

## **“It doesn’t have to be that way!” based on Luke 8:26-39**

Opening story by noted author John Killinger, ending with theme.

- Exactly what the Gospel reading is about
- Sounds like a horror story as madman confronts Jesus.
- Jesus brings peace to this troubled soul.

3 actions that lead to despair and cause our lives to be more challenging than need be

- First, we’re sometimes at war with ourselves. Father in grocery store, he started by controlling self. We are valuable in eyes of God.
- Second, we’re at war with other people. “neighbor at war”, constant battle with neighbors, colleagues, churches, nations.
- Third, we’re at war with God. Demoniac recognized Jesus as from God, but not God of mercy, rather a god of judgment. Martin Luther finally saw God as compassionate and forgiving.

“It doesn’t have to be that way.” We need to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ to find the peace, love, joy and hope that God offers those who turn to him!