

Jesus had healed this man in his mind, body and spirit. And the people knew what had happened. What was their response and why do you think they responded this way? What would surrendering to Jesus require the people to give up?

When we present the gospel to people, they must choose if they will surrender their lifestyle in exchange for salvation, and sadly, sometimes their answer is “No, I won’t let go of what I have.”

*19 Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." 20 So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.
- Mark 19-20 NIV*

The man who was healed and delivered was ready to follow Jesus, but he was told to go to his people as a witness of what the Lord had done.

How did the people’s response differ from knowing what had happened and hearing the man tell his story? Is there someone’s story that personally impacted your faith?

It is easy to convince ourselves that people know what Jesus can do and therefore we don’t need to tell them our story, but it can be the deciding factor to hear a first-hand account of the power of God. So, share what Jesus has done for you when you have the opportunity.

WRAP-UP

Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee through a violent storm and invaded enemy territory where He encountered a man possessed by evil spirits, showing His power over both nature and spiritual darkness. The man, isolated and tormented, runs to Jesus and is completely healed, revealing that no one is beyond God’s reach. Though the people witness this miracle, they respond with fear, unwilling to let go of their lifestyle. But Jesus sends the healed man to share his story, reminding us that our testimony powerfully reveals God’s transforming grace.

MEMORY VERSE

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. - John 10:10 NIV

Challenge – Take a few moments to write out some of the ways that Jesus has transformed your life or set you free. Remember where you came from and how far you’ve come

The Power and Presence of God Gospel of Mark Ch. 5 - Week 1

INTRODUCTION

As we return to our study of the Gospel of Mark, we find Jesus arriving on “the other side” of the Sea of Galilee. He had crossed against a violent storm and the disciples witnessed Jesus’ power over the elements, and the spiritual forces opposing Him through the storm. But in Gadara, the Kingdom of God invades enemy territory, and we see how the power and presence of God can free those who are captive to spiritual darkness.

Ice Breaker

On a scale of 1 – 10 how would you rate your skills with a Rubick’s Cube?

Key Passages

Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." - Mark 5:19 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Invading Enemy Territory

Up to this point in Mark’s Gospel, Jesus had been preaching in Galilee to a predominantly Jewish crowd. But when Jesus crossed over to the other side of the lake, He entered Gadara which was largely gentile and under Roman control.

1 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. 2 When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. - Mark 5:1-2 NIV

It did not take long for Jesus’ presence to be noticed. What were the two distinguishing characteristics noted of the man who approached Jesus in verse 2?

We don’t know how this man came to be indwelt by evil spirits, but we can see the results. He is making his home in the tombs among the dead. Just as this man was trapped in isolation and torment, sin can put us in

bondage and leave us feeling trapped and alone. Sometimes unchecked habits or decisions we've made take on momentum and lead us to dwell in places that should be dead to us.

What are some of the habits or decisions that can draw us into unhealthy places if we let them go unaddressed? What are the warning signs we should watch for that indicate we are slowly slipping off course spiritually?

Sometimes the circumstances of our life can start us down a path that ends in a crisis point. But Jesus can free us from the depths of despair and give our life purpose again. No matter how far you've wandered away, Jesus is always ready to lead us out of bondage and back to wholeness again.

2. Confronting the Enemy

3 This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. 4 For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. 5 Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. - Mark 5:3-5 NIV

Mark paints a vivid picture of this very tormented soul. The man was a danger to others and to himself. At this point he had superhuman strength and was able to break chains and irons. His humanity had been overwhelmed by the dark forces at work in him. In describing that he couldn't be subdued Mark uses the word *damazō* which means to tame or restrain as one would an animal. And the cry (*krazō*) he made was a croak or a scream that would be heard from a raven.

We may be embarrassed or hesitant to believe that there are invisible evil forces at work in the world. But when we witness unspeakable evil that dehumanizes, we are witnesses to spirits at war with God. What historical or current evil events have we seen that gives evidence of this kind of supernatural attack on the innocent? Have you known individuals who have spiraled so far into sin that you no longer recognize who they've become? These are the casualties of a spiritual war. Thank God, Jesus rescues to prisoners and sets captives free.

This man ran to Jesus and knew who He was (Son of the Most High God) and that Jesus was there for him. But he was still under the control of the

6 When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. 7 He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" 8 For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!" 9 Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." 10 And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. - Mark 5:6-10 NIV

unclean spirits and the battle had begun.

What do we immediately see about the balance of power in this encounter- that is, who is in charge here?

28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. - Matthew 12:28 NIV

19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that- and shudder. - James 2:19 NIV

11 A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. 12 The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." 13 He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.- Mark 5:11-13 NIV

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. - John 10:10 NIV

The "legion" of unclean spirits didn't want to leave their territory and selected pigs as their temporary home when they were expelled from this man. Pigs were viewed as "unclean" to the Jews and were the symbolic of Rome as well as paganism. A perfect receptacle for unclean spirits. Jesus granted permission for them to enter the pigs.

What was the response of the pigs to the presence of the unclean spirits? Can you see a parallel between the response of the pigs and the way the man had been acting?

3. Delivered from Darkness

15 When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ... 17 Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. - Mark 5:15, 17 NIV