

## TALKING JESUS: "HIS MERCY"

**THESIS:** Let's Talk Jesus

**TEXT:** Mark 5:1-20

**OPEN:** Are you afraid to talk about Jesus to people sometimes? In **Mark 5:1-20** let's discover an easy way to do it and what we should talk about regarding Him and His gospel.

**Mark 5:1-5** "They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. <sup>2</sup>When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet Him. <sup>3</sup>This man lived in the tombs and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. <sup>4</sup>For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. <sup>5</sup>Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones."

**Historical:** These tombs were an isolated burial ground avoided by most people. It was not unusual for the same cave to provide burial for the dead and shelter for the living particularly the very poor. There are cavern tombs in the Gersa area today (now Khersa) which appear to have been used as dwellings (*NIV Notes*, p. 1533).

**Mark 5:6-13** "When he saw Jesus from a distance he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. <sup>7</sup>He shouted at the top of his voice, 'What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!' <sup>8</sup>For Jesus had said to him, 'Come out of this man, you evil spirit!' <sup>9</sup>Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' 'My name is Legion,' he replied, 'for we are many.' <sup>10</sup>He begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. <sup>11</sup>A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. <sup>12</sup>The demons begged Jesus, 'Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.' <sup>13</sup>He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned."

Interesting here that even demons were acknowledging the divinity of Jesus (God in the flesh), but the Jewish leaders (chief priests, teachers of the law) and others were not doing so. What a rebuke of them!

1. **Insight from John MacArthur, Jr.:** "The souls of the two possessed men were of infinitely greater value than the two thousand pigs, and Jesus did not hesitate to permit such a relatively small sacrifice to be made on the man's behalf" (*The MacArthur NT Commentary, Matthew 8-15*, p. 44-45).
2. **Insight from J.W. McGarvey:** "What was done to the swine was done by the demons. The demons desire to have live bodies to dwell in (pigs) shows that they did not intend to destroy the swine. However, the presence of the demons in their bodies made the hogs crazy, as it had the demoniac, and they ran the way their noses pointed at the moment" (*The Fourfold Gospel*, p. 347).

**Demon** (Greek: *daimon*) denotes an evil agent, spirit or knowing one (*Dictionary of NT Words, W.E. Vine, p. 283*).

1. Demons are knowing ones, but they are not all-knowing like God. Demons are powerful ones, but they are not all-powerful like God. Demons are present ones, but they are not all-present like God.
  - A. **1 Corinthians 10:18-20** "Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons."
2. It should be noted that demons can perform miraculous signs, however, their purpose is to deceive people through them. They do so to entice people into false religion, whether the worship of false gods or oneself. This is what makes them counterfeit, not a benefit.
  - A. **Matthew 24:24** "For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible."

**Historical:** There are no incantations, rituals or amulets (a charm worn on the body) prescribed for giving an individual protection from spirits. God is said to have complete authority over the spirits, which cannot operate in the world without His approval (*1 Kings 22:23; Job 1-2*). Old Testament writers warned people about seeking to avail themselves of magical powers through contact with spirits (*Deuteronomy 18:10-12*). Jesus has absolute power over demons because of His divine authority, not magic or sorcery (*Luke 4:41*). Scripture denounces the claims of sorcerers and witches by detailing their inability to deal with spirits (*Acts 8:9-24; 19:14-16*).

**Quote from author & radio host Michael Savage:** “You drive around in most cities in America, there used to be religious symbols on dashboards like cars in Queens where I grew up in New York. It gave me a sense of continuity and calmness to know there were religious people around. You drive around there now and its dreamcatchers and voodoo dolls hanging off mirrors. You can’t even see out the windshield. If that doesn’t symbolize the debasement of our society, I don’t know what else could say it better than that.”

### **How are we to battle evil in this world and the unseen spiritual realm?**

**\*Ephesians 6:12-18** “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”

**\*Galatians 2:20** “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

**\*2 Cor 5:15, 17** “Christ died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again...If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

**\*Philippians 2:3-4** “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

**Insight from Os Hillman:** “Jesus says “I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life” (*John 12:24-26*). God is not about your success. He is about your death to self so that His success can be realized through you. There are too many believers who have not yet died to their old nature so Christ can live fully through them. When believers come to the end of themselves they will lose their lives to Him thus living through the power of the Holy Spirit and see the reality of a living gospel that impacts lives, workplaces, cities, and nations” (*Today God is First, Volume 2, 11/02/08*)

**Mark 5:14-20** “Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. <sup>15</sup>When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. <sup>16</sup>Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. <sup>17</sup>Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. <sup>18</sup>As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with Him. <sup>19</sup>Jesus did not let him, but said, ‘Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and

***how He has had mercy on you.’<sup>20</sup> So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for Him. And all the people were amazed.”***

**Illustration:** A woman was asked by a coworker, “What is it like to be a Christian?” The co-worker replied, “It’s like being a pumpkin. God picks you from the patch, brings you in, and washes all the dirt off of you. Then He cuts off the top and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt and sin. Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see.”

**Application:** Let’s talk Jesus to others—how much he has done for you and how He has had mercy on you.  
\*Your outreach for Christ network (family/neighbors/work/social/shops): pray/invite/serve/give resources/talk faith

**Illustration:** Consider this from Alexander Strauch’s booklet *Using Your Home For Christ*: “Oh, we just don’t know anyone—we can’t make any friends at church.” The couple who uttered this statement decided to “do unto others as they would have them do unto them.” First, they decided not to leave the church. Furthermore, they invited every person in the church to their home for dinner during the next year. At the end of the year, they knew everyone in the church and became close with many people.

**Philemon 6** “I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good things we have in Christ.”

**CLOSE:** Let’s talk Jesus and His mercy on us.