

Facing Our Demons **Can I Really Change?**

Mark 5:1-20

Crossroads, May 3, 2010

- **Next 5 weeks: Fear and Faith**
 - o *Facing our deepest fears and most troubling anxieties*
 - o *See Jesus as he deals with people's fears in Mark 4-5*
 - o *Pray that we see God and our strengthened in faith*
- **Pray**
- **Skit** – Each week begin with a skit on the passage

READ Mark 5:1-20 {5 min. for skit prep while everyone else read passage}

1) Facing Our Demons

- **Observations**
 - o Walk through passage ...
 - Legion = 6,000 foot soldiers
 - ...
- **Demons**
 - o **Who Are They?**
 - Spiritual Beings (fallen angels)
 - Local, not omni-present
 - Intelligent, not omniscient
 - Powerful, not omnipotent
 - o **What do they do?**
 - “Demons are opposed to the person and work of God and seek to lead human beings, including believers, away from him. For this reason, believers are forbidden to be involved with them.” (Zondervan Dictionary Bible Themes)
 - Lie, deceive, devour ... appear as Angel of Light
 - o **Are they still around today?**
 - Yes – ask any overseas missionary
 - But Satan loves to deceive, so either
 - Get us to forget them / disbelieve them
 - Get us to fear them / obey them
 - o **What role do they play today?**
 - Traditional Religions
 - Occult, Satan Worship
 - Witchcraft
 - Fortune Tell, Ouija Board, Astrology...
 - o **Can a Christian be Possessed by a Demon**

- Ex. Africa story – was it sickness, demons or both?
- Difference between Possession and Influence
- Filled with Spirit as argument against posses
- Note application of Africa story – people with different views can still minister together!
- So is it trial, temptation, oppression Yes
- o **Did the Devil Make Me Do It?**
 - How does the Bible talk about sin?
 - Satan tempts, but we sin:
 - “The devil (and doubtless his demons) tempt God’s people to sin. But there is no teaching in the Bible that the devil and demons *cause* people to sin. James wrote that the cause of our sin is not God, for He does not tempt anyone to evil (James 1:13). What then is the source of temptation and eventual sin? “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death” (1:14–15). The devil and demons do not make us do anything, and that includes sin. We choose to sin just as surely as we choose not to sin.” (understanding Christian Theology – Swindoll and Zuck)
- o **3 Keys to understanding Satans and Demons**
 - **1) They are Real** – they are smart, powerful, will kick our butts any day – so we need to not give a foothold, not dabble in their domain, be diligent in Spiritual warfare
 - **2) They do deceive and temp, they do not cause sin** or take away our responsibility
 - **3) No match for God – Already Defeated** – this takes us back to the passage – with a word Jesus casts out Legions of demons! – cross defeat sin and death and Satan
 - **Through the cross the power of demons has been conquered.** Christ conquered Satan and his demons at the cross and made a public display of them—as a victor displaying the spoils of war (Moody handbook of theology).

- **Col. 2:13- 15** ¹³When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

2) Can a person Really Change?

- Speaks to more than just Demons – Jesus does here what he did to storm previously – **calms storm tossed life** – makes calm – dressed and in right mind ... we all need this!
- **Sin and Struggles ultimately from within**
 - Out of heart mouth speaks
 - Act out of things stored up in us
 - Desire turns to Sin turns to Death
- **Outside Christ – slaves to sin**, no hope of change
- **In Christ – no longer slaves to sin** – real hope of change
- **New Creation**, old gone, new come
 - **II Cor. 5: 17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
- **Songs:** Strong the Chains ; And Can it Be
 - Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray—
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.
- **Implications for us – We can change**
- **Implications for others** – what do we do with the crazy, mad men we encounter? With the addict? With the criminal? - towns people locked they up, cast them out – Jesus came and set free – **Do we flee or come in faith Jesus can truly change people?**
- **Examples:** why we go to Russia, Camp Promise, etc

3) Are You Willing to Let Jesus Change You?

- As in the previous passage I believe one of the key lessons for us is not just in Jesus' encounter with the storm or the demon – it is in the **responses by the people who encounter Jesus**
- Here the **villagers are afraid**
 - **Economic** issues – 2,000 pigs killed – what will he do next?
 - Again, what is **more terrifying than a madman** – one who can **cast out the demons and change the character** of the man
 - **Upsets balance** – if those we cast out can really change everything changes
 - Example: **Les Mis** – law versus grace, a man can not change – Grace drives man of the law to kill self!
 - Seems extreme – but in the end we have to **give up our view of the world**, and **ourselves to come to Jesus**
 - Where we see sin we dislike becoming new may sound attractive, but **what about the sins we do like?** What about our other priorities in life – Jesus will also change those – am I ready for that?
 - **Mark 8:34-38** ³⁴Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? ³⁷Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."
 - **Here the man is** – he is now in his right mind and desires to follow Jesus
 - But note **even he does not get what he wants** – he wants to stay with Jesus – instead is sent home to tell others
 - **And the villagers** – when they see what Jesus does they want no part of Him – **ask him to leave**
- **Today**, are you willing to let Jesus change you? Will you trust Him to change those around you? Whatever the cost?