



From the Manger to the Cross, the Men in Christ's Life: The Healing of a Demon-Possessed Man
by Kris Swiatocho
Editors note: This is a part of a series.

My stepfather is only one example of a man who has impacted my life as a result of his relationship with Christ. Throughout this series, I want to share with you about some of the other men who have impacted my life solely because of their relationship with Jesus. I believe as I share that you, too, will connect with them and discover for yourself how God has always had a plan for you, is working it out in your life and will never leave you.

This past fall was one of my craziest speaking tours. Between the work almost every weekend in various states to my father's illness and eventual death, my life was a whirlwind. Once my tour ended, I told the Lord I couldn't do it again at that pace. That I needed to find some way of working in ministry but not have to travel as much. I know I would miss teaching every weekend, but the gain would be community, friends, and family again. Well, God was listening as things changed quickly with 2010. I haven't had as much speaking opportunities, but I have been able to rejoin my home church and get involved, meet my neighbors and start a Bible study, hang with old and new friends, and work on my house and yard. I didn't realize just how much I had missed things till I got back in my house. I didn't realize that all these years of being on the road had worn me down. It was time for change.

Every year God gives me a word(s) that He wants me to pray about and use every day. This year he gave me three words: rest, healing and perception. Rest in that I need time to slow down so I can renew my relationship with him, get my body in better shape, and evaluate where things are; healing due to my father's death and some personal health issues of my own; and perception, seeking God's point of view versus my own. You see, just like in our scripture, the healing of the demon-possessed man, I too have been on a journey of healing. This man was healed, allowing rest from being possessed by these demons and ultimately receiving a new perspective of his life, including a new direction. This man has taught me many things.

They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places. Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left. The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him (Luke 8:26-39).

What I Have Learned from the Healing of a Demon-Possessed Man:

1. This man knew where to turn for help. When we are tired, hurting, struggling, etc. the Lord wants us to come to him. He is the only one who can really help us. We try so many other things in our lives to cope with our problems. We eat,



sleep, and drink too much. We watch way too much TV. We drown ourselves in romance novels. We gamble on sporting events or the lottery. We shop for stuff we don't need. We are obsessive about our home and work. Sometimes we just pretend the issues aren't there by isolating ourselves. It doesn't matter what we use to cope; it all leads to destruction. Destruction of our bodies, our minds and our spirits. Destruction of our relationship with God and others. Remember, we live in a sinful world that will always have problems. So the question is how do we deal with the problems?

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2. When we ask for God's help, we need to be willing to submit to his authority. There are times in my life that I want God to help me, but I want him to help me in my way. God is the ultimate authority. We can't go to God and ask for his help if we aren't willing to accept what he gives us. The problem is, we are afraid of what he may give us. I understand in that in my own life I asked for a change in my schedule. I, of course, wasn't sure what that was going to mean. I knew I couldn't keep going at the rate I was going, but at the same time didn't want to just stop. So he gave me something in-between, allowing me to rest and heal as he made some changes in me.

When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" (Luke 8:28).

3. Jesus has power over all demons. Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. I know that the only reason I fall into the devil's schemes is that I listen to his lies and allow it to happen. I know God's Word tells me that I have the power through Jesus Christ to tell the devil to leave me alone. I have the power through his Word to bind the enemy. I have the power through his spirit to know truth from the lies. The issue is do I use this power or do I try to solve everything in my power. We must remember also that the devil and his demons are real.

For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places (Luke 8:29).

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:7).

4. God's timing is perfect. Some would ask why he would allow these demons to live at all. Why not put them into the Abyss (Revelation 9:1 and Revelation 20:1-3)? Well, this was not the appointed time for this to happen. We all know that God's timing is perfect. We may not think so sometimes, considering some of the decisions we feel he wants us to make. But, if we look back at our lives, we see God's handprint. You can be assured that things happen for a reason. All things work for God's purpose. Sometimes we just have to believe and let it go by trusting him.

Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss (Luke 8:30-31).

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).

5. Jesus sometimes takes away the things we treasure the most to get our attention. The area of land where all of this happened was a place called Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. These were Greek cities (10 of them) and self-governed. These cities had both Jews and Gentiles in them. Now based on what we know of Jews and Gentiles, a Jew would not herd pigs due to the fact they were considered unclean. So we can assume that these pigs were owned by Gentiles. What better way to get the Gentiles to notice what Jesus had done then to have the demons enter the pigs



and subsequently drown? Pigs, like most animals of that time, were a valuable commodity much like our homes, cars, computers, jewelry, relationships, etc. are today. Like the people in Jesus' time, we can easily put things above the Lord. Don't wait till the Lord has to take something away that you value most to get your attention. Ask him today what you are putting more value on than him, repent and receive his forgiveness. Take the next steps to put the right value on the "things" of this world.

A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned (Luke 8:32-33).

6. When the Lord shows us who he is, we need to be ready at a moment's notice to tell others. How prepared are you to share what God has done in your life? Some of us feel we have to have special gifts to share the Good News, but please know we all have a story. We have all had things happen to us and others that we can talk about. Every day God gives us life, shelter, food, etc. Every day we have something we can share with others. I know a lot of us are on Facebook. What a great place to share with the world what the Lord is doing in your life, how he has healed, encouraged, provided and saved those around you! Ask God today how you can be used by him to share the Good News at a moment's notice. Remember, there are opportunities every day. We just need to be looking for them with expectation, availability and positive attitudes.

When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside ... (Luke 8:34).

7. In our need and in our thankfulness, we need to stay humble. I love how this man is now found clothed, rested, in his right mind and sitting at Jesus' feet. What kind of witness was this for those who came running? What does this tell you about how we need to be seen by others? Do people know we love the Lord by how we treat people, our attitudes, how we pay our bills, how we drive our cars, how we spend our time, etc.? If a stranger walked up to you right now, what would you be doing? Now don't get me wrong, we can't sit at Jesus' feet 24/7. But what I am saying here is that we are definitely doing some things we wouldn't want someone to see. And of the things we would like for others to witness ... is it real worship or a show? This man was thankful, as we should be for all things that the Lord does for us. Things we see and things we don't see. Right now get on your knees, get on the floor stretched out and thank the Lord for your life. Acknowledge your need for him. Acknowledge you want it to be his way versus your own. Ask for the Lord's help in doing this.

...and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid (Luke 8:35).

8. Don't be afraid of what the Lord can do through you. Jesus does heal, provides, produces miracles, cares for us, etc. Our fear sometimes keeps Jesus from doing all the things he wants to do for us. We are so afraid we might have to give up our lives as we know it. So afraid of going into unknown territory. So afraid the change might be hard. As a result, we don't do anything but stay in the same place day after day, week after week, year after year. Stop being Moses! Yes, it is hard, and believe me I know. I gave up a successful advertising company to go into full-time ministry. I have never regretted this decision. There are many days I am scared, not knowing the future. But God is for me, has appointed me and so he will provide for me. On my own, I have no one but myself to rely on and well, I choose the Lord. I understand the fear but I know a Savior who has conquered fear. Ask the Lord to help you take the next step in your walk. Perhaps it's a new job, a new place to live, a relationship, a ministry, etc. Be available by God to be used, as he wants.

Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left (Luke 8:36-37).



9. We are all called to go and tell others about Christ whether on a moment's notice like above or through planning and prayer. I shared with you at the start of this article of how I asked God to slow things down a bit. Well, they have slowed down to almost a crawl. But what is amazing is even though things have slowed down, I don't have permission to stop spreading the Good News. I don't have permission to rest to the point that I do nothing. No, God has changed my direction to prepare me for the next step. So whether your mission field is your computer through Facebook or blogging, your neighborhood, cleaning up the streets, helping with the homeless to a foreign country to writing a check, we are all called to tell others about the Lord. The question is, are you doing it? This man was healed. This didn't mean he could take life easy and sit back. This meant he now had a ministry. What is your ministry? What is God calling you to do?

The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him (Luke 8:38-39).

Jesus used this former demon-possessed man to share what he did for him. Jesus had a huge audience of Gentiles who were not expecting a king. They weren't distracted with the misguided understanding of what the coming Messiah would be. They simply got to hear, and in some cases see, who Jesus was and what he could do for them. He came to save us. He came to heal us. He came to build a relationship with us. If you don't know the Lord in your life, [click here](#).

For myself, I am in a place I have never been. A place of trusting the Lord more than ever. Presently due to the economy, ministry as a whole for everyone has changed. Churches have had to let go of pastors and programs. But even though it's been a tough time for churches and ministries, it's also a time to recommit the work the Lord has given us to do. Just because the economy has changed does not mean we are to give up. The work is still there to do. It just requires more faith and trust on our part.

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TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. [Click here](#) to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris's speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

Singles and Relationships by Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell

Many singles are Christians who wonder if God will ever bring a mate their way or if they should just stop focusing on a future with a marriage partner and live the single life to the fullest. Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell offer solid biblical answers for singles in this newest title in Dick's popular 31-Day Experiment Bible study.