

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for November 20, 2016

Mark 5:1-20
Authority Over Spirits

I. The encounter (5:1-5)

A. The demoniac (5:1-2)

They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. ² And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.

- “the other side of the sea” = The eastern side of the Sea of Galilee
 - Also known as the Decapolis
- “the country of the Gerasenes” (Debated location)
 - Probably reference to city and town on Eastern side of Galilee
- Attempt to withdraw with disciples brings encounter with crazy man
 - He came from out of the tombs
 - He had an unclean spirit=demon possessed (Mark 3:11)
- Not the only demoniac, Matthew mentions two men
 - Mark chooses to focus on the more obvious and powerful one

B. The description (5:3-5)

³ He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴ for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.

- Lived among the tombs
 - Once again, another outcast and reject of society
- No one could bind him anymore
 - Breaks every chain and shackle
- Always crying out
 - Yelling like a madman and maniac
- Mark 5:15 indicates that he was naked
- Cutting himself with stones
 - Scaring everyone from the city
 - Matthew 8:28 “... so fierce that no one could pass that way.”
- This man is dangerous and disturbed

II. The exchange (5:6-13)

A. The deliberation (5:6-9)

⁶ And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷ And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." ⁸ For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" ⁹ And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many."

- He rushed Jesus perhaps with initial purposes to terrorize Him
 - This purpose quickly turns to falling down before Jesus
 - Even this legion of demons can't help but fall before Christ
- Once again, demons declare the truth "Jesus, Son of the Most High God"
 - Demons have had the right theology so far in Mark's gospel
 - Mark 1:24, 34; 3:11-12
- How can he adjure/implore Jesus "by God" not to torment him?
 - Probably similar to Matthew 8:29 "And behold, they cried out, 'What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?'"
 - Luke 8:31 "And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss."
 - Even demons knew there was an appointed time in store for them where they will be judged
- Jesus decides to engage with this man and we learn more about the severity of his condition
- His name is "Legion"
 - This was not merely one demon
 - About 6,000 men made up a Roman legion of infantrymen
 - This was a battle
 - This quickly becomes one of the greatest spiritual battles recorded in all of the bible
 - How will this Legion of demons defend themselves against the Messiah?

B. The drowning (5:10-13)

¹⁰ And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, ¹² and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." ¹³ So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

- The best that this legion of demons could do was "beg"!
 - Beg to stay in the region
 - Beg to go into the pigs

- Demons shudder before God
- In responding, Jesus had options
 - Send the demons immediately into the Lake of Fire
 - Send the demons into the abyss to be locked up until their judgment
 - Genesis 6, 2 Peter 2, and Jude
 - Banish the demons from that region of the Decapolis
- Instead, Jesus actually grants them the permission to go into the pigs
- Question: Why would Jesus not destroy the demons immediately?
 - Short answer: God has a greater plan that will bring most glory to Himself by leaving these demons in the Decapolis
 - Colossians 1:16 “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.”
 - Otherwise, God would have destroyed Satan long ago
 - Satan is merely a pawn in God’s grand and glorious plan
 - God’s Word guarantees us that God has complete control
 - We know there is not one rebellious molecule in all the universe
 - We also know there is not one rogue demon in all the universe
 - Jesus has to grant them permission
 - Demons are not acting independently
- Result was about 2,000 pigs rushing into the sea and drowning
- Why?
 - Demonstration of how disturbed this man truly was before Christ
 - Validation of the fact that Jesus had truly cast the demons out of the man
 - Tangible evidence for the man when sharing his testimony later on
 - We don’t know what demons did next or why they drowned the pigs
 - We do know that this scene was enough to gain the attention of the locals

III. The exit (5:14-20)

A. The desire (5:14-17)

¹⁴ The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵ And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed

and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ¹⁶ *And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs.* ¹⁷ *And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.*

- Reports immediately spread from the herdsmen watching over the pigs
- People from the city and country rushed to see if the report was true
- Imagine the shock upon their arrival:
 - They saw thousands of pigs in the Sea of Galilee
 - They immediately saw the demon-possessed man both clothed and in his right mind
 - Mark reminds us that he “had had the legion”
- This caused an immediate response of fear
 - Would this be a fear that leads to faith in Christ or rejection of Christ?
- The witnesses proceeded to tell the exact story
 - What had happened to the demon-possessed man
 - What had happened to the pigs
- Another round of “begging” ensues
 - First from the demons to stay in the country and enter the pigs (vv. 10, 12)
 - Now from the people to have Jesus leave their country (v. 17)
- Their fear of Jesus was not godly fear leading to faith in Jesus
 - There may have been financial reasons involved for their decision as well
- How would Jesus respond to this rude request?

B. The declaration (5:18-20)

¹⁸ *As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him.* ¹⁹ *And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”* ²⁰ *And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.*

- Jesus grants the request yet again
 - First, to the demons to go into the pigs (v. 13)
 - Now to the people to leave their region (v. 17)
- Another round of “begging”
 - First, from the demons and Jesus granted it
 - Second, from the people and Jesus granted it
 - Now from the demon-possessed man (v. 18)
- A perfectly normal and even good request from the man, which was to be with Jesus (v. 18)
- However, Jesus denies this request

- Jesus had a greater purpose in mind (just as He did with the demons)
- “Go home to your friends”
 - Jesus wanted this man to stay in the region
- “tell them how much the Lord had done for you, and how he has had mercy on you”
 - Jesus empowered him to be a witness and the first missionary
 - Jesus puts His own supernatural powers on par with the “Lord”
- Despite being denied, this man obeys Jesus’ Words
- He proclaimed in the Decapolis “how much Jesus had done for him”
 - Decapolis=10 city Gentile region East of the Jordan River
 - No need to maintain Messianic secret here in this Gentile region
 - Unlike previous and future Galilean ministry of Christ to the Jews
- The response was that “everyone marveled”
 - God used region’s most dangerous and disturbed man to bring good news of Christ to the same region