



LESSON 9

Luke 8:22-56

Opening Discussion

- *Name someone (a person living now or recently, famous or not) who has earned your trust.*

Introduction

The disciples have just heard Jesus teaching the crowds.

Now Jesus wants to go to the other side of the lake. They are on the Sea of Galilee – a relatively small body of water nestled between hills, which makes it like a basin, vulnerable to storms that appear out of nowhere.

First century Jews weren't necessarily sea-faring people. Except for fishing, they left the waters to their Phoenician neighbors. These Jews believed that the sea was evil and full of demonic creatures. They preferred to stay away.

So crossing the sea even on a calm day was not high on any of the disciples' agendas. They would much rather stay on land. But Jesus is about to demonstrate that he controls the waters, not evil creatures.

The Biblical Text

Luke 8:22-25 (A Demonic Storm)

- Jesus tells his disciples he wants to go to the “**other side** of the lake” (8:22).
 - This isn't just a small geographical detail.
 - The “other side of the lake” is similar to “the **other side of the tracks.**”
 - It's not Jesus' home turf.
 - He's worked with Gentiles before (e.g., the centurion), but he's never ventured out of the main Israelite territory.
 - Jesus and his disciples are now going into **unfamiliar territory.**
 - We can guess that some **trouble** is ahead.
- Jesus, presumably exhausted from his many interactions with people, falls **asleep.**
- A “**furious squall**” comes down on the lake.
 - This lake is prone to **quick, violent storms.**

- But many of the disciples are fishermen, accustomed to the water. So this must be an **unusually terrible storm**.
- The Jews believed the waters to be the hangout of **demons**.
- So a violent storm wouldn't just be seen as a dangerous meteorological event; it was the **unleashing of demons**.
- The boat is being swamped, and Luke tells us they were in "**great danger**" (8:23).
- The disciples go find Jesus and tell him they're going to **drown** in the storm.
- Jesus gets up and **rebukes** the wind and waters.
 - The word "rebukes" indicates that Jesus is treating the storm like a **demonic event** as well. The wind and waters are something to be "rebuked," not just stopped.
 - Later on, Jesus will "**rebuke**" an **evil spirit** (9:42).
- After the storm calms down, Jesus chastises his disciples: "**Where is your faith?**" he says (8:25).
- The disciples are afraid and **amazed** (again, the common reaction to Jesus' words and actions).
- They wonder, "**Who is this?**" (8:25).

- *How could Jesus possibly be asleep during this?*
- *Have you ever been upset at another person's reaction in a moment of crisis?*
- *By saying, "Master, master, we're going to drown," what are the disciples implying?*
 - *They must think Jesus can do something about it. As much as it seems like they often "don't get it," they admit their faith in Jesus here by assuming Jesus can keep them from drowning.*
- *Why does Jesus expect his disciples to have faith at this point?*
- *Why are the disciples still wondering who Jesus is?*

Luke 8:26-39 (A Demonic Man)

- Now Jesus and his disciples are near their destination.
- Upon disembarking, Jesus is met by a **demon-possessed man**.
 - This man was **naked** and **living in the tombs**.
- The man **acknowledges Jesus** as the Son of God. The **disciples know less** about who Jesus is than this man does.
 - At the end of the storm-calming story, the disciples ask, "Who is this?" (8:25).
 - Here, this man **immediately confesses Jesus** as the "**son of the Most High God**" (8:28).
- Jesus **commands the demons to leave** the man, but the man (and/or the demons) is worried it will be torturous, so he asks Jesus not to. He knows what the demons can do when provoked.
- Jesus then asks the man's **name**.
- He says his name is **Legion** (for the many demons who possess him).
- Then they (the demons, not the man) beg Jesus **not to send them away**.
 - Apparently they know what Jesus is capable of.
- They know their fate is sealed, but they ask to be **sent into the pigs instead**, so Jesus does so, and the pigs, now demon-possessed, run over a cliff and drown.

- The demons don't want to go into the Abyss, but they end up drowning in the demon-filled water anyway.
- The pig-tenders are understandably **shocked** and report the incident.
- When onlookers come, the man is now in his **right mind** and looking **presentable**.
- The people, however, are **afraid** of Jesus (and maybe afraid for their animals) so they **ask him to leave**.
- Jesus doesn't let the man go with him, but instead gives him permission to **tell everyone** about what happened.
 - Jesus tells him to "tell how much **God** has done for you" (8:39a).
 - The man tells "how much **Jesus** had done for him" (8:39b).
 - Again, this man realizes that **Jesus and God are one and the same**.

- *How can these demons know who Jesus is, but his disciples don't?*
- *What result did this exorcism have on this man?*
- *Talk about the most profound change you've seen in someone who has encountered Christ.*
- *Why does Jesus tell this man to spread the news while other times, he tells people not to tell anyone what he's just done for them (5:14)?*
 - *Perhaps people on the "other side of the lake" are allowed to speak about these things.*

Luke 8:40-56 (A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman)

- Jesus comes back to his **home turf** to find a welcoming crowd.
- A leading official in the synagogue, Jairus (Jay-eye-rus), falls at Jesus' feet, asking him to heal his **dying 12-year-old daughter**.
- Jesus starts out on his way to Jairus' house, but the **crowds crush** him.
- While on his way, a **woman who had been bleeding** for twelve years approaches.
 - Don't miss the **parallelism** between the **12-year-old** and the woman bleeding for **12 years**.
 - The woman's flow of blood would not only have been a **health** and **reproductive issue**; it would have rendered her **unclean** and a **social outcast**.
 - Think back to Jesus' healing of another person whose health condition made him a social outcast (5:12-16).
- She silently **touches Jesus' cloak** and her bleeding stops immediately.
- Jesus asks aloud, "**Who touched me?**"
- Peter finds this question useless. There is a whole crowd of people around, so there would be **no way to know**.
- Jesus is **persistent**, knowing that power has gone out from him (8:46).
- The woman is understandably **fearful to admit** it was her.
 - By touching Jesus, she would have **made him unclean** too.
 - But as we've seen, **healing flows out of Jesus**; **uncleanness does not transfer to** him.
- Jesus **affirms** this woman, telling her that her **faith has healed her**, and calling her the affectionate familial name "**daughter**."

- Remember that Jesus recently said that his **true family** consists of those who **hear** and **act** on his words (8:21).
- Jump back to the Jairus story: **Jairus' daughter has died** in the meantime. His messenger tells Jairus not to bother Jesus anymore.
- Jesus tells Jairus to do what this woman has just done: **have faith, and healing will come**.
- Jesus goes to the house, and enters, along with Peter, John, and James, as well as Jairus and his wife.
- The people are already engaged in **ritual mourning** for the dead.
- Jesus tells them to stop the funeral proceedings! The **girl is only asleep!**
- In spite of their unbelieving laughter, Jesus tells the girl to **get up**.
- She **awakens** and **eats**.
 - Luke might be telling us this as proof that she is **alive** and **functioning**.
 - One of the most basic tests of **medical status** is whether a person can eat (and keep it down!).
- Jairus and his wife were **astonished** (a bit of a twist on the standard “amazed”).
- Jesus tells them **not to tell** anyone.

- *What kind of faith does Jairus have?*
- *What are the similarities between this story and that of the centurion in Luke 7:1-10?*
- *The story of the bleeding woman is sandwiched between the beginning and end of the story of Jairus' daughter. Is there anything to this? Is Luke employing any helpful literary crafting here?*
- *Jesus is back to telling people not to spread news of the healing. Why?*
 - *Again, we're back on the original side of the lake, where people have to be cautious how they speak about Jesus.*

Application

- *In what moments have you been like Jairus or the bleeding woman? What about like the unsteady disciples?*
- *Talk about a critical moment when you failed to trust God.*
- *How has Jesus proven trustworthy?*
- *Do you believe Jesus has the power to rebuke storms (figuratively) today?*
- *What places today are like the first side of the lake, where we must think carefully about how we speak of Jesus? What places are like the other side?*

Next Week's Text

Luke 9:1-50