

JESUS Made All the Difference!!

Sunday, June 23 at 9:00 † Monday, June 24 at 7 PM

Second Sunday after Pentecost / First Sunday after Trinity – 2019

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: After the last 7 weeks of sermons on the book of Acts, *today we return to the Gospel – the Good News – according to Luke*; we are in **chapter 8**. Just before today's sermon text, Jesus' disciples thought they were going to drown – *but Jesus calmed the storm, and saved them from drowning!*

In today's text, Jesus meets and helps a man possessed by MANY demons; the results were ✦ blessings for the man, ✦ many dead pigs, and ✦ fearful people. Let's find out more...

1. **Meet the Demon-Possessed Man:** ²⁶ **Then they** [Jesus and

His disciples] sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee [east of the Sea of Galilee].

²⁷ When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a [certain] 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. [Also:] ^{29b} (For many a time [the demons] had seized him. [The man]



was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon[s] into the desert.) // Even though Jesus and His disciples went to the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee: **‡**they were in still in Jewish territory, **‡**Jews lived there, and **‡**Philip – *a son of Herod the Great* – ruled over that territory. The man who met Jesus *as soon as He got off the boat*: **‡**was demon possessed, **‡**was naked, and **‡**lived in an abandoned tomb. Since he was dangerous to the others, *he was restrained with chains and a guard*, yet he would often break his chains and escape!

2. **An Unusual Conversation:**

- a. The demon to Jesus: ²⁸ **When [the demon] 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 [Jesus] had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man.** // The demon knew **‡**who Jesus was and **‡**about Jesus’ power, so rather than flee, *he begged!* All evil angels know they will be punished forever when Jesus returns, *so that demon was basically asking, “What do you – Jesus, the Son of the Most High – have to do with me NOW, at this time?”* The demon could not resist Jesus, *but he was hoping to delay the beginning of his eternal torment until the return, until the second coming of Jesus!*
- b. Jesus to the demon: ³⁰ **Jesus then asked him [the demon], “What is your name?” And he [the demon] said, “Legion [so a number of demons between 4,000 and 6,000],” for many demons had entered him [and apparently Jesus wanted the others with Him to be aware of the HUGE number of demons He was dealing with].** ³¹ **And they [the demons]**

begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss [*literally, into the bottomless pit; the place “prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41 NAS)*]. ³² **Now a large herd of pigs** [*a herd of about 2,000 pigs (Mk. 5:13)*] **was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him** [*Jesus*] **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.** // Now, keep in mind, the owners of the pigs were most likely Jews AND it was illegal – *at that time, according to laws given by God* – for Jews to own pigs, so Jesus, *by granting the request*, brought ♦temporal judgment and ♦great loss of income upon those Jewish pig owners!

3. **Meet the Radically-Changed Man:** ³⁴ **When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country** [*field*]. 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.** // Imagine being one of those herdsmen... they were responsible for those pigs, *yet now all of those pigs were dead* – so they quickly reported what happened to try to avoid being blamed for the great loss! Then, *hearing the unbelievable news*, people went out to see what had happened. Upon arriving, they saw the radical changes that had occurred with the formerly demon-possessed man; he was ♦sitting near Jesus, ♦wearing clothes, and ♦under control! Also, those who came out heard from the

eyewitnesses; they must have marveled at Jesus' power over demons, *but they were also afraid!*

4. **The People Asked Jesus to Leave:** ³⁷ Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him [Jesus] to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. // So, knowing the full truth, they asked Jesus to leave! Why? *The people were more concerned about their money than their eternal salvation!* Therefore, they wanted Jesus to leave to prevent the death of any more pigs! What do we value more than Jesus? Do we want Jesus to leave us?

5. **The Man Witnessed to His Neighbors:** 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. // Think about the big picture: The man was in grave trouble; *then Jesus made all the difference!* So that man – *who was well known by the people* – was a living testimony of the power of Jesus over the power of the devil! Therefore, Jesus basically said to the man: Tell people ➡ how you were without me and ➡ how you are now through knowing me as your Savior, *and then leave the rest to God!*

This Week's Challenge: Since Jesus has also made a HUGE difference in our lives... *let us tell others what He has done for us!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, as You have raised us from death to life through Jesus, *so help us to tell others about Jesus!*

CONNECT WITH US ➔ Website: www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Podcast: Benefit from the Bible | Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230