

# All That Jesus Taught Bible Study - Part 34

by Zac Poonen

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*Jesus' authority and power can still the storms of life, and deliver us from the fear of death and its consequences.*

**Duration:** 24:17

**Scripture:** Matthew 8:26, Hebrews 2:14

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Faith Over Fear"

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## Description

This sermon delves into Matthew 8:28, exploring the encounter of Jesus with two demon-possessed men in the country of the Gadarenes. It emphasizes the power of Jesus to calm external storms and internal turmoil, highlighting the need for faith over fear, especially in facing the fear of death. The sermon underscores the authority believers have in Christ to overcome all trials and challenges, including spiritual battles with demons, through complete surrender to God's will and trust in His protection and timing.

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## Transcript

Today we turn to Matthew's Gospel, chapter 8, and verse 28, continuing our study in all that Jesus taught, by his life, his actions, and by his words. And when Jesus had come to the other side, the country of the Gadarenes, there were two men who were demon possessed. Now, before he came there, I want you to look back at verse 23, where we read about Jesus getting into the boat, and crossing the sea, and then coming here.

Here is where he met these two demon possessed people, and it was like a violent storm in their minds and in their bodies, that the demons had stirred up. And as almost like a preparation for that, we read in verse 23, that Jesus went with his disciples into the sea, across the lake, and verse 24, there was a great storm there, a great storm in the sea, similar to what they would see in these two human beings when they crossed the sea. So there arose a great storm, verse 24, and the boat was covered with waves, but he himself was asleep.

It's something wonderful to see this. Jesus was very human. He was tired, and when he was tired, he would sleep.

And that's the right thing for us to do as well. And they came to him and woke him up, saying, Save us, Lord, we are perishing. And he said to them, Why are you timid, you men of little faith? Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm.

Now is there anything wrong in being concerned and worried and anxious when your boat is about to sink? With the waves, it says here, the boat was covered with the waves. It was a boat, it was a fishing boat, and the water coming into the boat means it would sink. And these were experienced fishermen, some of them, and even they were scared, and they even said words like, We are perishing.

That means we are going to drown in the sea. Now experienced fishermen, experienced swimmers, when they say they're going to drown in the sea, it must be pretty serious. But the Lord doesn't say, Oh, well, I understand your concern.

It's natural to be anxious at such times, but don't worry. No, he immediately gets up and says, You timid people. You men of little faith.

Why are you so timid? Why are you so afraid? Why are you so afraid of perishing? You know, Jesus has come to deliver us from the fear of death. The Bible says that in Hebrews chapter 2. See, these disciples are afraid of death, and it's natural for all human beings to be afraid of death. Every human being is afraid of death, except those who become true disciples of Jesus Christ.

We read in Hebrews chapter 2, verse 14 and 15. These are very important verses. I want to connect this with the apostle saying, Lord, we are perishing.

He says here in Hebrews 2, 14 and 15, that one reason why Jesus took part of our flesh and blood was, now we all know he took part in our flesh and blood in order to die for our sins. There was no other way that our sins could be forgiven and removed, except that he died for our sins. But more than that, this is another great truth in the Bible, in the New Testament, which is not sufficiently preached.

All of Christendom, we hear this preached, Christ died for our sins. How much have you heard it preached? That Christ died to make Satan powerless. To make Satan powerless.

And as much as we can be absolutely sure that our sins are forgiven when we have turned to the Lord in repentance, and asked him to forgive us, we can be equally sure that all the power that Satan had over our lives for so many years is gone. The moment we surrender every area of our life to Christ, it's the areas of your life that you don't surrender to Christ, over which Satan will have power. Remember that.

The verse here is, He took part in flesh and blood that he might render powerless the one who had the power of death, that is the devil. He doesn't say the devil was destroyed. We know Satan is not destroyed.

He's very much alive. And he's still got a lot of power. And he moves around the world.

He rules the entertainment industry of the world. And he works through witches and all types of evil people through the persecutors of Christians. But his power is gone.

And one reason why Satan's power was taken away from him, it says here in Hebrews 2.15, is so that he might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. The fear of death brings us slavery. It is a slavery to be afraid of death.

If you are afraid of death, you are a slave. Not necessarily a slave of the devil, but a slave to fear. It's pretty much as bad to be a slave to fear.

You know that the Lord does not want you to be a slave to fear. It says the fear of death is a slavery. And he died to deliver us not only from sin, but to deliver us from this slavery of the fear of death.

And it says all their lives, the race of Adam, have been slaves to the fear of death. But now we've been delivered. If we accept it, you know, even though Christ accomplished things for us on the cross, it never becomes ours until we receive it by faith.

Christ died for the sins of the world, we read in 1 John 2.2. But the whole world's sins are not forgiven. Even though he's a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, it says in 1 John 2. The reason is the vast majority of people in the world have not accepted it for themselves. In the same way, Christ made Satan powerless so that all people can be freed from the fear of death, all Christians anyway.

But are all Christians freed from the fear of death? No. The vast majority of Christians are not freed. They're in slavery to the fear of death.

And the fear of death, we can say, is the highest of all fears. Number one. Every other fear is lower than that.

The greatest fear is the fear of death. And any fear that you have, any anxiety that you have, any tension that you have due to any other cause is inferior to the fear of death. So when the Lord delivers us from the fear of death, he delivers us from everything else as well.

Because if the greatest fear is gone, then the other fears are gone too. Goliath was killed, we read in 1 Samuel 17, that all the other Philistines ran away because their champion was killed. So when the fear of death is overcome, all the other fears disappear.

So it's very important for every one of us to overcome the number one fear, which is the fear of death. And Hebrews 2, 14 and 15 says, Christ died to deliver us from that. I can't free myself.

It's not a thing of mentally convincing myself. You don't get freed from sin by mentally convincing yourself of anything. We don't teach psychology here.

It's the word of God. It's Christ who delivers us from sin and it's the same Christ who can deliver us completely from the fear of death so that we're not slaves to the fear of death anymore. So this, you know, being bothered by saying, oh save us Lord, we are perishing.

We're not supposed to have that type of fear. Today it may not be waves crashing into the boat. It may be cancer.

It may be something else that comes crashing into our lives and it looks as if our life is sinking and we are gone. And we don't have to get into a panic if we say, oh Lord, please save us. We are perishing.

We can ask God to save us from sickness and even from death. But not in a panic, but in faith. It's quite a different thing to ask in faith and quite a different thing to cry out in panic.

So the Lord said to them, why are you so timid, you men of little faith? They had a little bit of faith. He didn't say you have no faith, but little faith means they had faith enough to follow him, but when it came to certain crisis in life they discovered that it was as good as having no faith at all. So little faith was almost equal to no faith.

It was about the same. And Jesus arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, Matthew 8, 26, and it became perfectly calm. This is a beautiful picture of how the Lord wants to rebuke every storm that ever comes into your life and mine.

You know, the Lord could have taken his disciples through seas that were calm, but they would never have learned anything. It's because they went through stormy seas that they discovered that Christ had the power to still the storm. And that teaches us that one reason why God allows us also to face stormy situations in our life is because he wants to show us that he has the power to still the storm even today.

So don't ever pray, Lord give me a safe, calm passage through life. I want to know the Lord. In fact, the more the Lord loves you, the more he wants to make you more like him.

He will take you through many stormy situations, difficulties and trials and things that other human beings may never face. So that in the purpose in it all is always to show you I still have power to rebuke the storm. So whatever you're facing today or next week or next year, remember this passage.

He arose and rebuked the winds and it became perfectly calm. This is God's will that in our heart there is a perfect calmness at all times. Not because we have never faced a storm, but in spite of the storm.

In the middle of a storm, a person at rest in his heart is a greater testimony to God than a person who's at rest in his heart who's not facing any trials or storms. So that's the thing we can learn here. And the other thing we can learn here is that this is the way God wanted man to live.

You know, when God created Adam, he told him, I want you to have authority over all things on the earth. Subdue everything. Notice the exact words there in Genesis 1. Sometimes we forget when God created man.

It's said here that before he made man, he said, let us make man in our image, John Genesis 1.26, and let them rule. Notice that word. Let them rule.

That's Adam and Eve. They were created to rule. The opposite of ruling is to be a slave.

God's original purpose for man was that he might be a king, queen, ruler, not a slave to anything but let them rule over the birds of the air, the cattle and creeping things. They were to rule over everything. God created man in his own image and gave him authority over everything.

So this is what we see here. Jesus, when he lived on earth, he was demonstrating on earth as it were saying, this is the way my father and I wanted Adam to live when we created him. This is the way that I wanted Adam to live when I created him.

Now here I am on earth showing you how he was supposed to live and he didn't. He failed only because of sin. And now I've come to deliver you from sin so that you can live with supernatural authority on this earth so that fears, anxieties, the storms of life do not disturb the calmness in your soul.

Dear brothers and sisters, dear friends, do you believe this is God's will for you? Every storm still perfectly calm. What a beautiful expression. I wish you would take this to your heart, Matthew 8, 26, and say, Lord, I want this in my life.

I want you to always still every storm. I don't want to escape every storm. I want to go through storms.

But I want to be like you that I can sleep through it without fear because you can still every storm. And of course, people have never seen anything like this. Those disciples marveled saying, what kind of a man is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? The answer, that's how God wanted all men to live.

With authority. To take God's authority. The other thing I want to say is why are you timid? Why are you afraid that you will perish before God's time? When we live in the will of God with all of our life totally surrendered to him, we can be at rest and asleep like Jesus was in the middle of a storm.

Because he knew that he could never die. Nobody could kill him till God's time had come. No storm in the sea could drown him.

We read of another occasion in Luke chapter 4 where in the middle of a sermon people stopped him, pulled him out from the pulpit, took him to the cliff in that town and wanted to throw him down. He just quietly walked out from there. Imagine 200 people grabbing one man and he quietly walks out from there.

That is the authority that we can have. Jesus had no fear. They can try their best.

200 people can grab me, try to throw me down from the cliff. It will not happen because God's time for me has not come. You notice the number of times in John chapter 7 where it says his hour had not come.

At one time it says they could not capture him because his hour had not come. Not because they were not strong enough. They had swords and spears and armor and all that and hundreds of people but when they come to capture Jesus they could not capture him because his hour had not yet come.

And that's why we need if you are surrendered to Christ like that. Now this promise doesn't apply to people who aim in life is to make money or his aim in life is to promote their own honor or his aim in life is to live comfortably or if your only aim in life is to glorify God and to do his will and you've got no other ambition on earth I can assure you in Jesus' name that you cannot die before your time comes. Like the saying goes I'm immortal until my life's work is done.

No one can touch us. We can walk as Jesus walked on this earth with complete freedom from fear, anxiety from the fear of death from the fear of these disciples of perishing. Let the Lord never have to say to us why are you so afraid when the Lord speaks a word of rebuke like that to you.

Listen to that word of rebuke and take it. Why are you afraid you men of little faith? Can't you trust me that there's a God in heaven who controls all our circumstances controls the people who try to harm us controls the devil that he will not allow us to be tested or tried beyond our ability like it says in 1 Corinthians 10 13 you don't need to hear that every now and then like a pep talk to stir you up. It's something that we must believe constantly.

1 Corinthians 10 verse 13 is true all the time. God will never allow us to be tested beyond our ability. Romans 8 28 says he'll make everything work together for our good if we love him and we want to fulfill his purpose in our life.

Sure. And that's why we're not afraid perishing. Let me show you one more verse in this connection.

In Psalm 139 is speaking about the Lord having known us and formed our body in our mother's womb. Psalm 139 and verse 15 onwards your eyes were 16 have seen my unformed substance and in your book all the days that were ordained for me were written down when as yet there was not one of them. Psalm 139 verse 16 before I was born.

He says David says the days that you ordained for me the number of days I was supposed to live on earth in your perfect will are already recorded and before there was even the first day that means before my first

day on earth of birth it was already determined when I should die. So death is not an accidental thing for one who's totally surrendered to God's will. There was an exact date on which Jesus was supposed to be born in God's perfect will and there was an exact date when he was supposed to die.

It was written in the book. God loves us as he loved Jesus and there's a book where it's recorded for me. I believe that I know it's true.

God determined the date I should be born and where I should be born and he's also determined the exact date when I'm supposed to leave this earth to go to be with him forever and that is why I don't live in fear that a road accident or a cancer or persecution may kill me before that time. That is impossible. Well, I'm not looking forward to death.

I'm looking forward to the coming of the Lord like Paul did. He said we who are alive will be caught up but if that is not the Lord's will and it is God's will that I should die then it will not happen before God's time. That assurance I have.

I have no doubt about it at all and I want to say to you exactly like it was for Jesus and as I believe for myself it can be for you too. So there's no need to panic. There's no need to fear.

There's no need to live with unbelief. It's an insult to God when a child of God thinks that the devil is more powerful than Almighty God. You know that's what you're actually saying when you live in fear of circumstances and death and sickness and all that.

You're wondering whether Satan is more powerful than God. He isn't. Nothing is more powerful than God.

God is the only one who is almighty and so the Lord says to him and so the Lord says to these disciples why are you timid O ye of little faith and then they go to the other side the country of the Gadarenes and they see two men who got a storm inside them. The other was a storm out in the sea and here we find people with a storm inside them and the demons inside were kicking up a storm. There the demons kicked up a storm outside on the lake.

Here the demons had kicked up a storm inside these people and they were hurting themselves. Scripture says they cut themselves with knives and stones and they were exceedingly violent. Romans 8 sorry Matthew 8 and verse 28 that no one could pass by that road.

What could they do? They cried out you know it says in another place they would they were tied with chains but they would break the chains and get free. Nobody could tie them down and they cried out saying what have we got to do with you you son of God have you come here to torment us before the time? Demons recognize that there's a time coming when they're going to be tormented forever. They know that.

They believe in eternal torment. A lot of Christians don't a lot of human beings don't believe in an eternal hell. A lot of Christians don't believe in eternal hell but the demons know it's true.

There is a time when but God has allowed them to roam around until that time comes. And the demons know that time is coming. And so that's why they asked Jesus have you come here to torment us before our time? And we read about them saying can you please don't cast us out don't send us to that torment now can you please send us to the swine you're going to cast us out send us into the swine and it's amazing Jesus said be gone one word and all of them all the hundreds or thousands of demons inside

these people because he said his name was legion were left immediately with one word notice also in Matthew 8 verse 16 he cast out the spirits with a word we don't have to shout and scream and yell and cry out for many hours for casting out a demon that would be an indication of powerlessness that would be an indication that we still have to fight the battle no the demons were defeated on the cross every single one of them and with one word one who has faith and authority and anointing of the spirit can cast it out I've seen it happen numerous times in my life with one word in the name of Jesus that is the demon's goal you can have that authority if your life is clean surrender to the Lord and you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ that he has defeated Satan on the cross God bless you we'll continue in our next episode

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