

# The Transformative Power of Salvation (Part 1)

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[0:00] This morning, let's take our Bibles to guess where? Luke chapter 8. You know, Luke chapter 8 is a pretty long chapter. I guess you've noticed that, haven't you?

It's taken me a little while to work our way through it, and we're not going to be through yet. There's still more to come in that chapter. But Luke chapter 8, starting with verse 26, our text is rather lengthy, 26 through 39, and I want to read the entire passage, though I'm going to divide this into two parts.

But the two parts stand alone, so we'll see a really very complete thought, complete message in the sermon for this morning, even though we're not going to get through the entire text.

Sorry, enough of that. Luke 8, starting with verse 26, then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.

And when he stepped out on land, there met him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time.

[1:28] 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, that's Jesus, had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man, for he had often seized him, and 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 mountain, so they begged him that he would permit them to enter there, or 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, the herdsmen, saw what had happened. They fled and told it in the city and in the country. Then they, that's the people in the city, 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.

[3:07] 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. Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged him that he might be with him.

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.

All right. Interesting story. I think you would agree with me when I say that this is, yet again, another one of those sensational stories that we have in the Gospels.

It's sensational. It's extraordinary. The passage that we studied last week, where Jesus stood up in the boat and he commanded the sea and the wind to be silent.

[4:20] And they were. That also would be one of those sensational stories. And this story here is that. It's intriguing. It's exciting.

It is sensational. And with that in mind, if you would allow your imaginations to take Luke's, what I would say, rather mundane, even matter-of-fact description here.

If you would just take his kind of bare descriptions and cast a little movie in your minds. All right. We're back on movies again.

I'm trying to be Hollywood again this week. But just kind of allow it to cast a little movie, a short movie in your minds. And if you'll do that, then I think that you will find that this story is thrilling, certainly, but also horrifying.

It's a horrifying story, and yet thrilling story. So try to visualize the story a little bit in your minds. Can you see, first of all, Jesus and his disciples in that small fishing boat, and they have just landed on the shore.

[5:33] We know from last week what had occurred before this, the great storm and so forth, and the great miracle and so forth. And now they've made it across the Sea of Galilee, just as Jesus had commanded them.

And they have landed on the shore there, the shore of the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Gerasenes, outside probably the city of Gadarene and so forth.

And so there they are on the shore. They've landed on the shore. And they're getting off the boat. And just as they step out of the boat onto the land, they encounter this wild man, very frightening wild man.

And he's coming right at them. He's headed straight for them, and he's naked, though I really think that you could barely tell that. I think he probably looked just like some kind of animal man.

And he's headed right for them. He's naked. He's utterly filthy from head to toe. And you can just kind of imagine his wild hair. You know, certainly he didn't keep his hair.

[6:48] It was wild and matted and dirty and probably had all kinds of other things woven in his hair. And his beard, I'm sure he had a long beard.

Nothing against beards. But I had to throw that in there. But it, too, was wild and scraggly and, you know, just hideous looking.

And his face and his body, you can kind of imagine this guy, what he must have looked like, probably what he must have smelled like, you know. And he's bleeding. And we don't get this from Luke's account, but Mark tells us that this man was so crazed from his demon possession that he was cutting himself and gashing himself with sharp stones.

And so he's probably bleeding all over his body. And not only that, but he had numerous times been shackled and chained by the people of the city to try to subdue this wild man.

And so he probably had, no doubt, had scars on his body and around his neck and maybe around his legs where he had been shackled numerous times. And he, the Bible says, had broken free from these shackles and these chains.

[8:04] And so we can imagine the remnants of that on his body. And here's this guy. He's maniacal. He's fierce. He has the strength of many men, apparently, because no man could subdue him, the Bible says.

And he's possessed, the Bible tells us, possessed of many demons, perhaps thousands of demons. And he's running right for Jesus and the disciples.

And we want to shout out, look out, Jesus. Get out of there. Get back in the boat. Get back out in the sea. This man's coming for you. Imagine this scene.

I mean, just right off the bat, they just no sooner got out of the boat. And here's this guy coming after them. And imagine what Hollywood could do with this. I mean, we could only really have to imagine.

I mean, a little CGI and, you know, make the man's appearance look especially horrifying. And some special sound effects, sound effects rather, to make his voice sound very demonic, you know, when he finally does speak.

[9:10] Because I believe it is the demon, or at least the head demon of this legion of demons that is speaking. And imagine what Hollywood could do with that with a few sound effects, though honestly no one has ever heard demons speak.

At least no one alive today. And so, you know, what a scene this would be. We can imagine. And maybe you can imagine that even more now.

And maybe you can add a little bit more to it. Just kind of thinking what Hollywood could do with it if they made it into a movie. And, you know, the avid moviegoers of our day would say, yeah, I'd pay money to go see that movie.

In 3D. All right, now, I've led you down a path because I want you to understand that what I've just highlighted out of this story is perhaps the most insignificant part of it.

I hate to disappoint you, but though we are intrigued by the story, wowed by the story, we're kind of drawn in visually to what it must have been like.

[10:20] This part of it really is insignificant. It may be the most intriguing part of it, thrilling part of it. Demons possessing a man and demons controlling a man and giving him almost superhuman strength and demons speaking through a man and several thousand demons coming out of this man, what that might have looked like, and entering into this herd of swine and then driving them crazy and over a cliff or precipice or whatever it was into the sea to drown.

That all is sensational and that's a thrilling thing to imagine. But we need to understand that we would have never known about this man.

We would have never known about this demon-possessed man and how many demons he had and all of this. We would have never known about this if Jesus had not been there. Do you understand that?

If Jesus had not been there, this would have never happened. Now, there would have been a wild man, of course. I mean, it's not that he did not exist. And certainly there are some things about him and about what happened to him and eventually happened to him that are very significant to the story.

It's not that we would perhaps that this country would not have had the man and dealt with this man, but we would have never heard about it. We would certainly have never heard about the demon part of this if Jesus had not been there.

[11:55] Because, you see, it is in his presence that these demons are drawn out.

Drawn out from this man to reveal themselves. They're, as it were, drawn out from their hiding place. All people saw, really, before Jesus appeared there, all people saw was a wild man, a mad man, a crazy man.

Insane. But these demons revealed themselves and spoke what they said, what they spoke, because Jesus was there.

He drew, rather, them out. Demons don't work out in the open. Contrary to what Hollywood portrays about them and literature over the years has said about them or speculated about them, they don't work out in the open.

Demons do not present themselves for who they really are. Okay? They don't do that. In 1 Timothy 4, verse 1, Paul called them deceitful spirits.

[13:05] They're deceitful. They're deceptive. They don't reveal themselves and who they really are and what they really look like, if you could see them. They don't speak.

They're deceitful. They're behind the scenes. Satan and his demons prefer to operate, the Bible says in 2 Corinthians 11, 14, prefer to operate as angels of light.

Not as frightening, horrifying, demon beings who speak and such.

They don't prefer to operate that way. It was in the presence of Jesus that forced the demons to reveal themselves and that happened quite a lot with Jesus when he walked this earth.

We've already studied one particular incident in Luke chapter 4, way back there when we were in that chapter. In that particular incident, Jesus was in the synagogue.

[14:05] Do you remember the story? And there was a man there in the synagogue. He was there, presumably, as one of the worshipers. And he had come to the synagogue. And I guess things would have just gone on unnoticed.

Except Jesus came that day and the demon that possessed this man revealed himself. And he would have never done that if Jesus had not been there.

He was compelled to reveal himself and compelled to speak because he was in the presence of the Lord of glory, the very Son of God, the Holy One of God.

And so he spoke. In fact, the Bible says he shouted with a loud voice and said something similar to what this demoniac here in the Gadarenes also spoke, or the demon spoke.

There in Luke 4, he said immediately, Let us alone! Let us alone! You see, Jesus was not being attacked by these demons. Jesus was attacking them. His very presence there.

[15:05] And this demon called out, Let us alone! What do we have to do with you, Jesus? Jesus. Meaning, I thought, It's not time yet, is it, for you to deal with us?

I thought that was going to come later. And he called him Jesus of Nazareth. And he said, Did you come to destroy us? And then he said, I know who you are. Just like the demoniac here in our story said, or the demon said, I know who you are. The Holy One of God.

Now, again, and I mentioned this last time when we studied Luke chapter 4, what would have compelled this demon to reveal himself in this way?

What would have forced him, or what did force him, to give testimony to Jesus' true identity? Well, the answer is simple.

[16:06] The presence of the Lord of glory. The presence of the very Son of God. The one Paul said in Ephesians 1.21, is far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion.

which is a reference to Satan and his dominion. His demons. In the Bible, it was the presence of Jesus that forced the demons to reveal themselves.

And that is why, by the way, that you find references to demon possession and demon exorcism only in the Gospels. And also, a few references in Acts, because the apostles were still alive.

But after Jesus ascended back to heaven, and after the apostles had all passed away, demonic activity, overt demonic activity, reverted back to the way it was before Jesus came, and before the apostles walked this earth.

And it did exist. It was active, but it was covert, as it is today. Very active, but covert, secret, deceptive.

[17:27] Now, one day, overt demonic activity will return to this planet, by the way. I think it will be during the Great Tribulation, and the demonic activity that's going to take place during the Tribulation will be as great, I think even greater than it was, during the days when Jesus was walking this earth, and his apostles, throughout the book of Acts.

Now, with that said, the main point of this text is not the demon-possessed man. Now, we want to hear about him, we want to understand what's going on here, we're attracted to that, but that's not the main point.

The main point of the text, guess, is Jesus, as it always is in the Bible.

It's Jesus, and specifically, his sovereignty, absolute sovereignty, even over the principalities and powers of darkness, Satan, and all of his demons.

the main point of the text is Jesus, his sovereignty, and I would add to that, his salvation. His salvation, that's the main.

[18:52] This sensational story is about the sovereign Savior who is able to transform the life of a poor sinner. Any sinner. from the most extreme of sinners that we could imagine in our own minds, like this demoniac who is possessed by maybe as many as 6,000 demons, or just the common, everyday, run-of-the-mill sinner.

He's able to save. That's what this story is all about. And here's the good news. This demoniac of the Gadarenes was an extreme case.

Let's just admit that. This is something extreme. This is something unique. It's an exceptional case. You don't find anything like this anywhere else in Scripture even. So it's an exceptional case.

So get this. This demoniac who is an exceptional case, possessed, again, perhaps of as many as 6,000 demons.

And yet Jesus had no trouble whatsoever transforming His life. No trouble at all. Delivering Him from the possession and control of these demons and no trouble saving Him.

[20:18] That's why I say this is good news because if Jesus can transform this demoniac and He can transform anyone's life.

Anyone. Anyone. That's the good news that we need to get from this passage. Now we're going to divide it into two parts because even though the demoniac is not really the focus, we do need to focus on Satan for a moment and learn something about Him.

So that's what we're going to be seeing here this morning. And then in a few weeks we'll come back to this text and look at some other very important elements in this passage in this story.

And we're going to look at this story into four points or headings. Let me give them to you here on the front end. And this, what we'll see this morning, is the destructive purpose of Satan.

That's something we need to know if we don't already know it. The destructive purpose of Satan.

The second thing we're going to look at and we'll look at this next time, the authoritative person of the Son of God.

[21:40] And then third, the transformative power of salvation. and then finally, the active passion of the saved. This is where I believe this text challenges all of us.

So these are the four points of this treatment of this particular passage and we're going to see the first one here this morning and here it is again. First of all, and this morning, the destructive power or purpose rather of Satan.

Is it important to know that? To know this about Satan? That his purpose is to destroy?

Do you know that about Satan? The destructive purpose of Satan? This is something we need to know. This is something that we need to know about his purpose in this world and I can boil it all down to this.

Now get this. Satan's purpose in this world is to destroy everything that God has made for his glory.

[22:57] That's his purpose. To destroy, let me say that again. Satan's purpose in this world and we could say for this world and everything in it is to destroy everything God has made for his glory and let me add this, especially you.

His, God's crowning creative achievement to destroy you. Forget about what Hollywood portrays about Satan.

Forget about that. Satan. I mean, they portray Satan in many different kinds of ways. Sometimes he's even the hero. God help us. Forget about how literature over the centuries has various, in various ways portrayed the person of Satan and his purposes and so forth.

Forget all about that. Satan wants one thing to happen to every member of the human race. He wants us dead and damned because you see, Satan knows that's his end and he wants to take you with him.

Do you know this about Satan? I can't say it stronger, any stronger. He wants you dead and he wants you damned. First Peter, 5a, be sober, be vigilant because your adversary, the devil, that's just another designation for Satan.

[24:35] It's a description of him. It's the word diabolos. It means he's diabolical to the very core. He's your adversary. And what does Peter say about him? He walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Resist him. Steadfast in the faith. Speaking primarily, I think, of the work of Satan. Jesus said in John chapter 10 verse 10, the thief does not come except to what?

Steal. Now, we're talking about Satan here. Steal what? Steal the gospel. Remember way back when we were looking at, in fact, it was just in this chapter, looking at the parable of the soils and that first soil, that hard, packed down, hard as rock soil of the heart and where the seed of the gospel has been applied there.

Satan comes along and does what? He snatches it up like a crow or bird would snatch up seed on a hard-baked soil. That's what Satan desires to do, to steal the gospel before it can take any root in your life.

And so this is what Jesus is saying about him. He comes for no other reason except to do these things, to steal and to kill and to destroy.

[26:06] Jesus said of Satan in John 8, 44, he was a murderer from the beginning. Don't be deceived about Satan.

He wants you dead. dead. And he wants you damned. Now having said that, you need to understand that that does not mean that Satan always wants that right away.

That somehow he's going to get in a hurry about this. He doesn't want that necessarily right away. He's an angel of light. He is a deceiver. He will string you along.

Have you experienced that? He will string you along. He promises your heart's desire. And then what does he deliver in the end? Despair. Destruction.

Every enticing path that Satan would lead you on and you would be willing to follow will lead in despair and to despair and destruction.

[27:05] I guarantee it. Guarantee it. Satan always promises the best first and then the worst last. that's Satan's purpose.

That's his method. Judas was deceived by Satan and he ended up hanging from a hangman's tree. Ananias and Sapphira were duped by Satan and we know how they ended up.

And we could tell many other stories even from scripture and there could be stories told from this body right here of people you know and family members and friends who have gone down the path.

They were enticed by the delight and the desires of their heart that sin promises Satan promises but in the end it leads to destruction. There is a way that seems right to man but in the end it leads to destruction and that's Satan's purpose.

Know him. Know this about him. Now we can see this I think very clearly from this story. In fact we can see it exemplified, described, put on display for us three ways here in this story.

[28 : 23] And I'm going to identify it this way. See Jesus unmasks this for us in the story. Three things. We see the purpose of Satan through the person in this story.

that's number one, the demoniac. But we also see it through the pigs in the sea. And thirdly we're going to see it through the people in the city.

So we have the person in the story, we have the pigs in the sea, we have the people in the city and all three of these elements of the story or certain characters in the story reveal to us what Satan's purpose is and that it is that he wants you dead and damned.

Let's look at the first one, the person in the story. That's the demoniac. We call him this man possessed of demons. And just consider this man's tragic and destructive life.

And we just started there in verse 29. Look at it. Luke says that these demons, here in verse 29, had often seized him. that means they took control of him.

[29 : 42] Almost like a seizure, he's out of control and being driven and moved by these demons. What a tragic set of circumstances for this man.

And he was kept under guard. I think the idea is that initially when this started happening and he was violent and he was dangerous, not only to himself, but also to other people, that they initially kept him under guard, in prison in some sense.

And the Bible says that they even put chains, shackles on him. But then he just broke those bonds. Can you imagine?

This man's condition. Mark, in his account of this story, in Mark chapter 5, mentions that no one was strong enough to subdue him. Luke further tells us that he was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

So, initially he's in the city and they tried to subdue him, bind him, put him in shackles, but he'd just break the shackles and eventually he was driven out into the wilderness.

[30 : 54] He had to live out where no one else lived. In fact, both Luke and Matthew tell us that he lived in the tombs. He lived around all the dead people.

Fitting place for him to live. And Matthew, by the way, in Matthew chapter 8, also tells us that he was, describes him this way, he was exceedingly fierce.

What does that mean? He was violent beyond description. Exceedingly fierce. So that no one could pass that way.

I mean, everybody stayed clear. And pity the one who did not know about this man. The unsuspecting man or woman who would pass by the tombs and be attacked by this maniac, this demon-possessed man.

The condition of this man, the tragic condition of this man, and he's headed to destruction. Now, the Bible doesn't tell us the full story about this fellow, does it?

[32 : 01] We don't know how he got to be like. He didn't start out this way. I mean, there's some implications here that we ought to consider. He didn't start out fierce and a maniac and, you know, running around naked and fierce.

And he didn't start out that way. He didn't start out demon-possessed. The Bible doesn't tell us how it started. We don't know how or when Satan finally got full control of this man and all of these demons came to inhabit his life.

No doubt, I think it's safe to say, that it started out very subtly. Some subtle way, some sin. Some habitual path of sin.

It always starts that way. Dear people, sin is Satan's chief tool. Tempt you to sin.

And nothing, by the way, is more destructive than sin. Someone said that sin fascinates and then it assassinates. I remember it that way.

[33 : 17] It fascinates and then it assassinates. It thrills and then it kills. The great R.G. Lee once said, you can eat the devil's corn if you want to, but he'll choke you on the cob.

It may be a little humorous, but the point is well made. R.G. Lee's predecessor, or the one who followed R.G. Lee at Bellevue, Adrian Rogers, used to say, Mark my words, give Satan an inch and he'll be your ruler.

And that's what had happened to this man. This man was totally, completely under the rule of Satan and his demonic forces.

And look what it got him. Homeless, living in the tombs, out of control, running around naked and dirty and filthy and attacking people, he's headed to destruction.

This is Satan's destructive purpose for this man. We see it very clear in the person in the story.

Also, we see it through the pigs in the sea.

[34 : 36] Verse 32, look at it. Now, a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain.

Again, Mark tells us in his account that there were 2,000 pigs.

That's a pretty big herd of pigs. 2,000 of them. And they're out there grazing, feeding. And so they, the demons, begged him, that's Jesus, that he would permit them to enter them.

And he permitted them. Now, we'll not deal with this today. We'll deal with this next time, just why Jesus would do this. And there's a reason.

And so he permitted them. And then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine. We don't know what that might have looked like, but this is what happened.

So, who's in charge here? Well, Jesus is, of course. The demons are pleading with him to not cast them immediately into the abyss.

[35 : 40] And we'll deal with this next time as well, what that means. And pleaded with him, let us go into these swine. And so Jesus allowed it. And that's what they did. What happened?

Well, the same thing that would have eventually happened to this man in the story. And the herd, the Bible says, the herd ran violently.

Now, we can picture this, Kim. They didn't just suddenly head for the precipice. They're running violently. That is, they went stark, raving mad suddenly.

And they're jumping and rolling and cavorting their body. And they're just absolutely mad. And they're all of these pigs at one time, 2,000 of them.

And they're moving their way. They're just wild and maniacal, just like this demoniac was just a moment ago when Jesus and his disciples arrived there on the shore of the Galilean Sea.

[36 : 43] And they're running mad. And they run down a steep place. It's literally probably a precipice, a cliff. And it goes down into the sea. And they fall down into the sea.

And they all drown. Interesting, huh? What? A picture of the madness of lostness.

I mean, you see people doing all sorts of crazy, stupid things. Believing all kinds of absolutely outlandish, weird things. It's madness. And conducting, you know, living certain kinds of lifestyle and involving themselves in gross immorality that goes beyond our imagination.

And it's a good thing we can't imagine it. I hope you can't. The madness of lostness. In that sense, I think all lost people are demon possessed. They're certainly demon controlled.

I mean, what they're doing is madness. And add to that the absolute rejection and rebellion against the truth of God's word and gets God himself and against his son.

[37 : 57] It's madness. Makes no sense. The madness of lostness. And this is Satan's purpose. madness to bring madness to the mind so that at some point that person is not even able to receive the gospel.

Certainly, no one is apart from the divine, gracious intervention of God. Satan's desire is to bring madness to the life of of that man or that woman and move them to destruction.

The pig in the sea, pigs in the sea, show us that, reveal that to us. Kind of takes the mask away, the veil away. It exposes what Satan's true purpose and his desire is for you.

You ought to see that. If you're sitting here this morning and you're not a born-again believer and yet you're wondering about these things and maybe you're involved in some gross habitual sin and you're headed down a path and you don't understand where it's leading.

I'm telling you where it's leading. Satan wants you dead and damned and he's leading you down a path of destruction. Just like he was leading this man here in the wilderness.

[39 : 27] And just like is revealed through the pigs and how they ran headlong to destruction. And then there's one more.

We see it through the people in the city. This is perhaps a little harder to see. And I would suspect that maybe most of us have missed this.

but we see even in them the destructive purpose of Satan. Notice the curious way the people responded to what Jesus did.

I say it's curious. It makes no sense to me. Verse 34, when those who fed them, the herdsmen, those who were keeping the pigs, when they saw what had happened, they were there, they saw it. What did they do? They fled and told it in the city and in the country. Now there's nothing strange about that. I mean I think we would all do that. We've got to go tell somebody what happened. And at the very least they needed to go tell their employer, the owner of the pigs, what happened to the pigs.

[40:44] And so they went into the city and started telling everybody what happened. Nothing strange about that. It's very natural. But read on, verse 35, then they, that's the people of the city, went out to see what had happened.

And they came to Jesus. Nothing strange about that, is there? I mean they wanted to go out there and see for themselves what had happened. What did they see? Well the Bible says they found the man from whom the demons had departed.

They knew who this man was. I mean he had terrorized their city. So this is not, they're not going out to find out what everything was about. They knew about this man.

So they saw him, they found him sitting at Jesus' feet. Clothed, that was something different, and in his right mind.

That's what they saw. And so what did they do? They rejoiced and glorified God and believed in Jesus, didn't they? wouldn't you? I hope you would.

[41:58] But that's not what they did. That's why I say it's curious. They've been terrorized by this man. They knew what he was like. I think the implication is that he had been in this condition and worsening condition for a number of years perhaps.

they didn't want any part of that guy. I mean, he's not going to be in our city living out in the tombs.

They knew this guy and now here he is, not only clothed, but he is perfectly fine.

He's in his right mind, in a normal mind. But the Bible says they were afraid.

That's how they responded. And we're not just talking about, you know, being afraid in the sense of something extraordinary has happened to here and it's very unsettling.

it would be a fearful thing. I mean, there would be a reaction that way. But we know from the rest of the passage what was the basis of this fear.

[43:15] They were afraid. And further, Luke tells us, they also who had seen it told them, the people of the city, by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed.

All right, so apparently these herdsmen went into the city and they probably told their employers and maybe family and others and then the word got around and so a great number of the people in the city are going out to find out what's going on.

Not everybody had heard the story about how it all transpired and so now here we have these herdsmen reciting exactly what they saw. You just won't believe it. This is what we saw. Now people here was a profound example of the transforming power of salvation.

Think about it. You could not find a more profound example of God's saving grace and the transformative power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You could not find one. I've never seen one as profound as this. Now I've seen some people who were saved who were absolute rebels and drunkards and immoral people and they were dramatically, radically saved.

[44:47] Now that doesn't happen every time or at least that's not what it looks like every time but sometimes it happens. You know like the old adage, you know when God saved him, he saved him. good. I've seen things like that happen.

I've known some people like that. Nothing on the level of this. What a profound example. How could you miss it?

How could you reject it? What they heard and what they saw for themselves was undeniable proof of the saving power of Christ?

Did they believe? Did they trust Christ for themselves? Did they? No. They did not.

And here's the point. We talk about the demoniac and we clearly say this man is controlled by Satan. And we forget all about the people who are living in the city who are just as much under his sway and control and unbelief.

[45:56] Satan's hold on the people of this city was so strong that instead of believing in Jesus, what did they do? They asked him to leave.

That's what they did. Luke says they asked him to depart from them. Leave us alone, Jesus. Leave us alone.

We don't want anything to do with you. That's what they said. That's how they responded. What a Satan-inspired response to the greatest miracle they could ever hope to see.

And then comes perhaps the saddest part of this story. Do you know what it is? Last part of verse 37.

Jerusalem. And he got into the boat and returned. Can you think of anything sadder than that?

[47 : 22] That the people of the city asked Jesus to leave and he left. And we have no record in scripture that anyone there believed other than this demon-possessed man.

Someone has said that if God's love doesn't bring repentance, God's judgment brings rebellion. And the end, destruction.

And dear people, that is Satan's desire for you. You don't know it. He doesn't advertise that plan. But if you're here this morning and you've never trusted in Christ as your Lord and Savior, Satan's leading you on a path that ends in destruction.

that's what he wants for you. Don't be like these people in the city who saw perhaps the most profound proof of the truth of the gospel, more profound than anyone perhaps has ever seen, and yet rejected it.

[48 : 52] And rejected Jesus. Said, leave, we don't want you. And Jesus left. Never went back. Now he did leave a missionary there.

So there is a window there of God's grace still active in that region, that city. Missionary was the demoniac himself. But Jesus never went back there, as far as we know.

they asked him to leave, and he left. I can't think of a sadder thing that could happen in anyone's life.

And yet I'm confident when I say and believe that that is exactly what is happening, perhaps some right here in this room.

You're rejecting him. you've heard the gospel many times. And God has been gracious also to show you living proofs of the power of the gospel, maybe in a family member, a friend.

[50 : 28] And yet you're choosing to follow Satan. you don't know it in those terms possibly, but that's what you're doing.

You're listening to him. And it is a way that leads to destruction. There's no maybe about that.

And yet Jesus is here this morning. Do you know that? He's here this morning. And he says, believe in me and be saved.

you