

Theme: Satan's demonic forces want to confuse, enslave, and destroy, but Jesus has the authority to restore people who can then go forth to tell others of all He has done.

I. Intro - Smeagol/Gollum

- A. Sméagol the Hobbit comes under sway of the Ring
- B. Over time he is distorted in soul, body, and mind
- C. He becomes Gollum; truly tortured, split being
- D. Today we meet someone similar - Gadarene demoniac

II. From One Storm Into Another

- A. Jesus is greeted with another 'demonic storm'
 - 1. Mark 4:35-41 vividly tells the story of the storm
 - a. Vivid details - probably from Peter
 - b. The disciples are afraid of the chaotic storm
 - c. Jesus rebukes & silences storm (demonic language)
 - d. Disciples now have fear of the Lord Jesus!
 - 2. This story is parallel in many ways
 - a. Vivid details - probably from Peter
 - b. A man under the power of demons threatens and people are afraid of his chaos
 - c. Jesus displays total mastery over the demons
 - d. At the end, fear shifts to fear of the Lord Jesus
 - 3. This is the most detailed account of demonic activity
 - a. We have seen them in the Gospel before
 - b. But here we are given a detailed account
 - c. From this we learn of their motives and desires

B. A pitiful description of a tortured soul

When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³ This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, 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 5:2-5

- 1. Man "immediately" runs to meet Jesus (not in NIV)
- 2. He lived in the tombs - the place of death
- 3. People tried to bind him with chains - like an animal
- 4. He has demonic supernatural strength so that no one could "subdue" or "tame" him (used of animals)
- 5. He moaned and cried day and night
- 6. He took stones & cut himself - attacking his body
- 7. One could hardly create a more pitiful picture
- 8. The demons have reduced this man to living like a wild animal, and his soul is so tortured that he is mutilating his own body.
- 9. Like the storm and the waters in Genesis 1:2, this man is a boiling chaos, so that the image of God he was created to be is barely recognizable.

C. A description of total 'uncleanness'

- 1. The story is in a Gentile region (Decapolis)
- 2. The man has an 'unclean spirit'
- 3. The man lives among the tombs
- 4. The area is full of swine
- 5. This would repel many Jews; how will Jesus respond?

III. Lord Over the Demonic Legions

A. The demons' confrontation with Jesus

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? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" ⁸ For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!" Mark 5:6–8

1. The man runs and bows before Jesus
2. The demon speaks through the man
 - a. What do you want with me - almost always a demon to Jesus in the NT - "We are at cross purposes!"
 - b. He knows Jesus' name though He has never been there before this
 - c. Only demons have known Jesus' identity - Son of God (the disciples had just asked "Who is this?!")
 - d. The demon fears torture - the man would not
 - e. Jesus is telling the demon to come out
3. Ironically, the demons are torturing this poor man and beg for Jesus not to torture them!

B. The depth of the demonization

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. 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 evil 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 5:9–13

1. Jesus asks the pitiful man for his name (αὐτόν)
2. The demon replies to the question - Legion!
3. Not necessarily 6,000 - but a lot of demons!
4. v10 - it appears the man is begging for the demons not to be sent out of the area - slipping back and forth between the human and the demonic in communication.
5. v11 - a large herd of pigs - reminder this is a Gentile area where Jesus is bringing the Gospel
6. v12 - The demons are begging Jesus to be sent into the large herd of pigs
7. Jesus allows this - and they drive the whole herd mad!
 - a. This shows the resilience of the man - he had withstood their onslaught for quite a while but the pigs went crazy in a moment!
 - b. Jesus probably allowed this to prove that the demons had been expelled from the man
 - c. He also probably allowed it to show clearly the destructive desire of the demons - they want to confuse, enslave, and destroy
 - d. What must be seen above all else is that the fate of the swine demonstrates the ultimate intention of the demons with respect to the man they had possessed. It is their purpose to destroy the creation of God, and halted in their destruction of a man, they fulfilled their purpose with the swine. (William Lane)
8. The reality of the demonic forces and their destructive intent should be clear to all - but how will they respond?

IV. Divergent Responses to Jesus the Lord

A. The townspeople: fear and plead with Jesus to leave

Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. 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. ¹⁶ Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man — and told about the pigs as well. ¹⁷ Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. Mark 5:14–17

1. The pig tenders run away to report these events
2. People come to see - and the man is fully restored!
3. What an amazing change - he is sitting, not raging; he is dressed not naked; in his right mind not screaming or hurting himself.
4. Like the disciples in the storm, this display of power prompts fear in the people. Humans fear such supernatural power for it can not be controlled!
5. There is also the issue of the pigs (v16) - this is a real economic loss and interruption of their way of life.
 - a. Many people today complain about the loss of the pigs - we are not much different!
 - b. This motive also lay behind slavery, Jim Crow, and other modern political movements - economic comfort can easily eclipse concern with the welfare of humans and the work of God.
 - c. This should cause real reflection in each of us.
6. The sad statement - the people plead with Jesus to leave! And He does (v18)!

7. They reject Jesus and His saving power, preferring the comfort of their economic prosperity, familiar lives, and gods they can control!
8. Most people, if they were asked, would probably say that they would like to see a manifestation of God. But this story is a cold shower for such religious pipe dreams: when God manifests himself in Jesus most people ask him to leave (see John 1:11). (James Edwards)

B. The former demoniac: worship, discipleship, evangelism

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹ Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your family 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 5:18–20

1. The man sat at Jesus’ feet - a posture of worship
2. Man delivered from demons begs to go with Jesus
3. This is the language of discipleship - with Jesus
4. Surprisingly Jesus says no - and sends him on mission
 - a. Jesus will not be there to proclaim the Gospel
 - b. This man can freely tell what happened because Jesus will not be there or have His mission hindered by crowds.
5. The man may not know much, but He knows that the LORD has delivered him and he can tell that to others!
6. Don’t miss that he begins with his own family - every person delivered by Jesus is a missionary among their own family!

7. A picture of Christian missionary impulse
 - a. He does not just go to his family, but takes the news all over his region!
 - b. He tells what JESUS has done for him (what the LORD has done for you in v19)
 - c. This leads to people being amazed - a much more open response than fear and asking Jesus to leave!

V. Applying the Word

A. What is my response to the Sovereign Power of Jesus?

1. We see two very different responses in this event
2. One group is afraid of Jesus and pushes Him away
 - a. We fear a God outside of our control!
 - b. We prefer our comfortable lifestyle and fear God's work may cost us - and it might!
 - c. We prefer the destructive Devil we know to the God Who we don't know
 - d. Have I responded to Christ as Lord - or pushed Him away?
 - e. As a believer - are there areas I have pushed away Jesus and His work out of fear that it will change my comfortable life? It is easy to judge the townspeople, southern slavers, etc - but what about me?
 - f. What if the call of Jesus cost me
 1. A promotion at work?
 2. A new vocation with less pay?
 3. Reputation or friendships?
 4. Putting me in situations outside my comfort zone?
 - g. Is the Spirit speaking to me in any area like this?

3. The man delivered tells others about Jesus
 - a. He goes back to family and friends - who had chained and rejected him!
 - b. he is telling people who had asked Jesus to leave!
 - c. He tells people in his village and others about Jesus
 - d. He is like the farmer in the parables - he is not responsible for growth, but only for spreading the seed!
 - e. We are called to spread the seed no matter the response - leave that to God!
 - f. When we consider all that Jesus has done - how can we be silent?

B. The Table of Deliverance

1. The Lord meets and delivers us at His Table
2. He reminds us of the deliverance we have been given in Christ!
3. By His Spirit, He gives fresh deliverance to us

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Mark 5:1-20
 May 14, 2023
 Communion
 Revelation 1:4-6

Teaching keywords: Christology; Jesus; Deity of Christ; Satan and demons; fear; salvation and deliverance

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood 6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father-- to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. Rev. 1:4-6