Recovered Faith
Luke 8:26-36
SS Lesson for 04/17/2016

Devotional Scripture:  Is 61:1-4

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From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

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Introduction

Overview and Key Verse of the Lesson

The lesson reveals the reality and joy of receiving Recovered Faith. The study's aim is to have confidence that victory over demonic influences is possible. The study's application is to take steps to guard against demonic influences and/or remove ourselves from them.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Key Verse: Luke 8:35

Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

Commentary from The Bible Knowledge Commentary

Whereas Matthew wrote that Jesus met two demon-possessed men (Matt. 8:28-34), Luke wrote about only one of the two. There is some confusion as to the place where the miracle occurred. What is meant by the region of the Gerasenes? Apparently the area was named for the small town Gersa (now the ruins of Khersa) on the eastern shore, across the lake from Galilee. Matthew mentioned “the region of the Gadarenes” (Matt. 8:28), which was named for the town Gadara, about six miles southeast of the lower tip of the Sea of Galilee. Perhaps the territory around Gersa belonged to the city of Gadara (cf. comments on Mark 5:1). When Jesus stepped ashore, He was confronted by a man who was demon-possessed. The man’s manner of life showed that he was totally under the demon’s control. He did not take part in normal human amenities (v. 27) and was often forced by the demon to go into solitary places (v. 29). As with most “demonized” individuals in the Gospels, this man was shouting at the top of his voice. The demon recognized Jesus, for the man called Him Jesus, Son of the Most High God. The words, Don't torture me show that the demon recognized that Jesus had control over him even though men could not (v. 29). In answer to Jesus the demon said that his name was Legion, a Latin term denoting a group of about 6,000 Roman soldiers. The point of the name was that a large number of demons were inhabiting the man. The demons asked that Jesus not torment them (Matt. 8:29 adds “before the appointed time”) by asking that they not be sent into the abyss, which was thought of as a place of the dead. The abyss was also thought of as a “watery place,” which made the outcome of this encounter all the more ironic and climactic. At the request of the demons Jesus let them enter into a large herd of pigs nearby which immediately rushed over a cliff into the lake and were drowned. Thus the request not to be sent into the abyss was granted by Jesus, but they were sent to watery place anyhow. The effect of the miracle on the people of the area was fear (vv. 35, 37; cf. 7:16; 8:25). This fear was enough to cause them to ask Jesus to leave. In contrast with those people the previously demon-possessed man was, on Jesus’ command, spreading the news of what had happened to him. This was the first recorded witness of Jesus in a Gentile area.

Commentary from The Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

Have you ever said of someone, “Goodness, how he has changed!”? Perhaps it was someone you knew from your school days or maybe a former colleague. That person may have so altered in appearance or attitude that he or she was almost unrecognizable. If you have ever attended a high school reunion, you will know what I am talking about. This experience happened to me a few years ago at a local store. I was strolling through the aisles when a man approached me. He greeted me warmly and asked about my family and life in general. Although he looked familiar, I could not place his face. Taken aback by his casual air, I did not speak. Seeing my hesitancy, he laughed. "You do not recognize me, do you?" he asked. When I admitted as much, he added, "I'm Cory Lauty." I was flabbergasted. Standing before me was one of my former classmates. We had had several classes together, and he was known for flirting with every girl there—except me. Back then, he used to tease me a lot because of my faith. I was further surprised when we continued to chat for several minutes. As we bade each other good-bye, I was still marveling over the conversation. In the meantime, another friend had come upon us and was listening. I turned to him and asked, "Did that really happen? Is that the same Cory?" That question was what everyone in the region of Gadara was asking after Christ's healing of the demoniac recorded in this passage. The change within him was so drastic that he became almost unrecognizable. Before Christ delivered him, this man had been possessed by a host of demons. We are not talking about one, or two, or even ten. He most likely was possessed by hundreds or even thousands. This tragic state had spread ruin throughout his life. He was a
lunatic, yet he possessed great strength. He was prone to violence, causing everyone to fear him. Scripture says that he was naked and living in the wilderness, having been driven there by the demons (Luke 8:27-29). When Jesus arrived, the demons within this man began to beg Him not to send them to the abyss but permit them to go into a herd of pigs nearby (vss. 31-32). It may seem strange that Jesus did not say, "No, you are going back where you are from." I think He knew something we do not. When He allowed them to go into the pigs, the herd ran off a cliff. Thus, the demons still went back to the deep and were not freed to torment anyone else. When the townspeople arrived, they found a man utterly transformed. He was clothed, sane, and calmly sitting at Christ's feet. I later learned that my former schoolmate had become a passionate believer. The one who used to mock my faith has, at times, been a real source of encouragement and accountability. Remembering how adamantly he used to scorn believers, I am awed by God's saving power. Like the Gadarene demoniac, he has been made a new creation (II Cor. 5:17). When people observe him now, they clearly see Christ in him (Gal. 2:20-21).

Lesson Introduction and Background

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

As a child and into her high-school years, Karen had been a happy and relatively carefree person. Following college, she started a career with a company that placed high priority on speed and success. She managed well through her 20s and early 30s, but hit a roadblock after marrying and having her first child. She became depressed and conflicted after the baby came. Karen returned to work, but felt overwhelmed by the responsibilities of job and family. By the time she turned 40, Karen was experiencing bouts of depression on a regular basis. An underlying sense of guilt magnified these feelings. “I’m a Christian,” she would tell her friends. “I’m supposed to be joyful in Christ. I don’t know why I can’t trust God and stop feeling so anxious.” Sometimes when she felt particularly discouraged or helpless, she would challenge God in her prayers: “So, where’s my joy?” About 18 percent of the U.S. adult population suffers from some form of anxiety-related disorder, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America. For Christians, it seems that there should be an inverse correlation between these afflictions and one’s level of faith, but often there is not. Today’s lesson can help us get on the right track in that regard.

Most modern readers of the Bible are aware that the land of Israel was controlled by the Roman Empire during Jesus’ life. Israel was, however, on the extreme eastern edge of that empire, literally on the frontier of Rome’s influence. Not far east of the Jordan River, one entered the Nabatean kingdom; this was where Paul fled for safety after becoming a Christian (see Galatians 1:17, where he refers to the region as “Arabia”). The Romans did not finally seize control of Nabatean-held areas until AD 106. A bit farther north, an area known as the Decapolis (literally, “ten cities”) was situated between the southeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee and a Nabatean-controlled area (compare Mark 5:20; 7:31). The Decapolis was an independent but unofficial league of city-states. These municipalities were not under Rome’s control but were allies of the empire. This area is where today’s lesson is situated. The heritage of the population of the Decapolis was very mixed: some inhabitants came from native Arabic people-groups; some were Greek and Roman colonists and business people; some had migrated from lands farther east (the old Persian and Babylonian empires); some were Jews who had moved to the eastern side of the lake. Despite the presence of the latter, Jesus had entered Gentile territory as we come to Luke 8:26. (Parallel accounts of today’s encounter are found in Matthew 8:28-34 and Mark 5:1-16.)
Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

**Faith Bound (Luke 8:26-29)**

26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.
27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.
28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"
29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

**Bound by demonic influences (26-27)**

*Demonic influences that come to us through temptations (Matt 26:41)*
41 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

*Demonic influences that are part of Satan's schemes (2 Cor 2:11)*
11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

*Demonic influences that come from Satan's prowling (1 Peter 5:8)*
8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to

*Demonic influences that are part of Satan's trap (Luke 21:34)*
34 "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap.

**Bound from righteousness (28)**

*Bound from righteousness by weak principles (Gal 4:9)*
9 But now that you know God — or rather are known by God — how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

*Bound from righteousness by evil associations (Prov 6:27-28)*
27 Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? 28 Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched?

*Bound from righteousness by over self-confidence (Judg 16:20)*
20 Then she called, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He awoke from his sleep and thought, "I'll go out as before and shake myself free." But he did not know that the Lord had left him.

*Bound from righteousness by relying on anything other than God (Isa 31:1)*
31 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord.
Bounds not easily broken (29)

Not easily broken because of the need for powerful prayer (Mark 9:28-29)

28 After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" 29 He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer."

Not easily broken because of the hold on the individual (Luke 9:39)

39 A spirit seizes him and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him.

Not easily broken because of being a captive of Satan (2 Tim 2:25-26)

25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

Not easily broken because of weak spiritual power (Acts 19:15-16)

15 [One day] the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

Faith Freed (Luke 8:30-33)

30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. 32 Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. 33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

Freed by God's control (30-31)

Control of all destiny (Ps 135:6-7)

6 The Lord does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths. 7 He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth; he sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

Control of all creation (Amos 4:13)

13 He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals his thoughts to man, he who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth — the Lord God Almighty is his name.

Control over Satan's influence over man (Job 1:10)

10 "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.

Freed from destruction (32-33)

Freed from destruction through God's patience (1 Peter 3:18-21)

18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, 19 through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison 20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also — not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,
Freed from destruction through God’s gathering (Jer 23:3)
3 "I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number.

Freed from destruction because of seeking God (Acts 15:16-17)
16 "After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, 17 that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things’

Freed from destruction through being chosen by grace (Rom 11:5)
5 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.

Faith Witnessed (Luke 8:34-36)
34 When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country.
35 Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.
36 They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed.

Witness of restoration (34-35)

A restoration from wandering from the truth (James 5:19-20)
19 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, 20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

A restoration from sin (1 John 5:16)
16 If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that.

A restoration from doubting (Jude 22-23)
22 Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear-hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

A restoration from idleness and weakness (1 Thess 5:14)
14 And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

Witness of God's power (36)

God's power that performs miracles (Ps 77:14)
14 You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.

God's power that provides strength to do all things (Phil 4:13)
13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

God's power through His grace (2 Cor 12:9-10)
9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

The day had begun with our Lord teaching the crowds from on board a boat (perhaps that one belonging to one of the fishermen of the disciples), anchored along the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. The use of the boat was not new (cf. Luke 5:3), but our Lord’s method of teaching by means of parables was (Luke 8:3ff.). Here, Luke records only the parable of the soils (8:3-18). At the end of His teaching that day, Jesus had His disciples set out for the other side of the lake (cf. Mark 4:33-36). On the journey across the lake, a great storm arose, which threatened the boat and its passengers. After Jesus had stilled the storm, the boat continued on to the other side of the lake. It is here that our story picks up. It is as Jesus steps out of the boat to the shore that the demoniac appears. The disciples’ hearts were still pounding from the scare they had experienced due to the storm. Their pulse rate was perhaps at last returning to normal. Now, as their boat glided gently up onto the solid ground of the shore, the disciples must have breathed a sigh of relief. I can almost hear one of the disciples sigh, under his breath, “Safe, at last!” What could happen to them now, after their safe landing? The solitude of the lonely shore was probably a welcome scene, after the crowds which had gathered along the other shore. No one probably gave a thought as to why no people were around, or why the road, which led to the nearby town, was empty. The boat landed in sight of a road, which would lead into the town nearby. There, on the hill, was a cemetery of sorts, although I have the feeling another one may have been in greater use. Neither the road nor the cemetery were being used, however, for one reason: two demoniacs dwelt nearby, and no one felt safe to pass by, anywhere where they might be accosted by them (Matthew 8:28). While these men had once lived normal lives in the nearby town (cf. Luke 8:27), they now lived more like animals. The men were demon-possessed, and so they were wild and dangerous. The townspeople had tried by contain and to control the men, even using chains, but their superhuman strength proved too much for the chains (Luke 8:29; Mark 5:3). They no longer wore clothes, and they often cried out in loud, inhuman voices, often lacerating themselves with stones (Mark 5:5). They were dangerous not only to any passer-by, but to themselves as well. The two men and the townspeople seemed to have come to an understanding. They would live in seclusion, where they would not hurt anyone else, and the townspeople would leave them alone. It was the best solution, it seemed, under the circumstances. The men were left to themselves, so that whenever the demons chose, they could torment them, but without harm to anyone else. Everyone seemed to know that the place where Jesus had landed was, by common consent, a no-man’s land. Matthew alone tells us that there were two demoniacs, and not just one, as a reading of either Mark or Luke would lead one to conclude. Mark and Luke, who tell only of the one demoniac, also include the report that this man, once restored to sanity, became a follower of our Lord. It take it that the other demoniac did not. Mark and Luke tell us only of the one demoniac, for they are interested in his faith, a faith which the other seems not to possess. As we seek to relive the incident with the demoniac and the herd of swine, we need to recall that the whole scenario was being witnessed by the “pig pokes” or “hog herders,” who saw everything from their elevated vantage point. If we can replay the event in the form of a mental movie, we need to begin with a wide angle lens. The Lord and His disciples have just arrived, and they are standing on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Also, near the lake seems to be the road, which passed beside the graveyard (where the two demoniacs dwelt among the tombs) and which continued on to the nearby town. Slightly higher, somewhat on a hill (it would seem) was the graveyard, where the demoniacs lived. From their position, they could see the boat approaching the shore and the party on board landing. Even higher up were the “pig pokes,” who were tending the hogs, who would later plunge down the steep bank into the Sea of Galilee and drown. Tending the hogs was probably not all that taxing, and thus the herdsmen must have been gazing out on the lake below, and have seen the boat approaching. (They may also have watched the storm, which had threatened this and other boats on the lake.) When they realized that the boat was going to land here, in this virtual “no man’s land,” they must have been expecting that their day would have a little excitement. They knew, of course, that the demoniacs were nearby (no doubt they kept their distance, too) and that no one ever used this road (Matthew 8:28), nor did anyone land on the shore near the graveyard. I can see these “pig-pokes” nudging each other in the ribs, saying, “Hey, Joe, watch this. This is going to be good.” They watched as the two demoniacs swooped down on the unsuspecting disciples, shrieking in a way that would chill anyone’s blood. They giggled as they saw the disciples’ apprehension. They waited for these two violent men to brutalize these men, sending them back in their boat, to wherever they had come from. How they must have marveled to see the two demoniacs fall before

God’s power that provides endurance and patience (Col 1:11)

11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully
Jesus. How their faces must have shown bewilderment as they overheard the statements of these two, screamed loudly enough for them to hear, even from their distance (cf. Matthew 8:29; Luke 8:28; Mark 5:7), declaring Jesus to be the Son of the Most High God (Luke 8:28). And then, can you imagine the uneasiness of these herdsmen when they saw the demoniacs turn in their direction, and point toward the herd of hogs, obviously asking Jesus something about them? When the hogs left the two demoniacs and possessed the pigs, the “hog herdsmen” were the first to know, and to run the other way. When the people of the town asked these herdsmen what had happened, they were able to tell it all, for they had seen the entire incident, located as they were above the entire scene. (It was from this same height that the pigs plunged, over a cliff, or at least a steep bank, into the lake.) As the demoniac rushed downhill from the tombs toward Jesus, eyes crazed, screaming at the top of his lungs, it must have been a frightening sight for the disciples. Perhaps they considered jumping on the man as a group, hoping to have the combined strength to contain him. The demoniac seemed only to see or to care about Jesus, and as he drew near, he fell to his knees. As this man speaks, it is not the person, but rather the demons which are in control. Thus, it is the demons addressing our Lord, as we shall soon see. The demonized man immediately recognized Jesus, even from a distance, as the Son of God and Israel’s Messiah. In Luke’s account, Jesus is acknowledged as “Jesus, Son of the Most High God” (Luke 8:28). When Jesus commanded the demons to come out of this man, whose demonized name was Legion, the demons began to speak through the man. It is very important to take note of the fact that although the demoniacs fell at Jesus’ feet, it was not an act of worship, as it would later be, when the demons were cast from the man. The demons did recognize Jesus’ identity, and they also acknowledged His superiority, His authority over them. They recognized, for example, that He could do with them as He pleased. Their petitions were addressed as those of inferior beings to One who was infinitely superior to them. If I were to characterize the response of the demonized man to Jesus, and thus the response of demons to the Son of God, there is one word which would best summarize their reaction to Him—FEAR. Notice the following characteristics of fear which are evident in Legion’s words:

1. Legion was fearful of the presence of God. The fear of Legion is very different from that of the disciples, in the midst of the storm. The disciples were fearful because they did not realize that God was with them in the boat. The demons are fearful because they know that God is present among them. Their first words to Jesus are a testimony to the fact that they recognize Him as the “Son of the Most High God” (Luke 8:28). They are frightened because they know God is in their midst.

2. The demons were fearful of torment, of the judgment of God. Why would the appearance of Jesus on the other shore of the Sea of Galilee be a cause of fear for the demons? Because they knew that the coming of God’s Messiah spelled destruction for them. Jesus Himself will say of the devil, “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of the world shall be cast out” (John 12:31).

In the beginning, God said that the “seed of the woman” would destroy Satan: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:15).

It is interesting to note that while the demons dread their own torment, they have no qualms about tormenting those whom they possess.

3. The demons were frightened by the timing of His coming. The thing which caught the demons off guard was the timing of His coming. They knew that their time would come, but they did not expect it to come so soon. To them, Jesus had come prematurely, at least according to their scheme of eschatology. Listen to their surprise as they say, “Have you come to torture us before the appointed time?” (Matthew 8:29). The demons knew that Messiah’s coming spelled their doom. What they did not expect was His coming to be so soon. We are inclined to give Satan and his evil hoard too much credit. We think that they are all-knowing when they are not. They, like the Jews of that day, and even like the disciples of our Lord, had a distorted grasp of Messiah’s coming. They looked for but one coming, not two. The demons were looking for the “second coming of Christ,” but they did not expect the first. When Jesus appeared, they were shaken, they were frightened. The fact that Legion ran to Jesus, rather than from Him, indicates (among other things) the demons’ fear and frantic confusion, caused by the unexpected appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. The demons were fearful of the outcome of Christ’s coming for the man they had demonized. The demons dreaded the deliverance of the demoniac. The reasons for this will be seen next.

5. The demons feared disembodiment. Jesus almost immediately began to command the demons to come out of the man. They, just as quickly, began to plead for “mercy.” They knew better than to ask Jesus to continue to possess this man, although that was their preference. If Jesus must cast them out of the man, at least let Him give them some body to possess: “If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.”

Demons would naturally prefer to possess people. Their destructive work would give them greater pleasure, and they could more fully manifest themselves this way (demons could speak through a man’s vocal cords, but we
do not find demons speaking through animals). To be dispossessed of a body was, to the demon, torment. Disembodied spirits could not as fully display themselves and they could through a body.

(6) The demons feared the restriction of their freedom to continue their destructive work. There is a very interesting fact revealed by a comparison of two of the parallel accounts. Notice the difference between these two requests of the demons:

And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss (Luke 8:31).
And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area (Mark 5:10).

It would seem that in putting these two requests together we would have to conclude that to send the demons out of the country would be to send them into the Abyss. Torment, for demons, is to be kept from doing evil. Combining what we learn from various biblical texts enables us to understand what the demons dread here. It would seem from Isaiah (chapter 14), Ezekiel (chapter 28), and Daniel (10:10ff.) that demons seem to have certain geographical boundaries. That is, they seem to have certain territories or spheres of activity, beyond which they cannot venture. We also know from 2 Peter chapter 2 that some demons have already been confined to the “pit” (2 Peter 2:4), just as Satan himself will be put in chains for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-3) in the future. Thus, it would seem that to be sent out of the country would mean being thrown into the Abyss, into a kind of captivity which would greatly confine and restrict their activity. The demons therefore appear to fear any restriction to their present activity, even though they know that they await the judgment of God in the future. There is no repentance here, but only regret if they are restricted from doing what they have always done, which is to rebel against God, to work against His purposes, and to torment men.

I believe that the fear of the demons can be summed up in these words: THE DEMONS FEARED THE PRESENCE AND THE POWER OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT HIS PRESENCE AMONG THEM WOULD RESULT IN CHANGES WHICH WERE NOT VIEWED BY THEM AS DESIRABLE

The demons were evil. They delighted in doing evil. Torture, to them, was being hindered from torturing men. Since they loved to do evil and since Jesus was both good and God, they knew that His coming would have to result in hindering them from continuing to do that which is evil. To an evil creature, bent only on doing evil, good is a most dreaded thing. The evil demons dreaded Jesus’ coming, for they knew it meant good. The demons pled not to be tormented, which, according to our text involved two things. First, they did not wish to be disembodied. Second, they did not wish to be sent from the country. The demons did not wish to be disembodied. It would seem that a demon cannot fully manifest its character and nature apart from possessing a body. To press the matter further, it would seem that apart from possessing a person, with a tongue, the demons could not speak. While it was vastly inferior to possess a pig than a person, at least it was a body. Thus, the demons begged Jesus to allow them to possess the nearby herd of hogs than to be disembodied. Jesus granted the demons’ request to enter the herd of swine, and when they entered them, the entire herd plunged, headlong, into the sea. It is interesting to me to observe that while the disciples had feared drowning in that very sea just a short time earlier, it was a herd of pigs whose fate it was to drown, not the disciples.

When the pigs plunged into the sea, there was little doubt as to what had happened. The herdsmen went off to tell all that would listen about what had happened. The entire town came out to see the scene, and the swine, but most of all to see the Son of God, who had come to their shores.

(Adapted from URL:https://bible.org/seriespage/27-deliverance-demonic-or-unholy-fear-luke-826-39)

Concluding Thoughts from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentator

We believe that believers cannot be demon possessed because we have the Holy Spirit permanently indwelling us. So we do not need to fear what happened to the man in our study today. We also affirmed, however, that we can be influenced by Satan. Satan and his demons are waiting to influence us, but such influence will not occur against our will. We have to allow this influence to come into our lives. We can allow these influences into our lives by what we take in through our eyes and ears. Television and the Internet can be two major means of satanic influence on us today. We also can be influenced by reading materials and by people in our lives. If you sense the influence of Satan in your life, I strongly urge you to take the steps necessary to remove these sources of influence. Removing the sources of influence is important, but we also need to take positive steps. James 4:7 instructs us to "submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." We cannot resist Satan on our own. We can only do so through the power of Christ by drawing near to Him on a daily basis. The good news is we can have spiritual deliverance from satanic influences. Let us endeavor to break the influences in our lives right now and avoid those influences in the future.
Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

1. The powers of darkness can do untold harm, but they quail before the power of Jesus (Luke 8:26-28)
2. Even demons must answer to Jesus (vss. 29-30)
3. Like many unbelievers, demons will try to bargain with the Lord and delay judgment (vs. 31)
4. Demons are powerful, but they can only do what is permitted them (vss. 32-33)
5. Some people are more afraid of the works of God than of the works of darkness (vss. 34-35)
6. When God works in our lives, the news travels (vs. 36)