

The Transformational Power of Salvation (Part II)

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[0 : 0 0] It's good to be back. Good to have the choir. Good to hear them. Good to see you. I've preached! I've preached in a number of churches over the last couple of Sundays and other days, and always, of course, with a translator and been in a lot of worship services and I couldn't sing any of the songs because I didn't know Chinese and none of the songs sounded like anything we sing here, so it's been kind of tough. So it's been good to sing, good to be a part of our worship, good to hear the choir, and good to stand behind this pulpit. So I'm glad to be here. So take your Bibles and open them to Luke chapter 8. I'm going to take up where we left off a couple of weeks ago, three weeks ago, I guess it is, and have some unfinished business here, and I'm going to finish that this morning. So Luke chapter 8, starting with verse 26, and I'm going to read the text again, which takes us all the way to verse 39. So Luke chapter 8, 26 to 39. Listen as I read God's word. Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when he stepped out on the land, there met him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time, and he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with you, 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, but it had often seized him. He was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles, and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. Jesus asked him, saying, What is your name? And he said, Legion, because many demons had entered him. And they begged him that he would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountains, so they begged him that he would permit them to enter them. And he permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. And those who fed them saw what had happened. They fled and told it to in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what had happened and came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. They also, who had seen it, told them by what means he who had been demon possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And he got into the boat and returned.

And the man from whom the demons had departed begged him that he might be with them. But Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to your own house and tell what great things God has done for you. And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him. So, amazing story.

And I think you would agree with me. This is a sensational story. I mean, there are a number of them similar to this in the gospel accounts that are sensational. This one maybe ranks up there near the top, if not the top, of sensational stories in the life of Jesus. And we might add to that, in many respects, the story is thrilling and horrifying, especially when we really kind of imagine what the whole scene must have looked like and the things that took place. It's horrifying.

Here's Jesus and his disciples. They've landed on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, opposite Galilee proper. So, they're not in Jewish country. They're in Gentile country and proven by the fact that, you know, the herdsman there are not shepherds shepherding sheep. They are taking care of pigs, which would not be what a Jew would do. So, they're in Gentile country. So, they've landed on the shore near the cities of Geressa. Today, it's modern Cursu. And the other city would be Gadara, the larger of the two cities. And that's why some manuscripts identify the region as the Gerasenes. And others identify it as the Gadarenes. Perhaps you were wondering, you know, you have a translation that says Gadarenes. And I read where it says Gerasene. And so, they're just two cities and one was prominent over another. And so, the manuscripts sometimes would mention the larger of the

cities, which would identify the region. So, here they are. They've landed. They're in Gentile country. And as soon as they get out of the boat, they encounter this wild man. I mean, he's just crazy and frightening because, for one thing, he's naked from head to foot. And because of his lifestyle of late, he's got to be filthy and smelly from head to foot. And you can just imagine his wild hair and his wild, filthy, matched beard and his dirty face and his dirty body. And he's bleeding on various places on his body, who knows where, and bleeding because he had repeatedly gashed himself with sharp stones.

[6 : 00] Mark's gospel tells us about that. And also bleeding from where he had broken his bonds, his chains. Because, you know, he's out there in the wilderness and he's shrieking and crying out and, you know, blood-curdling sounds coming from this guy. And so, the authorities had to bind him, but he'd break those bonds. And so, he's bleeding all over his body. He's maniacal. He's fierce. He has the strength of many men. He is possessed, the Bible says, of many demons. And he's headed straight for Jesus and his disciples. Now, what I've described for most of us, that's what we remember about this story.

That and, of course, the part about the demon speaking. We remember that part. And the part about Jesus sending the demons into a herd of pigs. And we see that herd of pigs rushing down a steep precipice or cliff or whatever it was down into the sea. And they all drown there. And that's the part we remember because that part is sensational. And it's interesting. And it's intriguing. And so forth.

Now, let me remind you several weeks ago when I started this passage that these elements in the story are perhaps the most insignificant part of it. It's not about this, really. And when we focus on this part of the story and think only about this part of the story, this sensational part, then it tends to cause us to forget about Jesus in the story, that Jesus is in this story.

And that none of these events would have taken place if Jesus had not been there. And so, we need to understand that Luke and the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to include this story in his gospel account as he did a couple of other gospel writers, a couple of other gospel writers, inspired them to include this in the story because he wanted his readers to see Jesus, not demons, not the demons. And he wants the readers then and now to be wowed by Jesus and not by Satan. Because you see, it was Jesus' presence there that drew these demons out from their hiding place.

They would have been content to stay inside this man, to stay quiet, of course, do their work in his body and in his life and in the community around him, terrorizing the community.

[8 : 33] But they prefer to be hidden. And it was Jesus' presence that drew them out from their hiding place. It was his presence that forced them to reveal themselves and even speak out loud.

And so, remember that. And so, with that said, the main point of this text is not the demon-possessed man. Nor is it about the demons themselves.

The main point of the story is Jesus. Alright? And we could say that, of course, about every part of the Bible, especially every part of the gospel writings. But the story is about Jesus and specifically his sovereignty over the demonic realm.

That's what this story is about. And further, it is about his saving power. His power to save the most hopeless, I think you would agree, the most hopeless of sinners.

That's what this story is about. The sovereign Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to transform a life of a poor sinner.

[9 : 41] Jesus had no trouble whatsoever of delivering, saving this demon-possessed man. He had no trouble doing that. And if Jesus can transform a demoniac's life, then he can transform any life.

Any life. And that's good news, isn't it? Now, last time we looked at this passage, I said that there were four truths that we wanted to consider from this passage. We looked at just one of them last time, if you were here.

And most of you, I think, were. But let me give you all four of these truths again here on the front end. Number one, the destructive purpose of Satan. The destructive purpose of Satan.

That's the first truth that we see in the passage. Though it's not the most important part of the story. We do see that in this passage. The destructive purpose of Satan.

Number two, the authoritative person of the Son. The Son of God. Third, the transformative power of His salvation.

[10 : 44] And finally, looking at the demoniac, now saved man. Then we see the active passion of the saved.

Those four truths are clear in the text. Now, last time we considered the destructive power of Satan. And remember I said that Satan's purpose in this world is to destroy everything that God has made for His glory.

That's His purpose. Especially to destroy you and me. God's crowning creative achievement. Mankind. To destroy.

That's His desire. To destroy anything, everything that God has created for His glory. And 1 Peter 5, 8 says, Be sober. Be vigilant.

Because your adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion. Seeking whom he may devour. Resist him. Steadfast in the faith. And so Satan wants one thing for you.

[11 : 49] One thing. He wants you dead. He wants you dead and damned. And that's what Satan wants. That's the destructive purpose of Satan.

Now, moving on from there, let's not focus on Satan. Let's focus on Jesus here. And see, secondly, not only the destructive purpose of Satan, but the authoritative person of the Son, the Son of God. Let me ask you something. And I think you know the answer. Who is in control in this event, this situation, in this passage? Who is in control?

Is it Satan, the prince of darkness? Or is it Jesus, the Lord of glory? Well, certainly it's not Satan. He's not in charge here. He's not controlling things through his demonic forces.

It's not Satan. It's not these demons. It is Jesus. See, the demons were not attacking Jesus. Don't ever get the idea from this story that this man is running down there to attack Jesus because he is controlled, inspired and controlled by a host of demons in him.

[13 : 01] And they're going after Jesus to attack him and maybe to destroy him. Don't ever get that idea. That's not the case at all. The demons were not attacking Jesus. The demons were no threat whatsoever to Jesus.

None at all. But on the other hand, Jesus was an extreme threat to these demons at this very point. And I just want you to look how Luke describes the sovereignty, the absolute sovereignty and authority over these demons.

And we see it in their worship, their words, their wishes, their willingness. Four W's, okay? Their worship, their words, their wishes, their willingness.

And so in the first place, we see this, that the demons were compelled to respond to Jesus in their worship of him.

Their worship of him. Verse 28, when he, this demoniac, but really the he is, I think, speaking of the head demon of this host of demons.

[14 : 07] When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and then what? He fell down before him. You see, the demons could not help but bow down before Jesus.

And because this man was possessed by these demons, then this man's body responded accordingly. And so here he is. He's falling. The demons are falling down before the feet of Jesus. Now, I said worship, that they were worshiping. But let me have you understand something. Strictly speaking, these demons were not worshiping, quote, worshiping Jesus in the strict sense of that word.

They were not worshiping him. Not true worship. Not in the way that we worship him and can worship him and do worship him. You see, the demons knew who Jesus, who he was, who he is. They know him. They know Jesus. And guess what? They hate him. Absolutely hate him. And so demons do not worship Jesus. They can't worship him. They can't.

[15 : 15] They have no capacity for that. And if they could, they wouldn't worship Jesus. But they are bowing before him. They're compelled to put themselves prostrate before the Lord of glory because they know who he is.

They know Jesus. And they know that he is sovereign over them. He is, in the first place, their creator. And they know that. Jesus was not created.

He's not one of the angels. He's not one of God, quote, God's creation. Jesus is the creator. And he created the angels. And part of them rebelled. And they were cast out of heaven.

And so these angels know that they are before and bowing and falling prostrate before the one who created them. He is their Lord.

That is, master. Their sovereign. Their sovereign. That's who Jesus is. And they know him in that way. They know Jesus holds their destiny in his hands.

[16:17] And believe me, the last person they wanted to see that day was Jesus. The Greek word that is used here and translated bow before him or fall before him is a word that means just that.

It means to fall forward. It means to, again, quote, to, or literally to prostrate oneself at another's feet. And these demons were compelled to do that.

This past week or really last Saturday, the team came home on Friday. And I had Saturday off. And didn't have to do anything until Sunday.

And then started my teaching again Sunday night and all throughout this past week in another city, Guangzhou. But on that Saturday, I had the day off.

And I thought about just kind of laying around the hotel and just sleeping and just doing nothing. But it was recommended that I go across the street, cross the highway from where our hotel was to a theme park.

[17:21] They have theme parks there in Shenzhen. And this one was called Splendid China. And so I got a brochure and I looked at that thing.

And it looked kind of interesting. And I'll tell you more about it next Sunday night. So I went to Splendid China. And in Splendid China, they have a number of temples and Buddhist temples and different things for you to see.

And it's really quite interesting. And there was a Buddhist temple at one particular spot. And out in front of this Buddhist temple, they had lined on each side of a walkway that went out to another kind of expansive area in the theme park.

They had lined up their statues of Buddha. And, you know, there are all kinds of different Buddhas. And these were, my translator told me later, called Angry Buddhas.

And they're standing about nine foot tall. And they're like this. And they have big, big teeth, fangs almost. And they look frightening. They are.

[18:21] They're all in a line on each side of this walkway. Well, later that evening, after one of the major shows, the last major show, I decided to go back down to that area.

Because right out in front of this Buddhist temple and these angry Buddhas was an area where they have water coming up out of the floor there.

And people go out there and they just get wet and dance around and have fun. And they have all these crazy lights going on. And really, basically, a rock concert that's going on. And I wanted to see that and get a picture of it.

And so I got out there and, indeed, you know, the music's blaring and all these people in swimsuits are out there, you know, dancing in this water and so forth out in front of this Buddhist temple.

And so I'm up at one spot and taking a picture. And I decide I'm going to go around the other side where that Buddhist temple is because I could get a good picture from that area as well. And so I'm walking along there with my cell phone because I'd already taken so many pictures on my camera that the battery went dead.

[19:25] And so I've got my cell phone and I'm kind of going like this right beside one of these angry Buddhas. And I'm getting in position to take a picture. But I didn't know that at the feet of this Buddha there's this kind of trench about a foot deep.

And I'm going like that and I step off down in one of those things. And I just went out prostrate on the floor there. And, of course, it was carpeted, this outdoor, you know, outdoor carpeting.

And I burned my elbow like crazy. But I got my picture, all right, and didn't destroy my camera. But I was telling my translator the next day about it.

And he said, well, that's angry Buddha there. And he said he was trying to make you bow before him, you know. Only I didn't bow before him.

I bowed away from him, okay? All right. But it was uncontrollable. But it wasn't Buddha that made me do that. I wasn't compelled by Buddha or any such thing as that. I was compelled by my own clumsiness and the fact that I wasn't looking where I was walking.

[20:32] But that's the idea here, that these demons, they didn't want to bow before him. They didn't want to fall prostrate before the Lord of glory, the true Lord of glory, the true God.

But they were compelled. And they fell before him. And they bowed before him. And so the demons were compelled to respond to Jesus in their worship of him.

In their worship of him. Second, the demons were compelled to respond to Jesus in their words to him. They spoke to him.

Verse 28. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before him, and with a loud voice said. So here's the demon speaking.

I think it's probably the head demon. You know, Satan's forces are very organized. They do have, you know, chiefs and, you know, those who are above others.

[21 : 34] And so in the pecking order, there's one head demon, I think, possessing this poor man. And so he's speaking for the other demons. And he's speaking through the man, through his voice.

And so he not only fell before Jesus, but spoke to Jesus. Spoke to him. And what did he say? Well, he said a number of things, I think, that are very interesting.

He said, what have I to do with you? That was the first thing he said. What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High, God?

I beg you, do not torment me. What have I to do with you? That's an interesting thing for him to say. In the New American Standard, they translate a little bit more literally.

He said, what business do we have with each other? Now, what is he asking? I mean, what's the point of that question?

[22 : 31] Well, the point of it is that he's saying to Jesus, it's not time yet for you to be here dealing with me.

That's what he's saying. And we know that from Matthew's account. Matthew recorded what the demon said this way. He said, have you come here to torment us before the time?

And so he's asking, or really saying to Jesus, you're early. This doesn't make any sense. It's not time for you to come and deal with us.

That's what the devil is asking. The demons are asking. You see, the devil and the demons, they have a correct eschatology. That is, they have a correct theology of last things.

And this was Jesus' first coming. And they knew that it would be at his second coming that Satan and the demons would be judged.

[23 : 35] But this is his first coming. And so they're wondering, why are you dealing with us now? We thought we had a little bit more time. You see, Satan and his demons know they are living, in a sense, existing on borrowed time.

They know the Scriptures just as well as you. In fact, better than you. And they've known what was written in the New Testament way back when it was first written. So they've had several thousand years to understand and deal with this.

And so they know. Demons know Matthew 25, 41. Where in the final judgment, Jesus will say to all unbelievers, he'll say, depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

They've read that passage. They know that. They know that's their future. That's their destiny. They know that that is what God has planned in the future. Satan is very familiar with Revelation 20 and verse 10.

Where the devil, where it says, The devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

[24 : 51] You think Satan doesn't know these Scriptures? You think his demons do not know these? They may not understand them. They may try to thwart them.

But they know these Scriptures. They know what is prophesied. They know what is in their future, their destiny. They know Scripture. But, of course, Satan is self-deceived into thinking that he can somehow win in the end.

And I think that's what is behind this question asked by this head demon. He's really asking Jesus, What are you doing here? I mean, we didn't expect to see you here.

You're early. You're early. We didn't expect you to be here. You're supposed to be... You're not supposed to be here confronting us. You're supposed to be down there in Jerusalem getting crucified.

So, what are you doing here? I think they probably would like to say that Lucifer, our master, is working on a way to keep you in that grave so that you will not rise from the dead.

[25 : 53] But what are you doing here, Jesus? It's not time for you to deal with us. But, really, they're terrified. Absolutely terrified in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They thought they had more time. And so, they begged Jesus to leave them alone. But notice what else they say. What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?

What a thing for them to say. But they were compelled to say it because it's the truth. The demons were not going to lie in the presence of Jesus. They can't. They're compelled to tell the truth. And so, what are we to do with you, Son of the Most High God? What a statement about the real identity of the Lord Jesus Christ and this coming from a demon.

This Greek, this word or phrase, Most High God, is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew, one of the Hebrew names for God. It is El Elyon.

[26 : 59] If you've studied the names for God, then you'll remember that one. El Elyon is the name. And it means Most High God. Literally means God, the absolute sovereign one.

And many places in the Old Testament, that name is followed by the statement, ruler of heaven and earth. Literally, possessor. Absolute possessor and ruler of heaven and earth.

Ruler of all things. And that would include the demonic realm as well. He's El Elyon. God. And Jesus is the Son of the Most High God.

And so, you see, they know who Jesus is. They know Him. And they know He is the Son of the Most High God. And Satan knows, and the demons know, who this Jesus is that they have fallen down before.

The Jews today do not know this. They do not know. The Mormons don't know. The Jehovah's Witnesses don't know.

[28 : 08] The Muslims don't know. The Buddhists in China don't know. And others of different religions in China. Most of the people in China you meet have never even heard of Jesus.

They don't know. And I tell you that many of the people that you work with every week don't know and don't care who this Jesus is. But Satan knows. The demons know, I guarantee it.

And they do care about that. James 2.19 says, the demons believe. Now, isn't that an amazing statement? They believe when almost everybody you meet out there in the secular world does not believe.

But the demons believe. And how do they respond? James says, they tremble in terror. And so the demons were compelled to respond to Jesus in their words to him.

I mean, they were even compelled to acknowledge their numbers. We understand that from the text. In verse 30, Jesus asked him, saying, what is your name?

[29 : 12] And the response was, legion. Legion. And then the explanation comes after that because many demons had entered him. Now, this is incredible.

Legion is his name. Now, I don't know if it was meant to be literal. I really suspect that it was.

I think the early readers would have understood perfectly what this meant. You see, in the Roman army, a legion was a unit of 6,000 soldiers.

There could have been as many as 6,000 demons. We do know that there were 2,000 pigs that Jesus allowed the demons to enter into.

So maybe there were 2,000. But if we were to take legion literally, it could have been, would have been 6,000 demons inhabiting, possessing this man.

[30 : 10] And they were compelled, compelled to identify their numbers. They were compelled to identify the true identity of Jesus of Nazareth.

He's the son of the Most High God. They were compelled to speak to him. All right, so the demons were compelled to respond to Jesus in their worship of him, in their words to him.

And I would add also that the demons were compelled to respond to Jesus in their wishes, their wishes from him. The chief demon said, I beg you.

I plead with you. Do not torment me. And in verse 31, and they begged him, pleaded with him, that he would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Which, by the way, is a reference to the bottomless pit, spoken of in Revelation 9. This is where many demons are today. They're held there, in chains, in a prison.

[31 : 13] It's a prison for demons awaiting the day of their judgment, which will be ultimately the lake of fire. And so they begged Jesus that he would permit them to enter into the swine, this herd of swine.

And Jesus granted their wishes. He's sovereign. He can do that. And so, you know, it begs the question, why? Why would he do that?

Why would he grant their wish? Why would Jesus do that? Why would Jesus allow these demons to enter into a herd of pigs?

It's probably because Jesus is a Jew and he hates pigs and, you know, they're unclean animals, right? I don't think so. The answer, I think, is threefold.

I think, first of all, this demonstrated Jesus' absolute authority over the demons. Demons. So much so that for them to do anything would be by his permission.

[32 : 19] Demons today, Satan and his demonic forces operate today under the permission of the Lord of glory. Sovereign God.

We may not like that, but they do. They don't, they're not allowed to operate in contradiction to God's permission. He's absolutely sovereign.

And so I think this demonstrates that, but more than that. Second, this was, I think, an unmistakable proof that the man was indeed possessed by demons. Now, this is proof of that.

And that they had come out of him and they had entered into the swine. Now, I don't know what that looked like. I doubt very seriously that the people could visually see this kind of thing happen.

I understand what Hollywood would probably do with this. I don't know if they saw it, but they perceived it. They knew this had happened. They were terrified. And I think Jesus, permitting these demons to come out and enter into the swine, demonstrated with an unmistakable proof that the man was demon-possessed and that they had actually come out of him.

[33 : 30] And that's why Jesus permitted this. I think, third, that the sudden destruction of the pigs, them running over the precipice and down into the sea and being drowned there, you know, them going mad and crazy, I think that this also offered a positive proof that Satan's desire is to destroy God's creation.

The same thing that happened to these pigs was ultimately going to happen to this man. That's his desire. That's his design. And just as soon as those demons entered into the pigs, it revealed what they do and what they desire to do.

And for the pigs were beginning to act just like the man was acting before. And so it was a demonstration of these things, not only for those who were there that day to witness all of these events, but through Scripture, a demonstration to us today that Satan's desire is to destroy.

It is to cause us to act like demons ourselves. And that leads to another thing that reveals the sovereignty of God, the Son of God.

The demons were compelled to respond to Jesus in their willingness before him. Their willingness to do his bidding.

[34 : 57] Now I say willingness, they really had no other choice. Jesus commanded them to come out of the man, and the demons did that. Jesus permitted them to enter into the swine, and they did.

And again, it's an absolute demonstration of the absolute sovereignty of God. You might remember in the previous passage when the disciples were with Jesus in the boat, and they were out in the storm, and Jesus, of course, calms the storm, and you remember that incredible miracle.

You remember what the disciples said, or they asked? They said, who is this man that even the winds and the sea obey him?

And they do obey him. He's sovereign. Jesus is sovereign over the physical realm. And then here in our story, Luke shows us that the demons must obey Jesus as well.

And they do. They do obey him. Jesus is sovereign over the spiritual world, spiritual realm, over Satan, over demons. Listen, there's no struggle between the Godhead and the demonic realm.

[36 : 11] There's no struggle in the sense that they're fighting and striving with one another, and there's maybe some uncertainty about the outcome. There's nothing like that between God and the demonic realm.

Not at all. Now, there is between us and the demonic realm. We can't go around and fight against demons. Well, we can, but our weapon is Scripture.

But there is no struggle between the Lord of glory and the demonic world. There was never any danger of one winning out, them winning out over him, or maybe compelling Jesus to do their bidding, or anything like that.

Nothing whatsoever like that. God is absolutely sovereign over the demonic world, and He will do His bidding. They will do it. They have no choice.

And so, can Jesus deliver the world from Satan? Yes. And one day He will. Completely, ultimately. Can Jesus deliver the world from Satan's demonic forces?

[37 : 17] Absolutely yes. And one day He will. He gave us a glimpse of that in this story, I believe. Can Jesus deliver you from the power of Satan?

And the influence of Satan? Absolutely yes. The authoritative person of the Son of God. He has all authority over Satan and all of his demons.

He has all authority over sin and death. He has all authority to forgive sin and to save. He has all authority to deliver you or anyone from hell and into the glories of heaven.

He is the authoritative Son of God. All right, now. Not only the destructive purpose of Satan. Not only the authoritative person of the Son.

But third. The transformative power of salvation. And that's what we've been moving toward here in this entire text.

[38 : 17] this man was crazy. Wild. Naked. Fierce. Dominated by a host of demons.

Living in the tombs. What a place to live. And I guess he was more at home with the dead than he was with the living. I guess he found his comfort among the dead very close to the underworld of the demons than he was with civilized man.

He was more at home there. And really, this man functioned just like a demon would function in this world. He had become a demon in a sense because he was so possessed by it.

And, you know, we wonder why people today are so attracted by death. You notice that in our culture? We just have this attraction toward death and images of death and demons and skulls and vampires and the living dead and zombies.

And we could go on and on with that. We're just, we're infatuated by that kind of stuff. And many are in that kind of culture today. We wonder why people wear black shirts with skulls on them.

[39 : 36] And we wonder why, you know, rock stars get up on the stage and they, you know, are shrieking and half naked and they have images of death tattooed all over their bodies.

And we wonder why that's the case. Well, where do you think all that comes from? This, this demoniac was more comfortable, drawn, to live among the dead in the tombs.

And there are people today who are comfortable in that kind of context, in that kind of realm. And they, they're infatuated by dead things and, and images of death and satanic things and, and so forth.

But this man, through the transformative power of salvation, he was radically changed right before our eyes. And it's really quite amazing because the transformation was so total, so absolute, dramatic, and, I tell you, literally the exact opposite is described for us in the passage and that's very, very deliberate in Luke's description here.

Instead of being naked, now the man is clothed. Exact opposite. Instead of wandering aimlessly, the man is now sitting at the feet of Jesus.

[40 : 57] What a contrast. Instead of being in the tombs, the realm of the dead, the man is now sitting among the living and comfortable there. And instead of shrieking and screaming and terrorizing everyone, the man is quiet.

And instead of dead, being deadly and threatening and maniacal, the man is peaceful. Instead of being, of being tormented, the man is now comforted.

Instead of insanity, there is now sanity. He's in his right mind. Instead of chaos in his life, there is tranquility in his life. What a profound picture of the transformative power of salvation or salvation's transformation.

What a picture of it and I would say what a proof of it. Last time I quoted John 10.10 to highlight Satan's desire for all of mankind and in that passage, Jesus says, the thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy.

But then, in stark contrast to that, the rest of that passage goes like this. Jesus says, I've come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly, super abundantly.

[42 : 23] This is the Jesus revealed in this story. He is the sovereign Savior, one who brings life for all those who will believe and no Satan, no demon, no any number of demons, no sin can hold you, control you, destroy you when through faith in Jesus, God's grace is applied to your life.

many of you, hopefully all of you, can give testimony to that reality. The transformative power of salvation. Now, your transformation may not have been, undoubtedly, may not have been as dramatic as this man, this demoniac, but it's nonetheless amazing that Jesus would transform us in salvation.

I heard about some men who were sitting in a barbershop one of these kind of small town typical barbershops. You know, they don't cut women's hair there, just men in those kind of barbershops.

And the men are in there sitting around talking. Actually, they're gossiping because men do that too, ladies. And they get on a lot of subjects, you know, in the barbershop.

They talk about politics and talk about sports and sometimes talk about religion. Talk about the Bible. And so that's what they were talking about at this particular time.

[43 : 53] And one of the fellas there said, you know, that story about Jesus turning water into wine, that's pretty hard to believe. There was a man there getting his hair cut who had been an alcoholic for many of the years of his life.

and his alcoholism had absolutely destroyed his life. But Jesus saved him, transformed him, delivered him from alcoholism and he said, well, you know, you may find that miracle hard to believe but if you'll come to my house, I'll show you how Jesus turned beer into furniture and food on my table for my family.

you see, the transformative power of salvation. The last truth I want us to see and I'll be finished is the active passion of the saved.

The story ends with this. It's really quite amazing. I'm not going to spend a lot of time with this but I want you to notice an amazing contrast between verse 28 and verse 38.

And it is deliberate, I believe, inspired by the Holy Spirit but Luke is writing and wanting to show a contrast. Contrast between the life of this demoniac before he was saved and his life after he met Jesus and there is this deliberate contrast between verse 28 and 38.

[45 : 24] Do you see it? Verse 28, under the control of demons, the man said what? He said, what have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?

I beg you, do not torment me. In effect, say, leave me alone. And then in verse 38, under the lordship of Jesus Christ, the man is literally begging to stay with Jesus.

See that contrast? You see, the ultimate proof, I think, of the transformative power of salvation lies right here in what this man wanted in his life.

What he desired above all things, the very passion of his life. It was never a passion before. His passion before was to be among the dead.

But his passion now was to be with Jesus. What a transformation took place in this man's life. But yet, I'd ask you, what could be more natural for a truly born again Christian?

[46 : 40] What could be more natural than this? The heart passion, active passion of a truly born again Christian is to be with Jesus.

Be with him and to be with his people. It is to follow Jesus, to obey Jesus, to go where he goes, to be what he wants you to be, to live with him.

That's what this man wanted. He begged with him, I want to be with you, Jesus. The man continued to be with Jesus even though Jesus said, no, I want you to go home and I want you to tell everybody at home what has happened to you.

And he did. He went to his city and told everyone what had happened to him. He was a witness of his faith. He was still with Jesus. But it highlights what our desire ought to be.

And if you're a truly born again believer, there's nothing more natural for you than to want to be with Jesus and to want to be and read his word and want to follow him and obey him and allow his grace to continue its work of transformation, transforming you into the very life and image of the Lord Jesus Christ, to live with him, to live for him.

[48 : 11] And so I end with a question for you. Is that your passion? you say that you are a believer in Jesus, that you have been born again.

Is it the active, very active, very ongoing passion of your heart and life to be with Jesus, to follow Jesus?

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.