

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 25TH-26TH, 2020 // BOOK OF MATTHEW

## AUTHORITY OVER THE NATURAL (MATT. 8:23-27) THOSE WILLING TO FACE THE STORMS

V18-22 warn of the cost of following Jesus. Now those willing to pay the price of being a disciple board the boat and set sail across the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and His followers were taking the longest route across a lake that was notorious for its unpredictable and violent storms.

### "...SWAMPED BY THE WAVES"

The first reaction in a storm like this was to bail out the water coming into the boat, but Jesus was asleep as the men feverishly scrambled to stay afloat.

- The human side of Jesus was exhausted from ministering to the crowds, but the disciples were probably angry that He wasn't helping.

### "LORD, SAVE US! WE'RE GOING TO DIE!"

Shortly after seeing Jesus heal a leper, a centurion's servant, and even Peter's mother-in-law, the disciples quickly forgot the power Jesus possessed, or maybe they didn't think He had power to control nature? Their cry was more desperation than faith. **Do we tend to cry out to God more out of fear than actual belief in His abilities?**

### BEFORE I GET TO THE STORM

Before Jesus rebukes the storm, He rebukes His followers by saying, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" **Jesus seizes teachable moments.**

- **Jesus should have a good reputation in the hearts of His followers, but maybe He has to let the storm stir awhile in order to get our attention?**

### THE POWER OVER NATURE

When Jesus rebuked the storm and it calmed, **it proved that He was the sovereign God over all natural things.** This authority amazed the people on the boat.

- We need to be careful with nature and God. Though He is sovereign (rules all), we still live in a broken world that includes periodic natural disasters.

## AUTHORITY OVER THE SUPERNATURAL (MATT. 8:28-34) DISEASE, NATURE, AND NOW THE SUPERNATURAL

When Jesus and the disciples came to the other side of the sea, "two demon-possessed men met Him as they came out of the tombs." The Decapolis was an area with a lot of Gentiles, hence the reason they could raise pigs. Also, fugitives and homeless would often live in old tombs.

### 3 THINGS THAT WOULD SHOCK 1ST CENTURY JEWS

First, Jesus purposefully went into Gentile territory. Second, He went into a cemetery. They would have thought that ceremonially unclean and dangerous because of evil spirits. Third, Jesus engaged demonically possessed people.

- People in Jesus' time had a much higher respect for the supernatural.

### THE DEMONS KNEW WHO JESUS WAS

Not only did the demons in these men know Who He was, they knew that there would be an appointed time to face "torment" for their rebellion to God.

- This proves to us that **simply knowing Who Jesus is does not save us.** We must also have a relationship with Him.

### "...SEND US INTO THE HERD OF PIGS."

This is where the conversation gets very intriguing. The demons fear Jesus and request to be sent into a herd of pigs off in the distance. Oddly enough, Jesus grants it.

- Jesus had the power to cast them back to hell, but tells them to "Go!" into the herd of pigs. When they did, the pigs destroyed themselves in the sea.

### SO, WHAT IS THE POINT OF THIS?

Some believe that Jesus allowing the demons to go into the pigs that killed themselves displayed the nature of demons. **Satan's ultimate goal is to destroy us, both physically and spiritually.**

- **All we have to do is look at the fruit of the world's philosophies and systems to see that they don't work.**

### HOW DO WE RESPOND TO A LIFESTYLE CHANGE?

Matt writes that "the men who tended [the pigs] fled...and reported everything, especially what had happened to those that were demon-possessed." When everyone heard what had happened, they "begged" Jesus to leave their region. Why?

## JESUS AFFECTS ALL PARTS OF LIFE

Some believe that the town wanted Jesus gone because they feared His authority. Others believe because the pigs were a major source of income, **they didn't want Jesus to disturb their livelihood.**

- **Jesus wants to be engaged in every part of our lives, and this is why so many eventually reject Him.**

## AUTHORITY OVER ETERNITY (MATT. 9:1-8)

### CROSSING THE LAKE ON THEIR WAY HOME

Jesus and the disciples headed back home to Capernaum after leaving the region of the Gadarenes. When they arrived there, "some men brought to Him a paralytic lying on a stretcher."

- **Notice this was a team effort.** Others had to help the paralyzed man get close to Jesus. **Our faith impacts others.**

## WAIT, WE WERE EXPECTING A DIFFERENT MIRACLE

Instead of healing the obvious health issue, Jesus sees the faith of the paralytic and forgives his sin.

- When the religious leaders saw this, they thought that He was blaspheming (offending) God. **Healing bodies was one thing, but healing souls was another level.** Only God could forgive sin.

## THE CLAIM OF DEITY

If the miracles, signs, and authority of Jesus being the Savior were nonexistent, the religious leaders would've had every right to reject Him.

- The problem was that **the leaders had gotten so off track from the mission of God that they couldn't recognize God standing in front of them!**

### "PERCEIVING THEIR THOUGHTS..."

The scribes probably didn't say anything about Jesus, but knowing their hearts and minds, He knew that they questioned His identity.

- Jesus understood that **wrong thoughts become wrong attitudes that result in wrong actions. Sin is birthed in our minds, and Jesus has to get ahold of us there.**

## JUST SOME ICING ON THE CAKE

Jesus knew that the scribe's hearts had become hardened to the truth, but just to prove His power to them, He heals the paralytic after forgiving his sins.

- **We learn that spiritual healing is more important than physical healing.** Jesus can do both, but He only promises spiritual healing in this life.

### "...WHO HAD GIVEN SUCH AUTHORITY TO MEN."

The awestruck crowd saw the miracles of Jesus and "gave glory to God." The reasons for miracles were always the glorification of God and the potential of bringing people into a relationship with Him.

- **Jesus has done the miraculous to us, but are we still in awe and do we share our story with others?**

## TRUSTING THE GOD OF THE NATURAL, SUPERNATURAL AND ETERNITY

- The Bible tells us that Jesus is sovereign over nature. **Do we understand the consequences sin has brought into nature? Do we trust God's sovereignty in times like this?**
- Do we believe that we fight a spiritual battle and that hell is literally coming against us? **Do we believe that if we are not careful we can open ourselves up to an evil that longs to destroy us?** Are we filled with God's Spirit that protects us from evil? Do we believe His name casts evil out?
- Do we long more for the temporal or the eternal? **What "treasures" are we storing up for ourselves?** Do we trust that no matter how things shake down in this life, that if we give our lives to Christ our eternity is secure?

## WE ALL PRAISE SOMETHING

- To praise something means to make it known and visible. **Do we make Jesus known in how we think, act, and communicate?**
- If we don't praise Him, what do we make known? What captures our attention? What drives our actions?

## PRAISING JESUS CHRIST

- **Are we in awe of God?** Do we meditate on the idea that He knows us? Do we long to know Him? **Do our lives praise the Creator?**
- If you don't know God, are you **digging to find the answers** as to why we're here, what our purpose is, and where our value comes from?