



The Gospel According to Luke Wk. 38 "Legion" By Pastor Jody May

Luke 8:26-39 ESV

Jesus Heals a Man with a Demon

²⁶ Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷ When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, 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 many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) ³⁰ Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him. ³¹ And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. ³² Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. ³³ Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

³⁴ When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵ Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ³⁶ And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. ³⁷ Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

Introduction:

Some of you know that I am a western fanatic, and in saying that I don't mean all westerns and I judge westerns a little differently than most. For example, just like most men in this room I love **Tombstone** but as good as that movie is, it is less about the fight of good vs. evil but it is more about vengeance. In reality I appreciated Kevin Costner's portrayal of Wyatt Earp because I think he captures the heart of westerns better than most modern actors. My favorite scene does not consist of any of the gunfights, but it is the point in the story when the hero steps forth, accepts what he has been created to do by the creator, and enforces the will of God. **"It all ends now!"**



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This is what I think about when I see Jesus confront the powers of Hell directly. In this story you see Jesus assume one of His mantles of responsibility, God's Enforcer.

1 John 3:8b ESV

⁸... The reason the Son of God appeared was to **destroy** the works of the **devil**.

Jesus tells us this much in Luke 4 when He reads the prophet Isaiah's words to His Hometown.

Luke 4:18-21 ESV

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim **liberty** to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at **liberty** those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

It was His **"It all ends now!"** moment and His people kicked him out of the town and tried to kill Him. They desired lawlessness instead of He who had come to fulfill it and take on the mantle of God's Enforcer. To bless His people to set them free and they chose bondage...

In today's encounter we see Jesus in His role as the one who came to set those that are held captive to the powers of Hell free, those with no chance of freedom nor redemption. **This sermon is to help us understand how the unseen world responds to our Christ, what it looks like to be enslaved to the powers of darkness, and what is the proper response to the great liberator Jesus Christ!**

It may be coincidence but this major offensive against Hell happened in a depraved Gentile culture. A place where the occult was accepted and practiced. The place is Gergesa, a Gentile outpost in the Roman republic, we know it is Gentile because Jews would not raise pigs. **Some**



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believe this to be the birthplace of deviled ham ☺. These folks were the remnants of Syrian, Aramaic, Greek, Babylonian, and whatever the Roman empire brought in on its' roads. This means that in this town you would find multiple sources of cultic and occult worship with all sorts of weird religious rights and practices happening. This would be a hotbed of demonic activity in a land where the enemy was looking for a foothold in all the time.

You may push back a little in your mind because you believe that demonic possession looks a lot like mental illness, just acting crazy doesn't mean your possessed. I just want to point out that the Bible does see a distinction between mental illness and demonic possession. For example, multiple times the Bible speaks on the topic of worry/anxiety (1 Pet. 5:7; Jn. 14:27; Mat. 6:34; Is. 41:10; Rom. 8:18) it also speaks of depression and excessive fear in the world, and talks about cognitive therapy when we are told to *take captive your thoughts* in Rom, 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 10:5. Nope, I believe this is the right call, by a physician according to eye witnesses from that region, this is something that can only be explained by other worldliness, meaning evil spirits.

Lastly, if you must know before we go on, if **I do believe** in demons and the possession of the lost, and the answer is **yes**. Is it a **common occurrence? No**, not for me nor have I seen it among this body. **Have I ever seen it? Yes, yes, I have.** The only thing I want you to know for now is that an Evil Spirit, as you will see here, cannot abide to be near the Spirit of Jesus, it always wants to flee. If the HS is in you, you are free, and so are your homes, but please be alert of allowing worldly culture in your life for the devil is a "prowling lion" (1 Pet. 5:8) and always seeks to influence you from without and can still tempt you.

1. The Demonic Effect in the Physical World.

1st They Pile on Shame.

²⁷... For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs.

This man lived naked... Just as in our world this is not custom of the time. As a matter of fact, this is a sign in the ancient world of immense shame. In the book of Acts, chapter 19 we see how the demonic loves to shame people when they can.

Acts 19:15-16 ESV - Sons of Sceva



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¹⁵ But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?" ¹⁶ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house **naked** and **wounded**.

As you can see, this is years after the Jesus, and the demonic force is more enlightened as to who Jesus was than the Jews were. But the main thing we notice is that it attacks them, physically marking them, and leaves them naked to bring shame to them and their house. In that town as well this family, in Ephesus, it probably damaged the family business as Jewish exorcists that worked for the Jewish population in that town. This one act, because scripture says everyone knew in Ephesus of this act, made fun of the family and brought great shame on them.

Maybe this helps us to understand, in families lost in the world, why there seems to always be a black sheep in the family. This might help us to pray differently for the lost when we see those that have disregard for the shame, they bring on themselves and their loved ones.

2nd The Empower Rebellion.

²⁹ ... (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.)

They increase one's ability to rebel, regular restraints no longer hold them, consequences don't mean anything to people caught in this slavery. If the host desires destructive behavior they will make the way possible. I have seen people given every opportunity to succeed, I have seen people surrounded with loving friends and family, I have seen people given the best counsel available, and I have still seen people disappear from the face of the earth through running away or suicide; it exist in my family.

The demonic's greatest victory is to get people to think that they are unfixable, uncurbable, unlovable, in the face of all what man offers them. That is why it is so necessary to have a God that works against a totally depraved nature, that works against our will, that visits us when we don't want Him to, that goes to us when we are too down to lift our heads, that upon His divine will of election before time to save a man/woman there is none that can escape Him and no force that can oppose Him. **Salvation alone comes from the Lord,** it is why it is so important to keep Jesus dominant in your house, not the things of this world.



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In **Mark 5:13 ESV** we see how depraved this man was. No one has been as lost as this guy, that's why Luke is showing you this, no one is beyond the reach of God. This story helps us to understand why some don't accept the Gospel, because it takes God to rescue a man, man cannot rescue himself.

13 So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering **about two thousand**, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

There were thousands of these things in this man. This man was buried under multiple consciousness of cruelty and hatred against all life and still they would not let him die and have peace. The fed off his misery but on that day, Jesus gave Him what lasts for eternity, **He offered Him His flesh and His blood and bought Him back from His totally depraved existence.**

2. Jesus' Effects in the Spiritual World.

For now I want us to focus on this text and look at the effect of the one that brings God's presence to the Spiritual World, I want you to see what the enemy thinks of Jesus, and my prayer is that it opens your eyes a little more to who Jesus is.

- **1st The enemy freezes out of fear.** **28** When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him – They see Him, they immediately recognize Him when He gets out of the boat and they lose their minds. No one inside that poor guy had the brains enough to say to the other demons, "let's book it!" They were trapped in their own fear! I think that is great to recognize. Fear is not what controls us for we are not controlled by a Spirit of Fear but by the Spirit of Christ (2 Tim. 1:7). The devils fear that which is in us. If you ever find yourself suffering too much from fear it may be from an outside presence, laugh in its' face, pray the name of Christ and He will flee, they can't stand Him (James 4:7).
- **2nd The enemy is aware and fears His final judgment.** **28** When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me." ... **31** And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. – They recognize Him. He beat their boss up in the wilderness 2 years back in a physically depleted body after being offered the world, He has been going through the countryside kicking butt and taking names. Jesus has a reputation, He's the



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enforcer, and they knew they were done. If anything, it shows you they have a communication line going on in the spirit world as well they know theology for, they know that only the Son of God can do what He does and then they confess an interesting fact - **they didn't want to go to the abyss.**

They recognize that **Jesus is the ultimate judge** of humanity the **Lord of preordained History**. The demons knew of their destiny and knew Jesus was the bringer of the end, they saw their doom in His eyes (**Rev. 9, 11, & 20**).

"It is comforting to know that the God we worship is not at the mercy of the vicissitudes of history, but that he himself is the Lord of history, knowing the end from the beginning and that whatsoever he decrees to come to pass will indeed come to pass."¹ - R.C. Sproul

- **3rd The enemy flees, they're cowards.** ³² Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. ³³ Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. - Demons want nothing more than to escape the gaze of God, they cower, and in the end they care nothing for those they enter and they care nothing about the collateral damage they do. Alien spirits brought to us by not just occults but cults are never out for the good of this world since their extreme hate and fear they flail and will destroy whatever they can.

All of this to show us that **Jesus is not just someone to fear; He terrifies the boogymen.** Jesus' effect on the spiritual world is devastating, judgmental, and always results with a victory for God!

3. The Emotional Effect of the Battle on People.

They are two ways of responding to this type of event in this story, and I will ask you this morning to think about who you align with more?

¹ Sproul, R. C. (1999). *A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke* (p. 179). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.



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³⁵ Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind,

1st Worship...

The story records the state of the man, sitting not running away because there was nothing in Him to make him run away anymore, he was clothed because shame had been replaced with alien dignity, and in his right mind that now sees God not the devil. All showing a complete healing of the man and then the response to his salvation:

³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone **begged** that he **might be with him**, but Jesus sent him away,

Jesus had turned the man **from a Maniac to a Missionary**. Jesus always saves to go and tell and ascribes mission as part of the solution for our spiritual deficiencies. A man that has been saved from hell is always given an alternate mission to fulfill.

There is a second response to all of this.

³⁷ Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned.

2nd Rejection...

The people rejected what the Lord was giving away for free that day, freedom from demonic control, much like His hometown, **well at least they asked** the enforcer to leave instead of trying to stone Him. It scared them because it opened their eyes not just to what was really happening in front of them, but it clued them into that there was something more than this physical world and it was right in front of them. They chose to live blinded to what the world was really about, they chose to accept what had become **normal for them, uncontrollable lunacy**.

That brings us I think to the main take away today about this strange but interesting story:

Be careful what you think is normal for Jesus never looks normal and His work makes people nervous.



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We need to remember in a demonically influenced culture the enemy looks to make things common, to get us to accept things as normal, so that we will not question them. (Desensitization)

- Abortion is not normal.
- Sex outside of marriage and outside your God defined birthed gender is not normal.
- Making drug use legal in our country is not normal.
- Watching shows playing video games rated MA/R promoting sex, rape, and violence is not normal.
- Identity politics and political and social slander is not normal.
- Working 60+ a week away that keeps you away from home more than not is not normal.
- Wearing clothes that promote lust because it is fashion is not normal.
- Living with constant debt to get what you want now is not normal.
- Not Stewarding your possessions and your body well is not normal.
- Getting divorced because it makes everyone happier is not normal.

But many in the church accept some if not all of these things as normal. So, the question has got to be who are we influenced more by, Jesus or the world? Do we see the world for what it is and worship Jesus for the freedom He brings us from these things, or do we reject Him because He causes too much of a disruption in our lives?

Reflect this week/application:

1st – Pray and ask God to reveal to you what you what worldly thing has become a normal thing in your life.

2nd-What will you reject and then share with others how God is freeing you from it.

Are you nervous right now about something you need to confess? My friend that is the Spirit of Christ in your life because He makes us all little nervous when he shows us the things we need to give up. Let's not accept the normal in our lives and let us pray for the intervention of Jesus to release us from our worldly cares.



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PRAYER

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father that sent His enforcer to free us from what the world deems normal.

Go in the name of the Son that saves by giving us back our dignity and sends the enemy running,

Go in the name and power of the HS that that shows us what we need not to accept as normal and empowers the sharing of our freedom gained by Christ.