

**Message #15****Mark 5:1-20**

Last month, October 25-26, the international association for exorcists met at the 12<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Rome. There has been a tremendous rise in demonic activity, which, according to the Catholic church, is causing a “Pastoral Emergency.” They concluded that the rise in demon activity is caused by two things: 1) Decreasing faith; 2) Increasing curiosity. Some people are fascinated with Satan and demons.

Actually there is no demonic crisis. There is no pastoral emergency. What is needed today is what was needed back in Christ’s day, and that is a need for people to believe in Him. Jesus Christ is the key to victory over the demonic and satanic. He is the One with the power and if any person will believe in Him and invite Him into their lives, the demons will flee.

You and I are not stronger than Satan or demons; God is. You and I cannot control what demons do or don’t do; Jesus Christ can. That point is clear from this text.

**JESUS CHRIST MIRACULOUSLY CASTS DEMONS OUT OF A MAN IN ORDER TO SHOW ALL HE IS GOD, WHO HAS ALL POWER OVER THE SATANIC AND DEMONIC WORLD.**

Now when it comes to the subject of demons today there are at least eight ways people may be connected to them:

- 1) Demon possession - only one without Christ may be demon-possessed.
- 2) Demon oppression - demons cause a series of negative things to hit like Job.
- 3) Demon suggestion - tempting things that demons present luring people to evil.
- 4) Demon obsession - more obsessed and fixated with Satan and demons rather than God.
- 5) Demon rejection - deny that Satan and demons exist.
- 6) Demon revelation - see truth about Satan and demons through God’s written revelation.
- 7) Demon invasion – demons permitted to invade the world in Tribulation (Rev. 9).
- 8) Demon domination – demons permitted to dominate the world in Tribulation (Rev. 18).

Now the key to victory over all of these things is not some religious exorcism; it is a relationship with Jesus Christ. He is the One who has the power over storms and over Satan. That point is clear from this text. There are eight historical realities we would like to present:

**HISTORICAL REALITY #1 – Jesus and His disciples arrive to the other side of the sea. 5:1**

After the storm episode where Jesus spoke to a storm and it obeyed Him, they arrived to the SE corner of the Sea of Galilee, which would put them on the east side of the Jordan River and they came into a primarily Gentile area. The country was known as Decapolis (which means ten cities). Two of the cities in the area were Gadara and Gerasa. Matthew calls this “the country of the Gadarenes” (Matt. 8:28); Mark and Luke call it the “country of the Gerasenes” (Luke 8:26). Actually this territory is known as Perea, which is distinct from Galilee and Judea.

Actually Gadara was located about 20 miles SE of the sea and Gerasa was a little town that sat right on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Gadara was like the capital city and Gerasa was part of the region. There are mountains and caves in both areas and obviously people from both of these cities obviously knew of this man because he was well-known to this area (5:5).

**HISTORICAL REALITY #2** – Jesus and His disciples are met by a demon-possessed man.  
5:2-5

Jesus and His disciples move immediately from the confrontation of wild weather to a confrontation of a wild man. Actually there were two men who were demon-possessed (Matt. 8:28); but one of them apparently had more demons than the other and he takes front and center stage in Mark's account and also in Luke's account (Luke 8:27). Now there are six facts brought out about this demon-possessed man:

**Fact #1** - The demon-possessed man immediately met Jesus when He got out of the boat. 5:2a

The emphasis of the Greek indicates that the man met Jesus Christ when He got off that boat. This to me is extremely interesting because demons want nothing to do with Jesus Christ. In fact, that will be seen in this very text. It is possible that the man who was demon-possessed had heard about Jesus and went to Him and met Him when He got off the boat. The interesting thing about this is that Satan and the demons would have known Christ was landing in Gerasa, but the man would have had no knowledge.

**Fact #2** - The demon-possessed man was possessed by an unclean spirit. 5:2b

All demons are unclean. There is no such thing as a clean demon. There is no such thing as a good witch and bad witch. Satan and demons are unclean.

**Fact #3** - The demon -possessed man had his dwelling among the tombs. 5:3a

About a mile south of Gerasa are tombs, and this is where this man lived. Only strange people hang out in cemeteries. Demonic people typically live in dark, filthy places—physically/morally.

**Fact #4** - The demon-possessed man could not be bound by anyone or anything. 5:3b-4

This man did have super-human, “herculean” strength given to him by demons. He was a lawless man, who would not subject himself to any restraints. Matthew says he was so violent that people could not even travel or pass by when he was there (Matt. 8:28).

**Fact #5** - The demon-possessed man was constantly screaming in the tombs and mountains.  
5:5a

The word for scream is one that means literally a screaming or crying out with a very loud voice (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, pp. 255-256).

**Fact #6** - The demon-possessed man constantly cut himself with stones. **5:5b**

Those who want to cut themselves or put marks on their body will one day discover it was not God leading them to do it. It was the evil satanic world. Luke records that the man typically did not wear clothes (Luke 8:27).

**HISTORICAL REALITY #3** – Jesus is confronted by the demon-possessed man. **5:6-7**

As we have said, Satan and his demons know exactly who Jesus Christ is. This demon-possessed man responded to Jesus Christ in the following five ways:

**Response #1** - The demon-possessed man ran up to Jesus. **5:6a**

The verb “run” is interesting. This is not the word “jog” or “trot,” this is a word that indicates this guy took off running at full speed like you would in some foot race (*Ibid.*, p. 450). This guy is in a flat out sprint running straight at Jesus Christ.

**Response #2** - The demon-possessed man bowed down before Jesus. **5:6b**

The Greek word means he fell down prostrate before Christ. In fact, this word is also used of bowing down before something in worship. It is predicted that one day every knee will bow before Jesus Christ and we may be certain that even those Christ-rejecters and God-mockers will bow. What this certainly shows us is that the demonic world recognizes the superiority of Jesus Christ.

**Response #3** - The demon-possessed man shouted out to Jesus. **5:7a**

The participle “shouting” is the same word used in **verse 5**, which means this man is screaming at the top of his lungs.

What he is screaming is “What business do we have with each other?” The demon-possessed man wondered what Jesus had to do with him at the present time. Demons know about the plan of God. Demons know there is a time of future judgment coming against them but they also know that until that time there is a hostile relationship between them and God. This demon knows that there should not be any connection or relationship between them and Jesus Christ.

People need to know this. If you get involved in the satanic or demonic world—you cannot possibly have a close connection and relationship with Jesus Christ. It is theologically impossible.

**Response #4** - The demon-possessed man identified Jesus. **5:7b**

This demon knew Jesus is the “son of the Most High God.” This is intriguing because it shows us that demons know that God is higher than Satan.

**Response #5** - The demon asks Christ not to torment him. **5:7c-8**

Demons know their ultimate fate. They know that they will end up burning in hell. The word “torment” is one that refers to the tormenting torture of hell (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 77). In fact, this very word is used of burning hell by Luke (Luke 16:23, 28).

This demon is pleading with Jesus not to send him into eternal burning hell. Even the demons are afraid of this place.

**Verse 8** explains why the demon was in such a panic; Jesus was ordering the demon to come out of the man. This demon knew he would have to leave this man and he did not want Jesus to send him into eternal fire.

**HISTORICAL REALITY #4** – Jesus asks his name. **5:9a**

G. Campbell Morgan believed that Jesus was asking the man his name and the demon butted in. However, most think Jesus is forcing the demon to identify himself, which a demon does not want to do.

Now one might ask why Jesus asked the demon his name. Since He has just been identified as being the Son of the Most High God, He obviously already knows his name. So why does He make the demon say it? Several possibilities on this:

- 1) To show His disciples that these demons are real and have real names;
- 2) To show the demon that He knows each one personally and will judge each one personally by name.
- 3) To show that to truly deal with one demon-possessed, one would need to see the difference between the demon and the person.
- 4) To force the demon to have to identify himself before Jesus Christ and all there. Satan and demons would rather have people think they are not in existence.
- 5) To show the disciples that demons must respond to Him regardless what His request is.

**HISTORICAL REALITY #5** – The demon personally responds to Jesus Christ. **5:9b-12**

Now there are three verbal responses:

**Verbal Response #1** - The demon identifies his name as Legion. **5:9b**

The noun “legion” was a noun used to describe a Roman military unit that consisted of six thousand troops. The noun “legion” means thousands. I do not know if this means this man was possessed by six thousand demons, but the demon says he was possessed by “many.” We know from **verse 13** that there must have been at least 2000 demons because they ended up in that many swine. The name “Legion” suggests a dominant, controlling, demonic power like that of the Roman military. To be indwelt by a legion means you are not free, but enslaved.

**Verbal Response #2** - The demon requests that He not send them out of the country. **5:10**

This demon “repeatedly and earnestly” asked God not to send them out of the country. Now according to Luke this meant these demons did not want to leave the earth and go into hell (Luke 8:31). They did not want Jesus to make them leave this part of the world. I do believe that this teaches us that there are “territorial angels.” This is supported from the book of Daniel and it is supported here. There are angels (both good and evil) assigned to various locations..

Obviously these demons were located in the Gerasa/Gadara region and they apparently were dominating the area and did not want to leave it.

**Verbal Response #3** - The demon requests that He permits them to enter a herd of swine.  
**5:11-12**

Now the fact that there are all of these pigs, shows this is a Gentile area because the Jews were forbidden by the O.T. law to eat pigs (Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8; Is. 65:4; 66:17).

**HISTORICAL REALITY #6** – Jesus permits the demons to enter the swine. **5:13**

Now just as soon as Jesus gave the demons permission to enter the swine, they entered the swine and the swine ran down a steep bank and went into the sea and about 2000 were drowned. There is no question that demons are behind all kinds of suicides.

Now some have questioned the fact that Jesus would let this happen to innocent animals; however, there are some things we do know and some things we do not know, so we really are in no position to make any judgment on this. It is His creation and He can do what He wants, not only with pigs but with people.

We do know that Jesus is in a war with Satan. Jesus is out to win humans and sometimes when in war, there are casualties. Furthermore, this clearly shows the destructive nature of demons. Jesus did not cause the swine to commit suicide, the demons did. What we do not know is why Jesus sanctioned this for this herd. Perhaps this herd had been obtained through evil methods. Perhaps this herd was being used for evil heathen religious worship services. Antiochus Epiphanes sacrificed a pig on the altar. We don't know. Furthermore, we don't know what happened to these “kamikaze demons” after this happened. What we do know is that there are many people today who live like pigs and probably many are demonically connected.

But here is what Jesus does show everyone by this—Satan and demons are not your friends. Satan and his forces are out to enslave you and destroy you. They are out to take away your dignity and your integrity. **Our only hope for escape and freedom is Jesus Christ! The only Spirit you want in you is the Holy Spirit. You ask Jesus Christ into your life and you ask God to allow His Spirit to control your life and demons cannot ever touch you.**

**HISTORICAL REALITY #7** – People respond to the news of what Jesus did. **5:14-17**

There are four responses:

**Response #1** - The response of the herdsmen. **5:14**

They ran away into the city and surrounding country and reported what had happened. These were guys who had been in charge of these pigs and they could not believe what they saw.

**Response #2** - The response of the people. **5:15**

The people came to Jesus and sitting there was this man who had been demon-possessed. He was quietly sitting, clothed and in his right mind. This caused the people to become afraid. Now the real question about their fear is what will they do with it? Will they turn to Jesus Christ or will they turn from Jesus Christ?

**Response #3** - The response of the eyewitnesses. **5:16**

The eyewitnesses told the story of what they had seen. They told about the demon-possessed man and how the demons went to the swine and they ran into the sea.

**Response #4** - The response of the people. **5:17**

They are not interested in believing in Jesus, they want Him gone. They asked Jesus Christ to leave. They care more about pigs than people. **They didn't care about demons being in their world, what they did not want was Jesus Christ in their world.** These people liked their religion just the way it was, but they did not want Jesus Christ.

**HISTORICAL REALITY #8** – Jesus responds to the people and the demon-possessed man. **5:18-20**

**Verse 18** says Jesus was getting in the boat. That is so sad. The people ask Him to leave and so He will leave. If you don't want Jesus Christ around or in your life, He will leave you alone. If you want to live your life without Him, He will let you. If you want to be enslaved to things, He'll let you. But if you want victory, you must have Him there in your life.

As He was getting in the boat, the man, who had previously been demon-possessed, asked Jesus if he could go with Him. Jesus would not let him go with Him.

But, Jesus told the man in **verse 19** that He wanted him to go home and report and tell the people about the great grace things you saw the Lord do. Tell them about the grace and mercy of God. By the way, Jesus identifies Himself as being the "Lord" right here.

Now in previous cases back on the other side of the sea, Jesus told the people not to tell anyone; but here He tells this man to tell everyone. Why? There is a dispensational answer to this—Jesus is in a Gentile area and the Gentiles who will receive Him will be the first to have a relationship with Him rather than the Jews who rejected Him.

**Verse 20** says the man went throughout the Decapolis, which is a Roman area comprised of ten key cities, and he told everyone about Jesus. The result was the people were “amazed.” But that does not mean they believed in Jesus.

Now Paul says the greatest demonic activity most people face today is not the dark side of this kind of satanic action, but religious men in pulpits, who are promoting their works system of religion (II Cor. 11:14-15). Demon-possessed men and women are in pulpits. They do not carefully teach the Scriptures and these men and women do not care if you have a real relationship with Jesus Christ.

But here is the truth; the only one who can save us from our sins and deliver us from satanic forces is Jesus Christ. You invite Jesus Christ into your life and you will be free.