

8-11-2012, COTR Texarkana

Title: An Evil Presence

Purpose: Provoke people to be aware of the influence of evil and resist it.

Spiritual Truth: Evil lurks in the dark places of our life waiting to destroy us. We must resist it.

Text: Mk 5:1-9, Jn 12:1-7

Topic: Satan, Evil, Demons, Spiritual Warfare

An Evil Presence

I. Introduction

A. Mark 5:1-9 (NIV) [Gadarene demoniac]

² When Jesus got out of the boat, **a man with an evil spirit** came from the tombs to meet him...⁴ For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him.⁵ Night and day...he would cry out and cut himself with stones...⁹ Then Jesus asked him, **“What is your name?”** **“My name is Legion,”** he replied, **“for we are many.”**

1. Jesus recognized the power of demons to influence human behavior.
2. This man wasn't crazy; he was under the influence of demons. He had superhuman strength, was violent, isolated himself and he abused himself.
3. Secular America today does not believe in God, demons and the supernatural. Everything supposedly has natural causes that can be scientifically explained.
4. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, began in 1840's, is a reference work for mental health workers that categorizes dysfunctional human behavior in psychological terms. These modern definition of mental illnesses supposedly replaced myths and superstition such as demons.
5. Instead of labeling him as the Gadarene demoniac he might be diagnosed as having adult antisocial personality disorder, psychotic disorder with delusions, Schizophrenic, Paranoid personality disorder...
6. Jesus dealt with his real problem; the evil presence of demons controlled him.

B. Review

1. Several weeks ago we tried to develop a Biblical understanding about the movie theatre shooting in Colorado.
2. A spiritual reason I offered for the killing rampage was the wicked heart of man
 - a. Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT) **The human heart is** the most deceitful of all things, and **desperately wicked**. Who really knows how bad it is?
3. Another possible explanation for the killing rampage is demonic activity.
4. Today I'll focus on how satan gets a foothold in our life to control/ manipulate us. We'll see how satan used Judas to betray Jesus.

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II. Satan used Judas to betray Jesus

A. John 12:2-7 (NIV) [harmony of Gospel accounts of Judas betrayal of Jesus]

² ...a dinner was given in Jesus' honor...³ Mary took... an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet...⁴ But...**Judas Iscariot...objected**,⁵ “Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.”⁶ He did not say this because he

cared about the poor but because **he was a thief**; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. ⁷ **“Leave her alone,”** Jesus replied. **“It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.”** 13:2 The evening meal was being served, and **the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot...to betray Jesus.**

B. Luke 22:4-6 (NIV) Satan entered Judas...⁴ And Judas went to the chief priests...and discussed...how he might **betray Jesus.** ⁵ They...agreed to give him **money.**

C. Matthew 27:3-5 (NLT) When Judas... realized that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was filled with remorse...⁴ **“I have sinned...for I have betrayed an innocent man.”** **“What do we care?”** they retorted. **“That’s your problem.”** ⁵ Then Judas threw the silver coins...and... **hanged himself.**

1. Summary: With Judas, satan operated differently. There was no violence, no cutting, and no screaming like the Gadarene demoniac but evil was still at work.
2. Judas’ loved money more than God. Satan used this sinful tendency to offend Judas when Jesus rebuked him. His offense affected him so deeply that he betrayed Jesus. Sadly, when satan was finished using Judas he destroyed him.

III. Spiritual lessons from Judas

A. Satan looks for “open doors” so he can influence us.

1. For Judas it was the love of money. Satan “entered” Judas through a door he kept opened, i.e. satan jumped on him; came in his heart; possessed and controlled him
2. 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 (NLT) [conflict in the church]
¹⁰ When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too...¹¹ **so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes.**
 - a. A rebellious church member caused problems in the church. He was disciplined and now forgiveness was in order. Paul knew that if they didn’t reconcile, satan would be able to sow discord and strife.
 - b. Satan’s nature is to oppose God’s work and destroy people’s lives.
3. There are many doors satan can use to get a foothold in our life:
 - a. Judas weakness was the love of money; In Corinthians he tried to use unforgiveness; pride; lust/ pornography; fear; jealousy; violence; envy...
 - b. It is imperative we recognize the open doors in our life and close them before he begins to control us.
 - c. I wonder what door the young man might have opened that made him walk into the theatre and begin shooting?

B. Judas took the “bait of satan” and got offended.

1. Judas got offended when Jesus publicly rebuked him over the “waste” of expensive anointing oil. This pushed Judas over the edge towards betrayal.
2. Definition offense: a stumbling block. Something somebody does or says that makes us angry, hurt or annoyed. Offended people feel insulted.
 - a. John Bevere calls offense the bait of satan.
 - b. When we get offended we withdraw, punish, get even, quit, get angry...
3. Satan uses offenses to manipulate us into doing something to advance his agenda.
4. Satan uses offenses to isolate us from people:
 - a. Proverbs 18:19 (NLT) **An offended friend is harder to win back than a fortified city.** Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with bars.
5. Our response to offense determines our future.
 - a. Colossians 3:13 (NLT) Make allowance for each other’s faults, and **forgive anyone who offends you.** Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

C. Judas apparently believed a lie to justify his actions.

1. Somehow satan must have influenced Judas' thoughts to make him believe a lie. Like all of us, some thought or impulse preceded his actions. Possible thoughts:
 - a. I work hard so I deserve this money...I don't agree with the way Jesus is leading this ministry...Jesus doesn't care about me so why should I care about Him?
2. Spiritual warfare happens in the mind:
 - a. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 (NIV) The weapons we fight with...have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and **we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**
 - b. Suicide has a lying voice...nobody cares; life isn't worth living so I'll end it
 - c. Adultery has a lying voice...you deserve a better wife; God wants me to be happy; the kids will be ok.
 - d. Drugs have a lying voice...Everybody is doing it...go ahead it'll be fun...you can stop whenever you want.
 - e. I wonder what lie the young man believed when he walked into the theatre?
3. Satan is author of lies and we respond to his lies with a thought.
 - a. John 8:44 (NLT) ... **the devil... has always hated the truth...When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.**
 - b. There are 2 ways to respond to a lie: 1) believe it 2) like Jesus, fight back with the truth of The Word of God and say, "It is written!"

IV. Conclusion

A. 1 Peter 5:8-9 (NIV)

⁸Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹**Resist him, standing firm in the faith...**

1. Recognize his attack and resist the influence of evil. Use your "shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit/ The Word of God".
2. If Judas and the Co. killer had done this they might have turned out differently.

V. Response

A. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

B. Prayer: Close the door: Forgive the person who offended you; Recognize the lies.

C. Souls