

Matthew 8:28-34: And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. ²⁹ And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" ³⁰ Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹ And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." ³² And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. ³³ The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

Intro: In Matthew chapter 8, we've seen that Jesus has **all authority** over disease & sickness (He cleansed the leper, He healed the paralyzed servant, He healed Peter's mother-in-law & many others); He has all authority over His disciples & all people (We must follow Jesus at great cost, making any sacrifice to follow Him – He must be number one!); He has all authority over all nature & calamity (calmed the storm); And today we see Jesus Christ has all authority over demons & devils! That's our King! He has all authority in heaven & on earth! & He loves us!

1. We See Two Fierce, Demon-Possessed Men

Matthew 8:28-29: And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. ²⁹ And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

a. Jesus goes to an area of the Gentiles: The country of the Gadarenes is a Gentile area (non-Jewish); they are raising pigs. This reminds us that Jesus came to deliver and save all nations!

b. We meet two demon-possessed men: Demons are real. Demons possess people and control people. These men were so violent, people could not even pass by and get close to them. They come out from the tombs – they are so bad they dwell among the dead!

John Piper: Four years ago I was called late one night to come to an apartment where supposedly there was a demon-possessed woman. I called Tom Steller and we went together while our wives prayed at home. What we found was a woman held in a room by some young Christian women who were intent on seeing the demon driven out of this woman. For about two hours I talked to her and read her Scriptures and prayed prayers of deliverance. She became increasingly violent, knocking the Bible out of my hand and grabbing the prayer sheets and shoving me. At one point, about one in the morning, when the conflict rose to a fever pitch between the word of God and the satanic force in this woman, someone in the group began to sing. It was one of our familiar worship songs. We sang it again and again and the Lord gave us new words for it each time. The effect on her was dramatic. She began to tremble and threaten us if we didn't stop. Then she threw herself on the floor and screamed for Satan not to leave her. She went into convulsions and then went limp. When she came to, she remembered nothing of what happened and was willing to read Scripture and pray. So Tom Steller and I know from experience that singing to God is not a nice little emotional trip to spice up a worship service. For us, it felt more like a matter of life and death. That is what it was for Paul and Silas. And that's what it is for our church.

c. We see that demons deface/belittle/mar the image of God in mankind: These demons so controlled these two men that they became violent, dangerous, and uncontrollable. Other forms of demonic influence: Peter; Violence is demonic (and fleshly). Abortion is demonic (and fleshly). Transgender sins are demonic (and fleshly).

Letter of Canadian Pastor: Bill C-4 passed through the House & the Senate without opposition . . . It received Royal Assent on December 8, which means it will come into Law after January 8, 2022 . . . In the Preamble of the Bill, it says that the belief that "heterosexuality . . . gender expression that conforms to the sex assigned to a person at birth are to be preferred over other sexual orientations, gender identities & gender expressions" is a "myth." According to Canadian law, as of January 8, 2022, the belief in God's design for marriage & sexuality will now be seen as a myth.

d. Demons destroy relationships & unity: V. 28: out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way

- **John 17:11:** that they may be one, even as we are one.

- **Eph 4:1-3:** walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility & gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

e. Demons know Jesus is the Son of God: V. 29: "What have you to do with us, O Son of God?"

Matthew Henry: Note, It is not knowledge, but love, that distinguishes saints from devils. He is the first-born of hell, that knows Christ and yet hates him, and will not be subject to him and his law.

Do you know Jesus in a demon way or in a saving way? **GOSPEL!**

2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

f. Jesus is the Son of God: Matthew 16:16: Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

He is both God and the Son of God! **John 8:58; John 20:28; John 3:16**

g. Jesus has come here: V. 29: "Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

D. A. Carson: "here on earth, here where we have been given some freedom to trouble men before the end." This obvious sense of the text presupposes that Jesus has come to the earth before the end. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Jesus' preexistence is presupposed.

h. Demons know they will be torment at the final judgment: They know they'll be judged! Judgment is coming! **V. 29:** "Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

There's a time coming (final judgment) when Jesus is going to torment demons forever & ever in the lake of fire!

- **Revelation 20:10:** and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

- **Revelation 20:15:** if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

2. We Hear An Odd Request From The Demons

Matthew 8:30-31: Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹ And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs."

a. We see a herd of pigs: According to God's law, pigs were an unclean animal – this is a Gentile land/area.

Jesus declared all foods are clean: Mark 7:18-19: Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, & is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.)

b. We see demons need Jesus' permission to do anything: Like in Job 1:12: And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand."

Spurgeon: The devil cannot enter even a pig without Christ's permission! So he cannot tempt you, my Friend, without our Lord's permission! You may rest assured that even this great monster of evil is under Christ's control. He cannot [trouble] you till Jesus gives him permission. There is a chain around the roaring lion and he can only go as far as the Lord allows him.

c. Demons know Jesus has the power to cast them out: Jesus rules and reigns over demons! Jesus rules over all!

3. We See The Power Of The Word Of Jesus

Matthew 8:32: And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters.

Hymn (A Mighty Fortress Is Our God): And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us
We will not fear, for God has willed His truth to triumph through us
The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him; his rage we can endure
For lo! his doom is sure; **one little word shall fell him**

That Word above all earthly powers no thanks to them abideth

The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also; the body they may kill
God's truth abideth still; His kingdom is forever!

One Little Word: "Go!"; God's authority to cast into hell; God's authority in general; God's Word; Jesus; Liar!

Why did Jesus allow the demons to destroy the pigs which was the very livelihood of their owners?

D. A. Carson: He who is master of nature is also its ultimate owner. The appointed time for full destruction of the demons' power has not yet arrived. (1) The pigs' stampede dramatically proved that the former demoniacs had indeed been freed . . . (2) the loss of the herd became a way of exposing the real values of the people in the vicinity

- **1 John 3:8:** The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

- **Matt 12:28:** But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

- **Acts 1:2:** after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. (do & teach)

- **Hebrews 9:14:** through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God

4. The Heartless, Fearful Response Of The City

Matthew 8:33-34: The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

a. Heartless: D. A. Carson: They preferred pigs to persons; they preferred swine more than the Savior: They cared about their pigs! They cared about their money! They cared about their stuff! But they didn't seem to care so much about men possessed by demons; They didn't care about Jesus Christ; They didn't care about the glory of God! They could have brought all their sick to Jesus to be healed, but they didn't!

Daniel Doriani: At the simplest level, the passage teaches that people are more valuable than things. There are people who don't want toddlers to enter their homes because they don't want them to drool on the table or touch the antiques. They have not learned the lesson of the pigs. There are people who will not spend their money or use their property to meet human needs because they are afraid of depleting their assets. They have not learned the lesson of the pigs. People are more important than possessions. We should ask ourselves if we use our resources in ways that prove that people are more valuable than things.

The godless, demonic world we live in still prefers animals to God and His law: Article: What does America value? One thing is certain; our country values the Bald Eagle. In June of 1940 the Bald Eagle Protection Act was signed into law stopping the decline of Bald Eagle. The act & the efforts of conservation groups saved the Bald Eagle from extinction. What did this act do? It made it illegal to possess any part of a live or dead Bald Eagle including an egg. This inclusion of the egg is insightful; because it demonstrates that our lawmakers inherently

understood that a Bald Eagle egg contained a living & developing eagle (not a collection of tissue.) The act offered the “unhatched” eagle protection . . . Would our government fund an organization that kills over 300,000 “unhatched” Bald Eagles annually & sells their parts for research? Why can Planned Parenthood butcher unborn children & receive government funds? What kind of culture protects unborn animals, but doesn’t protect unborn children? How can supporters of abortion & Planned Parenthood logically answer these questions? They cannot because abortion is an illogical & indefensible position. GK Chesterton said “Wherever there is animal worship there is human sacrifice.” Since 1973 over 50 million children have been sacrificed through abortion. I hope that someday we will pass a Personhood Protection act that protects unborn children like our government protects the Bald Eagle. (Every human being is made in God’s image. We should love, respect, & honor every human being!)

b. Fearful: The people of this city were afraid: Dever: The demon-possessed men who had been scaring them got scared by someone even more scary! Jesus scared the scariest men who were scaring them! Jesus is scariest!

Great fear is often the response when people meet God face to face in the Bible: Isaiah 6:1-5: In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high & lifted up; & the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, & with two he covered his feet, & with two he flew. And one called to another & said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, & the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, & I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

Mark 4:41: they were filled with great fear & said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind & sea obey him?"

c. Jesus was rejected: V. 34: And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region. **Pastor:** The grace of Christ is extended to those who don’t even want it! **(Receive Him!)**

- **John 15:20:** If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

- **Acts 14:22:** through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

- **2 Timothy 3:12:** Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted
This is not the prosperity gospel!

What is your chief comfort in life and in death? The most scariest (C. S. Lewis: “He’s not safe, but he’s good!), the most powerful, most authoritative, most unstoppable, most majestic, most glorious, most amazing Man in heaven or on earth is **FOR** you! & He’s against all of your enemies! He died! He rose! He rules! He reigns forever!

David Platt: Let’s trust wholeheartedly in Jesus’ authority.

Let’s rest peacefully in Jesus’ authority.

Let’s submit completely to Jesus’ authority.

Let’s rejoice gladly in Jesus’ authority.

Christ Jesus Came To Demons Rule
They Cried And Begged While Acting Cruel
With Just One Word So Minuscule
He Sent Them Drowning In The Pool
The Devil’s Works Destroyed So You’ll

With Jesus Stand They’re Your Footstool
He Died, Bore Wrath And Ridicule
Then Rose To Save From Every Ghoul
By Faith Alone He’ll Be Your Jewel
And In Your Heart He’ll Reign And Rule!