

****READ THE TEXT****

INTRO-

Introductory Illustration

- Tommy grew up in poverty surrounded by gangs, drugs & a sea of crime in L.A. He lived a very violent, self-serving, worldly, evil, hate-filled LIFE.
- Still as a young man — Tommy found himself in jail. He was violent, strong, evil, mentally unstable, full of rage & uncontrollable.
 - One day in jail, over the loud speaker, a Bible study was called, and (Tommy said): I could not, for some reason, stay sitting down; I had to go to this meeting.
 - The pastor preached on the conversion of Paul in Acts 9. He showed through scripture in the testimony of Paul, **the simple Gospel**, which is the power of God unto salvation. God saved Tommy and gave him freedom from the bondage to sin!

God accomplishes salvation! — *the work of God in the soul of a man*

In this passage, we see the work of God in a man. We see...

- Maniac to the Missionary
- Crazy to the Converted
- Hopeless to the Herald

Background to Luke 8:26-39

- This is a tremendously shocking story. It’s a bit disturbing & delightful all at the same time. It’s a bit uncomfortable & yet unparalleled! ***But it’s real, narrative, factual history!***
- This account in Luke also is found in: Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17

The invisible -- spiritual -- realm is unseen yet **very real!**

Demonic possession is when a demonic spirit resides in a human body, and at times will exhibit its own personality through the personality of the man/woman. Demonic possession is a reality today, though we must guard against either ignoring demonic activity or over-emphasizing supposed demonic activity. [we must not live in FEAR either!]

The Bible doesn’t specifically differentiate between demonic possession, control, influence. It is the demonic residence within a person. It’s very real in our world today.

What do we know about the FALLEN angelic realm (=demons/unholy angels; lessons from Luke 8:28-33):

1. they know exactly who Jesus is & believe in him (28; James 2.19)
2. they know they're headed for eternal torment (28)
3. they seize & possess people & seek to destroy them (29)
4. they are intelligent creatures & very wise (30)
5. they fear going away into their tormenting abyss (31)

6. they know they must ultimately submit to Christ's Word (32)
7. they seek to dominate, devastate, destroy the plans/purposes of God (33)
8. They often control people to such a degree that many who are viewed as having 'mental illness' may in fact be demon possessed.
9. they have **no** power over Christians & cannot possess a believer (Col 2:15 & 1 John 4:4 & 5:18)

Question = IS it possible for people with severe disorders (neurological, genetic, hereditary, dominating, controlling disorders, even demon-controlled) -- to be made whole by Christ and by the Word of His POWER?

YES!

THESIS — I want to show you how **Jesus has all authority!** Let's see the story unfold...

I. THE DEEP EFFECT OF THE FALL! (26-27)

this story describes a man who has fallen into "UNCONTAINABLE EVIL" -- no one around him can subdue or redeem (RT France). David Smith: "The man -- more like a wild beast than a human being. He's a mad-man!

This man was the "terror of the neighborhood".

A. Demon possessed; Mentally crazy; Ritually unclean.

1. This man is scary, insane, a maniac, unstable, violent, unstoppable, and plagued with odd-behavior.

B. Mark 5 gives a dramatic & emphatic description of the distressed demoniac:

1. v.2 - the man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met him (demons indwelt this person)
2. v.3 - he had his dwelling (home) among the tombs (*ritually unclean*, outcast, Gentile area)
3. v.3 - no one was able to bind him -- even with a chain (*violent*)
4. v.4 - no one had been strong enough to subdue him (*powerful*)
5. v.5 - constantly NIGHT and DAY he was screaming in the tombs and in mountains
6. v.5 - he was gashing himself with stones (*self-mutilation, cutting, gashing himself*).

This guy is a maniac! He's deeply effected by the results of the FALL/curse!

C. Isn't it interesting — the foremost character front and center stage has NO NAME in this story! He's here to show his tragic & dreadful condition!

II. THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE FOR THE MAN! (28-31)

Never forget Satan is opposed to God & wants to destroy & devastate God's plans!

In sharing the gospel: remember: *satan comes & snatches the Word away at times.*

A. Possession of demons (27)

B. Recognition of Jesus (28)

1. "what business do we have with each other" -- *lit. 'what is it between me and you?'*
2. "Jesus...Son of the Most High God" -- The DEMONS not only know Jesus name, but his supernatural name (Most High God)

3. “Do not torment me” --the torture they have in mind also the fear that Jesus is about to initiate the final destruction of all evil spirits in the last days.

a) The demons ALL know their ultimate fate is the Lake of Fire (Matt 25.41 & Rev 20.10).

C.V.30 - what is your Name? My name is: **LEGION** -- a Roman Legion consisted of 6,000 soldiers.

1. At this point v.30-31 leaves the reader understanding that **JESUS IS ENGAGING IN A MAJOR BATTLE!** Massive proportions! Severely intense! Jesus is outnumbered but *not* overmatched. It is the ultimate spiritual battle!

III. THE SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST (32-34)

Jesus doesn't shy away in fear & retreat; he goes forward w/ victory & unstoppable power!

A. Authority over demons

1. See the absolute destructiveness (and power) of demonic forces: the demons enter the pigs and they rush the pigs over the cliff into the sea -- and it becomes an illustration of evil's **destructiveness** --- especially since the demons have not only harmed the man but now have led to the pigs' death. *Demons desire to destroy!*

B. vv.32-33- Note: the authority of Christ over all demonic forces:

C. And yet -- **Jesus has all authority over them all!** *O what a great & Mighty Savior! He is stronger than the most violent man! He is able to deliver from Satan! He rescues from the powers of darkness. He died & mightily bore the sins of His own! He crushed Satan's head by rising from the dead! He will triumph over all sin! He will crush all His enemies! He protects His sheep! He loses none! He will take us home to heaven! What mighty authority & glorious power Jesus Christ has!*

*The only way to be delivered from demons and demonic control is through *saving faith in Jesus Christ.*

Never are we commanded to cast them out, rebuke them, bind them. **Rather**, we understand the reality of demonic activity, we trust in Christ & His authority, we preach the gospel to the lost & call them to repent of sin & trust in Christ who has all authority over sin, death, Satan & demons & the dark forces of evil!

Marvel at the sovereign authority of Jesus Christ!!

IV. THE RADICAL CONVERSION OF THE SOUL! (35-36)

The miracle pictures how Jesus can erase the power & effects of evil in a person
The gospel is in fact the POWER OF GOD (Rom 1.16-17)

This guy was the perfect case for the hopeless soul! Beyond remedy!
The slave of Satan can be saved by the Savior!

Here's a **splendid** portrait of salvation's transformation!

The man who had been demon possessed (v.35, 36, 38)...

A. Demons came out

B. Sitting at the feet of Jesus

C. Clothed

D. In his right mind [in the 'right mind' — Christ changes our thinking!]

E. Shocked all onlookers

F. Was 'made well' [healed ESV]

G. Absolute surrender = *pursued discipleship* .. 'with Jesus' (v.38)

As it's been well said: "When Christ is the Physician, nothing is impossible!"

V. THE UNASHAMED PROCLAMATION OF THE MISSIONARY! (37-39)

✓*Christianity is never receive & hide; but always GO AND TELL!

✓*If your Christianity doesn't produce an evangelistic spirit -- you need to check your soul!

✓Has Christ done great things for you? THEN you GO and you TELL and you PROCLAIM to ALL!

✓Never minimize the power of your spoken testimony -- not about YOU but the great things that GOD has done in YOU by the Spirit for Christ!

A. V.37 - those from the country asked Jesus to leave! **Jesus is powerful. It's not always safe to have Jesus around. He doesn't dance to your tune. They would rather lose their Savior than lose their swine!** *They'd rather lose CHRIST THAN THEIR PIGS!* They heard, they understood, they rejected, & they asked him to depart! **So he did (v.37b).**

Observe how the crazy man has been changed!

B. He went! 'describe'

C. He witnessed!

1. The man was to be a MISSIONARY IN RESIDENCE --- NOT A MISSIONARY ACROSS OCEANS.

2. Wait -- he's just been converted for minutes! And now he's a missionary! Yes, because if you know enough to be saved (=the gospel) then you know enough to be a missionary!

D. He worshiped!

Don't reject Jesus! Receive him & proclaim him!

CONCL-

Concluding Illustration

- I want to tell you about Mary! Don't know all that much about her -- but what we do know -- is *riveting, profound & remarkable!*
- From a little village in Israel in the Galilee region, this lady was overpowered by demons -- seven of them to be exact. Mary lived in the city of Magdala. She's known to us as: "Mary Magdalene."
 - She served Christ & ministered to Him & cared for Him (Luke 8:1-2); She saw Christ & stood at the foot of His cross (John 19:25); She saw where they placed the body of Christ in the tomb (Mark 15:47); She was the first to come to the tomb & find Christ not there (John 20:1)
 - Jesus appeared to her & told her to go & proclaim to the disciples that Jesus is alive (John 20:17) & so she announced: "I have seen the LORD!" & she announced all that He had said to her (John 20:18).

Let us do what Mary Magdalene & this man who was demonized did -- announce what great things God has done for us!