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5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
23 June 2013  
Grace-Trinity Lutheran Churches, Wichita  
Luke 8:26-39

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*

Have you ever felt like things are getting out of control?

This is a common feeling at our house.

It takes most of the evening to put the house back together, but only seconds to destroy it again!

One basket of toys gets dumped and then another.

One pile gets formed, then another.

One kid runs one way, another falls, another goes potty, another is hungry and ready to eat.

And then there's the noise.

Sometimes things just get out of control.

It feels and looks like chaos.

And things aren't okay.

Chaos isn't our Lord's way of working.

St. Paul says to the Corinthians,

*"For God is not a God of confusion but of peace."* (1 Cor 14:33)

Creation was all done in order—nothing messy or confusing about it.

The Temple was the same way—

everyone knew who was supposed to be where and when.

There was clean and unclean, holy and profane.

And everyone knew where they stood—

all according to His word.

Our Lord orders all things by His word.

Man and woman are ordered in their creation,

and so each has a unique and different role to fill.

Same with parent and child, teacher and student, employer and employee.

Each is set in an order by our Lord as a way for Him to deliver gifts to us.

But when the order breaks down, then confusion sets in.

When man and woman or husband and wife are disordered, then confusion comes to the home.

When the child tells the parent what to do, again, the order is broken and the gifts are lost.

Order in the home and the state and the church is all established by God in His Word.

He institutes this order so that He could give His gifts in peace and joy.

In today's Gospel, there's no peace or joy for the man of the Gerasenes.

He's known for walking around naked.  
That wasn't a problem back in Eden—  
but he's far removed from Paradise!

In fact, this unclothed man lives among the tombs.  
Mark's Gospel tells us that he would cry out constantly and cut himself.  
That's probably why they tried to bind him.  
But you can't bind the demons with handcuffs or iron bars.

This man lives a life of disorder.  
It's not just toys covering the floor of his home, or dishes left in the sink—  
for him it's a disorder of body and soul.

He's a Gentile, which means he's outside of Israel, outside our Lord's ordering of salvation.  
He's among the tombs, which means he's unclean—unfit for the sanctity of the Temple.  
He's possessed by demons—  
yes, in the plural; Legion is their name.

Now, a Roman legion is roughly 3,000-6,000 foot soldiers with cavalry.  
If a split-personality wasn't confusing enough, what about 4,000 voices telling you what to do?

This man's life is out of order...  
until he encounters Jesus, that is.

Now, when Jesus meets the man the demon instantly cries out.  
He confesses who Jesus is, "*the Son of the Most High God!*"  
The demons recognize the authority of this Jesus—  
they recognize the order:  
He's God, they aren't.

So they beg for mercy.  
They beg not to be cast into hell,  
but to enter the unclean pigs.

Now, notice that nothing happens one way or the other apart from Jesus' word.  
Their torment of the man, their suicide mission with the pigs—  
all of it comes under the order of Jesus' word.

So it is Jesus who sends the legion of demons into the swine and off the cliff.

All things are back in order.  
The man of the Gerasenes is now clothed, and in his right mind, and sitting at the feet of Jesus.

To sit at the feet is to be a disciple.  
This Gentile—unclean, unchosen, unworthy—  
is now ordered as a disciple to Jesus.

Though wanting more, the man is told,  
*“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.”* (Lk 8:39)

And so the man did—  
 he proclaimed to everyone he met what God had done for him in Jesus.

This man—whose life was so out of order, so chaotic by demonic possession—  
 was now free, at peace, and ordered rightly towards God.  
 No longer is he an enemy of God, but a friend, disciple, even a son.

But then there’s you—  
 sons, friends, and disciples of Jesus—  
 who seek the demonic and the disordered life.

Why?

Why do we deny the Lord’s order in marriage and family?  
 Why do we fail to stand up for the defenseless, and watch doctors murder the unborn?  
 Can you get more disordered than that?  
 Why do couples live together without marriage?  
 And why don’t the parents say how disordered it all is?  
 Why do we idolize the progressive and the growing and the prosperous?  
 And then turn and deny the institution that our Lord has given by His word?

We do this because in many ways we’re just like the man from the Gerasenes.  
 Our hearts are split, we’re double-minded, we detest the demons, and yet we believe their lies.  
 Left to ourselves, we could expect the same sort of destruction as the pigs received.

But thanks be to God we’re not left to ourselves.  
 Praise the Lord that He orders all things according to His peace—  
 even us!

We are like this man from the Gerasenes,  
 forgiven, cleansed, healed, and saved—  
 all by the word of Jesus, the Son of the Most High God.

But this Jesus has done more than just cast out the demons within you.  
 He has filled you with His presence;  
 He sent His Holy Spirit to turn your hearts and minds to always be ordered toward Him.  
 He has joined Himself to you so that whatever goes for this Son of the Most High God,  
 also goes for you!

You are His and He is yours.  
 In baptism, at this altar, and by this Word of the Gospel.  
 Go in peace, you’re free and forgiven.

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*