

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

17 August 2025

Locating and Serving on Your Mission Field

Text: "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you". *Luke 8:39*

Have you found your purpose?

The purpose filled life was a great seller.

We all want purpose.

It leads to fulfillment.

Did you recognize today's scripture?

A man wants to repay Jesus for what he has done for him by going with him.

But Jesus wants him to stay with his people and witness to what God did for him.

The biblical account of the deliverance of the man from a legion of demons is one of the most dramatic accounts to be found in all of the New Testament.

In this miraculous event Jesus took the initiative to deliver this man from the destructive powers of the demonic.

As a divine and benevolent mediator, he confronted the evil forces in this man and persisted until the man was set free, and we see him sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind.

This dramatic and inspiring account portrays the fact that Jesus came into this world to do more than just deliver people from the power of the demonic in an initial experience of conversion.

Jesus needed the potential of this man for the good of others.

He had a chosen place of service where this man could be God's messenger and helper and man's minister and servant.

We can deduce from this that God has a mission field for each of us, and we must locate that mission field and begin to serve him there.

Dr. Russell Conwell, founder and president of Temple University, had a famous lecture entitled "Acres of Diamonds," which he delivered more than five thousand times.

The point of this exciting lecture calls our attention to the fact that we will find our diamonds at home rather than in some distant and exotic place.

Jesus was affirming this same great truth when he spoke to the man and said, "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you."

The proper response of a saved person.

This man who was delivered from the power of the demonic provides us with an interesting study in motivation.

Verse 38 declares, "The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but he sent him away".

Gratitude could have caused the man to want to be with Jesus always.

A new affection and love for Jesus could have caused this man to want to be as close to him as possible for the rest of his days.

It is possible that the fear of a reoccurrence of demonic possession could have caused the man to want to stay close to the one who could deliver him.

The man's motive for wanting to be with Jesus was a worthy and commendable motive.

We should imitate him at this point.

A prayer request that was not granted.

The Scripture tells us that even though the man wanted to be with Jesus and his apostles, Jesus sent him away, saying, return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.

There are a number of recorded prayers that were offered to Jesus that he did not grant.

A greedy brother prayed that Jesus would insist that his covetous brother divide the inheritance properly.

Jesus declined to grant this request.

A mother requested preferential treatment for her two sons.

Jesus declined to grant this request as well.

Jesus' enemies taunted him and prayed, Come down from the cross.

We can rejoice that he did not grant their request.

The man in this morning's passage offered a very proper prayer.

This man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him.

And Jesus declined to grant this request because he had a greater need for the man and a greater purpose for him.

We can conclude that Jesus did not come into this world merely to make us feel good or to give us a feeling of inward security.

Later Jesus was to go to the area where this man's home was located, the Decapolis.

This was an area made up of ten gentile cities located east and south of the Sea of Galilee.

This man went back to the area and gave his testimony.

When Jesus arrived, thousands of people were waiting to see and hear him.

No doubt they had heard the man's report concerning the miraculous and merciful power of Jesus Christ.

It was here that great crowds gathered and followed him to the extent that they became weary and in need of food.

With seven loaves of bread, our Lord miraculously fed a crowd of four thousand people.

These mighty events took place because of the man's personal response to the wishes of the Lord who had set him free from the dominion of evil.

Our Lord's personal request and our continuing commission.

"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you."

When many people think of the mission field, they think of some far-off, exotic place where they might experience adventure and excitement.

It is true that our Lord commissioned his church to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth and to all peoples of the earth.

Perhaps individual believers and the church as a body have missed the point by failing to recognize that the mission field begins at home.

Christianity begins at your home.

It is in our homes that we are to believe and behave as followers of Jesus Christ.

The faith that does not ring true at home will not be effective in some faraway place.

Service to our Lord begins at home.

By a changed lifestyle in the home we can demonstrate the reality of the presence of God in our hearts and lives.

It is at home in the most important of human relationships that we are to demonstrate the agape love that the Holy Spirit of God pours out into our hearts through faith in Jesus Christ.

By word of mouth we are to relate to others the good things that God has done in our lives.

Our Lord desires each of us to serve him in our homes and this refers not just to our families but to the network of our family relationships.

Recent studies in personal relationships have indicated that the average person today has regular contact with about eighty different people.

In a sense that means that our world, though we live in the midst of billions, is really quite small.

It is in this smaller world where we are to verbalize the good news of what God has done for us in and through Jesus Christ.

Christians are in the communication business.

Return to your home, and declare how much God had done for you.

Jesus was specifically requesting that this man get into the communication business.

He wanted this communication to take place where the man was known.

He wanted him to communicate about the goodness of God in the area where people had known what he was before he became a believer.

The silent witness of a transformed life is incomplete.

It is tremendously important that we be different.

If Christ has made a difference, then we must verbally give testimony to his goodness and kindness to us.

When we give expression to the joy and gratitude of our hearts and when we give voice to the praises of God, if these are genuine, they will create hunger and thirst in the hearts of our “home folk” to come to know Jesus Christ also.

The man who had been demon possessed did what Jesus asked.

He went home and shared the good news of what God had done for him.

Let each of us follow his example.

This will bring the kingdom of God among us!