

sermon study guide

Pastor Kent Priebe

Date: May 9 / 10, 2020

Sermon Title: Thy Kingdom Come - Part 4: Authority Over Evil

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. How does your wardrobe reflect your personality?
2. In the book *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis, we read of two errors we can make in regards to demons: "dismissal" or "fascination." What is the danger of each? What is a healthy approach to these beings?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Matthew 8:28-34

3. For a more detailed exchange between Jesus and the demons, read Mark 5:6-13. From this exchange, what do we learn about Jesus? What do we learn about demons?
4. Read Mark 5:1-5, 15. Compare the man's life before and after his encounter with Jesus. What changes did Jesus bring to the man's life?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

We may find it difficult to relate to this account of demon possession. But as Pastor Kent said, this is our story too. The powers of evil are at work within us, even if in more subtle ways. Read Ephesians 2:1-5.

5. In what ways do the powers of evil seek to impact and influence our lives? How can we be on guard?
6. What part are followers of Jesus called to play in breaking the power of evil in this world? What factors can get in the way?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Reflect on what Jesus is speaking to you through these Scriptures. How can you pray for his protection, guidance and strength in this season? Pray this prayer:

"Jesus – heal me, free me, deliver me, forgive me, renew my mind, free me from any bonds of evil in my life."

Who in your life can you pray for, that they would experience the life and freedom that Jesus offers?

For Daily Reflections from CSC Pastors, visit <https://www.cschurch.ca/daily-reflections/>

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 8:28-34

²⁸ When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. ²⁹ "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"

³⁰ Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. ³¹ The demons begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs."

³² He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water. ³³ Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.

1 John 4:4

⁴ You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

[Mark 5:1-20](#)

[Ephesians 2:1-5](#)

sermon study summary

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The story of Jesus casting out demons provides another example of Jesus' supreme and universal power and authority, motivated by love and compassion, to free, save and bring about new life. **Jesus has authority and power over evil.** Although the topic of demon possession is often avoided, this passage clearly demonstrates that the influence of demons and evil is real. Spiritual evil can manifest in many ways whether it be supernatural demonic attacks or more subtle influences and temptations toward apathy, anger, bitterness and sinful desires. In his book *The Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis warns about the extremes of either disregarding demonic activity in the world today or being fascinated and obsessed with Satanic influences. A healthy approach recognizes that Satan and all of his demons have limited power, influence and knowledge, and that they are subject to God. They were created by God to serve Him but chose to disobey. The demons in Matthew 8:28-34 not only know who Jesus is, but they clearly understand the authority He has over them and that their future is subject to God's judgment (v. 29). Notice that in casting the demons out, there is no higher power for which Jesus needs to call. Although followers of Christ must guard against the influence of Satan, there is no reason to fear him because Jesus has and always will have power over Satan (1 John 4:4).

Evil in this world always brings about brokenness but **Jesus isn't afraid of brokenness.** The men in this passage lived among the dead in tombs (v. 28). This was a lonely place of sorrow where they were cut-off from society, likely without much food, clothing or shelter. They lived in hopelessness, loneliness, fear and bondage without dignity or peace. Their only comfort was pain and self-harm. According to parallel passages of this story in Mark (5:1-16) and Luke (8:26-39)**, these men were violent and strong enough to break chains that were used to attempt to control them. Thus, people were afraid of them. But not Jesus. He is not troubled or afraid of their desperate and broken situation. In the same way that Jesus was not fearful of their situation, He is not afraid of ours. In spite of all the brokenness in our lives, Jesus' desire is for us to come to Him in honesty, seeking His help.

With just one word, "Go" Jesus changed everything in the lives of these men by driving out their legion of demons. **Jesus has the power to heal and restore to life.** These men who were tormented and could not be controlled by chains were now clothed, in their right minds, and sitting at the feet of Jesus (Luke 8:35). Sitting at the feet of Jesus demonstrates that now Jesus, not their previous life, is their Master. Their clothing not only gave them value and dignity but it can be seen as an illustration of being clothed in Jesus' righteousness because of His forgiveness. They have been delivered from evil and their minds have been renewed. They have clarity to think and believe what is true. Jesus not only had the power and authority to do this in their lives, but He has the same power and authority to do this in our lives today.

**These are parallel accounts of the same event even though Mark and Luke focus only on one of the demon possessed men.