

Jesus Stills the Storm Within

by Anton Bosch

This sermon focuses on three powerful accounts in the Bible where Jesus demonstrates His authority over nature, demons, and death, emphasizing that He is the Son of God with supreme authority. The story of the demon-possessed man showcases Jesus' ability to bring peace and deliverance, highlighting the importance of recognizing and surrendering to His power in our lives. The response of the people in the region reflects the fear and misunderstanding of God's authority, urging listeners to seek healing and freedom in Jesus.

Scripture: Luke 8:26, Mark 5:1, Matthew 8:23, Matthew 28:18, Mark 16:17, Ephesians 6:12, 1 Peter 5:8, Revelation 20:1, John 8:36

Topics: "Authority of Christ", "Deliverance and Healing"

Description

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Transcript

This is part of a what they call a triad, a three-part account or three accounts that are told back-to-back and and obviously remember that these things did not necessarily always happen in that sequence. The gospel writers put things in different sequences simply because they are trying to make a particular point, and the point that Luke is making here is that Jesus has all power, and remember as we go through this account now that this is before the cross. This is before the cross, so after the cross he has even greater power because he was God in the flesh, and so he was limited by his humanity during his earthly ministry.

When he rose he said all power, all authority has been given unto me, and so Jesus is performing these miracles to make certain points, and Luke puts these three together. The first one that we saw last week, the stilling of the storm, and now the casting out of the demons, and then the next one is the raising of the dead, and in these Luke is making the same point that he has been making from the very beginning, and that is that Jesus is the Son of God, that Jesus has all power and all authority, and so we've seen that he has authority over nature in the stilling of the storm. We tonight see that he has authority over demons, and then the next one he has authority over death.

We've also seen that he has authority over sickness, and that there is nothing that is not under his authority. So that's why these three put together, and so let's go through, and I'm just going to comment on some of the verses, and hopefully near the end we'll make the main point, because unlike most of expository preaching, we can't necessarily make points on each one of these, but we'll comment as we go, and also I don't want us to be here tomorrow morning. So they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes.

This seems to be after the stilling of the storm, which is opposite Galilee. So they're crossing the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is based in Galilee.

He's now going to the other side, and when they stepped out on land, they met him, a certain man from the city, who had demons for a long time. So this was not something that had just happened. This was something that was established.

In modern miracles, and I do believe in miracles, I do believe that demons can and should be cast out, and that's a huge subject, and we're not going to get into that this evening. I believe in healing, but at the same time, unfortunately, there is a lot of fake stuff going on, and when these fake healers so-called perform miracles, there are one of two things that happen. The first is that the person wasn't sick to begin with, and now suddenly, oh well, now they can, now they get out of the wheelchair, and they can walk.

Or the second is that, in fact, they're not really healed. Now the point that I believe Luke is making, why does he say that he had been possessed for a long time? This is not a guy who just came there and just put on a show, and you know, went wild and acted crazy. This was someone who had been established to know, everyone knew this man had been demon possessed for a long time.

And so he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house, but in the tombs. He was just unable to wear clothes, and obviously the degree to which the demons had degraded his sense of morality was such that he saw no need for clothes. At the same time, it must have been a terrible way to live, because Palestine and Israel gets cold, just like, the climate is very much like here.

It gets very hot, and it gets very cold, and yet he didn't wear clothes, he doesn't live in a house, but he lives in the tombs. Now remember, the tombs there are caves in which they would lay the dead, and obviously there would be somewhere he would be able to shelter and sleep together with these corpses in the tombs. And then it says, when he saw Jesus, he cried out, and he 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.

These are the demons now speaking through the man. The man himself doesn't know who Jesus is, but the demons know who Jesus is. This is the sad reality today, is that many people don't know who Jesus is, and when they see him, and even in those days when the Pharisees saw him, they didn't recognize who he was, but the demons knew full well who Jesus was.

They recognized him as not just a prophet, as not just another preacher, but as Jesus, the Son of the Most High God. The term, son of the Most High God, means making him equal to God, that he is God in the flesh. They also recognized that he has supreme authority.

He has authority over them. Now remember, this is before the cross. God always has been sovereign, and I use that word sovereign in the sense that he is the highest authority, and therefore he does what he chooses to do.

I think one of the lessons from this evening is that the devil is real. We saw this on Thursday night, and it's interesting how that as we've been studying through Peter, we come to exactly the same idea as we have now come to in Luke. Remember that in Peter he says the devil goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and then the verse that we're going to deal with next week is, resist him steadfast in the faith.

So the devil is real, and we said on Thursday, for those who were not here, the devil is not omnipresent. He cannot be everywhere at the same time, but at the same time, his demons, his angels, his messengers, his agents are everywhere, and they are probably present here this evening even. And so they are real.

Demons are real. There are two problems today in our view on these things. Many Christians just deny the existence of the devil, deny that demons exist.

No, that's something that happened in the New Testament. Many liberal theologians say, well, you know, this guy had epilepsy, or he had some kind of mental illness, and Jesus healed that, but you know, demons aren't real. No, demons are real.

They were real then, and they are real now. I read a commentator this week who said, well, you know, the demons really are not active in now. They were active in the beginning ministry of the Lord Jesus, and they will be active again in the end times in the book of Revelation.

No, that's absolute nonsense. The demons have never gone to sleep. They've never taken furlough.

They have been active, and they still are active still today. So that's the one error. The other error is that we become obsessed with the devil and with demons, and some Christians are looking for a demon behind every bush, if you will.

Every problem that they have, oh no, it's a demon. I used to have work with a printer who did our printing for us in South Africa, and every now and then he would have problems with his presses. Printing presses are notoriously finicky things.

If the humidity is too high, they don't want to work, and all sorts of problems. And he would forever be casting the demons out of his printing presses. No, that's absolutely nonsense.

Demons don't inhabit inanimate objects. They don't get into the computer, although sometimes I think they do, but they don't. They don't get into a machine.

They don't get into your motor car. They get into people, and as we see here, even into animals. They inhabit living things, not non-living things.

But we don't fear the devil, because the point here is that even before the cross, even because of the fall and the fallen state of the world, and this idea, and I'm not going to explore that, but there's a false idea that Jesus had lost, or that God had lost control of the world in the Old Testament because of Adam's sin. No, He had never lost control of the world, and He had never lost control of the demons. They have always been subject to Him, and they are still subject to Him today.

The devil is not a free agent. He cannot do whatever he chooses to do. And we see right back in the Old Testament, in the account of Job, how that he can only go as far as God permits him in tormenting Job.

And so here these demons recognize who Jesus is, and they recognize that He has authority, and that He has supreme authority over them. So they say, don't torment us, or torment me. For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man.

For it 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. This is a common thing for those that are demon possessed. They seem to have supernatural strength, and sometimes many people have to try and hold them down.

This is the strength of the demon. How it does that, I don't know, but we know that that is true. We know, remember in the book of Acts, there were seven sons of Sceva.

These guys thought, well, you know, we've seen Paul cast demons out of people, so we'll cast demons out of this guy. And so they told the demon in the man to come out in the name of Paul that Jesus preaches. And the man turned on them, and all seven of them were beaten up.

So one man with a demon can take on seven men. So this guy had really supernatural power, because it looks like, and you know, when it uses the word chains and shackles, these aren't leather thongs that they would use those days. They didn't have ropes like we have today, but they would use leather straps, and this wasn't leather straps, although even those are hard to break, but these are literal chains and shackles, metal, that he was somehow able to break, and he was able to break, to break free.

And so Jesus asked him, and Jesus is now communicating with this demon directly, or the demons, what is your name? And he said, Legion, because many demons had entered him. Now I made a passing reference to this on Thursday. The word Legion obviously comes from the Roman army, and you remember that the Roman army was made up of different units, the same way as military units today are divided up into smaller and bigger and bigger units, until you eventually get an army, and the United States, in fact, has several armies.

The size of an army is pre-determined in the textbooks. So a Legion is 6,000 men, 6,000 men, plus a hundred and twenty cavalry, 120 horsemen on horses, and mechanics that built bridges, and did all sorts of other things, and so this is, this is an enormous force. Now obviously I don't necessarily believe that there were 6,000 demons in him.

The word Legion is also just used for this concept of many, you know, legions of angels, many, many angels. It is possible that he had 2,000 demons. Now where do we get that from? Well, I sucked it out of my thumb, of course.

No, according to Mark's gospel, there were 2,000 swine, 2,000 pigs, and the demons went into the pigs, and it seems that all of the pigs ran into the sea and were drowned. So it's possible, we're speculating, we can't say for sure, but there could have been as many as 2,000 demons, equating to the number of the swine. The fact is that there is not just one demon, there's not just two or three, there are many demons in this man.

And they begged him that he would not command them to go out into the abyss. So they recognized that he can do with them what he chooses. So what is the abyss? Well, the abyss is the bottomless pit.

It appears a few times in both the Old and the New Testament, and finally in the book of Revelation. The abyss is the ultimate destiny of the devil and his angels. But in the meantime, it appears from one or two

scriptures, and these are areas that are a little bit gray, from a few scriptures, that there are certain demons that are already in the abyss.

Who these were and are, we're not sure. Some people connect them to Genesis chapter 6, and I'm not going to get into that whole thing. But it seems that when certain demons had committed such terrible acts, whatever they may be, that God assigns them to the abyss, to the bottomless pit, where the demons ultimately would go.

And clearly it is not a pleasant place, because these demons don't want to go there. And they recognize that Jesus has authority to take demons. And obviously you say, well, why doesn't he throw them all in there? Well, I wish he would.

But obviously he's got a plan, and God is allowing the devil to do his work, that God may test us. And we're seeing the devil at work like never before in the church and in our country. And God is allowing that, so that he can test the believers, to see who those who are real.

And remember we said before, God knows who's real. The problem is we don't know who are real. And the problem is that so many are claiming, and they say we're Christians, but we're seeing more and more people are exposing their true nature, their true character, and we're discovering in fact that they are not Christians at all.

And I'm not going to get into names on that issue, but you've, I'm sure, read the news in these last couple of weeks. And so they say, don't send us into the abyss. Now, a herd of many swine were eating there on the mountain.

As I said, Mark says there were 2,000. Now, I want you to think for a moment. Where is this happening? What country? Israel.

Is it permitted for Jews to eat pork? For those who don't know, pork comes from swine. Bacon comes from pigs, swine, hogs. So it was not permitted for them to eat pork, along with other unclean things.

So what are these guys doing farming pigs? And this is a major operation. This is not a farmer who's got two or three pigs that he's feeding his scraps off the table of. This is a commercial enterprise.

Well, we can only assume that there were some Jews who were disobedient to the Torah, to the law. But also, there were many Gentiles in the area. And so they were probably sold to the Gentiles.

Who was keeping the pigs? Who owned the pigs? Well, it seems that they probably were Jews. And clearly what they're doing is being disobedient to the Scriptures, and they're simply doing what is profitable to them. That's by the way.

But it's just a crazy idea that they're not 2,000 sheep, but in fact that there are 2,000 pigs here in Israel. And so they begged him that he would permit them to enter them. And he permitted them.

So he gives them permission, and the demons went out of the man and into the swine, and a herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, the Sea of Galilee, and were drowned. When those who fed them, so the the herdsman, I guess you'd call them, saw what happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. So it's happening obviously outside of town, and they go into the town, and they say this is what happened.

Then they went out to see what had happened. And they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, closed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

Now I want you to think a little bit more. What was it that brought them out? Was it the fact that this man had been delivered of these demons? Or was it that the pigs were all dead? Seems to me it was about the pigs, and not about the man. And that's the sad state, is that people are more about stuff, and more about things, than about souls.

And that's not the new thing today. It's always been that way. And these people are more concerned about their livelihood, and the profitability, and the 2,000 pigs.

They must have been worth a small fortune. They're more concerned about those things, than they are about the man that had been cleansed of these demons, and that was closed, and in his right mind. And then the response.

They were afraid. They were afraid. The story is fascinating to me, because there are so many things that I don't understand about human nature.

And these people are just acting common to human nature. Why are they afraid? I saw that the reaction would be, they rejoiced. Because this man, who had been a public nuisance, who had terrorized them and their children.

This poor man, who was tortured, and living out there for years, was now sane, and in his right mind, and he was normal. I would have thought that would be the headline of the story. That would be the center of the story.

But it's not. And there's no rejoicing. There's just fear.

Recognizing that Jesus has this kind of power. And they don't recognize it as a positive power, in the sense of healing. They recognize it as a destructive power, in the sense of destroying the herd of swine.

I don't understand that. And yet, even today, people seem to have a wrong understanding about God, and His power, and His authority. And don't understand that in fact, while He is to be feared, He is to be loved, and He is to be adored, and He is to be worshipped.

Because He's not using His power, in a destructive sense, the same way as the devil. Remember we spoke on Thursday, that what He does, is He robs, kills, and destroys. And that's exactly what He did with the pigs.

It's amazing that the pigs didn't carry on grazing, and doing whatever they do. No, the pigs were destroyed. The man had been destroyed before.

His relationships had been destroyed. His health had been destroyed. His dignity had been stolen from him.

This is what the devil does. Jesus brings healing, and yet they fear Him. May God help us, that we may have a right understanding of His power.

That yes, if we're on the wrong side of God, we need to fear. But if we're on the right side, His power is there to heal us, to minister to us, to save us, and so on. And then verse 36, they also, who had seen it,

told them by what means He had been demon-possessed, was healed.

So they say, well, what happened? And they tell them what happened. 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 He returned.

One of the many very sad verses in the Bible. Jesus had come to their region. Jesus had come to seek and save that which was lost.

Jesus had come to heal. He had come to deliver. He had come to save.

But they had no time for Him, because He impacted on their business. Because He was bad for their profitability, for their bottom line. I think some of their fear is because they recognized that their business was illegal, and that they shouldn't have been doing the business that they were doing.

And obviously in that kind of situation, there's reason to be afraid. But I just don't, you know, I look at this and I say, if Jesus comes to Los Angeles today, will the city welcome Him? Or will they ask Him to go? We don't have time. We're not interested.

We're afraid. We don't want what you have to offer. And folk, I believe that it would be no different to us, for us today in this city, as it was in that city.

In fact, it was a group of 10 cities very close together called Decapolis. It's no different today. We don't have room for Jesus.

We don't have time for Him. We're not interested in the benefits He has to offer, because He upsets the comfortable and cozy lifestyle that men have. He throws the money changers out of the temple.

He casts demons out of people. And that doesn't suit everyone. And then, verse 38, when 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. And so, while Jesus couldn't stay to preach, this man now stays and becomes the local evangelist, the local preacher.

And he is preaching the Lord Jesus in that city, telling everybody of what had happened to him. That once I was out of my mind, once I was controlled by these demons, and you knew me, you saw me living out there in the tombs, I couldn't be chained. But when Jesus came, He cast the demons out, and He made me whole.

What a testimony. Here's the purpose of the story. The first account that we dealt with last week, Jesus deals with a storm out there, in the wind and in the waves.

But in this story, He deals with a storm inside of the man. And we spoke last week about the storms that we're experiencing in our country, and in the church in general, and in the world in general today. And we said that He is able to see us through that storm.

Where's your face? He will see us through. He will bring us out on the other side. But tonight, what He is saying to us is that not only can He still the storm out there, but He can still the storm in here.

He can deal with our demons. And I'm not saying that we are demon-possessed, even though He can do that also. But He can deal with our sin.

He can deal with our wrong thinking. He can deal with the stuff that causes us turmoil. He can deal with our anxieties.

He can deal with our fears. He can deal with the chaos that goes on in some of our hearts and some of our minds. And He's able to bring calm.

And He's able to chase those things out and fill us with His glorious peace, and with His presence, and with His joy. And so what Jesus did then, He's able still to do today. Yes, He can cast out demons.

And if He can cast out demons, He can cast out every other thing that is causing a disturbance in your life, whatever it may be. And many people are disturbed and filled with fear, looking at the stuff that's going on around us. The political parties are amplifying this, vote for me, because if you don't vote for me, then you will have destruction, and everything is going to be destroyed, and so on.

Folks, Jesus wants to bring peace. He wants to bring calm. He wants to still the waters, not just out there.

But He wants to still the waters in our own hearts and lives. And maybe there are those who are watching here this evening, or watching on the video, who have never found or come to Jesus as their personal Savior. Who are controlled, as this man was controlled by these demons, controlled by sin, controlled by bad habits, controlled by a sinful lifestyle.

Jesus can deal with that. And He can cause peace to come, and for you to be clothed. Speaking about the spiritual righteousness.

Remember the book of Revelation speaks about clothed with His righteousness. He's able to cause us to be washed. This man probably hadn't washed for weeks, for months, for years maybe.

But He's clean. He's clothed. And He's thinking straight.

Spoke about that on Thursday. Be sober minded. Think straight.

This man is thinking straight. And so even if you've never come to Jesus, and you've never allowed Him to come into your life, and to bring peace into your life, He can bring peace to you today. What He did for this man, He can do for us.

He can do for you. And even if you're a Christian, and you're tossed to and fro by all sorts of difficulties and problems in your heart, and in your mind, and in your emotions, He is able to still those waters, and He's able to bring peace. And then finally there are those of us, and probably most of us, who've experienced His healing, and His cleansing.

But we have a responsibility, like this man, to go and tell others what Jesus has done for us. That once I was blind, remember the man that Jesus touched. Once I was blind, but now I can see.

This man's testimony was once I was crazy. I was filled with a legion of demons. But now I'm in my right mind.

Once I was on my way to hell, but Jesus saved me. Once I was bound and chained by sin, by habits, by a lifestyle, but Jesus broke those chains, and He set me free. Father, we thank You that Your power has never abated.

That Your power is the same yesterday, today, forever. That the power that Jesus had over demons back there 2,000 years ago, He still has that power today. And He is still in the business of setting men and women free of the things that bind them.

And Lord, I just pray that there would be not one of us here this evening, or those who are watching the video, who are bound by even, possibly even demons, but certainly bound by habits, and lifestyles, and ways of thinking, bound by sin. Pray, Lord, that we may be set free by the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may be closed, and in our right minds, and preaching the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, I pray that this may be true, and that this may be real.

In Jesus' name, I pray that You'd go with us now, Lord, keep us, protect us, and bring us together again safely on Thursday, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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