

**Third Presbyterian Church**  
**Midweek Bible Study**  
**Miracle Series**  
**Miracle Exorcism of "Legion"**  
**Lesson 7 – Demon Oppressed**

Luke 8:26-39 (NIV) They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. [27] When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs. [28] When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" [29] For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places. [30] Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. [31] And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. [32] A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. [33] When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

[34] When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, [35] and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. [36] Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. [37] Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left. [38] The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, [39] "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

1. The sermon said someone who is saved cannot be demon possessed, but can allow themselves to be demon oppressed. Please explain the difference and why is this distinction important.
2. The sermon stated where the Spirit of the Lord is NOT, there is bondage. Please explain this statement.
3. The town people seem to be more at ease with a demonic who broke chains then they were with the Son of God, Jesus. Why do you think that was the case and how is this scenario true in so many ways today?
4. Popularity at the expense of Integrity is demonic and is not of God. Explain this statement.
5. To what extent do you believe demons are active today?
6. In what ways do people today ask Jesus to leave their life?
7. How have you allowed Jesus to FREE you?
8. What can you do this week to be more aware of Jesus' ability to help you with your most serious problems?
9. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

## Jesus Casts Out Demons in Gadara: Power to Free Men from Evil Spirits, 8:26-39

(8:26-39) **Evil Spirits— Unclean Spirits— Devils** (daimonia): evil spirits are demons. There is only one devil. However, there are many evil or unclean spirits or demons, and the New Testament has much to say about them.

The characteristics of demons other than the ones given in the outline above are said to be as follows:

1. They are spirits (Matthew 12:43-45).
2. They are Satan's emissaries (Matthew 12:26-27).
3. They know their fate is to be eternal doom (Matthew 8:29; Luke 8:31).
4. They affect man's health (Matthew 12:22; Matthew 17:15-18; Luke 13:16). Apparently, demon-possession is to be distinguished from mental illness.
5. They seduce men to a false religion of asceticism (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
6. They seduce men to depart from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1).
7. They are cast out of people (exorcism) in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 16:18).
8. They shall participate in the apocalyptic judgment which is coming upon the earth (Rev. 9:1-11, 20).

Evil spirits are enemies of Christ and of man. As such, they oppress, possess, and obsess people. (1) They delude the world and blind people to Christ (Ephes. 2:2). (2) They attack theology (1 Tim. 4:1-3). (3) They attack society (Rev. 9:3, 20-21). (4) They attack individuals (Luke 8:29). (5) They influence people to commit the sins of demon-worship, idolatry, sorcery, fornication, theft, murder, and much more (Rev. 9:20-21).

The believer's defense is the Lord. The believer must pray and fast and take on the armor of God in order to stand against their power (Matthew 17:21; Ephes. 6:12f).

This passage is excellent for studying the character of evil spirits and the Lord's power to deliver men from evil spirits.

1. The character of evil spirits (v.26-33).
2. The reaction of a covetous people (v.34-37).
3. The spirit of a delivered man (v.38-39).

**1. (8:26-33) Evil Spirits— Demons— Devils:** the character of evil spirits. At least ten traits of evil spirits are seen in this passage. (See note—' Matthew 8:28-31; note—' Mark 5:2-5 for more discussion and thoughts for application.)

1. Evil spirits are enemies of man, possessing a man for long periods of time. They take hold of a man, controlling his faculties and causing him to act abnormally, hurting both himself and others.
2. Evil spirits cause men to lose their sense of shame and conscience. This man was driven to run around naked. The point is, evil spirits destroy man's sense of modesty, privacy, intimacy, and respect. Evil spirits cause men to enjoy the attention of public exposure and the embarrassment of others.
3. Evil spirits cause alienation, the loss of all friends and social life. They lead a man to be *cut off*, ostracized from others. They often force a man to withdraw into himself and away from others, including immediate family; or they cause society to push the man away, forcing him to live alone or with others like himself. Evil spirits often destroy a man by making him live as it were among the dead, among those who have no contact with the world of living men. This is seen in this man being forced to live among the tombs of the dead.
4. Evil spirits are enraged against the Lord. Note three things in this verse. They knew that Jesus was the Son of the Most High God (cp. the Holy One of God, Mark 4:34). They also opposed Him and feared Him (see note—' Mark 1:23-24; note—' Mark 5:6-7. Cp. Matthew 8:31-32; James 2:19.)
5. Evil spirits seize men. Their influence and unrestrained nature seem to come and go, to lie calm and then to break forth in violence.
6. Evil spirits hate restraint and cause men to mistreat and oppose others. They drive men to struggle against morality and justice and against being governed, restricted, controlled, and disciplined. They drive men

to live wild and loose lives, to do as they please. They cause men to become unclean, sullen, violent, and malicious (cp. Matthew 8:28; Matthew 9:33; Matthew 10:1; Matthew 12:43; Mark 1:23; Mark 5:3-5; Mark 9:17-20; Luke 6:18; Luke 9:39).

7. Evil spirits take away a man's name, his identity, and his recognition. They deprive a person of purpose, meaning, significance. They destroy his self-image and his public image.

Note that Christ asked the man what his name was. The Lord was stirring within the man fond memories of his name before he had become demon-possessed.

8. Evil spirits are numerous and formidable. The evil spirit cried out within the man that his name was *Legion*. The legion refers to the Roman military legion which included over six thousand men. This definitely indicates that the man's case was desperate; the evil spirits in him were formidable, just as a military legion was formidable. (Cp. Mary Magdalene who had been possessed by seven devils, Mark 16:9. Note how a specific number was known. Cp. also Mark 5:9 "many.")

9. Evil spirits desire a body to inhabit for the purpose of working evil. They desire to be malicious, violent, and destructive. The evil spirits are said to be the ones speaking here. They recognized Jesus' sovereignty. Note how the "evil spirits" thought and worked.

a. They were indwelling and hurting this man physically, mentally, and spiritually.

b. They wished (if exorcised from the human body) to hurt other men by damaging and destroying their property.

c. They wished (if exorcised) to keep other men from Christ by destroying property and having them blame God for the devastation and loss.

10. Evil spirits are subject to the Lord's power. Christ had the power of His Word. The devil's power may be great, but the Word of Christ is omnipotent (all powerful), for all power belongs to Him.

**"Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).**

**"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31f. Read this whole passage for a beautiful and powerful description of the Lord's love and might.)**

There was the result of Jesus' Word: the man was saved; the evil spirits were cast out of the man. Christ had the power to deliver and save. All He had to do was say, "Go," and whatever evil indwelt the man was gone. The man was delivered from all evil: its presence, guilt, and consequences. The man was "saved to the uttermost" (Hebrews 7:25). (See note—' Mark 5:8-13 for more discussion and thoughts for application.)

**"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Matthew 9:6).**

**"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).**

**"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18).**

**"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).**

**"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:2).**

**"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**

**"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).**

**"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).**

**DEEPER STUDY #1 (8:33) Swine**

**Evil Spirit:** a question needs to be asked about the swine that were killed (Matthew 8:30-32). There were about two thousand of them (Mark 5:13). Why were they killed? As this is discussed, it should be noted that Christ did not kill them. He, of course, knew they would be killed; but the evil spirits were the ones who drove them wildly over the cliff. Why did Christ allow the owners to suffer such a great loss?

There are several possible answers.

1. It was a visible sign that the two possessed men were truly saved and freed from the evil spirits. Everyone knew beyond question that the two were possessed. Only a dramatic act could give unquestionable proof.

2. It was to convince those who did not believe in evil spirits that there are most definitely evil spirits who do possess bodies. (Unbelievers such as the Sadducees and other liberal thinkers of the day needed to see the truth.)

3. It was to teach obedience and holiness. It was against the law for a Jew to own and eat swine (Leviticus 11:7; cp. Isaiah 65:3-4; Isaiah 66:17). If the owners were Jews (and they probably were), they were sinning against the law. Jesus was thereby teaching that His presence demanded holiness and obedience to the law.

4. It was to teach the value of a human soul. The two possessed men were of far more value than any amount of material wealth, and even more so if the wealth was gained by illegal means.

5. It was to attract the attention and open the door for the evangelization of the surrounding district. No doubt the news of the Messiah's presence and power would spread and stir people to open their hearts and receive the message of the healed demoniacs (Luke 8:38-40).

6. It was to drive home Jesus' holiness and to arouse the people to acknowledge it; thereby the seeking and honest heart would be open for salvation (Luke 8:38-40).

7. It was to awaken covetous men to the fact that they were gripped by greed. They were doomed unless they forsook their material possessions and turned to the Messiah (Matthew 19:16-26). This could have been the best way and the only chance for them to be awakened to their need and to the power of Christ to deliver them.

8. It was to show and reveal the true nature of evil spirits

Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Matthew I.

## **2. (8:34-37) Covetousness:** the reaction of a covetous people

Note three things.

1. The people saw the great deed done, the marvelous deliverance of the demon-possessed man. However, their response was not one of rejoicing; it was fear—fear of Christ's power. They had known the demon-possessed man, how desperately hopeless his condition had been; and here he sat, delivered and made whole. What enormous power this man Jesus had!

2. The people rejected Jesus, being overwhelmed "with great fear." They were bound to be gripped with a sense of judgment because of their swine being killed. They were also bound to be wondering if the proclaimed Messiah had come to judge them ahead of time or to destroy more of their property. They definitely knew they were breaking the law of God by *keeping swine* (cp. Leviticus 11:7; Isaiah 65:3-4; Isaiah 66:17). Because of this sin and other sins, and their callousness toward the healed demonic, they were bound to be fearful standing there face to face with God's Son. They were unwilling to repent of their sins and to begin living for God. Thus, they could feel nothing else but fear.

3. Jesus did exactly what they asked. He left them. They chose the tasty, satisfying nourishment of the *swine of the world* over the joy and salvation of Christ. And so far as we know, He left forever, never to return to those who coveted this world more than Him.

**"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16).**

**"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26).**

"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccles. 5:10).

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Isaiah 55:2).

**3. (8:38-39) Witnessing—** Call: the spirit of a delivered man. The man was a dynamic example. As soon as he was delivered, he begged to be "with Christ," to travel all around, sharing the good news of Christ. He was *on fire* for the Lord, and wanted to commit himself to the ministry. But note what Christ did. He redirected the man; He commissioned the man to go to his own hometown.

**Thought 1.** Christ often redirects our fervor and willingness. He knows where we can best serve Him and the cause of His kingdom.

**Thought 2.** Every man, when saved, should become a dynamic witness for the Lord and be willing to go anyplace.

**Thought 3.** We should never let a redirection or a call to go elsewhere kill our fervor.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).