

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Sunday Sermon

Date: February 21, 2021

Text: Matthew 8:18-34

Scripture Reading: Matthew 8:18-34

Subject: Following Jesus; Sea Storm; Demon Possession

In the preceding message from Matthew 8:1-18, we considered:

1. Our Lord healing a leper.
2. Our Lord healing the Roman Centurion's servant's palsy with his word.
3. Jesus healing Peter's wife's mother of her fever so that she ministered to them.

Let us now proceed to chapter 8, verses 18 through 34. In these verses, we shall see a scribe saying he would follow Jesus; a disciple wanting to bury his father first. We shall consider the storm and Jesus' power over the wind and waves. Moreover, we plan to examine the record of Jesus casting out devils.

Matthew 8:18 (KJV) *Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.*

This occurred after the healing of Peter's wife's mother of her fever and the casting out of the devils in those who were possessed of them by his word. They were in Capernaum which is on the NW corner of the Sea of Galilee, so Jesus gave commandment to depart unto the other side of the sea.

Matthew 8:19 (KJV) *And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.*

And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, -- A certain scribe? Who were the scribes? During the time of the Old Covenant, the priests were the guardians of the Law. In the course of time this was changed. The more highly esteemed the Law became in the eyes of the people, the more its study and interpretation became a lifework by itself. So there developed a class of scholars who, though not priests, devoted themselves diligently to the Law. These became known as the scribes. Besides the scribes there were also "doctors of the law – lawyers" who both studied and taught the law. Why did he come to Jesus? We are not told, but it is probably true that he had seen Jesus works in Capernaum.

Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. – This is a bold statement on the part of the scribe. This sounds like a good thing to do, if it were totally true. Thus men often make sudden resolutions to walk with God, and to be his servants, upon evil accounts, and before they have well considered what they are likely to meet with who confess themselves to be the disciples of Christ. In short, they have not "counted the cost" of following the LORD. Thing is, that the LORD knew his heart – not only heard his words, but also knew his motive.

Matthew 8:20 (KJV) *And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

This is as the LORD is saying to the scribe, "You do not know what it is to follow me; my external condition is worse than that of *the birds of the air*, they have fixed nests, or the beasts of the earth, the worst of them have holes, but I have no fixed habitation on earth. He both here and in many other texts calls himself *the Son of*

man, (a name never, that we read of, given to him but by himself as recorded in the gospels 81 times), to declare the truth of his human nature, and that he had a natural compassion for men. Notice the account of this in Luke: **Luke 9:57 (KJV)** *And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

Matthew 8:21 (KJV) *And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.*

Let's read Luke's account of this: **Luke 9:59-62 (KJV)** *And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. 61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. 62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*

According to Luke's account, the Lord has said to him, Follow me.

Matthew 8:22 (KJV) *But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.*

His call was to follow me. What did the savior mean by the dead burying the dead? As followers of Christ, we are dead to the world; dead to the law [Ro 7:4](#); and dead to sin [Ro 6:11](#). This means that the world, law, and sin, have not influence or control over us; that we are free from them. It is as though they were not. A body in the grave is unaffected by the pomp and vanity, by the gaiety and

revelry, by the ambition and splendor that may be near the tomb. So men of the world are dead to Christianity and the things of Christ. They see not his beauty; hear not His voice; are not won by His loveliness. This is the class of men to which the Saviour referred here. Let men, says he, who are uninterested in my work, and who are *dead in sin*, ([Eph 2:1](#),) take care of the dead. Your duty is now to follow me.

Matthew 8:23 (KJV) *And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.*

Remember, they saw him entering into the ship and He had given commandment to depart for the other side of the Sea. So, his disciples followed him into the ship.

Matthew 8:24 (KJV) *And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. 25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. 26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.*

Let's read Mark and Luke's accounts:

Mark 4:36-41 (KJV) *And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? 39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great*

calm. 40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Luke 8:22-25 (KJV) *Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. 23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. 24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.*

Had not the LORD already commanded them to go to the other side of the sea? Is this not the very reason he asked them, "Where is your faith? Why are ye so fearful?" Didn't this mean that they were definitely going to the other side of the sea, the awful storm notwithstanding. Isn't this a great lesson for us in the present storm which is rising before us? Jesus has told us: "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world (age). I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. I will receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also."

Matthew 8:27 (KJV) *But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!*

O, brothers and sisters, Jesus is the master of the winds and waves!

“When He reaches out His Hand,
Billows cease at His command.
Winds and waves obey His will
When He says to them, "Be still!"
What man is this they all did say
Whom the wind and waves obey?
He’s the One who sails with me;
He’s the Master of the sea.” --Squire Parsons

Matthew 8:28 (KJV) *And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. 29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? 30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. 31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. 32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.*

Let’s read Mark and Luke’s account:

Mark 5:1-20 (KJV) *And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. 2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: 4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself*

with stones. **6** But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, **7** And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. **8** For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. **9** And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. **10** And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. **11** Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. **12** And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. **13** And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. **14** And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. **15** And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. **16** And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. **17** And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. **18** And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. **19** Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. **20** And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

Luke 8:26-40 (KJV) And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. **27** And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which

had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. **28** When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. **29** (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) **30** And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. **31** And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. **32** And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. **33** Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. **34** When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. **35** Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. **36** They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. **37** Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. **38** Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, **39** Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him. **40** And it

came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.

there met him two possessed with devils. -- Both Mark and Luke mention but one, which is no contradiction to Matthew; for they do not say that there was only one; and perhaps the reason why they only write of him is, because he was the fiercest, had a legion of devils in him, and was the principal one, that spake to Christ, and with whom he was chiefly concerned. This is to be understood, not of any natural disease of body, but of real possession by Satan. These possessed men met him, not purposely, or with design, but accidentally to them, and unawares to Satan too; for though he knows much, he is not omniscient: had he been aware of Christ's coming that way, and what he was about to do, he would have took care to have had the possessed out of the way; but so it was ordered by providence, that just as Christ landed, these should be coming out of the tombs.

These devils (demons) are the same as evil spirits who can and do take possession of those who are under the control of Satan in this present world.

CF: Mark 9:17-22 (KJV) *And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; **18** And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. **19** He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. **20** And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. **21** And he asked his*

*father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. **22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him:** but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.*

These evil spirits cannot possess the bodies of the saints, because greater is the Holy Spirit that is in them, than he who is in the world. These demons can control the mind and body members so that the person does things that he would not ordinarily do as we saw from the instance of the young man who Jesus healed of the evil spirit. Consider this record – the person(s) lived in the tombs; they wore no clothes; they were bound with chains and fetters to try to control them, but they (with demonic power) plucked the chains and fetters asunder. The word of the LORD quickly dispels them, otherwise, it is clear from scripture that the demons come into the body of unbelievers and go as they please. Consider this:

Luke 11:24-26 (KJV) *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. **25** And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. **26** Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.*

Notice what happened after Jesus had commanded the evil spirits to depart. Let's consider Luke's account:

Luke 8:34 (KJV) *When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. **35** Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. **36** They also which saw it*

told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. 37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them;

Matthew 8:33 (KJV) *And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. 34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.*

Quite a report they had to render when the observers returned to the city! The unbelieving world wants nothing to do with Jesus. While all human beings are definitely wanting to see miracles, they want nothing of God's spiritual power. We shall soon see a manifestation of this when the false prophet calls fire down from heaven in the sight of them all. They may be excited and thrilled at the miracle, but we see they DO NOT REPENT OF THEIR WICKED DEEDS. Why is that? Because they are dead in their sins and, to them, the gospel is foolishness. But, praise God, to us who are believing the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to them who are believing.

Now, today God commands all men everywhere to repent. Therefore, I say unto you, "repent of your sins! Change your mind about the heinousness of your sins and the holiness of Almighty God. Turn from your sins to Christ who came to save His people from their sins. Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ and you will be saved. If you do not believe in Him as your savior and Lord, then you are going to die in your sins. Die you shall! You and I are dying every minute of our lives.

Mark 16:16 (KJV) *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Those of us who are members of this church and believers in Jesus Christ will rejoice to see you turn from your sins and come to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith. Repent of your sins; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. If you believe not that Jesus is the Christ, then you will die in your sins.