



Daily Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

"Love for the Unlovable"

January 27, 2022

Luke 4:31-37 - And He [Jesus] went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And He was teaching them on the Sabbath, and they were astonished at His teaching, for His word possessed authority. And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, "Ha! What have You to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!" And reports about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.



Did you ever notice that the man in this story doesn't ask for help? He is clearly suffering—a demon is ruining his life—but he isn't politely asking, "Jesus, please help me." In fact, he's not at all what you might call an attractive victim. He yells in the synagogue. He blurts out things that are bound to get Jesus in trouble with His enemies. He makes a scene by falling to the floor—or rather, the demon makes a scene. He is not a cute wide-eyed child—he is not polite—he doesn't seem to be appealing in any way. He's just not the kind of guy to tug at your heartstrings.

And yet, he does tug at Jesus' heartstrings. Jesus wastes no time. As soon as the demon starts yelling, Jesus commands it to come out and leave the man alone. Jesus is concerned about the man; He wants to see him well—and He is willing to do whatever it takes to make sure he is rescued.

This story comforts me, because truthfully, most of the time I'm not a particularly attractive victim. I can be grouchy or tired or ornery or unhappy. I may not ask for help. I may even reject it. And I think this is true for most human beings, most of the time. Why should Jesus care about us?

But He does. He sees our situation and He rushes to help us. He does not wait until we ask politely, or fill out forms in triplicate. He comes to us. And He pays the cost to rescue us—even when that cost is His own suffering and death on the cross.

When we are not lovable, still Jesus loves us. He forgives us, helps us, and strengthens

us. He makes us His own people and has promised to give us everlasting life, just as He Himself has risen from the dead. He is Love Himself, loving the unlovable—and then making it possible for us to do the same thing for others.

THE PRAYER: Lord, I need You. Be with me and keep me in Your love. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Reflection Questions:

1. What kind of people or creatures would you say naturally inspire people to help?
2. What kinds do not?
3. What is a specific time when you have seen God's care for you?

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