



Luke 8:26-34

If the Son Makes You Free, You Shall Be Free Indeed

26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.

27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"

29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him.

31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

32 Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them.

33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

34 When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country.

Miracles, signs & wonders. What was their purpose in the earthly ministry of Jesus? Why did Jesus travel throughout Galilee performing wonders far beyond the ability of any mere mortal? Why did he do these things when as He himself told us in Mark 1:38, that He came forth to specifically to *preach*.

The answer to that question is two-fold. **First**, because those signs that Jesus performed all serve to teach us important things about Him. **Second**, because those miracles that Jesus performed *confirmed* the things that he was preaching.

By the time Jesus was born, many men had already arisen in Israel who had *claimed* to be the long-awaited Messiah. But only Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah, and only Jesus healed diseases, cured the blind, stilled storms, walked on water and rose from the dead. His actions confirmed His words, and Jesus self-consciously performed these miracles that men might know that He possessed the power and authority to preach and proclaim what he did. You see that in Luke 5-

23 "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'?"

24 "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" -- He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

25 Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

Last week you read about Christ's miraculous stilling of the storm. All He had to do was speak and the storm was instantly over. That miracle demonstrated His absolute sovereignty over nature. In a way, it foreshadowed the time when after His return the effects of the Fall on Creation will be wiped out. No more storms, no more disasters, no more calamities. Now, you have just read an account of a miracle in which

Jesus demonstrated that He also has absolute sovereignty in the spiritual realm as well. I hope you see that this miracle wonderfully foreshadows Christ's final triumph over the devil and his minions. The coming time when the Deceiver's power to harm or afflict will be forever ended.

Now, I mention that because as we are going through Luke, I desperately want you to see the progressive nature of the revelation here. How Jesus is showing not only His disciples, but you and me, more and more about Himself, and what He has come to do – as well as giving us this wonderful foretaste of what it will be like when He returns in glory. And as we look at individual trees, I want you to continue to see the forest they are part of.

Speaking of foretastes – You remember that Simeon as he held the infant Christ in His arms in Luke 2:32 had called Him “a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles” now as we have read these verses we are beginning to see that prophecy coming to pass. Jesus has crossed over the lake of Galilee to the Gentile – that is the non-Jewish – side. The light has come to the Gentile world –

You should mark this, as Gentiles, this is great news to us. God is making good what he said of His Christ in Isaiah: “I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Isa. 49:6)

What grace there is in this. That those, like us, who were once afar, are being brought near!

Now admittedly, the initial Gentile welcoming committee could have been better. Instead of multitudes of Gentile worshippers crying out Hosana, Jesus is instead met by only one man, naked, filthy, demon-possessed, covered in scars, and out of His mind. But this is the man that Jesus crossed the lake to see! **Therein you should see the compassion of Christ. Remember this meeting when you are tempted to think that you are too lowly or sinful for God to want to have anything to do with you – Jesus time and time again proves that He is willing and able to tend to the needs of the lowliest worm, and you will not be the first of his creatures in history whom he has neglected.**

This demon-possessed man probably saw the landing of the boat and intended to attack the party as they got out, but when He gets closer, the demons who had intended to terrify are themselves horrified to find that they are suddenly face to face with the Son of God. They who He is and they have no choice other than to fall down before Him in involuntary worship.

That doesn't mean that the demons had faith in Christ, far from it – they knew Him, but they hated and feared Him for they know full well that when Jesus returns He will cast both them and their Master into the Lake of Fire, there to be forever tortured in Hell along with those whom they have deceived. The demon obviously fears that, and cries out in verse 28 “do not torment me!” and then later in verse 31 we learn that the demons beg not to be cast into the abyss – that is the *abusson* or bottomless pit of Rev. 20:3 – a place of torment that demons are imprisoned in prior to their final judgment. We don't know much about it, but from this reaction we know it is not a place where they will be happy to be.

Let me here say a few things about, demon possession. Demons as you know are fallen angels, the angels who fell with Lucifer in His great rebellion and who now serve him.

And the **angels** who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

We read in the NT that they could and did possess people – in fact in concert with the coming of Christ there seems to have been a burst of demonic activity of that kind. Which shouldn't surprise us, the Devil has long been in the counterfeiting business, and as God's Son became incarnate, he probably wanted to create his

own mocking “incarnations” to oppose Him. They cannot however, possess *believers*. Those who are regenerate are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, they are the temple of the Spirit. There is simply no way, that anyone can simultaneously be home to both God and demons:

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."

18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty."

In these verses, a multitude of demons have possessed this man. We read in verse 30 that they were so numerous that when Jesus asked his name he replied Legion. A Roman Legion consisted of 6000 soldiers! This was a lot of demons, and yet we see that even though He has been occupied by a veritable army of darkness – they are completely powerless before the Lord. All they can do is beg. Here too is something to remember that we all too often forget. The Devil is not some sort of evil *God*. He too is merely a creature. He can only do that which the Lord permits Him too. The devil, as Luther put it, is God’s devil, and he is frustrated to no end that He ends up only accomplishing what God wills.

Therefore before Christ this army that had prior to this time been ripping up chains like paper and terrorizing the neighborhood are powerless. They know that they are about to be driven out of this poor man whom they had been tormenting for so long – so they beg Jesus to send them into the herd of pigs that is nearby – incidentally, here is a quick quiz for you: ***Could Jews own pigs?*** No. There is another indication that Jesus is in a gentile community.

Why the demons want to do this, and why Jesus permits them is something I will admit to you is something of a mystery. So all you can really do is make an educated guess.

Here though is my conjecture. The demons, if they can’t afflict this man anymore, still desire to do evil. Therefore, their plan is to do economic damage to the surrounding area – and indirectly make Jesus unpopular. So they plan from the very beginning to drive the herd into the lake and drown them.

Why does Jesus permit them to do this? Again, this is just a guess, but my belief is that He is testing the people of the surrounding area – what is more important to them? The deliverance of man long oppressed by demons? The coming of salvation to their shores? Or their worldly possessions? Again and again, God uses the devil for precisely this kind of testing, and while the Devil of course means it for evil – God means it for good. We will see next week, how the community did on this particular test.

But for now, some applications:

1) Although He is a particular dire example, in many ways this demon possessed man ***is a living example of the state of men prior to coming to faith in Christ.***

a) ***He dwells amongst the tombs:*** Again and again the Bible tells you that outside of Christ you are dead in your trespasses and sins. O, not literally dead, but spiritually dead. And living in the world, you dwell as it were in a Necropolis – a city of the dead. A land of tombs. Jesus himself compared the Pharisees to tombs themselves: “you are like **whitewashed tombs** which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men's* bones and all uncleanness.” (Matt. 23:27)

Were *we in our right minds*, we would be appalled to dwell in a place where all around us is dark, and rotten and unclean, but instead we try to cover it over and convince ourselves it's good. Instead of fleeing from death we embrace it! Now this is a *terrible* state of affairs for unbelievers to be in. But what is far worse is that much too often *believers* desire to take up residence in the grave yard! Don't let that be the case with you!

b) ***His behavior is horribly self-destructive both physically and spiritually:*** We read in Mark 5:5 that this man was always, night and day... in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and **cutting himself** with stones.

The unbeliever in his rebellion is constantly engaged in self-destructive behavior [example of the woman destroying herself by her actions] and then when salvation comes near, he is terrified! (Mind your own business!) He will do anything it seems to get away from the gospel and flee on to his death – including killing the messengers if need be.

c) ***He will not be bound by anything:*** **Psalm 2:2** The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*,

3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."

Because he is in bondage to sin and the devil, he will not be constrained by the Law of God. It is no great mystery why our society is overturning the law of God is it? As they do so they are creating an increasingly chaotic and ungovernable society which requires stronger and stronger chains which cannot hold it. Eventually, we create the same kind of individual and personal lawlessness that prevailed in SODOM!

d) ***He is held in captivity by the devil and his minions:*** Turn if you would to John Chapter 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

32 ***"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."***

33 ***They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free'?"***

34 ***Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.***

35 ***"And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.***

36 ***"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.***

John 8: 40 "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

41 ***"You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father -- God."***

42 ***Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.***

43 ***"Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.***

44 ***"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.***

2) ***In order to be freed from your bondage, you must be freed by the Son:*** Let me ask you a question: *Did the demon possessed man desire to be free from possession prior to his release? All the ask Jesus into your heart first non-sense.* The great good news of the Gospel is this *Jesus came to free us – when we were still enemies and rebels and sinners:*

1 John 4:10 In this is love, **not that we loved God**, but **that He loved us** and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

We deny we are in bondage at all! And yet **GOD SAVES SINNERS** and frees us from Sin through faith in His Son! And ***"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."***