

SHOWING GOD'S GREATNESS AT HOME

TEXT – Luke 8:26-39 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

Here we read the story of the maniac of Gadara. We are all probably familiar with this incredible story of the power of Christ over Satan. I want to take one point out of this entire story and apply it to our lives today.

Let's look again at the beginning of verse 39.

Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee.

Here we have the story of a man whose life has been incredibly changed by Jesus Christ. This man wants to follow Jesus and be with Him. However, Jesus gives him a different command. He told the man to GO HOME and show the difference that God has made in His life to those of his own house.

I believe this is one of the most neglected areas of the Christian life – showing Christ in our homes. Most of us are pretty good at coming to church and acting like Christians. Many of us are even willing to speak up for Christ in our workplace, and try to have a good testimony in public. But, what are we like at home?

If your Christianity was judged by how you live at home, how good of a Christian would you be rated?

LET'S LOOK AT SOME OF THE WAYS WE CAN SHOW THE CHANGE CHRIST MADE IN US IN OUR HOMES:

1. SPEAK WITH GRACE TOWARD EACH OTHER.

Colossians 4:6

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

- a. As men we need to be careful of how we speak to our wives and our children in our homes. We would never dream of talking to a Christian friend the way we sometimes speak to our wife or children.
- b. We should always speak kindly one to another.
- c. We should always be encouraging one another, not tearing each other down.
- d. We should never criticize our wife to anyone else but the Lord. He is the only one that can change them anyway. If we criticize our wives to others, we cause them to lose respect for our spouse, and we are only looking for personal sympathy.
- e. Our children will mimic our way of talking. If we lose our temper, speak with sarcasm or impatience, they will pick up these nasty habits as well.

2. BE QUICK TO FORGIVE.

Ephesians 4:32

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

- a. If someone outside the family wrongs us and apologizes, we are quick to say, "that's OK." or "no problem."
- b. We should be more eager to forgive those who are of our own house. We shouldn't try to make them grovel or give them the cold shoulder. Remember, if we cannot love our own family the way God wants us to, how can we possibly love God?

3. USE GOOD MANNERS AT HOME.

I Peter 3:8

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

- a. There's no excuse for not using good manners at home. We should treat our wife and children with love, kindness, and courtesy.
- b. We should never treat strangers on the street with more courtesy than we show our own family.

4. FULFILL YOUR GOD GIVEN ROLE GRACIOUSLY.

I Peter 3:7

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

I Timothy 3:4

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

Ephesians 5:33

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

- a. God has given men a specific role to fulfill. Husbands are to love their wives, honour their wives, and rule over their wives and children.

- b. We may not like the role that God has given us. All of the roles (husbands, wives, and children) are hard to fulfill. We may have many excuses why we can't fulfill our role the way we ought to, but this does not change God's commands.
- c. Jesus had a role to fulfill when he came to this earth. It was not a pleasant task. At one point He even asked the Father if He could get out of it. But He willingly submitted Himself to the Father's will in the matter. He is Our Example in submitting Himself to God's commands.
- d. We can only have God's blessings if we each fulfill our role as He has given it to us.

CONCLUSION: The lesson I wanted to get across today from this story of the maniac of Gadara is simply this. Before we go out and try to be a witness and example to a lost world, we need to be sure that we are being a witness and example to our own family in our own home on a daily basis. If our wife and children can't see God's greatness by looking at us, we are failing as men of God.