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## **Out of Control – Luke 8:22-56**

**Introduction** – These remarkable stories declare the kindness and compassion of our Savior to Jew and Gentile alike and the terrible condition every person and every community finds itself in without Christ. Lives are out of control, our control that is. But everything remains in the control of the Son of the Most High God.

**The Wind and Waves** (vv22-25) – Heading over the sea of Galilee, Jesus takes His disciples with him to the southeastern edge into an area inhabited mostly by Gentiles. Like Jonah, this Prophet falls asleep on the boat in the midst of a storm (Jonah 1:4-6). They wake Him in fear; Jesus rebukes the waves and then the disciples, who then fear marvel at who this could be in their boat.

**When God Seems to Sleep** – There are times that God seems delayed, or even asleep (Psalm 44:23, 73:20, 78:65). We want to be known for calling upon the Lord in all of our storms. We do not want to be “*little-faiths*” who need to be rebuked after Jesus calms the storms that beset our individual lives and the life of the church.

**The Legion of Demons** (vv26-39) – Jesus’ power over the sea demonstrates His authority over the “sea” of Gentiles as well, and so now this Jonah lands in the country of the Gadarenes. A miserable man meets Him declaring what the disciples did not yet understand (compare v25 and 28). Living among the tombs, this man is the living dead, almost inhuman in attire, action and attitude. It turns out that not only is he demon-possessed, there may be thousands of demons in him (a legion), for when they request of Jesus not to be sent into the abyss, he casts them out of the man and into a herd of about two-thousand swine (Mark 5:13). No person, no people, no land, is too demonized that it cannot be delivered by the Son of the Most High God.

**Two Reactions** – The citizens of the city and surrounding country are seized with fear as they come out to see for themselves the former demoniac “sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.” This great fear is not the kind that brings them to the Lord. Instead, they ask Him to depart, which he did (they preferred the devil they knew to the “devil” they didn’t know). But the man himself begs Jesus to be able to go with Him. Jesus instructs this man to go back to his own home and declare the great things that God had done for him, which he did.

**Two More “Twelve’s”** (vv40-55) – Upon returning to Galilee, Jesus encounters two “dead” daughters (one literally and one ceremonially). Both women are associated with the number twelve (vv42-43). The afflicted woman is healed as she touches Jesus’ garment and the dead girl is resuscitated when Jesus touches her. Notice, not all who touch Jesus really touch Jesus (vv45-46). Also notice, the afflicted woman had tried all sorts of other solutions, but in the end, like the dead girl, the only solution to her problem was Jesus Himself. Like the women, Israel was bankrupt. Israel was sick and unclean. Israel was dead.

**Compassion; Not a Spectacle** – What are we to make of Jesus being so careful to keep this healing so private (as opposed to the demoniac)? He seems to show great compassion upon this little girl, putting the tumult (see Mark 5) out of the house, only permitting some of the disciples to go in with Him, making sure she was nourished, and charging them to secrecy.

**Out of Control** – The disciples, the demoniac, the afflicted woman and the dead daughter all have something in common. Their lives were out of control; and try as they might, they could do nothing to change their situation. Deliverance in each case was a matter of the grace of the Son of God, the One who spoke with authority to the creation He had made and with tender gentleness to a little girl lying dead upon her bed.

**Miracles and Jesus** – The miracles of Jesus weren’t to create a circus-ring show, and yet they were to declare His power and authority over everything. They were to testify to Who He was. Jesus now resides in heaven where there are no storms, there is no uncleanness, there are no demons, and where there is no death. And in Christ we are promised that we will be there one day, physically, really, completely. In that way, these same miracles will accompany all who follow Him. If your faith is in Jesus Christ today, you will hear similar words from Him one day – “*Talitha cumi.*”

**Fear and Astonishment** – When Jesus shows forth His power and authority we find that we cannot control which way it goes. He is not a “genie” to be whistled up to help us in our time of need. He is Lord over the waves, the demons, and the dead

- and every other little event and circumstance in our lives. He is good, but He is not tame.

**Preaching to the Dead** - We must get the gospel straight if we are to be faithful evangelists, preachers, and friends. We are not like a doctor going into a hospital trying to convince patients to take our medicine. We are walking into a graveyard telling dead men and women to get up (Eph 2:1-3). But we cannot convince corpses to believe and to rise up. But, while we find ourselves in this story, ultimately this story is not about us and what we are doing. It is all about what the Savior of the world is doing.

*Dave Hatcher - March 19, 2006*