

## THE DELIVERED MAN

What's a great waste of good bacon? How about the herd of pigs that drowned in the Sea of Galilee when the demons left the desperate man at Gerasenes? It's quite the story, in Luke 8:26-39. A dangerous, distraught, demonized man had been delivered! But what about the pigs?

In this Gentile region of Decapolis, there were many resorts for the people of Rome. Pork was an important food supply and economic resource. Was it worth the cost to deliver a man made in the image of God from oppression by demons, the enemies of God? The herdsmen didn't think so (even though they might have been able to recover much of that bacon).

**DEMANDING MEN** - The man was demonized by a "legion" of evil spirits. A Roman legion was 6,000. Mark's gospel says there were 2,000 pigs. Demons, meet pigs. That's a lot of bacon.

Luke 8:34-36 says the herdsmen fled and told the news in the city and in the country. The people came out to see what had happened. *"They found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. Those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed."*

Then *"all the people of the surrounding country of Gerasenes asked Jesus to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So He got in the boat and returned."* Are you like those who sent Jesus away, instead of turning to Him to be healed and transformed?

**DECLARING MAN** - "When Jesus reveals His power and holiness, people are afraid," notes RC Sproul. "But one man wasn't. His fears were removed and he sat in his right mind at the feet of Jesus." The man delivered from demons now begged that he might go with Jesus.

But Jesus sent him away, saying, *"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you."* And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him. Mark adds, *"proclaim how God has had mercy on you"* and he went to all the Decapolis, and everyone marveled. Do you think Jesus came to this man randomly or purposefully?

**DIVINE HEALER** - In Luke 4:18 Jesus declared, *"the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, to proclaim good news, and to set at liberty all those oppressed, and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."* As Jesus healed the demonized Jewish man in 4:35, so now He heals the demonized Gentile. As Scripture says, *"to the Jew first, and also to the Gentiles."*

Of course the man would want to stay with Jesus, his healer! But Christ had a purpose for him, and this proclaiming of good news now had another voice. How would you respond, if Jesus had healed you, setting you free from demons? Who would you tell? If you had the cure for an incurable disease, or even for common covid, would you tell everyone?

**DIVINE DELIVERER** - Psalm 66 declares, *"come and see what the Lord has done, awesome in His deeds"* and *"come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell you what He has done for my soul."* NT Anderson notes, "If you will repent and believe the gospel, you will discover that Jesus Christ is the wonderful counselor and the great physician. He came to set captives free and bind up the brokenhearted. And to fulfill your destiny as a liberated child of God."

All this is a picture of redemption, as those oppressed by sin are set free by Christ Jesus. *"If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation, the old has passed away, the new has come,"* says 2Corinthians 5:17-20. And God gave His new creations the ministry of reconciliation, as His own representatives, *"God making His appeal through us. So we implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."*

**DECLARE HIS DEEDS** - Did Jesus come to this place and time, on the other side of the Galilee, to deliver this demonized man as a lesson for us all? Perhaps you've not been delivered from demons, but if you are a believer in Christ, you have been delivered from the darkness and deadness of sin. Scripture says *"you were dead in your sins, but made alive in Christ."*

Have you told others what Christ has done for you? Why or why not? Jesus says you should go and tell everyone! Your testimony of what Christ has done for you is a powerful message to open hearts and minds and wills to the truth and grace of the gospel that sets you free! ☐