



Grand Prelate's Monthly Message

September 2023

In Luke 8:26 – 39 (as well in Matthew and Mark's Gospels), we find the story of Jesus healing the demoniac at Gerasene. This is the story where a man is possessed by a legion of demons, and when Jesus confronts them, they request permission to be allowed to leave the man and enter into a herd of pigs. Once granted, the pigs ran into the lake and drown. Afterwards, the townspeople come out and ask Jesus to leave, but before he does, the healed man asks Jesus if he can go with him.

What gets me about this story is that with all three questions, Jesus does the opposite of what I would do. When the demons ask Jesus to go into the pigs, I would have told them, "No, I'm not letting you do what you request. Instead, I'm just casting you out." But Jesus gave them permission, which resulted in the herd of pigs dying. When the townspeople asked Jesus to go away, I would have stood firm and said, "I'm staying right where I am until I choose to go." But Jesus chose to leave. And when the healed man asks to join Jesus, I would have said, "Come with us." But Jesus told him to stay where he was.

This just goes to show that, as it says in Isaiah 55:8, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD."

As usual, Jesus knew what he was doing. We could spend time discussing Jesus' responses to the first two questions, but I want to focus on the third. Why did Jesus send the healed man away? This man was sincerely grateful for what Jesus had done for him. We read that he sat at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind. That he begged Jesus to go with him. But Jesus said, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So, the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

This was well before Jesus gave the great commission: to go and make disciples of all men. (Mt. 28:16-20). In effect, this man became the first missionary. His response was that he wanted to be with Jesus, but being with Jesus involves getting involved with Jesus' mission. His reaction to his healing was to go and tell people what God had done for him, in his community. Just imagine the impact that his changed life had on those around him.

Sir Knights, perhaps that is the real lesson for us in this story: Jesus calls us to share what he has done in our lives in the community we live in. We are not called to have all the answers, we are simply called to go and make disciples of all men. So let's let our actions, and the changes God has made in us, reflect the light of Christ to those around us. In doing so, God will be able to use us in mighty ways for His kingdom.

Always and All Ways in Christ,

Rick Saunders
Grand Prelate