

## NUTS IN THE CEMETERY

(Luke 8:26-39)

Intro: On the outskirts of a small town.  
-There was a big, old pecan tree.  
#Just inside the cemetery fence.

One day two boys:  
-Stopped by the cemetery.  
-Filled up a bucket with pecans.  
-Sat down behind some of the grave stones.  
#To begin dividing up the nuts.  
\*"One for you, one for me."  
\*"One for you, one for me."  
#Several of the nuts.  
\*Got dropped.  
\*Rolled down toward the fence.

Another boy:  
-Came riding by on his bicycle.  
-Thought he heard voices inside the cemetery.  
-Slowed down to investigate.  
#He couldn't see anyone.  
#But sure enough, he could hear voices.  
\*"One for you, one for me."  
\*"One for you, one for me."  
-Certain of what he had heard.  
#He jumped back on his bike.  
\*Raced towards town.  
#On the way.  
\*He met an old man.  
+Hobbling along on a cane.  
#Young boy said excitedly to the old man:  
\*"Come quick."  
\*"You won't believe what I just heard!"  
\*"Satan and the Lord are down at the cemetery,"  
+"Dividing up the souls."  
-Old man said:  
#"Beat it, kid."  
#"Can't you see I can barely walk?"  
-But the boy insisted.  
#So the old man hobbled slowly to the cemetery.

-Standing by the cemetery fence.

#They heard the voice:

\*"One for you, one for me."

\*"One for you, one for me."

#Old man whispered:

\*"Boy, you were telling me the truth."

\*"Let's see if we can see the Lord."

#They peered through the fence.

\*From one angle.

\*Then from another.

+But they could not see the Lord.

#At last they heard:

\*"One for you, one for me."

\*"That's all."

\*"Now lets go get those nuts down by the fence and we'll be done."

It is said:

-Man with the cane.

#Made it back to town.

\*Full five minutes before the boy on the bike.

## I. There Was A Nut In The Cemetery.

### A. Man Who Was Not In His Right Mind.

#### 1. Man of the city.

a. Who didn't live in the city any more.

b. He didn't live in a house.

c. He lived among the tombs.

-I once read of orphans in Cap Haitian, Haiti.

#Who live in a cemetery there.

#They come out of the graveyard.

\*To beg.

\*To steal.

#But when the police are called.

\*They run back into the cemetery.

\*They hide in the tombs.

-This man in our Gospel lesson lived among the tombs.

2. He wore no clothes.

3. He had been chained and shackled.

a. Perhaps for his own protection.

b. Perhaps for the safety of everyone else.

-But he would break loose from the chains.

4. He was a demoniac.

a. Possessed by demons.

b. Demons who would drive him into the wilderness.

- B. There Was A Second Nut In The Cemetery.
1. Jesus was there.
    - a. Don't misunderstand.
      - I'm not suggesting for one moment.
      - #Jesus was not in his right mind.
    - b. But he was in unfamiliar territory.
      - Luke's Gospel has a geographical outline to it.
      - #Following Jesus' birth.
        - \*In Bethlehem.
        - +In Judea.
      - #Early part of Jesus' life and ministry.
        - \*For the most part, takes place in Galilee.
      - #Beginning at Luke 9:51.
        - \*Next week's Gospel lesson.
        - \*Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem.
        - \*Middle part of Luke's Gospel.
          - +Travelogue.
      - #Climax, of course, occurs in Jerusalem.
        - \*Arrest.
        - \*Trial.
        - \*Crucifixion.
        - \*Resurrection.
          - +Of Jesus.
      - In Luke's Gospel.
        - #This is Jesus' first venture off of Jewish soil.
  2. Jesus had crossed the Sea of Galilee.
    - a. He was outside of Galilee.
    - b. He was on the east side of the lake.
    - c. He was in Gentile territory.
      - There were pigs there.
      - #Unclean to a Jew.
      - Jesus was in a cemetery.
        - #An unclean place.
      - Jesus confronted a demon-possessed man.
        - #Man who was out of his mind.
        - #Man whom most people would:
          - \*Avoid.
          - \*Run away from.
  3. Jesus must have been nuts!
    - a. This man didn't have:
      - One demon.
      - Seven demons.
        - #As Mary Magdalene had had (Luke 8:2).
        - \*Indicating she had been a very disturbed woman.

- b. This man had a legion of demons.
  - Roman legion consisted of 5000 or 6000 troops.
- 4. These demons, though many, had met their match.
  - a. They begged not to be sent back into the abyss.
    - Prison for disobedient spirits.
    - Even the demons didn't like to be chained up.
  - b. Instead Jesus sent them into a herd of pigs.
    - Have you ever heard of deviled ham?
    - Pigs rushed down a steep embankment.
    - #Into the lake.
    - \*Were drowned.
    - I once had a jail inmate ask me:
      - #"Wasn't Jesus an animal lover?"
      - #"Didn't Jesus care about the pigs?"
    - But that's not really the point of the story.
      - #Story isn't about the pigs.
      - #It's about:
        - \*Jesus' power over the demonic.
        - +Overcoming the forces of evil.
        - =With water and the word.
- 5. Man was totally and completely healed.
  - a. In fact, the Greek word.
    - For "heal."
    - Also means "save."
  - b. Jesus saved this man.
    - From the demons.
    - From a life of isolation.
    - From being a nut in the cemetery.
      - #Man who had been out of his mind.
      - \*Was restored to his right mind.
      - #Man who had lived in the cemetery.
      - \*Was restored to his home.
      - #Man who had not wanted Jesus to have anything to do with him.
      - \*Was sent to tell what God had done for him.
  - c. Because Jesus had gone to the cemetery.
    - Found a nut.
    - Said:
      - #"One for me."

## II. What Are The Demons That Possess Us?

### A. Please Don't Misunderstand.

1. I'm not suggesting that any of you.
  - a. Are not in your right mind.
  - b. Are not in your left mind.
2. But we do well to be able to name the demons that possess us.
  - a. In Biblical times.
    - It was thought that if you knew the name of a spirit.  
#You could control that spirit.
  - b. The demoniac tried that with Jesus.
    - “What have you to do with me, Jesus,”
    - “Son of the Most High God?”
    - #But he was not thereby able to control Jesus.
  - c. But when Jesus wants to know the name of the man's demon.
    - He doesn't just get a name.
    - He gets a statistic—Legion.
    - #Sometimes we have more than one demon.
    - \*Naming them is often the first step.
    - +To controlling and getting rid of them.
3. I've been having trouble with my neck and my shoulder.
  - a. Tenderness.
    - In the shoulder joint.
  - b. Ache.
    - From my neck across the top of my shoulder.
  - c. For the last week and a half or so.
    - Numbness.
    - #In my arm.
    - Tingling.
    - #In my hand and fingers.
    - \*If I squeeze:
      - +Shampoo bottle.
      - +Gear shifter on my car.
    - \*My thumb feels like I stuck it in an electrical outlet.
  - d. Both my doctor and Keith Khoo.
    - Have told me I may have compression.
    - #Pinched nerve.
  - e. My doctor gave me four options.
    - Do nothing.
    - #Literally.
    - #Just take it easy.
    - \*See if this resolves itself.
    - Get a cortisone shot.
    - #To relieve the pain.

- Get an MRI.
    - #To see how much compression there is.
  - See a neurosurgeon.
    - #Surgery.
  - f. I've opted for an MRI.
    - I don't want to do nothing.
    - I don't simply want to mask the pain.
    - I don't want to rush into surgery.
      - #I want to know what's going on in my neck.
      - #I want to be able to name the demon.
  - 4. We may have many demons.
    - a. Some may be physical.
    - b. Some may be mental.
    - c. Some may be emotional.
    - d. Some may be behavioral.
    - e. Some may be interpersonal.
    - f. Some may be financial.
    - g. Demons can come in many forms.
  - 5. Demons have a way of isolating us.
    - a. Cutting us off from God.
    - b. Cutting us off from community.
    - c. Making us wonder:
      - If we're nuts.
      - If the cemetery is such a bad place after all.
- B. Into The Midst Of Our Isolation Comes Jesus.
- 1. Not afraid of the demons.
    - a. Having faced the evil forces.
      - Of Good Friday.
      - Of the cross.
      - Of the grave.
    - b. Having been raised on Easter morning.
      - Thumbing his nose at Satan.
      - Saying to the devil:
        - #"Hey, buddy, you took your best shot."
        - #"Guess what?"
        - #"You are a loser."
  - 2. Jesus comes in baptism.
    - a. In water and the word.
    - b. Saying:
      - "One for me."
      - "Another one for me."
      - "Another one for me."

3. Jesus comes into our loneliness.
  - a. To heal us.
  - b. To save us.
  - c. To restore us to community.
    - With the instructions:
      - #"Don't be afraid."
      - #"Tell how much God has done for you."
4. Jesus even comes to our cemeteries.
  - a. At the time of death.
    - To say to all of us who believe:
      - #"One for me."
  - b. To say to those who mourn
    - "Be faithful."
    - "One day you, too, will have heavenly clothes to wear."

Concl: In Holy Baptism.  
 -Jesus claims us.  
 # "One for me."

In the Holy Supper.  
 -Jesus feeds us.  
 # "Two for you."  
 \* "My body, broken for you."  
 \* "My blood, shed for you."  
 -So come.  
 # Let's eat.  
 # Let's drink.  
 \* It's for all the nuts in the cemetery.