

RESTORING TO WHOLENESS Sunday School- October 11, 2009

Unifying Topic: **RECOGNIZING JESUS**

Lesson Text

I. Demon Possessed Man (Mark 5:1-5)

II. Jesus Drives Out Demons (Mark 5:6-13)

III. A New Witness For Jesus (Mark 5:18-20)

The Main Thought: Howbeit, 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. (Mark 5:19, KJV).

Unifying Principle: At times our problems are so overwhelming and sometimes causes such alienation that we do not know where to turn. What help is available? Mark's account of the Gerasenes demoniac demonstrates Jesus is able to break the chains that binds and isolate us to bring us back into the community.

Lesson Aim: To help students clearly appreciate how Jesus healed the demon possessed man.

Life aim: To teach how Jesus brought the power of His word and by His Spirit can change the most troublesome life, liberating us from demonic force and empowering us to witness joyfully for Him.

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- 5:1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.
5:2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,
5:3 Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:
5:4 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.
5:5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.
5:6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,
5:7 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.
5:8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.
5:9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.
5:10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.
5:11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.
5:12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.
5:13 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.
5:14 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.
5:15 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.
5:16 And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine.
5:17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.
5:18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.
5:19 Howbeit 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.
5:20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

HISTORY:

There are three types of Parables

- Similitudes - "The kingdom of heaven is like..." (These are all in Matt 13:)
- Parabolic sayings - these are the one-liners found in Luke 4-7
- Full parables - a story told to make a point.

The Parables of Christ: <http://www.bible-topics.com/Parables.html>. I counted a total of 52 Parables in the New Testament. Some have a different number. Check them out.

THE MACRO STRUCTURE OF THE PARABOLIC SAYINGS

The Parables	Their Meaning
Physician Heal Thyself Fasting and the Bridegroom	They raise the issue of the identity of the Messiah. He is here!

New Patch on Old Garment New Wine in Old Wineskin	They show the rejection of Judaism as a workable system. The <i>Kingdom</i> is here!
Blind Leading the Blind A Pupil is not above his Teacher	The problem was insufficient leadership A Challenge to the new leadership
Good and Bad Fruit and Trees Wise and Foolish Builders	The reality of righteousness will show up in the character or obedience of the person.
Children in the Marketplace The Two Debtors	These contrast Pharisaical self-righteousness with genuine repentant faith.

Now after the Jewish rejection of the King, and therefore by default the kingdom, Jesus begins his teachings by the seaside with a parable dealing with the Parable of the Sower in the 4th Chapter of Mark. A **parable** is an earthly story having a spiritual meaning. It is an everyday truth that has a spiritual application and Jesus therefore began to teach publicly in parables, *first* to

conceal a truth. Those who did not possess spiritual delight in the words and person of Christ would not understand. *Secondly*, to those who did have the Holy Spirit's desire for truth and the glory of God, more understanding would be given. Those who had no desire for God's glorifying truth would turn away, while those who possessed that passion would seek the meaning of His words (**vv12b-15**). The parables were never used by Jesus to make truth more simple to understand. Even the disciples needed constant clarification when it came to the teachings of His parables (**v10**). In private, He would explain the parables to His disciples. As Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom, He did not always find a receptive audience. When Jesus told a parable, He was dealing with either a Question or an Attitude. After all, He could read their minds and he knew their hearts. Some listened only to find reasons to accuse Him, and the main reason was that many had become "hard of hearing" (**v9**).

One of the most well-known parables illustrates the problem Jesus faced, known as "**The Parable Of The Sower**" or "**The Parable Of The Four Soils**" (**vv1-20**).

He began to teach by the sea in the ship and the people were on land. And He would say, "*He that have ears to hear, let him hear.*" Satan takes away the Word of God from people's minds and hearts so that they cannot believe and be saved. There were **three strategies of Satan** to take the Word away

- **the wayside**— **Immediately with Inattention, Ill-Will, or Ignorance**
- **the stony ground**— **Eventually with Shallow Soil and Persecution**
- **the thorny ground**— **Eventually with Prosperity**
- **the good ground**— **Cannot get to this .The Word grew.**

There are **three things at stake** in the loss of the Word: (1) Fruit-bearing. (2) Discipleship. (3) Salvation. The Lord was occupied in preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and He committed the preaching of this gospel to others also. He was a Sower, and He sowed the Word. That was His service, and it was theirs likewise.

"A Candle Under The Bushel" (**vv21-25**)

The lamp that was in the houses in Jesus' day was a clay dish that was filled with oil, and there was a wick put into the oil and it was lit. But is a candle lit to be hidden? Mark is trying to signify that this lamp is a person, and this person has a purpose in coming to light the house. The person is, of course, the Lord Jesus - and as John put it in *John 3:19*, "*He is the light who is come into the world.*" Moreover nothing should be hidden. What had been hidden? Christ's glorious identity as Messiah, as the Son of God, as the Suffering Servant, Savior King was hidden to the unbelieving Jews of His day. If man did not manifest the truth he had received, what was kept secret will eventually be shed abroad and will be manifested, revealed. The lamp isn't to be put under a bushel or under a bed, it has to be set on a stand - and who was the stand? It's you, it's me, it's the church. Let every one take heed to it.

"The Parable of the Seed" (**vv26-29**)

Though the growth is independent, and the life is in the seed itself, someone needs to go and put it out onto the soil. It's the same with the gospel, people will not get saved if we just sit and rest on our residue and do nothing about it, but as Paul said in Romans: how shall they hear without a preacher? There needs to be a Sower. It is inevitable that God's seed will grow when it is received, by faith, into the heart of the hearer. That seed grows independently in the heart. The love of God sent the Word of Grace and of the Kingdom unto men, that it should reach their conscience. A Sower must sow, the seed must be watered, and thirdly, the soil must be fertile. The seed should sprout and grow, and the farmer himself does not know how. How, he does not know? The emphasis is on "how". He has sown the seed, he sleeps night and day, leaves it, waits, and it grows! He is dumbfounded at the process, he doesn't understand how. There is unusual productivity in the power of God's Word (See Heb.4:12)! This work is not about you or I, it's about Him and it's about His Word. It's about the seed! —The secret of the growth of the seed, the secret of its life, is in itself. Also this parable presents God's kingdom from the first sowing, hidden in the hearts of men when the Lord Jesus was on the earth, then the patient waiting in this age of grace,

until the final reaping for all to see at the end of the age, that great harvest.

"The Parable Of The Mustard Seed" (vv30-34).

Jesus uses the image of something small to teach us about something larger than we can comprehend. In comparing the Kingdom of God to a tiny mustard seed, Jesus was using a powerful illustration. The Lord makes use of another similitude to describe the character of the kingdom. Like faith in the heart, the church and kingdom of God in this world began as a very small thing. Those who were chosen to be the foundational apostles of Christ's kingdom were poor, unlettered fishermen. Thus we have the work of preaching the Word; the responsibility of the laborers to whom the Lord would entrust it during His absence. This parable here was prophetic. He was telling his disciples not to despise the day of small things. Though it appeared a small, despicable thing, like mustard seed, the Lord here prophesied that His Church would become a great, large Kingdom. He said, as the mustard plant grows to be the greatest of all herbs, so shall my church grow to be the greatest of all kingdoms.

vv35-41

When darkness fell, Jesus says, "Let us go over to the other side", and yet they're going into the midst of a storm that Satan instigates for them, and the Lord allows them to go through it. While they guided the boat, Jesus lay fast asleep in the rear of the boat. He was weary from the business of the day. Apparently Christ took no notice of their situation. The message that it gives us right away is that this raging sea is a picture of the storms of life through which all believers are called to pass. The servant is not greater than his Lord. We must take up our crosses and go down the same road and face the same storms. We must be in the same boat. They call upon Him, and awake Him by cries, which He answers in grace. The Lord allows the storms so that our faith would grow stronger in the test. If we enter the satanic storm and the Master seems to sleep, it's a test, it's a test of our faith.

He speaks to the wind and the sea, and there is a great calm. At the same time He rebukes their unbelief. They should have counted on Him and on His divine power. Now faith would have recognized that they were in the same ship with their Master. That is to say, if Jesus leaves the seed He has sown to grow until the harvest, He is, none the less, in the same vessel. He shares, not the less, of His followers, rather they share His. Jesus calmed the storm because it was God's will to do it - but their faith had everything to do with believing that they would come to no harm because Christ was in the boat with them. And therefore, if Christ was in the boat, or to put it better, if they were in His boat, it could never sink! "*They feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?*" (v41).

POINT:

That's the way life is too! Things can be fine one moment and the next, the bottom falls out. One minute you can be enjoying fair weather and the next, you find yourself in the middle of a terrible and horrible storm. One phone call, one twenty-four hour period of time, one doctor visit, one tick of the clock, and there you are, in the storm of your life.

These four miracles proved to the disciples, and to us, that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. They demonstrate that He is the Master of every situation.

LESSON:

Mark 5:1-5: Demon Possessed Man

Earlier we looked at Jesus Christ, over the forces of nature. Now Jesus demonstrates the power of the Servant of the Lord over the forces of demons.* Verse 1 tells us that after the storm, they further traveled unto the other side of Galilee, into the country of the Gadarenes', or Gerasenes as some would render it. Now, as we look at the demoniac of Gadara, we see **three forces**: the force of Satan, the force of society, and the force of the Savior. All these three forces are still with us, very active in our world today. This was a locality midway along the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and it was mostly inhabited by Gentiles. Coming out of the boat, "*Immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.*" Matthew 8:28, speaks of two demon-possessed men - but Mark only speaks of the one.

NOTE:

*It's like the desert dweller who didn't believe in rain because he'd never seen it. Just because we may never have seen an instance like this does not mean that it doesn't exist. We must beware of an unbelief in regard to the personality of the devil and his minions, the demons, because as one has well said: 'Unbelief in the devil has often proved to be the first step in unbelief in God'. An unclean spirit characterized itself with moral filthiness, and often caused much harm to the person who was possessed. Satan easily gets a foothold in our lives when we yield

ourselves to sinful practices.

We see five things about the man:

- He had an unclean spirit.
- He lived among the dead, dwelling among the tombs.
- He could not be bound by fetters and chains that bind other men.
- No man could tame him.
- Always at night he was crying and cutting himself with the stones.

Oh, this man was dead on the inside. He was so dead that he was living with the dead.* We can be sure that he did not start out this way. This man lost his home, his family, the companionship of a wife and children, his identity; his decency, he's running around naked. He's lost his self-control, and he's like a wild animal. His unearthly shrieking, cuts through the night air while cutting himself with stones. These spirits** are unclean, and Satan drives them to destruction. He has lost peace in his mind and in his heart. He has lost his purpose for living.

NOTE:

*This cycle of sin is when Satan gets you, and he wants you, and he wants to take you where he's going - because Satan knows where he's going, he's destined for hell. Bit by bit, step-by-step, he will destroy you - he wants you, he wants to get you and make you like the demoniac, his dungeon!

**The problem with this man was: he displayed a demonic Herculean strength that some may be aware of, which takes over people who are oppressed, particularly possessed, by the devil.

Mark 5:6-13: Jesus Drives Out Demons

Jesus 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 (Mk.4:35). This man wasn't even a Jew! He was a Gentile and still the Lord reached out to him! This man, who ran from everyone else, ran to the Lord Jesus and fell at His feet. "*But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshiped Him*"(v6); This was the sixth thing about this man, he recognized who Jesus was but did not "*know*" Him.

- In **character** he was afar off. This man and the God-man had nothing in common, but he recognized Jesus.
- In **knowledge** he was afar off. The demoniac knew who Jesus was, but did not "*know*"(as having a relationship) Him.
- In **possessions** he was afar off. This man had nothing to offer Christ, no good feelings, no repentance, no good thoughts, or no holy desires but he knew who Jesus was.

However, 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, and they begged Him not to "*torment*" them. That is, they begged Him not to send* them to Hell, Luke 8:31.

Jesus never wastes words over the devil. He speaks to him very shortly and very sharply. Do you notice in Mark1:25, Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit saying, "*Hold thy peace, and come out of him.*" However here, Jesus asks, "*What is thy name?*"(v8). He answered, "*My name is legion: for we are many*"v.9 This did not affect Jesus.

The man was demented physically and mentally, because he was not his own. However, this one man could tolerate**a "legion" of demons. Incidentally a legion was a battalion of over 6000 Roman soldiers.*** The demons then requested that they might be allowed to enter into a heard of swine that was feeding nearby, v11-12. Jesus gives them permission and they leave the body of the man and enter the swine, v13. When they do, the swine cannot tolerate the demons and kill themselves by running in to the sea, v13.

NOTE:

*Another popular conjecture about demons is that of "territorial spirits." This one has more of a biblical basis to it. The demons here beg not to be sent out of the country. It would seem that sending the demons out of the country would cause them to have to go into the abyss, the bottomless pit. Another demonic entity over Greece. Michael is apparently the angelic prince over Israel. So it is entirely conceivable that there are territorial spirits and angels.

**Things that control you: we all have them, don't we? Things that we would rather not do, but every time it comes across and says 'Hello', we jump right in there. All we need to see is a finger: 'Come here!', and we go, we run to it and we indulge in it, we roll around like a pig in the mud. Again we get up in shame, and we think: 'Why, why did I do it again?'What is it? Is it drugs? Is it promiscuity? Is it pornography? Is it alcoholism? What is it? Is it money? Is that the thing that drives you?

***If you do the math, there were 2,000 swine in that herd. That comes out to three demons per pig. They couldn't

tolerate the presence of the devil and they committed "suey-cide". 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!

Mark 5:18-20: A New Witness For Jesus

The herdsmen saw the dead pigs, and saw the man delivered*, and chose to mourn over the monetary loss rather than delight over the delivered demoniac. There is a simple spiritual truth here: If you care more about money than you do about people, you're going to reject the Lord.

NOTE:

*Christians are bound by all sorts of fetters, you could even be oppressed of the devil as a Christian - not possessed now, but oppressed through fears and anxieties and all sorts of problems - but this man was delivered of all his fears, and all his demons. It's no surprise that he wanted to be with the Lord Jesus.

These people saw* a miracle in the man, and instead of falling at the feet of Jesus, they did the opposite of the demonic man - what did they do? They said: *verse 17, "And they began to pray, they asked Him (Jesus), they pleaded with Jesus, to depart out of their coasts" - 'Jesus of Nazareth, get away from us!' The delivered man begged Jesus to allow him to go with them. In Mark 1:44, Jesus tells the leper to say nothing, but here, Jesus told him to go home, Decapolis, and tell them the great things the Lord hath done. The Great Commission must be fulfilled by everyone.*

POINT:

There will be many who might not believe, but there will be others who will see it and fear and many will trust in the Lord because of the change that is wrought in your life!

SUMMARY:

Jesus is presented to us as the Servant of Jehovah who has power to overcome all hostile forces against God and man. Mark is showing us, and consequently the Holy Spirit is showing us, that man's extremity is God's opportunity. God in Christ just loves to minister to us in our deepest need when we cannot help ourselves. We have a storm that seamen couldn't overcome. We have a demoniac that no one could tame.

First, it teaches us that all spirits are subject to Jesus. They recognize His authority, v7. They must have His permission. And that man is the most depraved creature in existence. So when God saves a sinner, others who thought they were all right are terrified by it, especially if the saved man was once one of them! These poor souls were terrified in the presence of an almighty mercy, omnipotent love, and saving grace. Why? Because they knew nothing about it. They still lived in bondage. The only difference between them and the demoniac was that they were held by fetters and chains, and tamed by society, and they mistook their fetters for righteousness and their tameness for goodness. This young convert wanted to go immediately with Christ and become a preacher. The Lord would not allow it. The Lord sent him home to his family and friends, with a message to deliver to them. And this sinner, saved by the grace of God, did what the Lord told him to do, while the leper didn't (Mk. 145).

APPLICATION:

If your life is a mess, ask Jesus to deliver you. Admit you can't change and then cry out for his mercy. Ask him to chase the demons out of your life, take away the torment, and change you from the inside out. Come humbly to Jesus and ask him to be your Lord and Savior. Run to the cross. Lay your burdens, your cares, your worries, and your fears upon the Son of God. Lay your sins and faults and failures at the feet of Jesus. If you come to Christ, he will not turn you away. And when Christ answers, and he always does, go and tell others what he has done for you.

"Where does God want me?" The answer is, he wants you right where you are. And if he wants you somewhere else, he can move you at any time. What if you are the only Christian in the shop, the office, the factory, the store, the club, the classroom, or in your family or your neighborhood? All the better! No cause for despair. God has put you there as a missionary. And the people all around you are your mission field. The challenge is the same for you as it was for the man in our story. "Go and tell what great things the Lord has done for you." The best missionary work always begins at home. Everyone is either a missionary at home or a missionary in the mission field. Which are you?