

Weekly Encouragement

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Incorporated non-profit in New Jersey, USA

The Solution

By Rev. Peter Eng



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"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!" (Luke 4:36)

Some problems in life are within our ability to handle. If we give the problem enough time and throw enough money at it, we can reasonably expect to see a solution. But there are times when a problem is so intractable we just don't know what to do.

In this small town, was a demon possessed man. Nobody knew what to do for him or with him. When the evil spirit took control of his body, he would be totally unpredictable and could hurt himself and others. The local rabbis could not help. The family tried any and everything. Every quack who came to town was just another

expense without result. The family despaired, but dared not stop trying. They were depleted and dejected.

Then Jesus came to town. He was a different class. His talk did not eventually get to money. He taught with authority and the whole town was out to see him.

"Pray for my son!" "Heal my mother!" the crowd called out to him. And to their great amazement, he prayed for them and the sick were healed on the spot! Not only could he teach, he could also deliver.

The family of the demon possessed man brought him to Jesus and with a single command, freed this man from bondage. As the demon left, he lifted him up like a rag doll and threw him to the ground in demonic tantrum. But this man stood up and was not hurt! What amazing power where a blessing had no barb in it. The healing was so total and complete there was no residue of the problem.

Jesus! There can be no doubt he has both the authority and the power to do exactly as he said he wanted to do. His message was authenticated by his power.

The ancient people were wiser in some regard. They knew human effort could not accomplish certain things. When a person had the ability to do what humans could not do, he was the one approved by God.

When Emperor Nero died, the Roman

Empire fell into disarray and civil war broke out. The following year, one of the generals, Vespasian, emerged the victor.

The problem was that he lacked the noble pedigree expected of emperors or kings. This was a special problem in Egypt where the ruler was a god-king. Solution? The spin masters knew just the thing to do. They took a page out of the life of Jesus Christ (who had died almost 40 years earlier). The word went out that Vespasian was asked by a blind man to put spit on his eyes so he could see; and this was coupled with another story of healing a man with a withered hand; both through the aegis of the Egyptian god Serapis (Tacitus, Histories, 4.81; Dio, History, 65.8 [271]).

Hmmm... Sounds interestingly close to Jesus healing the blind with clay made with spit ([John 9:6](#)); and healing of the man with the withered hand ([Matt 12:10](#); [Mk 3:1](#); [Lk 6:6](#)).

Vespasian's claim was that this was to be a onetime event at the instance of Serapis, not himself. It was delegated authority and it was generated for political ends. It was not repeatable and not testable.

Jesus healed and continued to heal. Imagine what this meant in the ancient world. If an event like Vespasian being a channel of Serapis legitimized his rule over Egypt, Jesus' healing, which was superior in every way, told the people so much, not the least of which was that Jesus was able to deliver.

There are times when problems come faster than solutions. There are times when things fall apart and we don't know what to do. Desperate times make us seek out desperate solutions – most of which will not work.

There can be wonderful stories of human triumph over adversity, but I will be content with any non-spectacular solution. I can

look for solutions in the wrong places. But there is a right place I know I can find the solution. Like the desperate family of the demon possessed man. I know that Jesus can deliver.

Today, I cannot seek him out in person, but this is more than compensated because we all can find him in prayer. Let us fall at his feet and plead his deliverance. He can still cast out our demon and preserve us from any harm that the demonic tantrum might deliver.

"Call unto me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things that thou knowest not." [Jer 33:3](#) (KJV)

Note: The ESV is used unless indicated otherwise.

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Rev. Peter Eng is an ordained minister from the Reformed Tradition, but he is truly global in perspective. He served the Lord in various capacities starting from his teenage years in the 70s. His undergrad studies were done in Singapore, his grad studies in the USA, and post-grad studies in the United Kingdom, with additional post-grad research in Germany.