

Luke 8:26-39

My Father said that this world is getting crazier and crazier. So it was essential that he teach us right from wrong and to keep the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. That was a generation ago.

Today I think the world is going crazy. You are probably thinking the same thing. If you think about it, every generation since Noah has said the same thing. It seems yesterday's insanity is considered normal today. And it comes at us at faster rate!

When will God finally put an end to the madness? If I were God, I would turn my back and walk away. But that would leave us without hope in this crazy mixed up world. It is a good thing that I am not God. Thankfully we can rejoice that God's thoughts are not my thoughts and His ways are not my ways. As high are the heavens from earth are God's ways and thoughts. Isaiah 55:8-9

And so, we find God not washing His hands in disgust at us, but sending His one and only begotten Son Jesus Christ into this crazy world. In our gospel for this day Jesus gets into a boat and sails right into the insanity. **Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasene's, which is opposite of Galilee.** Not only geographically opposite, but also opposite religiously. In Galilee they are God's people; not perfect or without sin, but they do have God's Word. And there are some in Galilee who do hold and treasure God's Word with a good and honest heart and bear fruit with patience. Luke 8:15. That means the devil has to disguise himself with sheep's clothing to do his evil among God's people.

Opposite of Galilee, across the sea in the country of the Gerasene's this is not the case. God's Word has not been read or sown. The devil is free to do his evil work without putting on a disguise. The devil's demons will possess whom they will, and all the chains and shackles you put on a possessed man is like freight train plowing through a spider web. The country of the Gerasene's is not a safe place to go. You would think it would be the last place for the Son of God to enter. But remember, God's ways and thoughts are not our ways.

Jesus is fulfilling the prophecy from Isaiah 65:1-5...

The pilgrims crossed the sea for religious freedom and to spread the gospel in this heathen land. Sometimes they were welcomed, and at other times they were not welcomed. When Jesus steps on Gerasene soil, clearly, He is not welcomed. **When**

Jesus 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 not lived in a house but among the tombs. We would say the man is insane. But Luke tells he has demons and many of them. No amount of counseling and therapy is going to help.

The man or the demon speaks, not sure who it is. **“When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, ‘What do you have to do with me, Jesus, Son of the most high God? I beg you not to torment me.’”** If it the demons, then Jesus answers in this way, “I have come to destroy you and cast you into the abyss, where I will soon descend and say with a Loud triumphant voice, I have crushed the head of your master Satan, and you will suffer eternally for all the pain and suffering you have inflicted.”

At that they begged Him not to send them into the abyss. The begged Jesus to send them into the pigs. And Jesus gave them permission. And the many demons went into the pigs. The unclean spirits possessed the unclean animals and they rushed over the cliff into the sea and drowned. Literally they choked in the sea, which by the way is the abyss. Jesus did not give them sanctuary at all.

For if the man were asking Jesus, “Do not torment me,” Jesus would have answered, “I have not come to torment you. I have come to set you free from the shackles that bind you and set you free from the demons that have bound you. I have come to give you your life back that the demons took from you. “I have come to proclaim liberty to the captive and to bring liberty to the oppressed.” I do believe it was the demons speaking through the man. The result was the same. Demons driven out and destroyed and the man free from the bondage.

It is the same for you and me. Jesus has come down from heaven and entered into this crazy upside-down world, not only to drive out demons from this one man, but to go to the cross to defeat once and for all the sin that keep us in bondage and to set s free. He then sails across the baptismal waters to you and me who were born in chains and subject to the devil and destined to the tombs which hold the dead. Jesus came across the baptismal water to release from the chains of sin that bind us, so that we are not subject to the devil, and gives us a destiny of living in God’s eternal presence in heaven. This all done by His grace.

He has made you and me His own possession and He has given you a name to call upon in every time of trouble when the devil harasses you. He has given you the

name that is above every name, and at the mention of the name Jesus the demons fall to their knees and start begging. Let us all start to learn to use His name often in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. His name is a powerful name.

We have also been given God's Word. No demon or devil can stand against God's Word because it is filled with God's breath which brings terror to the demons while bringing peace to you and all who are in Christ Jesus. When the devil tempted Jesus in the desert Jesus used God's Word to repel the devil. Tapping into God's Word, the Holy Scriptures is like plugging a cord into an electric socket. It gives us power and hope in love for us. I challenge you this morning to get into the scriptures daily. That is why we place a reading schedule at the back of the Church to help you do just that. As we get to know this Word, we get to take it with us wherever we go, ready to fend off the assaults of the devil.

As it turned out there were witnesses to what had happened and what Jesus did. The herdsmen whose pigs now lay at the bottom of the sea ran to town to tell of all that they had seen. And the people ran back to see for themselves. What they found was the man who had been possessed by these many demons sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed in his right mind. And they were afraid.

He who had been naked and ashamed was now clothed. Just as Adam and Eve were naked and ashamed, the Lord covered their shame with clothes. Now this man is clothed in His right mind. Sitting at Jesus' feet taking in all of His words. Sitting at Jesus' feet thankful that Jesus had come from the opposite shore of the sea to cross the sea to set him free from the demons. Jesus came and delivered him and now the graveyard does not need to be his home. Jesus has given him new life.

Do you know who the crazy ones are now? It's the townspeople. **"Depart from us Jesus."** They were seized with great fear.

Now this man being clothed in his right mind begged to go with Jesus. But Jesus sent this now clothed man in his right mind back to his own people to tell all that God had done for him. This is how we bring some sanity back into a world that has gone crazy. Go to Your Home and declare all that God has done for you.

Peace of God that passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.