

THE MAN FROM THE TOMBS

MARK 5:1-20

Text:

Introduction:

This text sits in the middle of several hopeless situations. Just prior to the events we just read, Jesus and His disciples were out on the sea during a tremendous storm.

The disciples were certain that they were going to die.

In their minds, they were in a hopeless situation.

When they were engulfed in that storm, the disciples were certain that they would die. Those men were seasoned fishermen, but they were helpless to solve their problem. But, that storm out on the Deep was no problem for the Master of the sea.

Now, Jesus moves into a new set of impossible situations. He encounters a demon possessed man. He cannot help himself and the people around him are helpless as well.

If that demon possessed man were alive today, he would be sent off to live in a mental institution.

1. THE MAN

A. His Defilement (vs. 2)

Mark 5:2

² And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

As this story opens, we are told that this man is held fast in the grip of the devil. Satan is the master of his life and he is in a state of hopelessness and helplessness.

We are told that he has an unclean spirit! Then, we find out that he is not just the home to one foul spirit, but he is possessed by a Legion of demons.

In verse 13, we are told that when the demons left this man, they entered a heard of swine that number 2,000! This man was totally under the control of the devil!

B. His Depravity (vs. 3-4)

Mark 5:3-4

³ Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: ⁴ Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

Two words factor heavily in this man's world. Those words are cemeteries and chains.

This man had his dwelling among the dead. The demons in him drove him away from the living and he spent his life in the cemetery.

We are also told that the people around him tried their best to restrain him. They would catch him and bind him with fetters and chains. Fetters would have been attached to his feet. Chains would have bound his hands, his arms and his torso. These manmade devices could not hold him. He broke them as though they were made of paper.

C. His Desperation (vs. 5)

Mark 5:5

⁵ And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

Can you imagine the terror this man caused? He is up there in that cemetery. He is naked. He is running around like a wild man day and night. He cuts himself and his body is covered with blood and scars. He screams and yells in his torment.

We do not know whether this man cut his body in an effort to find relief from his demons or whether the demons caused him to do it.

2. THE MASTER

A. The Master's Compassion (vs. 6)

Mark 5:6

⁶But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

Everyone in that region feared this man. They fled in terror when he came near. They trembled in their houses at the sound of his shrieks of torment. Children were warned to beware of that crazy man in the cemetery. Everyone avoided this man. Everyone, that is, but Jesus!

Jesus Christ did not avoid this man; He made a special trip across the sea and braved a storm simply because He wanted to deliver this one man from the grip of Satan.

Mark 4:35

³⁵And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

Everyone else feared, avoided and despised this man; Jesus had compassion on him! Jesus cared about the condition he was in and Jesus was moved to do something about it!

B. The Master's Confrontation

Mark 5:6-13

⁶ But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, ⁷ And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. ⁸ For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit. ⁹ And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many. ¹⁰ And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. ¹¹ Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. ¹² And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. ¹³ And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

This man, who ran from everyone else, ran to the Lord Jesus and fell at His feet.

The demons that drove this man away from all human relationships drove him to the feet of Jesus.

Why?

They did not fall down before Jesus to worship Him as Lord; they merely fell down in acknowledgement of His deity.

They were bowing in subjection to the Lord of Lords!

Jesus confronts the demons, ordering them to release their captive.

This is a strange passage, but it teaches us some important truths.

1. All spirits are subject to Jesus
2. They recognize His authority
3. They must have His permission to do things
4. Man is the most depraved creature in existence

This one man could tolerate a “legion” of demons. Those pigs couldn’t stand just a few demons, yet this man was able to live with thousands. This just illustrates the human capacity for evil!

C. The Master’s Command (vs. 13)

Mark 5:13

¹³ And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

Every effort of man had failed this man.

Everything that had tried had proven useless.

But, one word from Jesus and He was free!

That is a picture of salvation!

Man can try his religious works, but they will all fail.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Man can try his psychology, pills, programs and practices, but they will they cannot save.

There is one solution to the problem of sin and His name is Jesus! There is only one hope for the fallen soul and His name is Jesus! There is only one hope for those trapped in a life of sin and hopes name is Jesus

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 6:37

³⁷ All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

3. THE MIRACLE

A. He Was Changed By Jesus (vs. 14-16)

Mark 5:14-16

¹⁴ And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

¹⁵ And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with

the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. ¹⁶ And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

When the pigs ran down the mountain and killed themselves, the servants who were tending the herd went to town and told their masters what had happened. The townsfolk came to see for themselves. When they arrived, they heard all the details and they could see the evidence of a changed life right before their eyes.

- Jesus Changed Him (vs. 15)
- Jesus Clothed Him (vs. 15)
- Jesus Calmed Him (vs. 15)

B. He Was Committed to Jesus (vs.17-18)

Mark 5:17-18

¹⁷ And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. ¹⁸ And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

The people of that region were afraid of Jesus, vs. 15, and they demanded that He leave their country. For these people, this episode was just too much! They might have been able to handle a little preaching, but when Jesus started changing lives and costing them

money they wanted no part of Him. So they drove Him away.

There are a lot of people like that today!

Just give them a Sunday morning service and they are satisfied.

Maybe they will even come back Sunday night or Wednesday.

But, don't ask them to do any more than that!

When the Lord wants more they rebel and push Him away.

Most folks want just enough Jesus to make them feel good and to keep them out of Hell.

Look at the contrast! The townspeople want Jesus to leave. The man who has just been saved wants to be with Jesus. That's what salvation will do for you!

C. He Was Commissioned For Jesus (vs. 19-20)

Mark 5:19-20

¹⁹Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. ²⁰And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

Jesus refused the man's request to go with Him. Instead, Jesus sent him back to his home to tell others what the Lord had done for him.

And, that is precisely what he did. We went into "Decapolis", which means "the ten cities" and he preached the Gospel to all who would listen!

Picture in your mind how this scene must have played out, the people see him coming. They cringe in fear, children hide behind their mothers, doors are slammed shut, and people run in fear to hide from the mad man.

But wait! Something is different today.

Yes, it's still him.

He still bears the scars in his body, but the look in his eye is different. He isn't screaming, he is preaching about a man named Jesus.

He isn't running around like a wild man; he is calm and sane and he is talking about how Jesus has changed his life.

He isn't naked; he is clothed and peaceful and changed.

The people listen to his story and they are touched; some are no doubt saved.

What a difference Jesus makes!

Close:

One of the most notoriously bad characters that ever lived in New York was Orville Gardner. He was the trainer of prize fighters and companion of all sorts of hard characters. His reputation was so thoroughly bad that he was called "Awful Gardner."

He had a little boy, whom he dearly loved, and this boy died. A short time after his boy's death, he was standing in the bar of a New York saloon, surrounded by a number of his companions. The night was sweltering, and he stepped outside the saloon to get a little fresh air. As he stood out there and looked up between the high buildings at the sky above his head, a star was shining down upon him, and as he was looking at it, he said to himself, "I wonder where my little boy is tonight?" Then the thought came to him, "Wherever he is, you will never see him again unless you change your life."

He hurried from the saloon to the room where his godly mother was. He went in and asked his mother to pray for him.

He attended the Revival of 1857 at New York City and was saved.

He no longer went by the nickname "Awful Gardner" and he became a preacher whom many came to see.

Gardner became a powerful preacher and he saw many come to Christ.

What has He done for you today? Are you lost and in the grip of sin? Jesus can set you free! Are you out of God's will and trapped in pride and bitterness? Jesus can set you free! Do you need His touch? Do you need His compassion? Do you need His life-changing power?

He weathered the storm on the sea to get to this man. He weathered the storm of Calvary to get to you and me.