



Who, Then, is This?

Text: Luke 8

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Overview: One of the stated purposes of Luke's gospel is to provide certainty concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ. He, therefore, provides information with the intent of drawing forth a commitment from his readers. Despite the fact that some will not believe, Jesus' mighty deeds are worth serious consideration even to the most hardened of skeptics. Jesus displays his power over heaven by stilling a raging storm; He displays his power over hell by exorcizing demons from a dangerous outcast; He displays his power over life by restoring a woman to full health; and He displays his power over death by raising a girl from the dead. In each of these cases, Jesus' power is unmatched by any other, and the results of his work are complete and permanent. These historical narratives, taken individually and collectively, should elicit a response of faith from all.

01. When we speak about Jesus, it is not enough to say the He was a good man, a fine teacher, or even a prophet. We must recognize that He is Lord of all.

02. When we respond to Jesus, it is not enough to treat Him as our friend, our guide, or our support. We should worship Him with fear, wonder, and amazement.

03. When we receive Jesus, it is not wrong to pray for healing or for help that is beyond our own means. We honor Him when we trust in his power and his timing.

1. Note Luke's reference to the women who followed Jesus and provided support for his ministry (Luke 8:1-3). Even though their names are not as familiar as the disciples (some are not even mentioned by name), what does this suggest about the importance of people who minister behind the scenes? Is their work any less important because they were not part of the twelve?

2. Read Luke 8:4-15. Where do you find yourself in the parable of the sower? Does the Word of God take deep root in your life, or is it sometimes snatched away, or uprooted before growth takes place? What ultimately accounts for the different responses to the Word?

3. When the disciples cried out to Jesus in 8:24, He replied, "Where is your faith?" Having never seen Him (or anyone) stop a storm before, what do you think Jesus expected from the disciples at this point in his ministry? Should they have responded more calmly, or simply assumed all would be well? What is the role of faith as we encounter life's difficulties? What are you doing to increase your faith?

4. Imagine the impact that the formerly demon-possessed man had when he returned home and declared what God had done for him (8:38-39). How does our personal testimony add weight to the gospel message? Why is our personal testimony ultimately insufficient apart from the gospel message?

5. In each of the miracles narrated in this chapter, reference is made (either subtly or directly) to the permanence of the cure. How does this attention to detail add further confirmation to the identity of Jesus as Lord of all, knowing as we do, that none of his miracles were due to sleight of hand or temporary remission? What comfort can you derive from such examples, knowing that our glorified bodies will place us in a permanent state of wholeness and usefulness to God? Finally, who is like the Lord?

For Further Reading: David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Healing and the Scriptures* (Oliver Nelson, 1988).