

Expository Thoughts On Matthew - Matthew

8:28-34

by J.C. Ryle

Transcript

The subject of these seven verses is deep and mysterious. The casting out of a devil is here described with special fulness. It is one of those passages which throw strong light on a dark and difficult point. Let us settle it firmly in our minds that there is such a being as the devil. It is an awful truth, and one too much overlooked. There is an unseen spirit ever near us, of mighty power and full of endless malice against our souls. From the beginning of creation he has labored to injure man. Until the Lord comes the second time and binds him, he will never cease to tempt, and practicing mischief. In the days when our Lord was upon earth, it is clear that he had peculiar power over the bodies of certain men and women, as well as over their souls. Even in our own times there may be more of this bodily possession than some suppose, though confessedly in a far less degree than when Christ came in the flesh. But that the devil is ever near us, and ever ready to ply our hearts with temptations, ought never to be forgotten. Let us in the next place settle it firmly in our minds that the power of the devil is limited. Mighty as he is, there is one mightier still. Keenly as his will is set on doing harm in the world, he can only work by permission. These verses show us that the evil spirits know they can only go to and fro and ravage the earth until the time allowed them by the Lord of lords. "Art thou come to torment us," they say, "before the time?" Their very petition shows us that they could not even hurt one of the swine of the Gadarenes unless Jesus the Son of God suffered them. "Suffer us they say to go into herd of swine. Let us in next place settle it in our minds that our Lord Jesus Christ is man's great deliverer from the power of the devil. He can redeem us not only from all iniquity, and this present evil world, but from the devil. It was prophesied of old that he should bruise the serpent's head. He began to bruise that head when he was born of the Virgin Mary; he triumphed over that head when he died upon the cross; he showed his complete dominion over Satan by healing all that were oppressed of the devil when he was upon earth (i.e. Acts 10:38). Our great remedy, in all the assaults of the devil, is to cry to the Lord Jesus, and to seek his help. He can break the chains that Satan casts round us, and set us free. He can cast out every devil that plagues our hearts, as surely as in the days of old. It would be miserable indeed to know that there is a devil ever near us, if we did not also know that Christ is able to save to the uttermost, because he ever liveth to make intercession for us. (i.e. Hebrews Let us not leave this passage without observing the painful worldliness of the Gadarenes, among whom this miracle of casting out a devil was wrought. They besought the Lord Jesus to depart out of their coasts. They had no heart to feel for anything but the loss of their swine. They cared not that two fellow-creatures, two immortal souls, were freed from Satan's bondage; they cared not that there stood among them a greater than the devil, Jesus the Son of God. They cared for nothing but that their swine were drowned and the hope of

their gains was gone. They ignorantly regarded Jesus as one who stood between them and their profits, and they only wished to be rid of him. There are only too many like these Gadarenes. There are thousands who care not one jot for Christ, or Satan, so long as they can make a little more money, and have a little more of the good things of this world. From this spirit may we be delivered! Against this spirit may we ever watch and pray! It is very common: it is awfully infectious. Let us recollect every morning that we have souls to be saved, and that we shall one day die, and after that be judged. Let us beware of loving the world more than Christ.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jc-ryle/expository-thoughts-on-matthew-matthew-828-34/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net