

THE GREAT NEWS

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R E L A T E

There are two stories in the apostolic record that strike deeply into my soul as a beneficiary of God's blessings through His Son. I would like to share them with you now. The first is about the man born blind whom Jesus healed and the Pharisees tried to get the man to speak against him. The man had spent years without any real help from the religious leaders of his day and seems to have been given some courage when they came to challenge him. First, they called his poor parents in and tried to intimidate them but when his parents told them to talk to their son because he was of age, they turned their sites again on him, and we read in John 9:24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or not I do not know but one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. When critics of Jesus or of faith or Christian people who call my Christianity into

question or when they ask me to prove what faith means or looks like, I often recite this first story, saying: "I can't tell you definitively about Jesus. I take everything about Him on faith - everything except this" whereas I was blind, now I see." Anyone who comes to the Lord can or probably should make this same claim because we are all blind until He gives us the power to see, but how blind was I? More than blind. And this brings us to the second tale in scripture. One that touches my heart ever time I read it. It comes from Matthew Mark and Luke and says, Luke 8:26 And they (Jesus and his apostles) arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27 And when he (Jesus) went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and wore no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. Matthew account adds that he was "exceedingly fierce" and Marks account says that he "would not let

people pass by him," and would "roam the tombs at night crying and cutting himself with stones." This was me, friends. A night roaming dark filled soul that cut himself with stones and was exceedingly fierce so much so that I taunted anyone who got in my path. Then we read in the Luke account, beginning at verse 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. 29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) 30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. 31 And they (the demons) besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. 32 And there was there an herd

of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. 33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. 34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." Like this demon filled brother, tortured by His flesh and this world, moving him to a state of unrest, self-harm and life among the dead, I too was set free by the One who gave me sight, and have ever since been sitting at the feet of Jesus, fully clothed and more and more and more, in my right mind." With you I give all praise and glory to the living God in Jesus holy name who has healed us all.