



LESSON EIGHT: FREEDOM FROM THE DARKNESS

*Lamb of God Lutheran Church, Columbus, OH
November 18, 2018*

RELATING TO THE WORLD'S STORY

- 1) Paul wrote, "At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another" (Titus 3:3). What "enslaves" people today, deceives their emotions, or perhaps becomes the "gods" and "masters" that controls them? How do people try to get free from these "masters"?

LEARNING FROM THE SLAVE GIRL'S STORY

When the evil spirit used the slave girl to taunt Paul, it reminds us of how the demons taunted Jesus too. They recognized Jesus as "the Holy One of God." (See Mark 1:23-28.) Demons know God and his power. It makes them shudder. (See James 2:19.) But the reason Jesus appeared was to destroy the devil's work. The spirit in the slave girl at Philippi recognized that Paul and his team represented Jesus, "the Most High God." Paul commanded the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" Even the gates of hell cannot prevail against a confession of Jesus as Savior and a trust in his authority over everything (Matthew 16:18).

Want to learn more?

Jesus drives out demons by his divine authority

Matthew 8:31
Mark 5:1-20
Luke 8:1-2, 26-39

- 2) Read  Ephesians 1:18-23. Compare the power that Paul had with the power we have in Jesus.

Instead of the gods the world worships, Paul reminded Timothy, "There is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people" (1 Timothy 2:5-6). Jesus fought the battle to free us from our captivity to sin and the devil. It was the promise already in Genesis 3:15. It came at the price of his own perfect life. "It was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed ... but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

- 3) Share examples of captives and ransoms (or rescues) in real life. How does that help us picture how Jesus paid our ransom and redeemed us?

Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 to explain to people what he came to do, “to preach good news to poor... freedom for prisoner...release for oppressed” (Luke 4:14-30). Jesus was “oppressed and afflicted” for our benefit. (Isaiah 53:3). On the cross Jesus carried the struggle against Satan into a victory. And when Jesus rose from the grave, he proved that he broke Satan’s grasp and freed us from our slavery to the fear of death. (See Hebrews 2:14-15.) He “rescued us from the present evil age” (Galatians 1:4) and “the dominion of darkness” (Colossians 1:12-14) to bring us to the kingdom of light. Today through faith in Jesus we share the victory in Jesus and can overcome the world. (See 1 John 5:4-5.) When we get to heaven, it will be the ultimate safe zone where there will be no pain, abuse, or darkness.

- 4) How does each passage show the impact that the freedom we have in Jesus has on our lives.

 Colossians 1:10-14

 Acts 26:15-18

 Galatians 4:3-7

 Romans 6:15-23

Many people groups today live under the fear of the spirit world and its control over their lives. Jesus told Paul to get on his feet. “I am sending you ... to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (Acts 26:16-18). We too are sent to represent Christ to the world around us to bring honor to God and peace to people.

Want to learn more?

*God’s concern for the
oppressed and
disadvantaged*

Deut. 10:17-19

Psalms 146:5-10

Malachi 3:5

5) Describe ways God works through people to show his compassion to the oppressed and disadvantaged people and bring glory to God.

 Deuteronomy 24:17-22

 Isaiah 58:6-11

 Luke 14:11-14

 Matthew 25:31-40

**Motivation from
Isaiah**

Isaiah 35

Isaiah 55

Isaiah 58:1-11

Isaiah 61:1-11

MAKING IT YOUR STORY

6) Who are the oppressed, neglected, struggling, or addicted in your life or community? Determine ways you can reach out to them and help them see Jesus.

THIS WEEK:

- *Learn this Bible Story to share: **Jesus Drives Demons out of a Man in the Decapolis** (Mark 5:1-20).*
- *Learn about WELS Special Ministries at www.wels.net/specialministries to see how you can serve those with special needs and struggles. (See also www.freedomforcaptives.com and www.conquerorsthroughchrist.net.)*

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