

Good Soil Where It's Least Expected

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[0 : 00] Well, how about we talk about demons on a picnic Sunday?! Well, that's where we're at in the Gospel of Luke today, is talking about demons.

! And so, a lot of people have an interest in demons or demon possession and that sort of thing. A lot of different viewpoints. If you talk to ten different people, there might be ten different viewpoints on the subject.

And much of the time, you're going to see people fall between the idea of fiction and fear. Lots of crazy stuff out there as well.

And so, I want to set some stuff up before we get into today's story. There are two errors, and you have this on your notes. Two errors when it comes to the subject of demons and demon possession.

People typically make one of two errors regarding the devil or demons. One error is to disregard the subject altogether and to say, well, it's just fiction.

[1 : 05] It's just people's imagination. It's not really real. That kind of thing. The second error is to go to the other extreme and to become obsessed with the whole thing.

And that's a problem, too. We're told in the scriptures how we ought to handle the subject of demons.

And I don't want to spend all of our time talking about where they came from. We don't have a lot of answers to that. We know that the Lord created all of the angels before he created the world.

And that there was a rebellion led by Lucifer. And the whole portion of the angels then chose to rebel against God.

God removed them from heaven. And now we have demons that roam the earth and are part of that demonic network that the devil operates in.

[2 : 04] And so, the question becomes, what do we do with that? How do we handle that little bit of information that we have about demons? And so, just again, before we get into the story, a little primer on demons from a biblical perspective.

And again, you have this on your notes. We're taught, first of all, that the focus of our attention should not be on the devil itself or himself, but on Christ above all.

Therefore, and just a few passages of scripture to go along with this. Hebrews 12, 1, Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight in the sin which clings so closely to us.

And let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, or fixing our eyes on Jesus, focusing our attention on Jesus.

That's where our focus, that's where our attention should be. Not so much on demons and demonology. We need to know some things about that, but then we need to move on and focus our attention on Jesus.

[3 : 18] We are told to resist the devil. Not by having some special prayer, a special incantation, or holy water.

There are stuff that you see a lot of times on TV. Movies or shows or stuff having to do with demon possession. You see people's heads twisting and vomit.

Some of you have seen too many movies. I have two. And so you've got that one holy guy walking in and he's throwing water. I'm not sure.

It's not in the scriptures. I'm not sure where that comes from. That's not the point here. But instead, by drawing near to God, James 4, 7, submit yourselves therefore to God.

Resist the devil. And how do we do that? By drawing near to God and he will draw near to you.

When we draw near to God, the devil doesn't want any part of that. So that's the best way to do

that.

[4 : 17] Not to, again, focus on the demons, but instead focusing on the Lord. We're directed to be aware of the devil's schemes. Ephesians chapter 6 has a passage that deals with this.

We're told to put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. And we're also to make note of and to publicly, and there might be some people who would be upset with a preacher saying something like this, but to publicly rebuke false teachers and false doctrines.

We are to make note of those things. We are to call them out and we are to do that in a public nature. When a false teacher teaches, he's not off in the corner somewhere sitting on his own. He is in front of a group of people and he's teaching that false doctrine. And so because it is of a public nature, it needs to be confronted in a public way. And this is what the scriptures teach us. 2 Peter 2.1, But false prophets also arose among the people just as there will be, talking about in the church, there will be false teachers among you who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

[5 : 39] So we need to be aware of these false teachers and the false doctrine that they are teaching. And then Paul in 1 Timothy 5, verse 20, as for those who persist in sin, again, talking about these so-called spiritual leaders or those who are in front of others and teaching false doctrine.

Rebuke them, he says, in the presence of all. That is a public confrontation. We're supposed to do that in a public way. We're commanded to do that so that the rest may stand in fear, so that people will know what the false doctrine is, so that it's brought forth in public, in front of, in the presence of all the people, so that we all understand what was taught that was wrong and the false teacher who brought forth that wrong message.

And we need to understand that there is someone who is the originator of all of this false teaching and false doctrine, and that, of course, is the devil.

Jesus taught about this himself in John 8, verse 44. He says, when he lies, talking about Satan, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and he is the father of lies. Understand that whenever you hear something that is a lie, you understand where that originates from.

It is not from God. It is from the devil. There is nothing neutral there. If we're hearing something that is truth or lie, we know that it is from God or it is from the devil.

[7 : 16] There is nothing neutral about the teaching of the word of God. It's one or the other. It's not somewhere in between. And so we need to be aware of that.

We're instructed daily to dress in the armor of God when it comes to dealing with this. But I want you to follow what Paul says about this particular subject to its conclusion, to how Paul concluded this message.

We're to be dressed. We're to be ready with the armor of God on. But look at the passage, Ephesians 6, verse 13. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, having done all, to stand firm.

Stand, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth. And now he's just going through the different pieces of this armor. Put on the breastplate of righteousness as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

[8 : 31] Now he tells us what to do with that, praying at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication. And so that's what we're told to do.

That's a part of drawing near to God is doing that in prayer. That is how we draw near to God, through the word of God and through prayer.

That is how we do that. And then, oh, here we go. To finish that, to pray. That's what we're doing. Now, we get to the story that we're coming to.

Just after last week we talked about the storm on the sea and Jesus is asleep in the boat and Jesus, we're going to die and we're going to drown.

And Jesus gets up and calms the storm with a word. And they're like, oh, this is amazing.

[9 : 32] This is too much. This is who is this man that he can do this. And it was a lesson of their faith. Where was their faith? Jesus asked that question.

And this is all still in the context of the parable of the soils, which is the four different soil types and us wanting to be fruitful.

That's the goal. That's the measure. And sometimes we had mentioned a few weeks ago when we talked about the parable of the soils, sometimes you don't know what a person's soil is going to be like.

When someone seems to be so anti-God and so anti-gospel, and yet sometimes that is the most fertile soil there can be. And that is the case today.

We meet someone today, a man who is possessed not by just one but many demons, and this man, even though he seems like would be not the greatest of candidates for someone to receive the gospel, that's exactly what we see in this story.

[10:40] And so Luke chapter 8 beginning in verse 26, we're going to make our way through this. Matthew's gospel also has this story, so does Mark. So I'm going to piece together this story looking at portions of Luke and then Mark and then Matthew as well.

Hopefully we'll get the whole picture of this story by the end of it. So follow along. Let's see. Then they sailed. This is after the storm. They ended up in the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite of the Sea of Galilee or the Lake of Gennesaret.

Depending on which culture you were from, that's what you called that particular body of water. And also the same thing is true of this particular place that they sailed to. Luke calls it the Gerasenes.

Matthew calls it the country of the Gadarenes. And again, it just depended on which culture you were referring to. That was the name that it was given. At the end of the story, we're going to find another different name of this particular region, this particular area.

So don't be confused by that. Now, the other thing not to be confused by is that in Matthew's Gospel, he talks about two demon-possessed men, where Mark and Luke are referring to just the one.

[11:56] Now, we don't know why Luke and Mark only refer to just the one. Maybe that's what they choose to focus on in their particular story. It's not a contradiction. It's just different viewpoints telling the same story.

Just like in a crime scene, when detectives come upon a crime scene and they're interviewing witnesses, they know that the stories are more legitimate when there are different aspects of the story told, as opposed to if all the stories line up perfectly, they know that the people who are telling the story kind of colluded together to make sure that their story is matched up.

So that's why we have some differences in the Gospels, which again goes to authenticate, not to show that there's a contradiction there. So there's two demon-possessed men coming out of the tomb, so fierce that no one could pass that way.

So this is a situation where these demon-possessed men, and the one in particular that we're going to focus on in Luke's Gospel, are so fierce and so dangerous that people had to make sure that they went out of their way to avoid this kind of confrontation.

Back in Luke chapter 8, when Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons, plural. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs.

[13:25] Now when you hear this, that he had no clothes, what's another word for that? Yeah, the guy's buck naked. Okay? So it's a weird story to begin with, okay?

They get out of the boat, and this guy approaches, and he's naked, and we're going to find out later some more information about his appearance. And then he's living in the tombs.

Now don't think modern-day cemetery with a bunch of headstones. Think about this when we talked about it in chapter 7 with the woman who was going to bury her son. They had these little hillside caves, and they would go into these caves and carve out almost like shelves where they would lay the bodies of their dead in that town.

And so in those tombs would be shelter. You'd have dead bodies in there with you, but you would have some sort of shelter.

Like that's where this guy lived, in those tombs, when he wasn't bothering people. So here's this guy, and he's obviously out of his mind.

[14:40] Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains, he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. So the idea of cutting yourself is not a newer phenomenon.

It goes all the way back here to this particular man. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. So I'm imagining the rest of the disciples in the boat maybe haven't gotten out of the boat yet.

And they're maybe huddled in the back of the boat, trying, well, you know you go, know you go. Because they're afraid of this guy. But he's not coming to attack Jesus.

Actually, Jesus went there to attack these particular demons that are possessing this man. So he comes from afar off, and I'm imagining he's screaming and wailing the whole time, running down the hill to get to where they're at by the seashore.

When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, What do you have to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?

[15:55] I beg you, do not torment me. Now we're going to find out that even before he says this, Jesus had commanded the demons to come out of this man, that the demons would release this man.

And so here are these demons, and I don't know what this sounds like or whatever. You can kind of imagine with your movie watching.

And behold, they cried out. This is Matthew's account. What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us?

Notice the highlight. Before our time. In other words, they know Jesus is coming. They think it's not time yet, because don't you know the demons know the Bible?

And they know their time is coming. They know that there's a judgment day coming. And so they're asking Jesus, Are you coming to us to torment us, to judge us before that time?

[17:10] As if to say, That's not fair. Back in Luke, For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man.

And then Luke gives us a little parenthetical statement here. The ESV provides us with parentheses to help us to see that this is kind of a side note about this particular man.

For many a time it had seized him. The demons had seized him. He was kept under guard previously. This is now in the past. He'd been kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but they couldn't hold him.

He would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert. So this was, he's at this point, he's free. He's not bound at this point.

But in the past, they've tried to contain this particular demon-possessed man. Jesus then asked the man, asked him, What is your name?

[18:10] So he's asking the man, maybe as a reminder of who this man was previous to the demon possession, maybe as a way to remind him that he did have a life before all of this began.

But that's not who answered. What came out, and just for imagination's sake, Oh, my name is Legion.

For we are many. I'm just, again, I watch too many movies. It's, no idea what demons sound like.

But, here you go. This is, not scary for Jesus. I don't know about the disciples. And they begged him not to command them to part into the abyss.

Now, this is a very interesting statement here that we're going to cover in a little while. We're going to talk about what they're actually asking for here in a little bit.

[19:14] But they don't want to be judged yet. That's basically the bottom line. And then Luke tells us, all three, Matthew and Mark as well, now, a large herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these.

And so he gave them permission. Really, Jesus? You're going to let them do this? Now, again, it's interesting.

They're still living in an Old Testament economy. So for Jewish people, and this is kind of like on the border between Jewish and Gentile communities here. And so large herd of pigs, Mark tells us there's 2,000 of these pigs.

That's a lot of bacon. I'm a little sad what happens to this bacon. Let me tell you. But 2,000 of these pigs, and again, who are the ones in charge of raising these pigs?

Are they Jews selling them to Gentiles? Or are these like black market pigs and Jews are buying them and eating them? And what's going on here? And so it's fishy.

[20:22] The whole thing with the pigs here is just fishy because these are unclean animals. Even to be around them, to touch them, makes you ceremonially, spiritually unclean.

So, hey, there's these pigs over there. Let us go into... They know they're going away, these demons. They know that. That's a given for them.

It's not like they're going to be fighting here. It's not like, you know, we're going to have a spiritual tussle going on here. They're in complete submission to Jesus. And so they're begging him. Hey, send us into that herd of pigs over there. Let's do that instead. And Jesus gives them permission to do this.

So the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs. And the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. Bye-bye bacon.

[21 : 20] Now, the name Legion, backtrack just a little bit. The name Legion, that's talking about a Roman group of soldiers that would number in the thousands, upwards of 5,000 soldiers.

Now, I don't know that this man had 5,000 demons in him, but the name indicates that there were quite a few demons that had taken possession of this man.

And they left this man, went into the herd of pigs. The pigs went into the lake and drowned. So did the demons end up in the abyss after all anyway?

Or, we don't know. We don't have the answer to that question. But, you know, inquiring minds want to know. We won't, we will, you know, we'll talk to this particular formerly demon-possessed man when we get to heaven and find out.

And when the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. They were like evangelists. Not really.

[22 : 28] Sort of. In a weird way. They were telling everybody what Jesus had done to their pigs. They're gone. They don't have any pigs to take care of anymore.

Then the people, and get a load of this, the people from that town went out to see what had happened. And they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting and at the feet of Jesus clothed clothed and in his right mind.

So some time had passed. This man had been able to go home and take a shower, right? Had been able to get cleaned up. However, they did that back then.

And to put on regular clothes. And he's seated and he's in his right mind. And the people in town, very famous man, they had to alter travel plans around where this guy would be.

And there he is. Just seated at the feet of Jesus. Not naked. All cleaned up. And in his right mind.

[23 : 47] And the people of the town did what? Rejoiced! No, that's not the answer. They were so happy.

No. They were afraid. And in my mind, I'm thinking, okay, the time to be afraid was beforehand. You know, when he was threatening you and wanting to beat the tar out of you and, you know, all of that kind of stuff. Now that he's cleaned up and dressed up and the demons are gone and he's right and he's right.

Praise the Lord! Heard! No. That is not their response. They were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed.

And again, you would think that there would be, I mean, what would we do in a situation like that? I would like to think that we'd be rejoicing. rejoicing for this man, rejoicing in the Lord and what he had done.

[24 : 59] And then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to depart from them for they were seized with great fear.

A lot of times, that's an exaggeration, there are times where I've heard preachers talk about this particular passage or even commentaries talking about how the reason why they asked Jesus to leave was because they lost their economy.

Because Jesus sent the pigs into the lake. That's not in the text. That's just an assumption that we would make based on we're economy-focused, we're financially focused, right?

Maybe the guys who were in charge of the pigs, maybe they were a bit upset by that. I imagine they were. But that's not who these people are. Are these people like so bummed they're not going to get a regular supply of bacon anymore?

That they're sending Jesus? No, the text tells us why they want Jesus to leave. And it's because they're afraid. What are they afraid of?

[26 : 10] This man's just been healed of this demon or multiple demons. Are they afraid that, well, now I'm going to have to get my life in order?

If Jesus stays around, I better have to, you know, I better get my act in gear. I better, you know, mind my P's and Q's, but I don't want to do that. So, they're afraid. They're afraid after the healing. So, Jesus is making preparations to get in the boat and leave and the man from whom the demons had gone begged Jesus that he might be with him. He wants to go with Jesus. He wants to travel with the disciples. His life has been radically saved, radically changed. He's a completely different man. but Jesus sent him away. And this is like one of those Apostle Peter moments where you're like, Jesus, what are you doing?

[27 : 23] You granted the wish of the demons? You said yes to the demons and you say no to this guy who's just gotten saved, who's just gotten his life back?

How could he do that? Instead, he says, return to your home and declare how much God has done for you.

So, he, in a sense, commissions him to go and be an evangelist to the people who would know him best. Ah, I get it.

I get it. And he went away proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him. Imagine that testimony.

Imagine sitting in church and hearing that testimony. And then Mark tells us that he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis.

[28 : 32] Decapolis is just a fancy Greek word to mean ten-city area. It's all, it's just ten little, little, little cities dotting along the seashore there.

And he was known throughout that whole area for what Jesus had done for him. He went and declared and everyone marveled.

Luke's favorite word. Actually, this is Mark this time. Everyone marveled at that. What a story. What Jesus did.

Talk about a heart, hardened heart to the gospel, wouldn't be ready. I mean, the thing you're thinking is, I need to survive this encounter.

I'm not so much concerned about sharing the gospel with this guy. Jesus gets off the boat and he's like in attack mode. I'm coming for this guy. He's going to be saved today. And the demons do exactly what they're told.

[29 : 35] Now, we're almost done. I want to talk about these demons and their response to Jesus. And I want to do it from the context of you and I today and our response to Jesus.

And think about all the people that you know, all the people in our communities and everywhere, actually worldwide, but let's focus on our little area here who are doubters of I don't know if Jesus is really God or I don't know if Jesus is, you know, the son of God or I don't, you know, do I need to submit my life to him?

I don't know, as long as I believe in him, that's all that really matters. And I want us to take, this is going to sound weird, all right, that the preacher is saying this out loud.

I want us to learn, I want us to take a lesson from these demons that had possessed this man. Is there something that we can learn from their response to Jesus that ought to inform how we view the Lord, how we view Jesus, how we are to respond to him, the responsibility, the accountability that we have to respond to Jesus.

Jesus. And so while some people struggle with doubt about Jesus, you have this on your notes, and we do. I mean, we have passages like this in James 2.19.

[31 : 08] You believe that God is one. Okay? This is James declaring kind of a theological statement. Like, this is a point of theology.

You believe that God is one. God. The people that James was writing to, and that would include us, we believe that there's just the one God.

You believe that. There's just the one God, right? Everybody in the room. Now, in a Roman culture, that would be a weird thing to say, right? Because in a Roman culture, Greek culture, no, there's multiple gods.

What are you talking about? No. You guys believe that there's just the one God. And then he says, well, that's great. Even the demons believe that.

The demons have correct belief. The demons have correct doctrine. Where does that get them?

[32 : 10] What does that do for them? Yeah, not much. They're terrified. They shudder. And we see exactly that. What James is saying here, we see exactly that in these demons that have

possessed this man.

So, for instance, when we read the text today, and as we've read through this, we've already seen all of these things in statement form. Demons believe in the reality of the incarnation.

This is huge. This is what we celebrate at Christmas time, right? That Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit through the Virgin Mary and became both God and man at the same time.

Our minds don't understand that. That Jesus is both God and man at the same time. Demons believe that. Sometimes people think, well, Christmas is all just about Santa Claus and decorations and eating cakes and puddings and whatever, I don't know.

Whatever you eat at Christmas time. Cookies. And no, these guys theologically get it. I mean, look at Jesus, Son of the Most High God.

[33 : 28] That's just, you know, not just a name. These are real titles that they're declaring. They get who this is, standing on the shore, who's come after them.

The Son of the Most High God. That is a unique declaration absolutely declaring that they believe that Jesus is the Son of God incarnate.

The word incarnate, God becomes man. He's both God and man at the same time. It's a unique theological position that Christians accept, and so do the demons.

demons believe in the absolute deity of Jesus. I mean, when they see Jesus show up on shore, they come charging down the hill.

This guy, you just, and again, the scene, but it's not he's coming to attack Jesus.

[34 : 35] He's coming because Jesus wants him there. They get that. They cried out, what have you to do with us, oh, Son of God?

They get that this is God himself, and they have no choice but to submit. If they didn't believe that Jesus is God, why would they submit to him?

And yet, we have people in our world, in our culture, who struggle with the idea of, well, he was just a good teacher. He was just a good man who, unfortunately, the world killed him before his time.

How can the demons get it? Now, they've already been judged, right? The demons, they've already been judged, they know what's coming, our judgment is yet to come.

But for them, this is settled. Settled. It's a done deal for them. They believe, demons believe, in the certainty of future prophetic events.

[35 : 59] When people today, and maybe there are people in this room who struggle with the idea of the future prophecy prophecy that's yet to come, and yet from a correct perspective, future prophecy is history that just hasn't happened yet.

It's coming, right? And that's how the demons view it. They know it's coming, right?

Remember how they said before the time, are you here? They know their judgment's coming. They know their torment is coming. coming. And Jesus, what are you doing here before the time?

But they know it's coming. And then what's interesting, and we read from the English Standard Version, this is the NIV. And in the NIV, I think they properly capitalized the word abyss because it's talking about a particular place in prophecy.

The abyss, when they said, hey, hey, don't send us into the abyss. It wasn't just some random pit somewhere. Sometimes it's translated pit or bottomless pit.

[37 : 08] But this is the abyss. We see this in future prophecy. We know Revelation chapter 20, he sees the dragon.

This is preparing now for the millennial kingdom. So the church has been raptured. The world has gone through the tribulation. Jesus has returned and he's setting up his kingdom on the earth and he seizes the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the devil, right, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years and threw him where?

Into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him. They know that's coming. They know.

oh, it's settled issue for them. Demons believe in the inevitability of their future judgment.

We've talked about this before. I mean, the Bible makes this very clear. Then, this is in Matthew 25, again, talking about events at the end of the tribulation before the kingdom is brought to bear on the world.

[38 : 33] He will say to those on his left, this is Jesus talking about the judgment of the sheep and the goats. At the end of the tribulation, the sheep are those who are saved during the tribulation.

The goats are those who are lost, remain lost during the tribulation. Depart from me. He's talking about the lost people. You curse it into the eternal fire prepared for the what?

The devil and his angels. You notice the fires of hell are not prepared for us. Prepared for the devil and his angels.

But when we choose to reject the grace of the Lord, this is where we end up. If we choose to reject him, the devil and his angels, they made their choice even before the world was created.

Their fate, their doom has been sealed since that time. They know it's coming. They absolutely know it's coming. Demons are under the ultimate authority of Jesus Christ.

[39 : 53] They can do no other but to obey. And again, a large herd of pigs, let us go into the pigs, and he gave them permission.

Jesus is in charge. I think he knows what he's doing. Can we just agree on that? Why would I struggle with this?

And then the demons came out of the man and they did exactly what Jesus commanded them to do. They had no other choice. They must do what Jesus commands them to do.

So the question for us, I hope all of those things are settled in your mind as they are for the demons.

The question then becomes, are you just going to believe stuff but never surrender your life to him? Are you thinking that your correct doctrine does anything for you in terms of your own future judgment?

[41 : 12] Do you know the Lord as Savior? Or do you respond to something like that by saying, well, I believe in God. And again, James would say, that's great.

So do the demons. It doesn't do anything for him. But is your faith more than just a knowledge? Or is your faith the kind of faith that says, I trust you with my life?

It's yours. It's, in a sense, a surrendering of yourself to him. I trust you, not just with my words, not just with my mind, but with my whole self.

Lord, I trust you with my life. It's yours. And when we say that to him, it's as if we're saying, Lord, do with my life as you please.

It's yours. I like what you have in mind. The things that you promised, I'm in. I'm all in. That's saving faith.

[42 : 32] To say, yes, I trust you. I trust you with my life. Now, once you do that, is your life going to be perfect from there?

You're never going to sin again. Right? Everything is just going to come up roses with no thorns. It's just going to be beautiful. You're going to have plenty of money. You're going to have plenty of health.

You're going to feel great. You're going to do great. It's just going to be so wonderful for you going forward once you've made that decision. Amen? Unfortunately, those promises are actually good for us.

Those promises are what's guaranteed in heaven. But in the here and now, Jesus promised us hardship.

And we're going to face temptation. And we're going to fall. And we're going to be incomplete. And he's going to continue to do the work in us to grow us and to mature us until that day when we see Jesus face to face.

[43 : 42] And what a day that will be. But my prayer for you is that you would have this settled in your heart, settled in your life.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Lord, through this story, we learn that these demons, theologically, it seems like they've got this stuff figured out.

But it doesn't do them any good. Help us to see that. Help us to see that by coming to church and learning theology or learning doctrine or learning these stories that we read in the Bible, if we never surrender our life to you, if we never trust you in that complete way, the question becomes, what good does all that stuff do us?

If we have all the right knowledge, even if we seem to behave, at least from the perspective of other people, but if we never trust you with our lives, Lord, I pray for those who are here today or those watching online, Lord, you would impress upon their hearts the need to trust you, to trust you with their lives, to be all in, to not try to think their way with knowledge into heaven, or to behave their way, we can't do those things, it is impossible for us, that a right relationship with you and a right standing before you, when we stand before you, that only comes through faith, the kind of faith that's not just a head knowledge, but the kind of faith that says,

I'm yours, I trust you with my life, there is no plan B, there is no other alternative, this is the only hope that we have, and when we make that decision, yes, our life is enriched by all the wonderful things that we learn in the scriptures, and yes, our life is better when we live life your way, but we don't do those things in order to be accepted by you, we do those things because we belong to you, because you've already accepted us, because you've saved us, we're now part of the family, so Lord, I pray for those who have yet to make that decision, that even today, that they would be in the place where they need to see and to hear and to accept this truth, and to trust you, to completely trust you with their life.

[47 : 37] Lord, we love you, we thank you, in Jesus' name, amen. Amen. to