

# The Power of Jesus

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*Main Thing*

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This morning as you're being seated, I want to encourage you to open your Bibles to the gospel of Luke chapter 8. As you're turning to Luke chapter 8, if you're a guest, if you're a visitor with us, or maybe you haven't worshiped with us in some while, I want to welcome you to a very unorthodox study of the gospel of Luke. You say, "Why unorthodox?" Because typically, when you walk through a respective gospel, you begin at the beginning, in the gospel of Luke, that's the manger scene, that's the Christmas story, and you end with Mount Calvary and the resurrection. However, we're actually going through the gospel of Luke backwards. We actually began at the empty tomb, and the reason we did so is that you and I today, we have an advantage that everybody that we're going to study today, every story we're going to read today, an advantage they did not possess. They were skeptical of Jesus. They were curious of Jesus. They were wondering to themselves, "Could this really be the one who had been promised and we heard of today?" For 2,000 years, the tomb has remained empty. We don't have to be curious. We have confirmation that Jesus Christ rose from the grave.

And so today, as we go back into chapter 8 of Luke, four very famous stories: there's the calming of the storm on the sea, the deliverance of the demoniac in the Gadarenes, there's a woman with an issue of blood for 12 years that Jesus heals, and there's a man's daughter who he raises from the grave. And as we walk through these passages today, a couple things I want you to be aware of. The first one is this, they're going to begin to kind of build upon one another. Typically, we would take these four stories independently. However, if you read them as we are today, they continue to build upon one another, and there's going to be kind of this crescendo at the end where we discover the power that Jesus Christ desires to exhibit and exercise in our lives. The second thing I want you to be aware of is this, that today, if you're a believer in Jesus Christ, if there has been a time in your life where you've acknowledged your sin condition and asked Jesus to save you, what we're about to study today is what he desires to do and how he wants to operate in your life. If there's never been that time, what you're about to study is what you're missing out on by not believing in Jesus.

And so today, as we turn to Luke chapter 8, we're going to begin in verse 22. Now, it ends in verse 56. We're not going to read the totality of them, because of these four

respective studies, we're going to just look at them independently and allow them to build upon themselves. But it begins in verse 22. It says,

22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. 23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. 24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

So the first problem that we've got here in Luke chapter 8 is we have a storm on the water. Now, we're going to use this proverbially in our lives today because many of us are walking through storms of life, but what did it produce in these men's life? It produced a product of an emotional crisis, so to speak. They began to say things and communicate things that they would not normally do so, and I can show you biblically why. There are 12 men on the boat plus Jesus. Do you know that at least six of them were professional fishermen who grew up on that lake? I mean, this is where they learned to swim. This is where they learned to fish. You got James and John of Zebedee, you got Philip and Nathaniel of Bethsaida, you got Peter and Andrew of Capernaum. They grew up on this lake and you're telling me these men, these grown men who owned their own businesses at one point, you're saying they'd never been in a bad storm on the lake? The answer is they'd never been in a storm like this one. And one of the struggles that we have when we talk about the power of Jesus in our life is we acknowledge and we confess that he got us through that storm but we always struggle, can he get us through this one? Right? And so what we see here is there have been who knows how many storms that they had weathered but this one was more extreme. This one was worse than anything and so they began to question and they began to doubt.

So what did Jesus communicate to them? What was the procedure he said? It's real simple. Verse 25, "Where's your faith?" In other words, what Jesus is challenging us when there are emotional crises of life, where you're walking through something worse than you've ever walked through before, where you're experiencing something different than you've ever experienced before, the same faith that was exercised to get you through the previous scenario is the same faith you need to exercise in "this one." How quickly you and I forget that the same Jesus that got us through a previous experience is the same Jesus that can get us through whatever we're walking through right now.

So these men come upon the shoreline and what we discover is a situation where they are met on the seashore or the lake, by the way, it's called a lake, it's called a sea, it's the same body of water, there's a man who is known as a demoniac. In the other gospels it says he had at least a legion of demons in him, thousands of unclean spirits. And we pick up the story in verse 26. It says,

26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

Let me paint the picture of this guy. He's a wreck is what he is. It says he doesn't have any clothes on him. He dwells in the tombs. It talks about in the other gospels that he cries out day and night. He's in extreme agony and pain but his agony is beyond emotional pain. This isn't just something he's walking through that's more than previous situations. In fact, fast forward to verse 35, this is after Jesus heals him. It says in verse 35,

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, [listen to this] and in his right mind: and they were fearful.

In other words, we have this crisis of this man who's in a situation of life. To what did that produce in his life? It's mental. It said that he was "in his right mind," which means that before Jesus touched him, he was not in his right mind. Now, I want to make a very important disclaimer at this point in the message. If you or somebody you know and you love is struggling mentally, they're struggling processing, in fact, James 1:8 says, a double-minded man is unstable in all their ways, if you or somebody you know or love is struggling, for lack of better terms, with what we might call mental health, please hear me, the Bible isn't saying they're demon possessed. It's not saying that, okay? What we have in this story is an illustration that if Jesus can put this guy in his right mind, he can put anybody in their right mind. And so again, I want to be very clear, okay? Just because we're struggling "upstairs," just because we're having double-minded thoughts, just because we may not be thinking properly does not necessitate demon possession or oppression or any of those other things, but you would have to admit that as you're walking through life and things aren't "going according as you had planned," there comes a point where at times you can get paralysis by over analysis. In other words, you think on things so much that you can't think properly anymore.

And so what did Jesus do? It says he delivered him. Now that's one of those words that scares a lot of Baptists. Now my Pentecostal brothers, they love that word. But deliverance, let me... deliverance does not mean throwing wheelchairs and foaming at the mouth. Okay? The word deliverance simply by definition means to be taken from one location or from one locale unto another. Let me illustrate for you. I don't know about you, but our family, we've adopted pretty much a new way of shopping. We go shopping all the time, we just don't go to a store because it comes to us. Can I just go ahead and say to everybody, it is a gift from God when you order something and two days later, it just shows up, and if you want to pay mortals, show up the next day. I mean, it's incredible. But if you never notice the packages, now maybe I'm just the nerd in the room and I'm willing to admit that. I like to see where it came from. I am shocked at how much stuff comes from Wyoming. I'm like, what? Seriously, where did this stuff come from? And

what we find out is that whatever it is that we desired and we ordered, it was removed from a warehouse somewhere else and showed up in Opelika, Alabama. That is what deliverance is. What did Jesus do in this man's life? He took him from a place where he was unable to think properly and to get him where he could process properly. So deliverance, don't think foaming at the mouth and shaking on the floor. If you are not able to process properly and now you have clarity of thought, guess what? You've been delivered, right? And that's exactly what happens in this man's life. It says he was seated in his right mind.

So we have a storm that brews this emotional response, I've never been here before and I'm struggling trusting the Lord with it. Then we have a man who can't properly think and Jesus touches him and all of a sudden he's able to process clearly. And then the story continues, verse 43. We meet a woman, a woman who's been sick for 12 years. She's basically "at the end of her rope."

43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, 44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stopped. 45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. 47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

So the problem we got here, things are escalating. A storm on the sea, that's a bad scenario, a man living in the tombs, that's rough, don't get me wrong, but you've got a woman now that for 12 years has suffered. She has struggled and not only physically, but according to what we just read, financially as well. She's exhausted every resource she has. She's spent every last dime she has. And what does the Bible say? She goes and she touches the hem of Jesus' garment. Now I don't want to over-analyze this because the garments that he would have worn in those days but you know the picture that I get is that she literally has her nose in the dirt of the ground. She is "so low in life" that she hardly can even stand up and the Bible says she touched his garment and she was made whole.

Now this is a physical issue. She has a real physical disease and I need to give another disclaimer before we talk about Jesus' procedure here. I want to share with you what the Bible is not saying. The Bible is not saying dismiss doctors and medical professionals. That's not what it's saying. There are some people, they read this passage and go, "Aha, I need to be like that woman, never go to the doctor, I'll be fine, I'll just trust Jesus." Twelve years later, you might want to go see a doctor, okay? She went to every doctor.

Now, God has gifted each and every one of us. There are people in our lives that have been trained in the medical field, doctors and surgeons and nurses and all these

individuals that have a giftedness and a skill set that just blows me away. And I can say this not only on their behalf, but my dad was in the medical field for over 40 years and as gifted and as talented and as skilled as they are, you do realize the mortality rate of humanity is still 100%. They can improve our quality of life, and at times, from our perspective, they increase our quantity of life but there is no medical professional in the world that can grant immortality. There's not one. In fact, one of the things you'll discover is every person that Jesus ever healed still died. Even the people he raised from the dead. You may not think about this, but Lazarus, he raised Lazarus from the dead. Pretty significant miracle, right? Guess what? Lazarus died. And the reason I share all that with you is this is so much more than just physical healing. If this was all about the physical, then she would have come back to health and never died.

What did Jesus grant her? One of the most powerful things we can ever get in life? Mercy. Mercy. Mercy is not getting what we rightfully deserve. This woman, her body was worn out. Now don't you know, if you've ever been really sick, I got news for you, if you've physically been sick for 12 years, you're mentally worn out too. You're emotionally at your wits end. Do you see this case that is building? I'm sure the emotional train had left years ago. I'm sure mentally she had been struggling for who knows how long, and physically, she was at the end of her rope. She's got nobody else to turn to. She's exhausted every physician. She has had a medical professional look at her and say, "There is nothing more we can do." And that will wear you out. So what happens? Mercy. This gift of mercy. Not only is there an end to the suffering, not only is there an end to the pain, but the next day, the way that I can imagine, probably for the first time in a very long time, not only could her body operate the way it needed to, she could think clearly and she was emotionally stable. That is a gift of mercy that God gave this woman on that road.

But we meet a final story. There's a man by the name of Jairus. Jairus was a Jewish man that worked in the synagogue. In fact, if we'd read this passage all the way through, we would discover that Jairus had come to Jesus initially because his daughter was sick. This woman interrupts that conversation. Jesus touches her and heals her and we're about to read the story that from his perspective and everybody else's, it's too late. His child is deceased, lifeless. And can I just go ahead and say because I've never had to walk through this path, I cannot imagine doing so, I cannot imagine any greater pain than what this man is going through. The way things are set up, ladies and gentlemen, we're supposed to bury our parents, we're not supposed to bury our kids. He is walking through probably the most emotional, mental, and physical, spiritual traumas that anybody can walk through. In verse 49, it says,

49 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. 50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. 51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. 52 And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. 53 And they laughed him to

scorn, knowing that she was dead. 54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. 55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. 56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

We know the story. We've just read it. So what happens when you walk through a situation like this? When you're emotionally taxed, mentally taxed, physically worn out, then you have a spiritual crisis. This is exactly what happened. Here is a man who doesn't know who to turn to, where to turn. There's no scenario that I can imagine that could be worse than this. So what does Jesus do? The power of Jesus. He gives the one thing that nobody else can give. He gives hope. I mean hope, that is a powerful word because when you have hope, you can walk through things you didn't think you could walk through, and when you don't have hope, you can't navigate the simplest things of life.

And you and I today, whether you realize it or not, in the context of these stories, we are walking through a culture, we're walking through a society, we're walking through a humanity today that in recent years, we've lost our hope. We have created a culture today that says no matter what happens, don't get excited about it, it won't last for long. In fact, you may or may not realize this, but the last three years of our lives, we have walked through Luke chapter 8. You say, "What do you mean we've walked through Luke chapter 8?" Well, in spring of 2020, I guess it was fall of '19 in other places, there was a storm that brewed. It's a storm like we'd never seen before. Unless you were alive in 1918 with the Spanish flu, you had never walked through anything like this. This was a storm like no other and yet, would you testify that most people's faith failed, did it not? Most people's faith failed. It was a big storm and what did that storm do? It created a lot of mental instability. We had a lot of people who couldn't think properly. They couldn't process. They couldn't see what was up, what was down. They couldn't believe what was true and what was not true. We were fed so much information, we didn't know who to believe. And guess what? We got just like this woman, it may not have been 12 years, but we got physically worn out. And isn't this interesting, in a time where everybody stayed at home, or most people stayed at home, we were too exhausted to do anything because we were worn out. And then guess what happened? Hopelessness settled in and we created a culture where there's no hope, there's nothing that can be done, there's no way out, there's no this, there's no that. What happened? Jesus shows us in this passage, even when everybody says there is no hope, you allow him into the equation and that which is dead can live again, that which has been pronounced to never be can be, and in the book of Romans, it says that which cannot be seen, he can make visible.

But I want you to see the key to all the stories, all right? I want you to look in verse 54, "And he put them out." Now you may not realize how incredibly important this is to the passage but I want to set the scene for you as we draw to a close. Jesus has calmed the storm, he's delivered a demoniac, he's healed a woman of an issue of blood for 12 years, but now all of a sudden, can I use the phrase, all the cards are on the table. We had a lifeless child, parents and a family that are emotional, physical, mental wrecks, and what does everybody tell Jesus? "There's no hope." That's what they told him, right? They said,

"Why are you even here? She's dead. This is a waste of your time." Look at verse 54, "And he put them out." You say, "Well, why is this the key to the passage?" Because not just the last three years, but right now, you and I are inundated with information and pundits who tell us that we live in a world of hopelessness, there's nothing that could come better of it, and I'm telling you, put them out. You say, "What do you mean put them out?" Turn them off. Take your social media and just shut it down. What good is it doing you anyway? All it does is make you mentally unstable and an emotional wreck. Am I not just calling it what it is? I'm just gonna ask you a very honest rhetorical question: which one of you is a better person after you've been on social media? Turn it off. And when people start communicating information that is contrary to scripture, turn it off.

He put them out. The reason we have a culture of hopelessness right now is because people listen to the TV and not to the word of God. Why do we have a hopeless society? Because they watch and browse social media instead of the word of God. Jesus said put them out. If you want the power of Jesus in your life, you've got to put out these voices. You've got to silence them in your life and you've got to allow him to do what only he can do. He can bring hope when there is no hope and he rose from the grave to verify and to confirm for us if he can conquer the grave, he can conquer hopelessness, despair, instability, emotion. It doesn't matter what it is, he is the antidote. Put them out.

Let's pray with our heads bowed, our eyes closed. Today as we come to this time in our service, you may be that individual here on our campus, you may be watching online, you may be listening on the radio, and today is the day where the Spirit of God took the word of God and just made it clear that you've listened to all the wrong voices and you haven't listened to the Lord's. You know, there are so many different opinions about how to navigate life. There are so many different opinions about how to exit this life into the next one the right way. But the Bible says in Romans chapter 10, whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. The Bible didn't say whoever becomes religious, as it was made clear today, it doesn't say whoever's baptized, it doesn't say whoever joins a church, it doesn't say whoever starts this and stops that. It says whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Right now if there's another voice in your head saying something else, you need to put them out because the Bible says when you trust Jesus and him alone, he'll save you. So maybe today, maybe today is the day that you need to cry out. It's not about reading a script. It's not about repeating what I or somebody else might say. It's not about doing it out loud. This is a heart's cry where you call out to the Lord that you've got a sin problem that only Jesus can solve. So maybe today that's where you are. Wherever you are, just cry out. Maybe your hearts cry, it doesn't have to be these words, but maybe your hearts cry when you go something like this, "God, today I can't go on. I'm much like these stories. I'm at the end of my rope. I'm done. I realize there's nothing I can ever do to fix my sin problem. I believe Jesus is the only way. So God today, I'm coming to acknowledge that. I'm coming to declare that I've got a sin problem that I desperately need Jesus to fix. God, I believe, God, I believe that your word is true when it says, the wages of my sin is death. And God, I've been places, I've done things, I've said things, and I've thought things that I rightfully deserve just what your word says. But it also says, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. I believe

that Jesus is powerful enough to forgive me and to save me. God, today I believe, I believe Jesus loved me so much that he came on my behalf. He lived a sinless life on my behalf. I believe that when he allowed himself to be nailed to the cross, he bore the pain and the punishment of my sin. And God today, I believe that when he rose from the grave, he made it possible, he made it feasible for my sin to be forgiven and my soul to be saved. God today, I don't have the answers to all the crises that are going on in the world. I don't have the answers to all the things that are out there. God, I know this though, I've got a sin problem only Jesus can fix. The best way I know how, I'm asking you to forgive me, I'm asking you to save me, I just want to turn my life over to you."

With our heads still bowed our eyes still closed, you may be at the back of the room, the side of the room, the middle or the front, it doesn't matter, in just a moment I'm gonna pray for us, we're gonna stand and sing together, and I want to invite you if you called on Jesus to save you today just to step out and to step forward. I'll be here, we've got a team here, we would love just to spend some time with you praying with you. Or maybe today you're like this couple who said, "You know what, we're believers, but we need to follow in believers' baptism." We'd love to have that conversation. Or maybe you're like many already on our campus today who said, "You know, this is our church home. We want to formalize that." We'd love to converse. Or maybe today you say, "You know what? I got all that covered. I'm just, I'm going through a tough spell right now and I really could use somebody to pray over me and pray with me." We would love that privilege.

*Lord Jesus, as we come to this time of decision, God, thank you that in spite of our transgressions, in spite of our rebellion, in spite of just our natural disposition to go contrary to you, that you love us so much that you're not only willing to save us and to redeem us but you want to walk with us through all the struggles of life. So right now God, I pray that all the competing voices all the philosophies all the ideologies, help us, O God, put them out and may we only respond to your voice. It is in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.*