

Series: The Gospel of Luke
Text: Luke 4:31-37
March 1, 2015: Gospel Community Study Guide

This Study Guide is based on a sermon by Dr. Joshua Mack. You will find the link to the sermon here.

<http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?sid=3615446440>

Getting Started:

This world is filled with many frightening things. We could spend a long time talking about the different problems there are. As Christians, ultimately we believe that Jesus is going to completely fix the mess this world is in.

If you think about it, that's a pretty big thing to say about one person, especially someone who in the gospels, looks as "ordinary" as Jesus. I mean, what did the people of Nazareth say when they heard him making the claims he did? "Isn't this Joseph's son?"

To demonstrate that Jesus is worthy of our trust, we are going to look at him going up against one of the most frightening things in the entire universe, something that certainly is at the core of many of the problems we see all around us.

I am talking about a demon.

We are going to consider some of what the Bible says about demons and also look at how demons reacted to Jesus. But before we do, maybe we can step back and talk a little about how the people around us think about demons.

How would you describe your culture's attitude towards demons? How does the average person from where you are from think about demons? Perhaps give an illustration or two?

Remembering the Message:

This Sunday, we studied Luke 4:31-37. Have everyone in the group read the passage to themselves silently, and then ask someone from the group to summarize the story in their own words.

What is this story basically about? What is Luke telling us about Jesus? Why do you think he is telling us this about Jesus? How does this story connect with the story that went before it?

We said on Sunday this story is intended to show us Jesus' power. How does Luke illustrate the power of Jesus in this story?

Specifically, we mentioned two ways this story puts Jesus' power on display (fill in the blank):

1. Through the demon's _____ to Jesus.
2. Through Jesus' _____ of the demon.

The Big Idea:

There is hardly anything more frightening to most people than a demon, and yet as we look at this story, this demon is clearly frightened by Jesus. While the people of Nazareth didn't see Jesus as being anything out of the ordinary, this demon clearly did.

This demon's response to Jesus and Jesus' rebuke of the demon demonstrate Jesus' power and encourage us that He will have no problems fixing the things that are wrong with this universe. His word is so powerful that evil, unclean demons must obey Him immediately.

Into the Bible:

Since there is a lot of confusion about demons, let's look at the Scriptures and see what we can discover. Look at the some of following verses and think together about what they teach you about this demonic realm.

Colossians 1:16

2 Peter 2:4

John 12:31

2 Corinthians 4:4

Ephesians 2:2

Ephesians 6:12

1 John 5:19

Colossians 2:15

1 Peter 5:8

2 Corinthians 11:14-15; 12:7

1 Timothy 4:1

Revelation 20:10

Summarize what these verses teach you about the devil and demons. Now what questions do you have that they don't they answer?

It's tempting to spend a lot of time thinking about the questions the Bible doesn't answer about demons. But really we should avoid speculation. Instead, we should trust that God has revealed what we need to know in order to live godly lives. And here's one key point we know for sure. Jesus is not scared of demons. Demons are scared of Jesus.

Thinking Further:

Many people are afraid of demons and spirits and curses. Do you think a believer should be afraid of demons? Why or why not?

Read the following quote from John MacArthur and then have the people in your group share their response to it:

“I want you to know something. You might think that you as a believer need to be afraid of demons. Wrong. You don't need to be afraid of them. Demons live in constant terror. The demons believe...They know that Jesus is going to come back and bind them for a thousand years and then throw them in the lake of fire. They can read Revelation just like we can. The demons know the story. They're in constant fear because they also don't know the day nor the hour when the Son of Man is going to come and render their judgment. So the demons believe and because they believe the truth, they are in a constant state of trembling. They're afraid...they're afraid. You don't have any reason as a believer to be afraid of demons. The demons live in fear. We believe and have no fear, right? Because we believe the gospel and the gospel tells us that our eternity is settled and secure and in that we rejoice. The demons know the very opposite. They know for them there is no salvation, only a lake of fire. They don't know exactly when that's going to come, they know it's inevitable and they live in constant terror.”

To Think About:

The reason we as believers don't need to be frightened by demons and curses and all of those things is not because we are so strong, but because Jesus is and we belong to Him.

What are some of the main encouragements or challenges you have taken from what we have studied together today? Is there any specific word of praise you would like to give to God for what you have learned about Jesus today?

How about questions? Do you have any thing you are still wondering from what we have talked about? What are some of the practical differences what you studied makes on your life? What would you like to share with someone else? Is there any specific issue that this study has brought up that you want the members of your gospel community to be praying for you about?