

Power Like God Luke 8v22-56

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[0 : 0 0] come in power, meeting us in our need today. Amen. Dad will fix it. That's what happens in our home anyway. If something breaks or it's not working, well give it to Dad, he'll fix it. Well most of the time things get fixed and sometimes they aren't and if we can't we give it to someone else who can or we take it to someone else who can.

Sometimes however things are so broken that we just can't fix it. I was reminded of this during the summer. We received the sad news that Rebecca's friend had taken her own life. And as we went to visit the family and saw the heartache, I so desperately wanted to fix it all. Soon after we got news that my dad was diagnosed with cancer. As we got the results, two to five years with treatment, I so desperately wanted to fix it all.

More recently, a friend confessed to being a secret alcoholic. As we heard the effects of their family and their family and their life, I so desperately wanted to fix it. And these things are not unique to me or to us as a family. Every one of you here have situations and circumstances that you desperately want to fix it. But you can't. Sometimes things are so terrible, there is nothing we can do. We are powerless and helpless.

Well, in Luke's account, we meet people just like us. People who are powerless. People who are helpless. Four big ideas, four things we're going to learn from these true events today. First, Jesus confronts the powers of darkness. Jesus confronts the powers of darkness. As Jesus comes into the world and where we are in Luke's gospel, he's really just still beginning his ministry and people are getting to hear about him and he's receiving a lot of attention and he's not immune to the darkness we face. In fact, he walks right into it and confronts it head on. First, we meet the fearful disciples on a boat. Look at verse 22. One day, Jesus said to his disciples, let's go over to the other side of the lake. So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, Jesus fell asleep. A squall, which is really a small hurricane, came down on the lake so that the boat was being swamped and they were in great danger. The disciples went and woke Jesus saying, Master, Master, we're going to drown.

Now, we've just faced a little storm, storm Ophelia, and that was terrifying. You think what it would be like to be out in that open lake in the dark, no light, in your small little wooden boat being tossed around by the waves and your boat filling up with water. We're going to drown.

[4 : 1 8] We're going to die. Then we meet a tortured demon-possessed man. Verse 26.

They sailed through the storm to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee.

When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time, this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs.

Picture the scene. A naked madman. His only friends are the dead.

Now, I don't know if you've ever experienced something or someone that you would say, this is evil or satanic. It is not a joke.

[5 : 2 0] This man has been physically, mentally, and spiritually tortured by Satan's servants. Even his name reflects the chaos that is in his life.

Down at verse 30, Jesus asked him, what's your name? Legion. Legion means hundreds, even thousands. Legion, he replied, because many demons had gone into him.

He had no rest. Third, we meet a woman ostracized by her sickness. Verse 40.

Now, when Jesus returned, so he's kind of gone back again across the lake, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. Then a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house, because his only daughter, a girl of about 12, was dying.

And then it's as if Jesus is interrupted. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years, more than likely a gynecological problem.

[6 : 45] She'd been bleeding for 12 years, but no one could heal her. Not only does she have to deal with the constant bleeding, she faces being ostracized from her community.

You see, her bleeding made her religiously unclean and untouchable. 12 years of being pushed out and ignored. And then fourth, we meet a broken father whose daughter is dying.

We just met Jairus, didn't we? Who comes to Jesus to heal his only daughter. Well, verse 49.

While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. Your daughter is dead, he said.

Don't bother the teacher anymore. And with those words ringing in his ears, his life is shattered and broken.

[7 : 54] His only daughter, 12 years of age, has been snatched from him. You see, these are not just stories.

These are real people in their real experiences of life. And when they are recorded together, they reveal the darkness that we all see and experience as we walk through life.

The chaos of nature's storms, as hurricanes and flash flooding destroy whole communities, leaving a trail of destruction in its path.

the devastation of evil, as it enslaves lives, breaking and destroying all that is beautiful and all that is good. The suffering that sickness brings, unbearable pain, restricting and isolating people from their friends and family.

And then all of these things come to a horrible and inevitable climax. Death itself. And those we most love and hold dear are taken away.

[9 : 18] Sometimes through the process of time, sometimes without warning. And what makes this darkness so dark is our absolute inability to do anything about it.

By ourselves, we are powerless and hopeless. The disciples, despite their years of fishing experience, are at the mercy of the storm.

We're going to drown. And those who try to contain the demon-possessed man are confronted by their own weakness. Look at the end of verse 29.

Many times the demon had seized him and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

And the suffering woman who had sought every possible cure, end of verse 43, but no one, there was no doctor, no power that could heal her.

[10 : 30] And then Jairus, who came running to Jesus for healing, has lost all hope because his little daughter is dead.

We like to think that we can face whatever life throws at us. That somehow we have the power and the resources within ourselves to deal with it.

But life's experiences confront us with the reality that left to our own devices, we are powerless and helpless. Weather forecasts will not protect you.

Rules and laws will not constrain evil. Doctors and medication are not always enough and no one and nothing can save us from death.

Facing the chaos and brokenness of this world, we are powerless and we're hopeless. Second, Jesus restores with the power of God.

[11 : 43] Jesus restores with the power of God. Well, all those we meet in this account are powerless. Jesus proves to be powerful.

Look at the way in which Jesus restores and renews each situation. First, the disciples in the storm. Panic has set in.

The waves are coming in. We're going to drown. But listen to the words of Jesus. Verse 24. He got up, rebuked the wind and the raging waters.

The storm subsided and always calm. From the chaos and destruction to calmness and restoration.

Then the demon-possessed man, his life has been enslaved, controlled by demons. His life is ruined by their constant attacks. But look what happens when Jesus delivers.

[12 : 52] Verse 35. The people went out to see what had happened and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind and they were afraid.

And those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. From a violent, tormented mind to a quiet and cured mind.

Then the sick woman, her life is a desperate situation, no means of a cure, ostracized from her community. Her life hangs in the very balance. But an encounter with Jesus changes everything.

Verse 44. She came up behind Jesus, touched the edge of his cloak and immediately her bleeding stopped. Verse 48.

Then he said to her, Daughter, daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.

[14 : 13] From pain and suffering to peace and healing. And then the helpless father.

His life has been shattered and broken. His only daughter is dead. All hope is gone. And Jesus arrives. Verse 50.

Hearing this, hearing that the little girl had died, Jesus said to Jairus, Don't be afraid. Just believe and she will be healed.

Verse 52. Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. Stop wailing, Jesus said. She's not dead, but asleep.

In other words, that to Jesus, her death was just like someone who is sleeping. They laughed at him knowing that she was dead, but he took her by the hand and said, My child, get up.

[15 : 20] And her spirit returned and at once she stood up. From unrelenting sorrow to inexpressible joy, from death itself to the resurrection of life.

As Jesus comes and confronts the darkness, he restores what is broken, he renews what is destroyed, he reverses the disorder, lives that have been overwhelmed with darkness burst into glorious light.

Where chaos ruled, it is now replaced by calm seas, stilled minds, unimagined peace, and new life. what awesome transformation.

But let us not miss the point of all of these events. This is nothing less than the power of God on display. Look at how each of these stories develop and build on each other.

As the disciples sit in the calmness of the sea, after Jesus has calmed it. Verse 25, In fear and amazement they asked one another, Who is this?

[16 : 47] He commands even the winds and the water and they obey him. Well, they knew that God had created the world by just speaking words.

They knew that God alone controlled the forces of nature. They knew Psalm 147. He sends his commands to the earth. His word runs swiftly.

He spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes. He hurls down pebbles or hailstones. Who can withstand his icy blast? He sends his word and melts them.

He stirs up the breeze and the waters flow. So who is this that stands before us in the boat rebuking nature by his word?

Who is this? Well, ironically, it's the demons who know who Jesus is. Look down at verse 28. When this man, this demon possessed man, saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at Jesus' feet, shouting at the top of his voice, what do you want with me?

[18 : 00] Jesus, son of the most high God, a title that's reserved for God alone. I beg you, don't torture me, for Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man.

We expect that when Jesus meets a demon possessed man, there's going to be some kind of fight, some kind of resistance, that this is going to be difficult and this is going to be hard.

Instead, when he comes to Jesus, he falls at his feet in total surrender. Verse 32, a large herd of pigs were feeding there on the hillside.

The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them and Jesus gave them permission. when the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

Now, I don't want you getting sidetracked worrying about these poor little pigs and their nice little curly tails. That's not the point. We are to stand back and be amazed at the power of God.

[19 : 18] As satanic forces crumble at the words of Jesus, begging him for permission and obey him at his command to their very destruction.

You see, if the disciples are asking the question, who is Jesus? Who is this? And the demons get it right by answering, Jesus, son of the most high God, then the woman knows exactly who it is that she must go to.

As she reaches out to Jesus, verse 46, Jesus said, someone touched me, I know that power has gone out from me. She knows where to run, because she knows who Jesus is.

Power flows from Jesus. Power over destruction in the storms, power over the devil, power over disease, and ultimately power over death, as Jesus speaks, and the very dead are raised to life.

Listen to his words. Watch and be amazed that this is God in the person of Jesus Christ intervening into the lives of ordinary people who are hopeless and powerless and helpless.

[20 : 51] Now it's important we really don't miss this point. You see, all that we see Jesus doing here, we need to be careful how we think about it for ourselves.

This does not mean that Jesus promises to calm every storm, banish every evil, heal every sickness, and raise all who die.

We should never limit the power of Jesus. We should never limit his authority over all of these things and at his will to do what pleases him.

But he does not promise it in every situation. In fact, as Jesus walked this earth, he did not heal every single person. And every single person that Jesus did heal, well, they died anyway.

Even Jairus' daughter would have to die again and go through the pain of dying. The miracles of Jesus are not a promise of a suffering-free life for you and for me.

[22 : 04] So what are they? Well, they're here to tell us that Jesus confronts the powers of darkness and as he does so, he displays the power of God to restore and renew so that in the darkness, in our powerless and helpless state, we will not fear.

Instead, we will run to him in faith. so third, Jesus frees us or sets us free by the power of faith.

He sets us free by the power of faith. God says, I wondered if you noticed the main emotion or the main reaction in all of these events as we've gone through.

It's one of fear. There's fear in the storm. There's fear of this demon possessed man as he lives on the edge of town and what he's going to do to the people.

there's fear for this woman that she's going to be noticed and what are people going to say if they find out she's an untouchable. There's fear for Jairus as his daughter is dying and eventually death takes her.

[23 : 36] This is normal and a natural reaction. And when we can't control the events or the circumstances around us, we begin to panic and we fear.

And sometimes fear grips us in such a way that it conquers us and controls us. We feel imprisoned by anxiety and worry. No way out. No hope.

But there's another fear going on. Did you notice that? Look at the disciples. They were afraid in the storm.

They were afraid they were going to drown. Then Jesus calms the storm. So it's all nice and calm. But look at their response, verse 25. In fear and amazement, they asked one another, who is this?

He commands even the winds and the water and they obey him. It was the same for the people where the demon possessed man had lived. they were afraid of him.

[24 : 47] He was causing chaos and destruction. And then Jesus confronts him and he releases the man from the demon possession. And he's healed and cured and in his right mind.

But look at the response of the people, verse 25. Sorry, verse 37. then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them because they were overcome with fear.

So he got into the boat and left. You see, when confronted with God's power, there is an even greater fear.

not just fear of the circumstances we are in, but fear of an awesome power. They are so terrified that they want to get rid of Jesus.

Why? Well, they're missing the point. They're not grasping who Jesus is. Jesus didn't come into the world to terrify us, but to save us.

[25 : 58] Jesus comes into the world to display his power so that we will run to him and trust him. If we grasp who Jesus is, rather than be conquered by fear, we will run to him in faith.

The question Jesus asks his disciples in the boat is the same question we all need to ask ourselves. do you see what Jesus asked them in verse 25?

The beginning of verse 25, he says to them, where is your faith? Where is your faith? Who do you trust?

Who do you run to in the chaos and brokenness of life? When we're out of options, when we're powerless and helpless, where do you turn?

Well, Jairus and the woman show us where we should turn and what faith is like. First, we need a desperate faith.

[27 : 14] Verse 41, then a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue. Now, a ruler of the synagogue is a very high position. You are well respected.

People kind of tilt the head to you. A ruler of the synagogue came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house.

Again, you get the sense that Jairus knows something of who Jesus is, and rather than run in fear, he runs in faith. He falls at Jesus' feet in desperation.

He has nowhere else to go to, no one else to turn to. He humbles himself before Jesus, throwing everything at him.

Everything rests on what Jesus will do. He depends on him and him alone. That's what faith is. It's saying, without Jesus, I will not get through this.

[28 : 22] I need you. don't be conquered by your fear. Run to him in faith. But we also need what I just term here a touching faith.

Look at verse 44. Look at how the woman comes to Jesus. She came up behind him, secretly, and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

Who touched me? Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.

I mean, everybody's touching you. What do you think? But Jesus said, someone touched me, and I know that power has gone out from me.

Remember, this woman is religiously unclean. Because of her bleeding, she's untouchable. If she touches someone, they become unclean.

[29 : 30] She could lose her life over this. But when she reaches out and touches Jesus, she becomes clean. Her life and circumstances are changed.

And in case we think that somehow there's something magical going on, that Jesus' clothes have power to heal, look how Jesus responds. He wants everybody to make sure how this healing has happened, including us.

Verse 47, Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet, again in desperation. In the presence of all the people looking in at her, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

Then Jesus said to her, daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace. It's her faith in Jesus that heals.

Everybody else is crowding around and touching and pushing against Jesus but nothing happens. But this woman reaches out in frail, secret faith.

[30 : 45] faith. That's what faith is. Reaching out to Jesus and simply trusting in him.

Don't be conquered by your fear. Run to him in faith. faith. And then last, Jesus gives hope through the power of his death and resurrection.

Jesus gives hope through the power of his death and resurrection. You see, these stories are, yes, they're amazing stories, but they're stories that push and point to an even bigger and ultimate story.

What these stories tell us about is that what Jesus did for some people here, he has done for all through his death and resurrection.

What Jesus has done for some here, he has done for all who will trust him through his death and resurrection. As Jesus would go to the cross, it is at the cross where he confronts the powers of darkness in all its terror.

[32 : 05] At the cross he went to war against sin and Satan. And as Jesus died, it seemed that evil has won, darkness descended, the demons laugh.

But three days later Jesus rises again from the grave. He has defeated sin. He has defeated Satan. He has conquered sickness and death.

He has disarmed the evil powers and authority. He has destroyed the devil who holds the power of death. Jesus rose victorious and triumphs over all with absolute power and supreme authority.

This is the God that we are to look to. This is the God that we can trust. He sets us free from our fear today.

and he gives us the hope of eternal freedom to come. This is the God who says to us, daughter, my son, go in peace.

[33 : 18] Do not let the fears of the darkness overcome you. Go in peace. and this is the God who will say to us, for surely when that day will come, when we all die, whether it comes through the process of time or whether it comes suddenly, we will hear the words of Jesus say to us, my child, get up.

and we will rise and we will live with him for all eternity in a world absence of darkness and evil and sin and sickness and disease and death.

Do not fear. Go in peace. Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord, what can we do but other than bow before you and fall at your feet just like Jairus, just like the woman.

For we have nowhere else to go. We have no one else to run to. You are Lord and you are God.

[35 : 08] You are powerful, awesome, and great. And you have displayed that power through your death and through your resurrection. salvation. And therefore we stand, not conquered by fear, but going in peace and looking forward in faith.

Thank you that you are an awesome God that we can trust, a God whom we can look to. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. We praise you for who you are. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.