

Fear is not my Future

Jesus shows his power in two miracles

The Greatest Opportunity Series - Part 11

Mk 4:35-5:20

June 1-2, 2024

Introduction

- **God never expects us to do life or ministry on our own.**
- **Fear comes from a sense of INABILITY, a lack of control, a lack of power.**

Sometimes it's entirely legitimate. If a train is coming down the tracks at full speed toward your car stuck on the rails, you should be afraid. You do not have the ability to withstand a train crashing into you at 40mph. It's actually that fear that stimulates your body to have the energy to get out of the car ahead of time. It's wisdom to understand our appropriate limits. Now, it's not wisdom to embrace a lesser view of our power and authority, but if it's really a limitation there's nothing wrong with calling it so.
- **God never rebukes us for appropriate fear** - One of the most common commands in Scripture is 'do not be afraid.' But don't misunderstand what God is saying. He is not telling you to be blindly, or ignorantly confident in something you shouldn't be confident in. He knows our weakness and fragility. What He's saying is that in certain circumstances we aren't looking at the situation accurately. There is an X-Factor that we aren't calculating, ... His presence.
- **The 5 words that change lives** - As a sufferer of chemical deficiency that leaves me with panic disorder, I have taught extensively on anxiety and fear. My favorite passage to use is **Philippians 4:5-7**. It contains 5 words that can change your life. The problem is that most people only quote verses 6 & 7 and miss the whole point. Those two verses are the sexy verses. They say, *"do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* Here's the problem: the command of verse 6 doesn't start like that. In the ESV you'll notice that verse 6 isn't even a complete sentence. It starts after a semi-colon. It's actually the first five words, BEFORE the semi-colon that set the entire tone of the passage. **Without those you don't have any of that freedom or peace. So what are those 5 words? The Lord is at hand...**
- **Jesus' challenges to His guys** - what you are going to study with me today in our passage is **the premise** that Jesus never gets on His guys because they are appropriately afraid, He challenges them because they aren't taking all the facts into consideration. You see...

What We CAN'T do, Jesus CAN

- **Recap of Last week**
 - **Pastor Rodney**, everyone!!! Amazing, yes?
 - **He taught the parables** of the **light hidden** under a basket, **the talents** and the **growth of the Kingdom of God**.
 - **He challenged us that:**
 - **What God does, He does ON Purpose** and that **our job is shine Christ**. **The challenge** was that **we want the gospel AND our secrets. But we are called to STAND UP and STAND OUT**.
 - In the Parable of the **Talents** he said, **"Neglect Always Gives Room to the Enemy"** Therefore we have to give God our **FULL Attention**.
 - And finally, he taught us about **mustard seed beginnings and how God can make extraordinary outcomes from the tiniest of things**.
 - **The Point of the recent parables** - All of those parables are **teaching that God is more powerful** and His kingdom is more mighty than we can imagine.¹ And **now it's time for Jesus to demonstrate** it in real life. He is about to do **three miracles** in a row that will blow the minds of His team. He'll demonstrate **His power over nature, demons, and death**.
- **This Week** - We get to cover 2 of those and they are some of the most extraordinary stories, and two of my favorites in the entire New Testament. Jesus shutting down the wind and naked demon guys. Could it be any better?

Lesson

- **External Chaos**
 - **Jesus Calms the Wind and the Waves**
 - **Mk 4:35-41**- *"On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."³⁶ And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose,² and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that*

¹ "The three miracles reported in Ch. 4:35-5:43 reveal Jesus' sovereignty over sea and wind, demonic possession and death. They have been brought together as a unit, presumably by the evangelist, to illustrate the vanquishing of powers hostile to God." William Lane, NICNT Commentary

² The Sea of Galilee, surrounded by high mountains, is like a basin. Sudden violent storms on the sea are well known. Violent winds from the southwest enter the basin from the southern cleft and create a situation in which storm and calm succeed one another rapidly. Since the wind is nearly always stronger in the afternoon than in the morning or evening, fishing was done at night. But when a storm arises in the evening, it is all the more dangerous. Such a storm struck as a fierce gust of wind came upon the lake, driving the waves over the sides of the boat, which was being swamped with water...The severity of the storm may be estimated from the fact that apparently even the experienced fishermen were terrified." NICNT

the boat was already filling. ³⁸ But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹ And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!"³ And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹ And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

- **ESV Combo Account⁴** - "On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. He got into (the) boat, his disciples followed him. So they set out, and other boats were with him. And as they sailed he fell asleep. And behold, there arose a great windstorm (which) came down on the lake/sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves (which) were breaking into the boat, and they were filling with water and were in danger; but he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing! Save us, Lord! Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And he awoke and rose and rebuked the winds and said to the sea and the raging waves, "Peace! Be still!" and they ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid, O you of little faith? Where is your faith? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, what sort of man is this, that he commands even winds and water/sea, and they obey him?"
- **On that day, when evening had come**, - it's a bit confusing the way that Mark writes it. On one hand it says that Jesus was teaching beside the sea earlier in the day to a very large crowd (he was in a boat teaching due to the size of the crowd). Then it says he took the disciples aside and taught them privately. The confusing part is that it seems Jesus ONLY taught his core disciples (12?) the parables: lamp under a basket, the growing seed, and the mustard seed which I thought those were taught to the main group. Regardless, it seems that it was a LONG day of teaching and it was time to go.
- **he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."** - They were in the Galilee region and the 'other' side was the Eastern side, which was the Gentile side, a region called Garasene/Gadarene. The only interesting thing is that Jesus would go over there to minister when it was primarily Gentile. He didn't normally do that. Why He chose to do that this time (it was slightly different with the Samaritans because of their Jewish history - so I see why He spent more time with them) I don't know. Allegedly at the widest points of the lake it takes about 2 hours to sail across on a normal day. It's 8 miles across at its widest point and 13

³ "This detail (σιώπα, πεφίμωσο), found only in Mark, is reminiscent of the encounter with the demonic in Ch. 1:25 και ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· φημώθητι; Ch. 4:39 και ... ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ και εἶπεν ... πεφίμωσο. The parallel has been frequently pointed out." NICNT

⁴ Luke is black - Lk 8:22-25

Matthew is orange - Mt 8:23-27

Mark is green - Mk 4:35-41

miles long. They were likely nearer to Capernaum (northwest side of lake) and needed to get to the Garasene/Gadarenes area (southeast side of the lake), which would be longer. **Average rowing speed is 4 mph. That would make this trip approximately an hour rowing if they were making good time. A sail would speed that up.**

- **And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.** – Mark says that the crowd was still there, so again, the order that he writes it is weird. The other interesting thing here is that it mentions ‘THEY’ took him with THEM. Who are these people? Who are the ‘OTHER’ boats with Him? What it looks like is: 1.) it’s all the 12 and a few others which would require a few other boats; 2.) a group asked Jesus and His team to go with them across to the other side for a specific ministry issue and they were the group He was traveling with. Matthew’s account says that not only did Jesus preach a lot but that this was following the healing revival at Peter’s house, and it was JESUS who wanted to go to the other side DUE to the crowd (Mt 8:14-23). Luke simply says that it was some random day that they sailed for the other side. We do need to separate this account from the walking on water account. Two different events.
- **And a great windstorm arose** – Almost all commentators cite the **brutal and rapid windstorms that come onto the lake from the Southwest.**⁵ The lake is like a bowl surrounded by hills but on the Southwest side there is a V-shaped break in the mountains that allows the wind to come in strongly from that direction depending on regional storms. Because there is no natural break for the wind and it comes right in on flat water, it picks up speed and hits hard and fast. One commentator cited that it’s actually because of the wind patterns that **most fishing was done in the evening/night when it was the calmest.** The problem with that is in the dark a stormy lake it more dangerous.
 - **Could it be demonically related?** – throughout my years in ministry I have read and been told that some believe that this was not a normal storm due to its severity and the reaction of the disciples (some of who are fishermen on that lake by trade and know everything about that area). They believe that this is a demonically inspired storm

⁵ “THE Lake of Galilee was notorious for its storms. They came literally out of the blue with shattering and terrifying suddenness. A writer describes them like this: ‘It is not unusual to see terrible squalls hurl themselves, even when the sky is perfectly clear, upon these waters which are ordinarily so calm. The numerous ravines which to the north-east and east debouch [open out] upon the upper part of the lake operate as so many dangerous defiles in which the winds from the heights of Hauran, the plateaux of Trachonitis, and the summit of Mount Hermon are caught and compressed in such a way that, rushing with tremendous force through a narrow space and then being suddenly released, they agitate the little Lake of Gennesaret in the most frightful fashion.’ The voyager across the lake was always liable to encounter just such sudden storms as this.” William Barclay Commentary

where the enemy was trying to take down the team. I don't know if that's true, it's certainly speculation, but that doesn't make it wrong. The only reason that it matters is whether Jesus was simply controlling nature or He was demonstrating control over nature to the disciples, AND demonstrating control over all situations to the watching supernatural world.

- **and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.** - The Bible never seems to give me all the details I want, and that's how God wanted it. It's frustrating because I'm trying to put the pieces together and there are gaps. For example, how big are these boats? It says that there are a bunch of boats out here together that are in a bit of a group, and they are all going over to the other side. It depends on whose boats they are? Are these larger boats owned by larger fishing teams? Are they the Zebedee crew boats? Are they personal boats and that's why they had to take so many? The reason this matters is it helps to determine how big this storm was. If they were in the **standard boat**,⁶ which there is a partially preserved version of one in the museum in Galilee, then it was roughly **27 feet long, 7 ½ feet wide**, and the full sides were maybe **3 feet tall**. They are **flat bottomed** to be able to get near the shore. It is equipped with either **a single sail or rowing** capability. The most interesting element was that it typically only **held 5 people**. Just Jesus' crew would take at least 3 boats to move around (13 guys). Josephus (Jewish historian from the first century) said there were 230 boats on the sea of Galilee during Jesus' day. Most evidence I could find says there were only relatively small boats on the lake, no large ones.
- **But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.** - The stern is **the back of the boat**. Allegedly there was a small area in the back that had a small **carpet and cushion** to rest on (fishing is exhausting and long hours).⁷ This is where Jesus would be. **He was exhausted from teaching all day and knew that He was going to be ON when they arrived at their next destination.**
- **How is Jesus asleep in this?** - perhaps this is one of the greatest lessons of this story: **Jesus isn't afraid of what we are afraid of**. On one hand we could think, 'well, I wouldn't be afraid if I were God,

⁶ https://www.forcey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/08_bi_early_ships_boat.pdf

⁷ "Jesus was in the boat in the position in which any distinguished guest would be conveyed. We are told that, 'In these boats ... the place for any distinguished stranger is on the little seat placed at the stern, where a carpet and cushion are arranged. The helmsman stands a little farther forward on the deck, though near the stern, in order to have a better look-out ahead.'" William Barclay Commentary

either!' and that may be true, but we do need to remember that **Jesus was self-limited on earth** and kept Himself relatively contained while on the planet, which means that **He relied solely on the Father and the Holy Spirit to do what needed to be done**. He was doing this as an example for us to follow. Therefore, He did have concerns and cares and struggles (ex. Garden of Gethsemane). It wasn't that He was unaffected by earthly reality. It was that **He was so deeply entrenched in His connection with the Father and Holy Spirit** that He knew they were covering Him for anything important. **He was able to sleep in the storm. Can we?**

- **The boat is filling and He's sleeping** - Okay, we have to call this out: **Jesus is a hardcore sleeper**. The text says that He's on a cushion in the boat on the floor and the waves are filling the boat with water and He's still asleep. How much longer was He going to nap while drowning? It's one thing to be unconcerned, it's another thing to be dead to the world asleep.
- **And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"** - In this one line is a host of problems. 1.) **First of all, they woke Him**, which if they truly knew who He was (Son of God, 2nd person of the Trinity), they wouldn't have. 2.) **they assumed that they could die without His authorization** - which they can't. 3.) **They suggested that He DIDN'T care**. Jesus is on His way to the cross to die for the sins of mankind and all He has done is serve, serve, serve. They don't know all of that but to say that He didn't care is a **blurting out in anger and fear. Too often we treat God poorly when we are stressed. He is still worthy of honor and respect when we are freaking out. We are far too arrogant and cavalier with our challenges against God.** Unfortunately, **even after 2,000 years of reflection on what God has done for us, there is still a 'what have you done for me lately'.**
- **Who's in the boat?** - it's tempting to think that Jesus was with a bunch of fishermen in this boat, but what if He wasn't? Yes, 4 of the 12 were fishermen by trade, but **what if they were in a different boat** and Jesus was with the Zealot (Simon), the Tax Collector (Levi/ Matthew), and two other normal guys? Maybe in the fisherman boat they were able to handle all of this and were getting things together in their boat. Maybe Jesus was in the panicky boat.
- **And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!"** - The full account says that: 1.) He woke up - probably needing to get a sense of what was happening. He went to sleep with calm and is now being yelled at in a storm. 2.) He rose/got up/stood up in the boat

(Matthew tells us that) to take a look and have an authoritative stance. 3.) He rebuked the wind and sea by saying, 'Calm down Now!' Just on the surface, this is a stunning account, but the deeper we dig into it, the more amazing it gets. First of all Jesus is talking to inanimate objects: wind and waves. What in the world? It's one thing to rebuke - a formal and public reprimand. It means to 'express a sharp disapproval.' - a person who can hear you and be shamed into shutting down. But it's another thing entirely to reprimand nature. Nature isn't listening because it doesn't have ears, right? Wrong. There is something keeping nature online, alive, connected, directed, growing, moving, living. Whatever that is (the system that God created and sustains and manages), IS listening to the commands of God. If God says to rain, it will rain. He is directing nature. Therefore, to tell the wind and waves to shut down is the most normal thing for God to do. The shocker here in this story was that a man did it, Jesus. The disciples didn't yet fully accept or understand who He was (v. 41). The interesting part is that Jesus endowed His followers to do the same thing (ex. curse the fig tree). Then the Holy Spirit entered humanity in a new way (indwelling) at Pentecost and now we are able to speak on God's behalf, as long as He authorizes it.

- **I rebuke you oddity** - one thing that we do as Christians in our prayers that is very strange is that we use a term describing what we are supposed to be doing. We will say, 'I rebuke you, in the name of Jesus' to demons and disease, but that's like saying, 'I correct you, in the name of Jesus,' instead of actually correcting them. It's an action word describing the thing you are doing, not the thing itself. It would be better TO rebuke, than talk about rebuking when rebuking. It's just a pet peeve I have as a stickler of words. Which btw I still do it personally (so I'm frustrated with myself too).
- **And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.** - Nature knows better than to rebel against God. Only thinking things (demons, angels, humans) would have the audacity to do that. Nature ONLY does what God says. Nature is far more respectful and obedient and perhaps that's because they can do no other. But when Jesus said it, it happened.
- **Great calm** - the word for great in Greek is megas. It mean significant, large. My guess is that Mark meant to say that when Jesus told the wind and waves to shut down they shut all the way down and the whole area/storm region, was instantly and totally calm. This is the power of God. He can make that which is stormy calm in an instant. That is why we pray.

- **What did the other boats think?** - we always read this story as if they were all in one boat and everyone heard what was happening with Jesus and what He said, but that's not true. There were a bunch of boats. **What did those guys think?** You know they probably looked over at the Jesus boat, like 'did He do something?'
- **How awkward did yeller guy feel?** - whichever disciple decided to yell at Jesus must have felt stupid when a moment later it's totally peaceful and quiet. If I were Jesus I would just lay back down and **let them soak in that awkwardness** instead of saying something and relieving the tension.
- **He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"** - Jesus lights up on them. **The you here is plural.** He is rebuking all of the guys in His boat, even though only one was the yeller. Notice that He asks, '**WHY?**' Why are you so afraid? Meaning, you shouldn't be. If they were normally afraid, He wouldn't chastise them because it's expected. Humans get afraid. But His rebuke indicated that they did something wrong. **They were afraid wrongly.** And why was it wrong to still be afraid? Notice the second line, '**they STILL didn't have any faith.**' This means that **they have been trained and given evidence sufficient to have strong faith but they aren't letting it soak in or taking it seriously.** The term faith doesn't mean general faith, but **FAITH IN SOMEONE**, in Jesus. It means, 'don't you trust me after all that you've experienced by now? Don't you know who I am and what I'm all about? What more must I do to help you understand and trust me?' **Jesus is frustrated by their hardheadedness, not their fear.**
- **And they were filled with great fear** - **now they are afraid of something else.** They used to be afraid of the storm and drowning (*deilos* - to fear), but now **they are stunned into respect** and embarrassed by the demonstration of power and rebuke (*phobos* - terrified into respect). **If we fear God, then we don't fear other things, but if we don't fear God, we fear everything.**
- **and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"** - they are trying to collectively (talking amongst themselves) figure out what is going on. The ones in the boat with Him saw it all and it freaked them out. They were embarrassed. They were stunned. They had new evidence of His power and authority. **Whoever they once thought that He was, was just exploded and replaced by a mystery of magnitude.**

- **Internal Chaos**

- **A Demon-Possessed and Desperate Man Comes to Jesus**
 - **Mk 5:1-5** - [read the **ESV Combo Account Instead**] - *"They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.⁸ ²And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴for 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.⁹ ⁵Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.¹⁰"*
 - **ESV Combo Account¹¹** - *"Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes/**Gadarenes**, which is opposite Galilee. When Jesus had stepped out of the boat, on land, immediately two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. (One of the men) with an unclean spirit (was) from the city (but now) for a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been kept under guard and bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces and be driven by the demon into the desert. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones."*
 - **They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes** - This is the opposite side of the lake from where they were. It's a bit of a diagonal crossing from Northwest to Southeast on a map. After the storm it was probably another 30-45 minutes of rowing to the

⁸ The point of arrival is indicated in a general way as the district of the Gerasenes, most probably in reference to a town whose name is preserved in the modern Kersa or Koursi. At the site of Kersa the shore is level, and there are no tombs. But about a mile further south there is a fairly steep slope within forty yards from the shore, and about two miles from there cavern tombs are found which appear to have been used for dwellings." NICNT

⁹ "In accordance with the practice of the day they had attempted to bind him by chains to protect themselves from his violence. When this proved to be futile, they had driven him off to wander restlessly in the wild hill country and to dwell in the subterranean caves which served as tombs and dwellings for the poorest people of the district." NICNT

¹⁰ "Was this practice associated with worship of demonic deities? Cutting the flesh in frenzied worship is very ancient (cf. 1 Kings 18:28). In Ch. 5:7 Jesus is addressed by a title well attested in Gentile and Jewish syncretistic contexts appropriate to the Decapolis as a Hellenistic and pagan area. The suggestion lies close at hand that the possessed man was involved in a demonic form of worship contrary to his will." NICNT

¹¹ Luke is black - Luke 8:26-39

Matthew is orange - Matthew 8:28-34

Mark is green - Mark 5:1-20

landing location. How awkward is that trip? Did Jesus bail water and go back to sleep? Or did He exhaustedly say, 'I'm up now.'

- **It's nighttime¹²** - If you remember the beginning of the story it was nighttime when they left and it's only been about 2 hours since. So now, it's **really late**. Let's say they all got down chatting on shore around 9pm and now it's 11pm or later. I have no idea what their plan was to go get a place to stay but whatever it was, it didn't turn out that way. I do know that they were **all super tired**.
- **The local tombs** - One key thing is that the location they were going to run aground on was **a cave area that held tombs**. That's not a comfortable place to arrive in the middle of the night, especially when weird people lived in some of those unused cave tombs. Then again, Jesus didn't care. It was all the same to Him. But for the other guys, this had to be spooky.
- **And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.** - Matthew records that here were two demon-possessed guys while the other gospel accounts mention one. Matthew also indicates that they were both there the whole time and were both freed. What's the deal with that? It's likely that two men were engaged but one man was the more difficult of the two and took center stage. It is also possible that when the authors wrote this the impact of this man on the Decapolis was notable and they wanted to highlight this guy that became relatively famous, while the other guy was simply healed/set free. There's no contradiction only a difference in focus by the authors. Anywho, these guys see Jesus right when He arrives on land. It seems they were a bit up on the hillside and started coming down from the tomb area that they were staying at.
- **Unclean spirit title** - notice that they weren't called demon-possessed by Mark but 'unclean spirits'. That's saying the same thing but it's a bit more clear to say that it was 'ungodly spirits'. They had spirits (God, angels and demons are spirits), but they weren't good ones. So they were 'unclean'.

¹² "If this is to be taken in close connection with what goes before—and that is Mark's intention—it must have happened late in the evening or even when the night had fallen. The story becomes all the more weird and frightening when it is seen as happening in the shadows of the night. Verse 35 tells us that it was late in the evening when Jesus and his friends set sail. The Lake of Galilee is thirteen miles long at its longest, and eight miles wide at its widest. At this particular part it was about five miles across. They had made the journey and, on the way, they had encountered the storm, and now had reached land. It was a part of the lakeside where there were many caves in the limestone rock, and many of these caves were used as tombs in which bodies were laid. At the best of times it was an eerie place; as night fell it must have been grim indeed." William Barclay Commentary

- **He lived among the tombs.** - Mark focuses on the one main dude that will take up the rest of the story. His story was particularly tragic. Living in the tombs meant isolation and surrounded by death. No one that had another option would live among the tombs. It was for extremely poor people or those who had special needs and were outcast from society. The tombs were caves so it wasn't like they lived in carved out tombs with dead bodies inside. They lived in the area of the tombs. Some were being used actively as tombs and some weren't.
- **And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces.** - It seems that initially society tried to deal with this guy and bring him under control. But since he wasn't in control of himself they had to do it. Yet, the demons within him were so tormenting that they were taking over his body and giving him superhuman strength (one of the possible side effects of demon-possession - think about Samson being 'possessed' by the Holy Spirit). He would break whatever ties they tried on him. The demons weren't going to be subdued.
- **No one had the strength to subdue him** - No matter who or what they tried, they were unable to force him to calm down or to be docile. The point is simply this: he was too much for people to handle.
- **Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out** - He had never-ending torment internally in his mind and heart. The demons were creating agony. It's possible that he had schizophrenia originally and they took advantage of him and exacerbated his condition to further torment him, rather than they having to do all the talking, but that's speculation. The point was that he didn't get a break, it was constant. Anything constant is maddening (chronic pain, no sleep for weeks on end, dripping faucet, etc.).
- **and cutting himself with stones** - This is self-harm. The essence of self-harm is that when things are tormenting from the outside and you have no control over it, then you want to have some control over your pain. It's what cutting is all about today. Was the man cutting himself in torment or were the demons causing him to cut himself to hurt him? It's the same thing. I'm sure he didn't know where one started and the other left off. That is the nature of possession (full integration).
- **And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him** - This is one of the fascinating parts of this story for me. Why did he run up to Jesus? Why not avoid Jesus? We realize that the demons were scared of Jesus and didn't want to interact with Him, so it doesn't seem

like it would be their idea. So, **did the humanity of the man, the desperation of the part of the man that still was alert/coherent, drive him to go see Jesus?** It seems so because the demons seem suddenly to be along for the ride. **Did the Holy Spirit drive the man to Jesus? Likely.** God tends to put limits on what Satan and his team can do to mankind (likely due to the image of God on them in addition to God's compassion). That means that there is no demon-possessed person that is beyond God's freedom or reach.

- **What is the point of demon-possession?**¹³ - **There are two possible reasons: 1.) to hurt people; 2.) to hurt God.** I think it's the combo pack that they like the most. They want to hurt what God loves and by doing so hurts Him. They can't impact Him any other way. He allows it. God lets us be His weak link, the one opening in His armor. But it's worth asking the question and looking into why demons want to inhabit people at all. Don't they have better things to do? Apparently not. Think about it this way, **what else would they care about?** They have lived on this planet since its inception (most likely, maybe shortly after) and they are, for all practical purposes, bound here. **This is their prison.** They don't want to wander around and mess with chipmunks. **They crave power** and the only thing worth having power over is something that can know they are being enslaved. **A worm slave is lame. But people, there you go. People have a will and you can bend that will and crush that will. That's a challenge, that's worth doing.** So, **the game is control.** The more control they can get, the more they fell they are winning. We know it's a power and control issue because of who their bigdog is: Satan. He wanted to take the throne of God. To thinking beings power is always going to be an issue. The battle in this world both naturally and supernaturally tends to center around control and influence. It's power. The same thing with possession. **The point is to dominate** and do to them whatever makes you happy. So, the point is to degrade and demoralize. If you can't kill them, why not reduce them to as-good-as-dead.
- **Satan's will for your life** - a common Christian preaching tool is to talk about God's will for our lives. But what is Satan's will for our lives. He too is someone that is not of this earth, nor needing mankind to survive. So, any interest in us would be a personal, not necessary need. **This story tells you what Satan would want from you if he had his way fully.** Any spiritual warfare is likely to be a small snippet of this full vision.

¹³ "This account, more graphically than any other in the Gospels, indicates that the function of demonic possession is to distort and destroy the image of God in man." Lane, W. L. (1974). [The Gospel of Mark](#) (p. 180). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

- **What's the difference between oppression and possession?** - 2 key things: 1.) level of control; 2.) Identity.
 - **Keeping it at oppression** - Let's use **disease** as an example. Let's say that you have a chronic disability. Whether or not that disability possesses you or simply hampers you (it is your or it's something you deal with) would be based upon whether everything you do is controlled by its presence, and if you have submitted that you are nothing more than the disability. But, if you are able to see that it's one part of you, one aspect of you, one challenge to deal with and not your full identity it stays in its place. Possession is one of control and identity. Something may hinder and bother you from the outside or a portion of you, but only you can determine whether it gets to take up residence in the very core of who you are. **Trauma** is this way as well. We may need help to get things out or under control. We may not have the personal resources to do what needs to be done, just like with counseling or a hospital, but its incumbent upon us to get the help that IS available.
 - **CAN vs IS** - an important distinction culturally and theologically for us to remember at Bridgeway is that **there are a lot of similarities between demonic issues and natural issues, but they are not NECESSARILY related. They CAN be related, but don't have to be.** For example, **schizophrenia** or **epilepsy** are natural occurring issues that some human beings have to deal with. Unfortunately, demonic activity can mimic some of the same behaviors. **It's important for us NOT to ASSUME demonic but to wait for key indicators to lead us into greater investigation.** **Tourette's syndrome** causes uncontrollable outbursts of speech and involuntary movement. That can also happen in demonic activity. **Panic attacks and irrational fear** can both be chemically related and indicators of the demonic. But we don't assume it's demonic, we look into whether there are other indicators that would suggest there is something more. Pastor Mark Clark of Bayside has Tourette's and I have panic disorder. We are not possessed.
 - **Picking on, Jumping on, root and exacerbation** - I don't know if I'm going to have the time to get into this level of detail but its helpful to know the nature of the enemy and how demons operate. They are opportunists. They are interested in tearing people down. Therefore, they will want to use any weakness for their advantage. This means that sometimes they will oppress and harm to **pick on us.** They are **bullies** and the more we are distorted and limited the more

they feel they are winning. This also means that **if there is a weakness, trauma, or emotional disability, it's common for them to jump in on it and exacerbate it to make it worse.** Sometimes they are the root of where things start but more often than not they are capitalizing on opportunities. What we do know is that if the Lord allows them, they will want to make things worse for us. It's the grace, power and protection of God on His people that makes the difference.

- **Lord of lords**

- **Jesus Begins to Exorcise the Demons**

- **Mk 5:6-8** - [read the ESV Combo account instead] *"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?¹⁴ I adjure you by God, do not torment me."¹⁵ ⁸ For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"¹⁶*

- **ESV Combo Account** - *When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran, cried out and fell down before him. And behold, they cried out with a loud voice, "What have you to do with us, Jesus, O Son of the Most High God? Have you come here to torment us before the time? I beg you, I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"*

- **He ran and fell down before Jesus** - this is a submitting posture. Is it the demon knowing Jesus and getting in a begging stance, or is this a desperate man needing help? It's not clear but since verse 7 goes right into the demons actions, perhaps the man started running to be helped and since the demon knew he was going to be confronted, also agreed with the falling down on their face. Maybe both?

- **And crying out with a loud voice,** - this is a both angry and scared yell. It's really loud so that everyone can hear what's happening. In a sense it's partly a battle cry as well as trying to throw off the Messianic reveal timeline. Even though it's the disciples there with Jesus there are also

¹⁴ "Son of the Most High God" is not a messianic designation but a divine one, in spite of the syncretistic associations that gather around the term "Most High." NICNT

¹⁵ "Its purpose is entirely defensive; sensing the identity of a dangerous opponent, the unclean spirit raises its voice to defend itself against him." NICNT

¹⁶ "In the act of kneeling, the defensive use of the divine name and the violent invocation of God to strengthen the plea that Jesus would not torment him, there is the full recognition of Jesus' superior power on the part of the demon. On this understanding verse 8 is in its original position. Jesus is sufficiently powerful that the demon at once understands that it must now leave its victim. An explicit command is scarcely necessary, and comes almost as an after-thought. It is put in the form of a subordinate clause, and Mark's historic imperfect may be translated "For he had said to him, Unclean spirit, come forth out of the man." NICNT

other observers. The demon is throwing chaos into the air to see what it can disrupt and distract with.

- **he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, -** What are you doing to me? Why are you here? What do you have against me? Is this the demon speaking or the man? Clearly it's the demon.
 - **Why is the demon surprised and defensive?** - because there seems to have been **a loose prior agreement that God allowed Satan and his team to have a lot of freedom** to do a lot of things for a long period of time. There was an understanding that one day things were going to go head to head, but that was at the end of the natural world. They didn't understand, or didn't want, any significant interference prior to that. So, in an essence they are saying, *"what are you doing here? You normally leave us alone. Why are you changing the rules on us? I beg you BY GOD (how y'all have always acted) to leave me alone."* It's all a panicky response.
- **Son of the Most High God?** - This is not a Messianic reference but a reference to Christ's deity. The demons know that He is the 2nd person of the Trinity. They know He is God.
- **I adjure you by God,** - this is perhaps the most strange comment the demon makes. He tries to use God as leverage to get Jesus to do its bidding. How does that work? How can you beg God by God for leverage? The only way that it works out in my mind is that the demon is recognizing that the 2nd Person is limiting Himself and relying on the Father and Holy Spirit to direct and empower. It seems that the demon is trying to take advantage of that situation and appeal to the Father for the protection and adherence to the original agreement of leaving them alone for the most part. It doesn't work because the Trinity is fully unified at all times, but it's an interesting attempt. It seems to be based on saying, 'I know your nature to be consistent and to keep your word, so I'm begging you to keep your word now.'
- **do not torment me** - this is the great fear of the demon, that Jesus is going to torment him! **How ironic** to come from the demons who are tormenting the man actively every day. What a bunch of hypocrites. But they are already exposed so in their desperation they are talking honestly. How could Jesus torment them and why would He? First of all **when they are tormentors they think through that lens**. It's like someone who constantly accuses their partner of cheating and you have to think, why do you think about cheating so much? Is that something in your head for a reason? Is that a temptation for you? So, of course they think that they deserve to be tormented after all they have done and they

know that Jesus will ultimately throw them in the Lake of Fire (the Garden of Eden explained that the serpent/Satan would be crushed by the heel of a man-born savior). **The bigger issue for them is pre-torment.** Jesus can do things to them right now that can hamper them, when they believe they deserve more time of freedom. Usually, the demons main concern is being imprisoned early. That's likely what the demon is talking about here. **The demons who caused the Nephilim in Genesis 9 were imprisoned early** (abyss lock down - Luke's account adds that in this story). That was an example to the other demons that it COULD happen if they stepped out of line.

- **For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"** - Now this is another **fascinating line** in the story for me. It seems to suggest that **Jesus had already told the demon to leave but it was resisting.** The past/present tense of 'was saying to him' to get out, but the demon kept talking indicates it wasn't leaving. I don't know why Jesus was so soft handed with this demon unless there was a greater purpose. He could have demanded it immediately unless the Father or Holy Spirit was hampering Him. So that leaves a question about purpose.
 - **Sticky Demon?¹⁷ Or Teaching Opportunity?** - When the disciples tried to kick out a demon early on and they couldn't, Jesus told them that there were particular sticky demons that need a greater force (through prayer and fasting) to get them out. Is this a sticky one that was resisting Jesus in His humanity? That seems weird because Jesus was a close to the Father and Holy Spirit as possible for a human. It seems more likely that this was a teaching opportunity set up either by Jesus in the moment or set up by the Holy Spirit in advance.

- **Margin for Rebellion**
 - **The Demons Try to Resist**

¹⁷ "We shall not even begin to understand this story unless we see how serious a case of demon-possession this man was. It is clear that Jesus made more than one attempt to heal him. Verse 8 tells us that Jesus had begun by using his usual method—an authoritative order to the demon to come out. On this occasion that was not successful. Next, he demanded what the demon's name was. It was always supposed in those days that, if a demon's name could be discovered, it gave a certain power over it. An ancient magical formula says, 'I adjure thee, every demonic spirit, say whatsoever thou art.'" William Barclay Commentary

- **Mk 5:9-10** - "And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many."¹⁸ **10** And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country, (not to command them to depart into the abyss)."
 - **ESV Combo Account** - "Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "My name is Legion, for we are many," for many demons had entered him. And they begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country, not to command them to depart into the abyss."
 - **And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"** - Jesus is going along with the plan here and asks the guy and the demon their names. Contrary to popular opinion, I refuse to believe that this was an attempt to get a greater foothold by knowing the name of the demon, to cast it out. That is a popular view that you need to know the name of a demon to take authority over it. That is incorrect. **Jesus has authority, period.** He doesn't need formulas or tricks. What He says, goes. We may struggle at points, but that is only because we don't fully know our identity, authority and power through Jesus Christ. But we don't play demon power games trying to get leverage. That's secular.
 - **Then what was the point in asking him his name?** - The point seems to be that **Jesus wants the onlookers to know the severity of the situation.** Just like the mute man with a demon was a demonstration of power, just like the miracles were highlighted for a public display of power, here Jesus is going to highlight the desperation of this man and the amount of demons. No one would know how many demons if this conversation didn't happen (it would be invisible movement). This was a teaching moment by Jesus for His crew.
 - **He replied, "My name is Legion,¹⁹ for we are many."** - Too much has been made about the title legion in light of the Roman contingent of 6,000 soldiers in a legion. This is not a suggestion that an exact Roman

¹⁸ "The term "Legion" is not strictly a Latinism (legio); like other military and governmental terms, it had entered the language and is found not only in Hellenistic Greek but in Aramaic as well. It is difficult to know what meaning to place upon the term. The answer may express the man's sense of being possessed by an aggregate of uncoordinated impulses and evil forces which have so impaired his ego that the spirits speak and act through him. If so, this response may be an appeal for compassion. It is a pathetic admission of the loss of all sense of identity. On the other hand, the answer may be evasive, the demons desiring to withhold their true names from Jesus in a desperate attempt to thwart his power. It is also possible that the name may have been selected to invoke the fear of a powerful name. It is probable that the many demons can be referred to as a single being because they are in common possession of the same victim, but it is not possible to ascertain the exact nuance expressed in the term "Legion." NICNT

¹⁹ "A legion was a Roman regiment of 6,000 troops. Very likely the man had seen one of these Roman regiments clanking along the road, and he felt that there was a whole battalion of demons inside him. In any event, the Jews believed that it was not possible to survive if you realized the number of demons with which you were surrounded. They were 'like the earth that is thrown up around a bed that is sown'. There were 10,000 at a person's right hand and 10,000 at the left hand. The queen of the female spirits had no fewer than 180,000 followers. There was a Jewish saying, 'A legion of hurtful spirits is on the watch for men, saying, "When shall he fall into the hands of one of these things and be taken?" ' No doubt this wretched man knew all about this, and his poor, wandering mind was certain that a mass of those demons had taken up their residence in him." William Barclay Commentary

legion number is in this guy. It is more of a demonstration title that there were tons in there. It was not one or two, it was at least 2,000 (due to the pig number although panicky pigs is a thing). Besides, anyone that talks in the plural should be immediately suspicious in your mind.

- **And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country, (not to command them to depart into the abyss).** - This is what they were worried about. They didn't want to be sent away either temporarily (regionally) or permanently (abyss). Luke adds the abyss thing. I don't know why they care where they go. It's not like they signed a lease agreement on an apartment in the area. But for some reason they didn't want to leave. They were going to have to leave the human but apparently they wanted to stay around and do more damage locally.
- **Piggly-Wiggly**
 - **Jesus Casts the Demons into the Pigs**
 - **Mk 5:11-20** - *"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."*
 - **ESV Combo Account** - *"Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside at some distance from them, and they begged him to let them enter these, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs; let us enter them." So, he gave them permission and said to them, "Go." Then the demons/unclean spirits came out of the man and entered the pigs, and behold, the whole herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned in the sea."*
 - **Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside,** - the most important part about this highlight is that it's **pigs**. Jews don't eat or work with pigs. The point is explaining that they were on the **Gentile side of the lake**. Also, the pigs are about to be a center character.
 - **and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them."** - **The demons want another host**. They know what's going to happen to the pigs, it's likely there was a demon book somewhere explaining to them what happens with animal possession. (that's a joke, there aren't demon books for demons). But remember, they are looking for a host. **They don't want to be fully pulled out of this dimension. Possession ties them to this dimension at least temporarily. They can do more damage here visible and tangible.** They know that they are going to go into the pigs and then be set free to find more people.
 - **The demons would go free** - **Jesus taught on what happens when a demon gets cast out**. It seems that it looks for another host and it's

not a comfortable thing to be outside a host (not sure why). But what's important to note is that the demons want to be freed to find someone else. Now, I don't know why they didn't just go into the ether directly and why they wanted to bounce from pigs to the ether (dry waterless dimensional place). It seems unnecessary. We are left with two options: 1.) They may have thought the pigs would hold them for a bit until they could jump into a person, and didn't anticipate the pigs committing suicide. 2.) it has some benefit that we don't know about.

- **Matthew 12:43-45** - *"When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. ⁴⁴ Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation."*
- **So he gave them permission.** ²⁰- This baffles people but shouldn't. **Jesus lets the demons go to harass other people. Why? Why not get rid of them? Because He's sticking to the plan.** He will get rid of them when He no longer uses them as pawns (the 'other' option to God and ramifications for sin). He isn't panicked about their activity. He can do whatever, whenever. So, He works with them at the time and sets them free.
- **And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs** - They went into the next host.
- **and the herd, numbering about two thousand,** - that's important because it suggests that at least two thousand demons were in the guy. That was clearly what it indicated to onlookers in the moment. We don't know if some of the pigs were panicky and said, 'I don't know why we are running!'
- **rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea** - The pigs committed piggy suicide. They were tormented and didn't want any part of it and ended it. Some commentators suggest that the demons wanted to kill the man too but God didn't let them so they showed their hand by killing the pigs before they launched out. I don't think so. They could kill pigs anytime. I think that all of this was a demonstration of God's power and the size of the demon horde.

²⁰ "The answer would seem to have two elements. First, Jesus recognized that the time of the ultimate vanquishment of the demons had not yet come; his encounter and triumph over the demonic does not yet put an end to Satan's power. It is the pledge and the symbol of that definitive triumph, but the time when that triumph will be fully realized is yet deferred. It must await the appointment of God. Therefore, Jesus allows the demons to continue their destructive work, but not upon a man. The second element is related to this: Jesus allowed the demons to enter the swine to indicate beyond question that their real purpose was the total destruction of their host." NICNT

- **Shocked by Calm**

- **The Town Panics at Jesus' Power**

- **Mk 5:14-17** - *"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 (for they were seized with great fear)."*

- **ESV Combo Account** - *"When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men, in the city and in the country. And behold, all the city went out to see what had happened, and to meet Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, the one who had had the legion, sitting there at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs (and) how the demon-possessed man had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear and begged him to leave their region."*
- **The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country.** - the guys watching over the pigs had a terrible night. They were freaked out and know that they lost their herd (their one job). They would get in trouble so they immediately told on Jesus to defend themselves.
- **And people came to see what it was that had happened.** - this is likely the owners of the pigs coming to see if what the shepherds/ herdsmen were saying was true. They had a financial stake in this. There would also be looky-loos coming too. It's the middle of the night.
- **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,** - they first thing they noticed was that the demon guy that everyone talked about and everyone feared was transformed. He was nothing like they knew him to be. Even before they could look at their financial loss the transformation before them was so significant it took their attention.
- **Transformation** - my favorite part about this story (and I haven't had time to get into it today) is the power of transformation that this story tells us. *It demonstrates that no one is beyond change with God. No one is beyond His power and help. If Jesus can resurrect a body, then no disease is too difficult. If Jesus can remove a legion of demons with a word, then no spiritual warfare is too much.* This story is here for us to take hope in whatever situation we are dealing with. God is able.

- **and they were afraid.** - Just like the disciples were more afraid of Jesus after the calming of the wind and waves than they were of the storm prior, so too are these guys more afraid of what just happened (changing of reality), than the prior demon guy issue. People don't like losing control in their lives. We fear change because we fear loss. We want to be in control of what happens to us. God is unsettling for that reason.
- **And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs.** - Shaking them out of their daze at what they were seeing, the herdsmen reminded them of the loss of pigs (\$), and it reminded them why they were angry. Their fear could return to anger at their loss.
- **And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region (for they were seized with great fear)** - They were too afraid of commanding Him to leave but they were too afraid of letting Him stay around. They begged him to go. The biggest point this says to me is that we would rather have our familiar torment than scary new freedom, sometimes. How weird is that? We are that drawn to comfort of familiar.
- **Delivered Evangelist**
 - **Jesus Sends the Healed Man on Mission**
 - **Mk 5:18-20** - *"As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him.²¹ **19** And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them²² 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."*
 - **ESV Combo Account** - *"As he was getting into the boat. The man who had been possessed, from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus did not permit him but sent him away, saying, "Return to your home to your friends, and declare how much the Lord God has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city (and) in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled. So (Jesus) got into the boat and returned"*

²¹ "As Jesus entered the boat the man begged Jesus that "he might be with him." Mark's formulation appears to be a technical one for discipleship. The desire of the man to accompany Jesus is the response of gratitude, and indicates that Jesus is not some strange divine-man who is to be feared. He is the one who bestows healing that is redemptive, and who calls forth the devotion of those who have received his benefactions." NICNT

²² "It is striking that no restriction is placed upon the man by Jesus, in contrast to the injunctions to silence found in other instances of healing. The accent falls upon apprehension of the divine action and declaration in a manner which anticipates the primitive Christian mission rather than upon secrecy and silence. This may be due to the fact that the man was a Gentile and his proclamation is confined to a predominantly Gentile area. It is, nevertheless, an exception to the more usual pattern observed by Jesus in Galilee. It should also be observed that the object of the man's declaration was not the person of Jesus directly, but what Jesus had done in restoring him to wholeness. Thus in the midst of the Gentiles, the God of Israel was glorified through the proclamation of what Jesus had accomplished." NICNT

- **As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him** - The freshly transformed man **wants to be a disciple** of Jesus. What a beautiful response. He knew what he had been freed of. **Like Mary Magdalene** who had 7 demons cast out (fullness), who followed and loved the Lord deeply for what He had done, so too did this man know what Jesus had done and he wanted to give Him his life. This man was a **Gentile**, and it was not time for Gentiles to be in the main crew (first Jew, then Gentile rule).
- **And he did not permit him** - Jesus shut down the plan. Why? It wasn't right and according to plan. **The guy must have been crushed.**
- **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."** - Jesus doesn't just leave him alone to be picked on again by the demons (they would come back to try again - void vacuum theory), **He gives the man a new mission.** It was time to be an evangelist. It was time to let the Holy Spirit possess him and do things for the Kingdom of God.
- **And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis²³ how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.** - The **Decapolis is very Greek.** It was a relatively independent region under Rome that operated on their own and paid taxes. It was a 10 city (deca means 10) area. They were about to hear the Gospel proclaimed to them. This was a hint of the Gospel going worldwide soon.
 - **No sermon is more powerful than a well told testimony.**

Conclusion

²³ "THE interesting thing about this passage is that it tells us that this incident happened in the Decapolis. Decapolis literally means the Ten Cities. Near to the Jordan and on its east side, there were ten cities mainly of rather a special character. They were essentially Greek. Their names were Scythopolis, which was the only one on the west side of the Jordan, Pella, Dion, Gerasa, Philadelphia, Gadara, Raphana, Kanatha, Hippos and Damascus. With the conquests of Alexander the Great, there had been a Greek penetration into Palestine and Syria. The Greek cities which had been then founded were in rather a curious position. They were within Syria; but they were very largely independent. They had their own councils and their own coinage; they had the right of local administration, not only of themselves but of an area around them; they had the right of association for mutual defence and for commercial purposes. They remained in a kind of semi-independence down until the time of the Maccabees, about the middle of the second century BC. The Maccabees were the Jewish conquerors and they subjected most of these cities to Jewish rule. They were liberated from Jewish rule by the Roman emperor Pompey about 63 BC. They were still in a curious position. They were to some extent independent, but were liable to Roman taxation and Roman military service. They were not garrisoned, but frequently were the headquarters of Roman legions in the eastern campaigns. Now Rome governed most of this part of the world by a system of tributary kings. The result was that Rome could give these cities very little actual protection; and so they banded themselves together into a kind of corporation to defend themselves against Jewish and Arab encroachment. They were stubbornly Greek. They were beautiful cities; they had their Greek gods and their Greek temples and their Greek amphitheatres; they were devoted to the Greek way of life. Here, then, is a most interesting thing. If Jesus was in the Decapolis, it is one of the first hints of things to come. There would be Jews there, but it was fundamentally a Greek area. Here is a foretaste of a world for Christ. Here is the first sign of Christianity bursting the bonds of Judaism and going out to all the world. Just how Greek these cities were and just how important they were can be seen from the fact that from Gadara alone there came Philodemus, the great Epicurean philosopher, who was a contemporary of Cicero, Meleager, the master of the Greek epigram, Menippus, the famous satirist, and Theodorus, the rhetorician, who was no less a person than the tutor of Tiberius, the reigning Roman emperor. Something happened on that day that Jesus set foot in the Decapolis." William Barclay Commentary

- **What those two stories have in common: Chaos outside and chaos inside - Jesus is the master of both.²⁴**

24 It is interesting to note that the words Jesus addressed to the wind and the waves are exactly the same as he addressed to the demon-possessed man in Mark 1:25. Just as an evil demon possessed that man, so the destructive power of the storm was, so people in Palestine believed in those days, the evil power of the demons at work in the realm of nature." William Barclay Commentary