

PULPIT COMPANION

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REVELATIONS 12:11

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In this powerful message, we're challenged to confront the internal storms that rage within us.

The story of Jesus encountering the demon-possessed man in Luke 8:26-39 serves as a profound metaphor for our own spiritual battles. We're reminded that Jesus is bothered by what bothers us - our pain, our struggles, our inner demons.

The key lesson is that we must not normalize dysfunction or accept spiritual bondage as our default state. Instead, we're called to 'get bothered' by what's holding us back from living in the fullness of God's love and purpose.

This message urges us to remember our true identity as children of God, to break free from the 'legions' that seek to define us, and to walk in the freedom and healing that Jesus offers. It's a call to move from the tombs of our past into the testimony of our future, allowing God's transformative power to work in our lives.

SCRIPTURES FROM PULPIT AI

- Luke 8:26-39
- Matthew 14:14-18
- Proverbs 14:12
- Revelation 12:11





DEVOTIONAL

Day 1: Remembering Your True Identity

Reading: Luke 8:26-39

Devotional: In today's passage, we encounter a man possessed by demons who had forgotten his true identity. Jesus asks him, "What is your name?" - not because He didn't know, but to remind the man of who he truly was. Like this man, we often let our struggles, pain, or past define us. But God calls us by our true name - beloved child of God.

Today, reflect on how you've been defining yourself. Have you allowed your challenges or mistakes to overshadow your identity in Christ? Remember, you are not defined by your struggles, but by God's love for you. Pray for God to help you see yourself as He sees you - redeemed, restored, and deeply loved.

Day 2: Breaking Free from Internal Chains

Reading: Romans 8:1-11

Devotional: The man in yesterday's reading was bound by invisible chains - the demons that possessed him. Similarly, we often find ourselves bound by internal chains of fear, doubt, or past trauma.

But Paul reminds us in today's passage that we have been set free by the Spirit of God. What internal "legions" are holding you back from fully embracing your freedom in Christ? It might be negative self-talk, unforgiveness, or unhealthy habits. Identify these chains and bring them before God. Ask Him to fill you with His Spirit, breaking every chain that holds you captive. Remember, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17).





Day 3: The Transformative Power of God's Love

Reading: Ephesians 3:14-21

Devotional: In our sermon, we saw how Jesus' love transformed a man from being demon-possessed to becoming a powerful witness. Paul's prayer in today's reading echoes this transformative power of God's love. He prays for us to be "rooted and established in love" and to grasp how wide, long, high, and deep Christ's love is.

Today, meditate on the vastness of God's love for you. How has His love transformed you? Are there areas in your life where you still need to experience His transformative love? Ask God to deepen your understanding and experience of His love, allowing it to change you from the inside out.

Day 4: From Tomb to Testimony

Reading: John 11:38-44

Devotional: The demon-possessed man in Luke 8 was living among the tombs, symbolizing death and despair. But Jesus called him out, just as He called Lazarus out of the tomb in today's reading.

God wants to move us from our "tombs" - places of despair, hopelessness, or spiritual death - into vibrant life and powerful testimony. What "tomb" might you be living in? It could be depression, addiction, or a sense of purposelessness.

Hear Jesus calling you out today. He wants to turn your story of despair into a testimony of His power and love. Pray for the faith to step out of your tomb and into the new life He offers.





Day 5: Becoming a Place of Welcome

Reading: Matthew 11:28-30, Hebrews 4:14-16

Devotional: Our sermon emphasized the importance of the church being a place of welcome for the broken, not a wall of exclusion.

In today's readings, we see Jesus extending this welcome to all who are weary and burdened. He invites us to come to Him and find rest. As followers of Christ, we're called to extend this same welcome to others.

Reflect on how welcoming you are to those who are different or struggling. Are there ways you've built walls instead of bridges? Ask God to give you His heart of compassion and to show you practical ways to make others feel welcomed and loved. Remember, as you welcome others, you're welcoming Christ Himself (Matthew 25:40).





SMALL GROUP GUIDE: "Get Bothered by What's Bothering You"

Opening Prayer:

Key Scripture:

Discussion Questions:

1. The pastor said, "We live in a world that teaches us to manage pain, medicate trauma, and normalize dysfunction." How have you seen this play out in your own life or in society?
2. Reflect on the statement: "Don't mistake visibility for vitality." In what ways might people appear to be thriving on the outside while struggling internally?
3. The sermon mentions "legions" that can possess us internally. What are some modern-day "legions" that people struggle with?
4. How does remembering our true identity in Christ help combat internal struggles?
5. The pastor stated, "Your healing may cost someone else's hustle." Can you think of examples where personal growth or healing might disrupt existing systems or relationships?
6. Discuss the concept of becoming a "walking testimony." How can our personal transformations impact others around us?
7. Which of the "seven things that ought to bother you" resonated most with you and why?





Practical Applications:

1. Identity Exercise: Take a few minutes to write down your name and positive attributes that reflect your identity in Christ. Share with the group if comfortable.
2. Reflection Journal: This week, keep a journal noting times when you feel "bothered" by something. Reflect on whether these are issues God might be calling you to address.
3. Testimony Sharing: Practice sharing a brief (2-3 minute) testimony of how God has worked in your life. Consider sharing this with someone outside the group this week.
4. Community Action: Discuss as a group one "bothersome" issue in your community. Brainstorm ways you could address this issue in a Christ-like manner.
5. Prayer Partners: Pair up with someone in the group to pray for each other daily this week, focusing on areas where you need God's deliverance or healing.

Key Takeaways:

1. Jesus gets bothered by what bothers us internally, not just external storms.
2. We often accept dysfunction as normal and forget our true identity in Christ.
3. Deliverance can disrupt dysfunctional systems, including economic ones.
4. Our healing and freedom can become a powerful testimony to others.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, thank you for bothering to come into our messy lives and set us free. Help us to remember our true identities in You. Give us the courage to confront the "legions" in our lives and to become walking testimonies of Your transformative power. May we be bothered by the things that bother You and act with Your love and compassion. In Jesus' name, Amen.

