

Jesus is Lord: Meditations on Luke 8 (part 2)

This week, we continue with part two on the Lordship of Christ from Luke 8. If there is anything we need at any given time in this short life that is full of troubles it is this: Jesus is Lord! Last week, we saw that Jesus is Lord over sickness and Lord over death. This week, we will see that Jesus is Lord over the unseen evil rulers in this world. Our text is Luke 8:26-39. I have 3 truths and then some applications.

As we read, remember our main truth: Jesus is Lord over unseen evil rulers in this world. Look at vv. 26-39: **“Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. When Jesus had 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 had not lived in a house but among the tombs. When he 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.” For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 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. When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. 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. And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, “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.”**

1. Notice the reality of the demonic. I think this is obvious, especially in the NT. Often we see the power of unseen evil forces over men and beasts. Our story is unusual, but true. This man was under the influence and often control of many demons. (Matthew records two demonic men. But, Luke chooses to tell us about one of them, probably the most important encounter.) This case is very severe in its effects to both the man and those around him. He spent most of time without clothing. And, he lived in a graveyard. He was often chained up, but with great strength broke the chains. When Jesus asked the man his name, one of the unclean spirits answered, “legion,” which here is his way of saying “many.” (Has anyone here ever seen anything like this? Just curious. You can ask me later about specifics, but I have seen something similar to this in both Mexico and Africa.)

One of the important truths for us and our worldview as Christians is that this world of full of evil, unseen forces. They are part of the fallen order of Satan and his angels. Eph. 6:12 says, **“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the**

authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” Now, we do not know the exact extent of their rule in this world. But, we do know, in the providence of God, they have been given great authority.

2. Notice Jesus’ complete control over the demonic world. In vv. 27-29 we read: **“When he 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.” For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man.”** Immediately, we see Jesus’ complete control over the demonic. The demons knew EXACTLY who he was. And their submission to his authority is immediate and complete. For they know at his word, all heaven and earth must obey. After all, they’ve been around for a long time. And nothing in this regard has changed. Notice also vv. 30-33: **“Jesus then asked him, what is your name? And he said, Legion, for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 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.”**

We see the same in every instance of Jesus’ dealing with the demonic. At the beginning of the Book of Mark as Jesus casts out a demon, the people are amazed, saying: **“What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him”** (Mark 1:27). This truth is not alarming to us; nor should it be. For as Col. 1:15-19 says, **“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell . . .”**

3. The death and resurrection of Christ has brought about a change in regards to Satan’s rule over God’s people. As Christians we must consider the cross and resurrection of Jesus and its effects on the evil rulers and principalities of this world. As we have seen, it was obvious at that time that Jesus was Lord. When He spoke, the demons obeyed every word. But, the cross and resurrection changed Satan’s ability to affect the people of God. Let me try and explain this further. In Luke 22 we find Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. And Judas, with his crowd, including soldiers and religious leaders came to arrest Jesus. And in his sovereign control he says, in vv. 52-53: **“Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”** At that time Jesus gave himself up to the crowd. He did not give up his lordship. He was in complete control as Lord. But, nonetheless, He did give himself up to the crowd! And he attributes this time and the coming humiliation of torture and death on the cross to the “hour” and the “power of darkness.”

Here, I think of the Chronicles of Narnia with *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*. There is a scene in the movie where Aslan leaves the company of his friends. And he allows Susan and Lucy to accompany him a bit further, until finally, he goes alone to meet the White Witch and all

her evil followers. And he turns himself over to their control, though he could have torn them to pieces at any moment. He laid down his life. They bound him, cut off his mane, spit on him, beat him, and finally killed him. This was their great hour of darkness. But, in the movie, the next morning, Susan and Lucy find him dead, and after sometime of sadness, they walk away. And then, suddenly they hear a great roar. And as they turn, there he is, risen from the dead, with a beautiful mane flowing in the sun, smiling down upon them.

In the same way, the cross was the “the hour of powerful darkness.” There, Jesus bore the wrath of sinful men. But, even more importantly for us and for this world, Jesus bore the wrath of Almighty God! At the right time, He said, “It is finished.” And He breathed his last. And then, 3 days later, he rose from the dead. And in his resurrection, the hour of “darkness” passed never to return! Now, concerning the cross and resurrection, notice some very important verses from Paul and Peter. In Col 2:8-15 we read: **“See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.” WE SERVE A CHRIST WHO IS LORD NOW!**

Satan and his messengers have no authority over believers. Nor can they do lasting harm. For those who are in Christ, cannot be separated or ultimately harmed. Rom. 8:37-38 says, **“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** Brothers and sisters, they may kill our body, but our destination is to be with God “in Christ” forever. And we are safe in his care. And, by the way, we will get a new body one day.

This also means that Jesus is our peace; NOW! In John 16:33 Jesus says, **“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”** Brothers and sisters, THAT WHICH USED TO HAVE GREAT AUTHORITY and POWER over us no longer has dominion. How do we know? We know because of the cross and the resurrection of Christ. This is the Gospel! This is Good news! Rom. 6:5-11: **“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you**

also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” Let me end with some applications about the Lordship of Christ in our passage.

Application: The Lordship of Christ affects the entire person (body, mind, soul). Look at v. 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 . . .”** You are not in your right mind until you are converted by the power of Christ. And when you are converted, you are actually “in your right mind.” However, the world does not see this. And because of the difficulties this evokes as we don’t want to be the minority or go against culture with all the tensions it causes, we must. The Apostle John says, **“Come out from among them.”** Often the world will tell us to leave them alone. At other times, they will persecute us and accuse us of “being out of our minds” or “unreasonable” or “intolerant.” But, such is our lot!

Application: The Lordship of Christ leads to making disciples. We might put it another way: Lordship understood is Lordship proclaimed. We see this with the man in our story. In v. 35 notice that he now sits at the feet of Jesus. And then in v. 39 he begs Jesus to let him stay with him. But instead Jesus says, **“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.”** Only in heaven will we know the effects of this man’s conversion on how many disciples he made. I remember years ago working in Canon Mills. I was a young man, young believer. And I remember the great change of heart and mind after my conversion. And as I tried to be godly, I didn’t laugh at the jokes of my older co-workers. I didn’t take part in their conversations. And together, they made fun of me. But over time, who do you think they came to when they had problems or issues at home or spiritual questions. Let this be a special application for our younger folks in high school. Kids can be ruthless. They often don’t know how to keep their mouths shut. They are quick to accuse, quick to make fun of. And they are quick to include and exclude. But, you must stand strong. And the same will happen to you. God will send kids who are hungry for the truth and you will be a city on a hill, a light in a dark place. But, when, by the power of the Gospel, you have been converted and see that Jesus is Lord, you can and you will stand for the truth in this world.

Application: The Lordship of Christ has a double effect. It is the greatest cause of peace or the greatest cause of fear. The man was sitting peacefully at the feet of Jesus. And, at the same time, the villagers asked him to leave; for they had great fear. 2 Cor. 2:15-16 says: **“For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.”** To some, the Lordship of Christ is the most beautiful fragrance. But to others, the Lordship of Christ is the worst fragrance. And they cannot bear it.

Also notice how many people refused the Lord Jesus! “The whole village.” This is what we are seeing in our culture right now. This is a great mystery, but has always been the case. Some places see no repentance and faith. And by the providence of God others do.

Application: The Lordship of Christ is cause for worship. Look at vv. 38-39: **“The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, “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.**

Today, for those who are in Christ, we are like the demoniac. The Lord has come and set us free, free from sin and death, free to be free and worship the living God. Jesus is Lord!