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# Jesus Has the Power

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

## Jesus Has the Power

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“Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and the demonic spirits begged Jesus to let them go into them. He gave them permission. So the demons came out of the man and went into the pigs, and the herd of pigs rushed down the steep slope into the lake and drowned. When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they ran off and spread the news in the town and countryside. So the people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus. They found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus’ feet, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told them how the man who had been demon-possessed had been healed. Then all the people of the Gerasenes and the surrounding region asked Jesus to leave them alone, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and left.” —Luke 8:32-37

The crowds were seized with fear. Instead of rejoicing over the triumph of evil, these people chose to remain paralyzed by their fear to the point of expelling from their premises their only hope for salvation. Fear.

The Oxford Dictionary defines this word as “unpleasant emotion; a state of alarm; a dread or fearful respect; anxiety for the safety of; danger or likelihood of something not welcomed; uneasy expectation; and apprehensive about.” Fear can paralyze us. However, fear is the opposite emotion of what we have in Jesus: confidence and courage. Paul tells us:

“Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God.” —Philippians 4:6

For each one of us, we have a choice between trusting in Christ in the midst of our circumstances and worrying over them. This does not mean that we sit around doing nothing as we wait for God to act. Confidence and courage result when we engage in the things Jesus calls us to. Paul tells us:

“Whatever you are doing, work at it with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not for people, because you know that you will receive your inheritance from the Lord as the reward. Serve the Lord Christ.” —Colossians 3:23-24

I love this quote from Frederick Buechner because it gives credence to our passage for today as to why the crowds were so fearful:

“‘Thy will be done’ is what we’re saying ... We are asking God to be God. We are asking God to do not only what we want but what God wants. We are asking to make manifest the holiness that is now mostly hidden, to set free in all its terrible splendor the devastating power that is now mostly under restraint ... ‘Thy kingdom come .... on earth’ is what we are saying. And if that were suddenly to happen, what then? What would stand and what would fall? .... To speak these words is to invite the tiger out of the cage ... You need to be bold in another way to speak the other half. Give us. Forgive us. Don’t test us. Deliver us. If it takes guts to face the omnipotence that is God’s, it takes perhaps no less to face the impotence that is ours. We can do nothing without God. Without God we are nothing. It is only the words ‘Our Father’ which make the prayer bearable. If God is indeed something like a father, then as something like children maybe we can risk approaching.”

I believe that one of the reasons we experience so much fear in our society today is because we have lost the fear of God. This fear is the only fear commanded in Scripture: we are to fear God and God alone. We make a big mistake when we put God on our level. Think about it for a moment, what would it actually be like to be in the presence of God? We need have no fear of life if we have the fear of God.

We must remember that God is approachable only through Christ’s work on the cross. Without that, we are all as dead men! I am reminded of Hebrews 12 describing Moses’ reaction to God’s holiness on Mount Sinai:

“For you have not come to something that can be touched, to a burning fire and darkness and gloom and a whirlwind and the blast of a trumpet and a voice uttering words such that those who heard begged to hear no more. For they could not bear what was commanded: ‘If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.’ In fact, the scene was so terrifying that Moses said, ‘I shudder with fear.’” — Hebrews 12:18-21

As believers in Jesus we have access to God in all of His splendor and power and awesomeness and holiness. We can approach His throne only on the merits of Christ’s atoning sacrifice for our sins. The blood He shed took away our sins and has allowed us to be ushered back into the holy presence of the great “I AM.”

## **Become More**

We experience Jesus’ power to dispel our fear because of God’s greatness. Trust in God’s plan for you and His power to accomplish that plan. He is watching over you!

## **Further Reflections**

“But I trust in you, O LORD! I declare, ‘You are my God.’ You determine my destiny! Rescue me from the power of my enemies and those who chase me.” —Psalm 31:14-15

“Fearing the LORD is the beginning of discernment, but fools have despised wisdom and moral instruction.” —Proverbs 1:7