EPIPHANY

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

A Man with an Evil Spirit

31 January 2027

Bible

Links are provided as a convenience and are not intended as an endorsement or recommendation. Many alternatives are available online!

Mark 1:21-28

Watch the Story

Lectionary Readings

All the readings set for Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany.

First reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm: Psalm 111
Second reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Gospel: Mark 1: 21-28

Blocks

Minecraft Seed: `1738801`

Create a world with the difficulty set to normal so that hostile mobs appear. You can do this in creative or survival mode. If playing in survival you might want to collect materials in creative mode first before switching.

Build the synagogue where Jesus is teaching. See https://www.bibleodyssey.org/articles/first-century-synagogues/ for some information on what it might have been like – a kind of town hall.

Do the hostile mobs get in the way of your building project? If it is your world, you can always turn on cheats and switch to daytime to chase them away.

Bricks

Use Lego or junk modelling to build a synagogue like the one Jesus would have been in – a kind of multi-purpose town hall.

What kind of distractions get in the way while you are building? Make a list! Maybe things don't go right first time, or you start chatting, or need the loo!

What sort of things might stop you coming to church, or praying?

♡ Prayer

Jesus uses his authority to rescue people from evil forces that were keeping them from God. Anything that creates a barrier to God is bad. Jesus overcomes all barriers and defeats evil.

Pray for everyone who is feeling distant from God for any reason. May they come to know the hope and love that Jesus brings.

ⓘ Context

Extra information to extend your knowledge!

This looks to be a story of the kind of thing Jesus did: we could translate it he “used to teach” in the synagogue. Capernaum is at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee, and Jesus spent a lot of time there. There might have been about 1500 people living in Capernaum — quite a bit smaller than Kidlington! In those days synagogues were probably places where all sorts of community activities happened. Any suitable man could teach from the scriptures; but Jesus was probably different from the “scribes” because they are likely to have mostly quoted other people, whereas Jesus had his own authority. Under the influence of other cultures, the Jewish people had developed a belief in demons or “unclean spirits” which were an explanation of forces opposed to God. Sometimes they were associated with illness, perhaps especially what we would recognise today as mental illness. In the story the unclean spirit names Jesus (this was thought to be a way of having power over someone) but Jesus tells it to be quiet and come out of the man. Jesus shows he can free people from oppression and things which keep them apart from God.

Community Suggestions

Community suggestions coming soon!

View this session online: https://www.blocks-and-bricks.org/sessions/year-b-fourth-sunday-after-the-epiphany.html