

Daily Discipleship

Sunday, June 19-25 (C) -Luke 8:26-39

Stories of Discipleship: *A Confused Man's Story*

Focus Question: *How might God bring you from confusion to clarity?*

word of life

“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.’ So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus has done for him.” Luke 8:39 (NRSV)

Read Luke 8:26-39

Confused is probably an understated description for the man from Gerasenes. His name is Legion, the same word to describe 6000 Roman soldiers. For Legion, it might have felt like he had 6000 voices and demons inside of him. This man does not wear clothing and lives in the tombs when he is not chained up. When Legion sees Jesus, he shouts at the top of his lungs in fear of Jesus removing the demons.

1. *How do you imagine Legion? Describe him.*
2. *Why might he be afraid of Jesus removing the demons?*

Even though the disciples sometimes struggle with the identity of Jesus, the demons clearly understand Jesus as the Son of the Most High. They know he has power over them. The demons beg him not to send them to the abyss, but to enter into a herd of pigs in the area. Jesus gives permission. The pigs become so distraught they run down the bank, into the lake, and drown.

3. *Describe the scene with the pigs.*
4. *What do you know about the Jewish dietary laws concerning pigs?*
5. *How can the demons be so clear about the identity of Jesus?*

The drowned pigs create quite a scene for the people from the city and countryside. But there is also the scene of the man named “Legion” sitting quietly at the feet of Jesus.

6. *Which might have been more shocking – the drowning of the pigs or the stillness of the man?*
7. *What were the financial implications of the drowned pigs?*

The people become afraid. So, they run the healer out of town. Change is difficult for people, even if the change brings healing and health for someone. The people do not understand what caused the pigs to run into the lake to drown. Nor did they understand the possessed man sitting so still and under control. They just do not understand.

8. *What makes people afraid of change for the good?*
9. *Imagine a conversation with the healed man. What would you ask him?*

Jesus boards his boat to leave, but the healed man follows him and begs to go with him. But Jesus instructs him to return and proclaim all God has done for him. That’s a challenging call – to return to the people who ostracized and chained him; to return to people who have seen you at your worst and to those who asked your savior to leave town. But the man obeys and does as Jesus commissions him. Thanks be to God for those who heed the call and follow, even to places where they prefer not going.

10. *What might it be like for the healed man to return to his village?*
11. *What does it mean to go where Christ asks – even if you don’t want to go?*
12. *Give an example of someone who responded to a difficult call.*

word among us

Malcum drank at parties, after work, before work, and sometimes during work. He knew he had a problem, but never considered himself to be an alcoholic. He was never violent – until one night after work. It wasn't like he had an excessive amount of drinks that night, but something snapped inside. The kids were probably not all that loud and his wife had not done anything terribly wrong. It's hard to explain, but something snapped. He had no patience, and he began to throw things in a wild tirade. He stormed out of the house in anger, but on some level, he knew he was out of control and didn't want to hurt anyone.

That wild night scared him. It scared him enough to get down on his knees and begin praying like he never prayed. He prayed and cried throughout the night until he fell asleep. Sometime in the middle of the night, it began to rain hard, but Malcum slept through the rain. The next morning Malcum woke up and could not believe the sight around him. He had fallen asleep under a big oak tree, so by morning he found himself sleeping in a mud puddle, totally and utterly soaked. He was exhausted, but realized there was a sense of peace inside him, like nothing he had ever experienced. Malcum knew God had rescued him from his pain and was putting him on a new path. He left that oak tree praising God, ready to make amends with those whom he had hurt, and to find the support groups he needed for his daily walk.

1. *What were Malcom's demons?*
2. *What other demons haunt people of our times?*
3. *How do you define a demon?*

It is important to note Malcum returned to his life to make amends. He did not abandon his life, but returned to it. No doubt, he would try to describe to others what it means to be a changed man. He was ready for a new start, inspired by the presence of God under an oak tree. Perhaps he realized he was at rock bottom and his life was out of control, but by the grace of God.

4. *Imagine the reaction of his family and co-workers.*
5. *If Malcum gave up alcohol, what changes would that mean for his family?*
6. *Why might some rejoice with Malcom at this new lease on life? Explain.*

After Jesus healed the man with the demons, it is not surprising the healed man would want to travel with Jesus and be one of his disciples. He begs to be included in the boat and to leave that place. But Jesus sends him back home saying, "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." (Luke 8:39 NRSV) That crowd might have been a tough one as they waited for Legion to revert back to his wild behavior. Yet the instructions by Jesus could not be simpler. The healed man was to tell others about God working in his life.

7. *Is that not the job of a Christian—to tell others about God working in our lives?*
8. *What has God done in your life?*
9. *How do you proclaim that in your daily life?*
10. *What would need to happen in order to proclaim about God more often?*

Prayer

Christ, thank you for bringing salvation to our lives. Empower us to tell others about how much you have done for us. Amen

Dig Deeper:

Isaiah 65:1-9

last word

Proclaim what God had done for you
to at least one person each day this week.



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