

Call to Obedience #302
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org

Never Give Up

By Reimar Schultze

“And He (that is Jesus) went unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For they considered not the miracles of the loaves: for their heart was hardened. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew Him, and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard He was. And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch, if it were, but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.”—Mark 6:51-56

This is one of the most remarkable stories in the Bible. Here people were healed by the touch of Jesus’ garment. How did this all come about? It happened through Jesus’ great love for sinners, and through somebody obeying God, having faith for dry bones to live again.

The background is that a little while before this happened, Jesus had fed 5,000 men, their wives, and children. After this miracle, Jesus went into a mountain to pray while He sent His disciples by boat across the sea to go back to Gennesaret. There are times when we need to pray. There are times to row. We must pray some, and we must row some. Before Pentecost, the disciples did not pray enough. They only prayed in a crisis situation, such as when a storm would come. Their prayer life was ‘Master, we perish’ (Luke 8:24). Their prayers were panic-driven prayers! But, after Pentecost, they learned to pray with faith, confidence, and authority. They never again prayed, “Master, we perish!” After they had crossed the sea, Jesus and His disciples came to Gennesaret and there in Mark 5 is the story of Legion, a man who was possessed by many devils. Jesus cast out the devils and then these demons asked Jesus for permission to enter the swine, and Jesus granted it. So, the demons entered the swine and 2,000 of them ran down the steep hillside into the sea and drowned. When the people of the city heard about this and saw the man who had had the demons sitting clothed and in his right mind at the feet of Jesus, my friend, what did they do? They told Jesus to go home! Go home, we don’t want you here!

Our text says, “they began to pray, (that is to beg) him to depart out of their coasts.” When do you beg? You beg when you are desperate. They were desperate to get rid of Jesus. It says, they began to beg. Let me ask you, how long did they desperately beg Jesus to leave their country? The answer is: continually, until Jesus headed back to the boat, or perhaps until He was back on the sea.

Did you ever ask yourself the question, what would Jesus have done if they had not begged Him to leave? What if they had invited Him to stay? Do you think He would have stayed? They begged Him to leave. Did you ever ask Jesus to leave? Have your

priorities, your actions, or your attitudes ever told Jesus to leave? They slammed the door on Jesus after they had seen the greatest personal deliverance of any one man from Genesis to Mark. The man's name was Legion. In the Roman military, a legion was about 6,000 men. Can 6,000 devils live in one man? Did this man have any chance for deliverance? What kind of a man is Jesus, who is He, what can He do? Again, Jesus did the greatest miracle of personal deliverance and the people slammed the door on Him. Yes, they begged Him to leave. It does not tell us anywhere that Jesus wanted to leave. Even though Jesus had delivered their country from a man who could not be bound, who was screaming and shrieking night and day in the cemetery, their hearts were so hard that they wanted Jesus to leave. Where was their gratitude, where was their appreciation? How hard can the heart of man be? One would think that Jesus would condemn Gennesaret and never come back. Have you ever witnessed to someone, have you ever helped someone and you were rewarded with "Get out of my life, go home"? But oh, what a surprise! Here we see Jesus going back to Gennesaret despite the way He was treated. He was going back where He was rejected. He was going back through a storm. My friend, there is a divine tenacity in the heart of Jesus to seek and to save the lost, that keeps reaching for the vilest of sinners, and most perverted of backsliders.

There is another reason why Jesus went back to Gennesaret. He told the saved man to publish what Jesus had done in the entire region and the man did it. Jesus sowed a seed there, and that seed fell on good ground, and Jesus was going to look for a harvest of 30 fold, 60 fold, and 100 fold. So Jesus came back to Gennesaret a second time. Our text says, "And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew Him and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard He was." Hallelujah! Hallelujah! My sermon is called "Never give up." These people in Gennesaret received Jesus as passionately as they had formerly rejected Him! Since Jesus could cast 6,000 demons out of a man, how powerfully can He bring conviction on the hardest of hearts? Remember Nineveh!

Oh, my friend, perhaps you have given up on your husband, your wife, your children, your boss, your co-workers, and your neighbors who have rejected the Gospel. If they have rejected you with your Gospel, my friend, don't give up, but go back. The day may come, by the grace of God, when they will receive you with the same passion with which they rejected you before! And then the seed that was sown, that seed of love, will sprout and bring forth a harvest. So, don't let it get into your mind that when somebody has shown you the door that that means you are relieved from your responsibility to go back and share Jesus. Don't say of those who reject you: Well, I told them, and they did not want the Gospel! Their hearts are hardened, and I don't want to go back. Indeed there are times when you need not go back, when you need to shake the dust off your feet, but more often than not, you are to go back and (sometimes more than once).

Two of my favorite people in world history are Winston Churchill, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and General MacArthur of the United States Army. I like them both for their one-liners. I think these men had similar spirits, they were like two peas in the same pod. Winston Churchill, near the beginning of World War II, was asked to speak at Oxford University. It was 1940, Poland, Norway, Holland and Belgium had fallen to the Nazis. France had capitulated and England was facing occupa-

tion by the Germans. The United States had not yet entered the war. Many people felt that England was doomed, but Churchill got behind the microphone to face the nation at Oxford University and there he gave the shortest, most powerful speech ever. He said, "Never give up! Never give up! Never give up!" He shook his head and his big cheeks were flying from the left to the right and back again. And, indeed, because England did not give up, she, with the Allied Forces won over the Germans.

General MacArthur fought a ferocious battle in some of the islands in the Pacific. His army had to pull back because they could not gain the edge over the Japanese. But, as they left the island, he said with a divine determination, "I shall return." And indeed, two and one-half years later the day came when MacArthur returned with a conquering army. Oh, I like this! In Mark 6:54-55, we see Jesus coming back the second time. He stepped onto the shore of Gennesaret like a mighty conqueror and it reads, "And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew Him and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard He was."

We in the church in America are in a death struggle, spiritually speaking. We need that same spirit: "Never give up! I shall return. I will go at it again until I see victory." I want each of you to have that spirit in your heart about the things that have defeated you. We need to take back our churches and let them be truly Jesus' churches. We need to take back our courts of law, we need to take back our schoolhouses for Jesus! We need to take back our marriages, our families, and we're not going to do it unless we have a similar spirit of perseverance that Jesus shows here, a spirit seen in these great men, MacArthur and Churchill.

Oh, may God put into you a 'Go back' spirit a 'Go at it again' spirit. I want you to know that if we all get that spirit, mighty, awesome, glorious things are ahead of us. Yes, it says that Jesus came back and they knew Him. The Greek says they recollected Him, they remembered Him from the last time. And now their hearts were ready, praise the Lord! And so, the result was, "whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment: and as many as touched Him were made whole."

I want you to have faith and hope for all of those people that you have witnessed to; be it family members, or distant relatives, or neighbors, or people at work. I want you to have faith and not to look at the obstacles, the obstinacy and the rebellion in the hearts of these people. Just to have faith to believe that God is going to give you a breakthrough someday soon. What is impossible with man is possible with God. Oh, Lord, grant us all the spirit of divine tenacity, the spirit of conquerors to go back, and back again until the final conquest.

Call to Obedience #302
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org