

## A CHANGE IN DIRECTION

### **Luke 8:26–39**

*<sup>26</sup>Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee.*

*<sup>27</sup>When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. <sup>28</sup> When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me.” <sup>29</sup> For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) <sup>30</sup> Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” for many demons had entered him. <sup>31</sup> And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. <sup>32</sup> Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. <sup>33</sup> Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.*

*<sup>34</sup> When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. <sup>35</sup> Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and 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. <sup>36</sup> And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. <sup>37</sup> Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. <sup>38</sup> The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, <sup>39</sup>“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.*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

In this dramatic account, Jesus crosses into Gentile territory for the first time and encounters a man whose life has been utterly shattered. His identity, personhood, and dignity had been robbed away. Possessed by many demons, he seems to be heading toward ruin and destruction.

But Jesus, the Son of the Most High, not only has the authority to cast out the demons, He also restores the man and sets him towards a new direction.

In this passage, we see the power of God to redirect lives: from desolation to dignity, from isolation to intimacy, and captivity towards a response.

## DISCUSS

### 1. Restored Dignity (v27-35)

The man had lost everything. He was without clothes, without a home living among the tombs (v27), and Luke gives us no indication of his name. But Jesus restores him and gave him back his dignity as a person created in the image of God.

We see this in the contrast of how the man was after the demons had gone.

V35b “(he was) sitting at the feet of Jesus, *clothed and in his right mind...*”.

**Where in your life have you felt like your dignity was lost or distorted—through shame, fear, or failure? How does Jesus' restoration of this man encourage you about your own story?**

### 2. Invited into Intimacy (v35)

The man ends up sitting at the feet of Jesus (v35), a posture of humility, learning and discipleship.

We see this Gentile man, exorcised of demons, now in posture of relationship with God himself.

We see this invitation also in Luke 6:35-36. In our passage, the demon calls Jesus "The Son of the Most High God" (v28b). And in comparison, Jesus calls those who are merciful like His father “sons of the Most High” as well.

“But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be *sons of the Most High*, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” – Luke 6:35-36

Through Jesus, even outsiders are invited into intimacy with God.

**Have you ever felt distant from God—or disqualified from His love—because of something you've done, or something done to you? How does this passage speak to that?**

### 3. Directed towards a response (v38-39)

Here we see a stark contrast.

The people “asked him (Jesus) to *depart from them*, for they were seized with great fear” (v37), but the man “begged that he (Jesus) might *be with him*” (v38).

One group turns Jesus away. The other turns toward him.

Interestingly, Jesus doesn’t let the man follow Him physically. Instead, He commissions him back to his home to proclaim how much God has done for him. Restoration leads him to mission, he becomes a witness to Jesus (see v39)

This reflects a key theme in Luke-acts. Those who have witnessed Jesus’ saving power are commissioned to tell others.:

“You will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

**How can your personal story of restoration point others to God and his Gospel?**

**Pray For:**

#### 1. Healing and Restoration

- Ask God to meet us in places of shame, failure, or fear—and to restore our identity and dignity as His image-bearers and His children.

## **2. Deeper intimacy with God**

- Thank God that through Jesus, even outsiders like us are invited into relationship with Him. Pray that together we would grow in humility, desire His presence, and be shaped by sitting at His feet.

## **3. Hearts That Respond, Not Retreat**

- Pray that unlike the fearful townspeople, we would not turn Jesus away but welcome His authority and direction in our lives—even when it's uncomfortable or costly.