

2025-10-05

**Remember What Jesus Has Done**

Mark 5:1-20

I graduated from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, in May, 1989. I had been sending out resumes for a few months. I was working as a volunteer chaplain in a nursing home. That means I was not getting paid for the time I put in there. I earned money by doing yard work for people. I gave my resume to several local churches looking for pastors but other students were taken instead of me because they had name recognition. Their dad was a preacher and their family was Southern Baptist. No one knew who I was. My dad was not a preacher. My family was not Southern Baptist. No one in the Baptist circles knew who I was. Sally and I waited for a response from a church. Nothing came. In July the seminary informed us that we had to move out of our seminary housing apartment by the middle of August. New students were coming in and they needed our apartment for them. Sally suggested that we travel to Arizona for a week and look for work. Arizona is where Sally and I met, married and started a family. We knew some people in Arizona and they knew us. We hoped that would help us in finding work.

My parents, who lived in Ohio came to Louisville, KY and took our 2 girls for two weeks to Ohio while Sally and I took a Greyhound Bus to Phoenix, AZ. Sally was a middle school teacher. Sally went to the principals she knew. I went to the preachers I knew. After a week of searching and handing out our resumes, we still had no job offers. It was a long bus ride back to Louisville, KY. On that ride I asked Sally where she wanted to live, where she thought God wanted us to serve. She wanted to return to Arizona. By the time we arrived back in Louisville, KY we had a couple of weeks before we had to move. Kentucky did not look promising. There were too many graduates from the seminary like me looking for work. We decided to move back to Arizona. We rented a 12-foot truck to take our few belongings. Sally drove the car which had not always been reliable. At one rest area, the car did not start. We thought maybe this is where God wanted us to serve Him. But after much prayer the car started. We only had enough money for 2 months rent on an apartment in Glendale. If we ran out of money, our plan was to move to Encanto Park and join the other homeless people under the bleachers. As a student at Grand Canyon College, I had done some volunteer work at the Phoenix Rescue Mission. That is where we would get our meals. Fortunately, none of that happened. By the grace of God, He had people looking for us when we moved to Phoenix. A principal Sally knew hired her and she began work immediately. A preacher friend of mine hired me to work as a chaplain for abused children. Sally and I were both working within ten days of arriving in Arizona. We remember that God has always provided for us.

**Mark 5:1-5** Remember, Jesus and His disciples had traveled across the Sea of Galilee to get some rest from the demands of the crowds in Capernaum. They arrived at an area known as the Gadarenes because of a nearby city with a similar name. *“And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit”* (5:2). So much for Jesus getting some rest. Before we look at the interaction of this demon possessed man and Jesus, we learn some things about this man and his life. In Matthew’s account (8:28-34), he mentions 2 demon possessed men. Mark just focused on this one man. He was probably the worst of the two and the one everyone would remember. Luke’s account (8:26-39) reveals to us that this man was naked. We are to **notice first where he lived**. He made *“his dwelling among the tombs”* (5:3). Also *“night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs”* (5:5). This was not a normal way to live for a Jew or a Gentile, running around the mountains and the tombs naked. We assume this man was a Jew but we are not told. Jews did not hang around or live in cemeteries. Being around a dead body and even the graves of people make a person unclean (Numbers 19:16).

**Notice how people treated him.** *“He had often been bound with shackles and chains”* (5:4). When did the people do this to the man? I would only do it when this man passed out from total exhaustion. They would cloth him and shackle and chain him. Just do not be around when he woke up! People were afraid of him. They did not know what to do with him so they tried to control him by chaining him up. But he could not be controlled. When he woke up, he ripped apart the chains, he broke the shackles and tore off his clothes. This guy had superhuman strength. His strength came from the many demons in him. The people did not know how to help someone like this. Neither do we. My guess is they chained him up to try to protect themselves from him and to protect him from himself. **Notice what he would do.** Matthew tells us that he terrorized people that came near him (8:28). In Mark’s account, this man screamed in the middle of the night, every night and during the day, every day. His blood curling screams would wake everyone up as his loud cry echoed through the night air. These screams would send chills down people’s spine. He would take sharp stones, like flint, and cut himself hoping for some relief from his torment. This is the worst person, the most demon possessed person that Jesus encounters. Now we come to his encounter with Jesus.

**Verse 6** *“When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped Him.”* I do not know how you would react if some crazed, demon possessed, naked man came running at you as fast as he could run, but I would start looking for a way to protect myself from whatever he is going to do. I would also be amazed at Jesus who sat there unafraid as this maniac ran at Him. Instead of attacking anyone, this man, controlled by demons, fell on his knees and bowed before Jesus. That is a description of

worship. We know that “*at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth*” (Philippians 2:10). Before the demon made any statement, Jesus had commanded the demon to come out of the man (5:8). The demon was trying to avoid the one thing he had to do. He had to obey the word of God. It was a demon in the man that cried out, “*What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me*” (5:7). **Notice what this demon knows.** He said, “*What have I to do with You?*” This demon and all demons want nothing to do with God. They have nothing in common with God. They fall before Jesus because they have to. They have no love for God. They have no desire to obey Jesus. Oh, they will obey Him because they have to, not because they willingly desire to obey Him out of love. How about you? Why are you here? Why do you come to worship God? Hopefully, we come to worship God the Father and God the Son willingly and lovingly because of what He has done for us. Jesus died to pay the debt of our sin. He died for us. He died in our place. We owe Him our lives. Do we have anything in common with God? Yes, we are made in His image, in His likeness. We are made to experience His love. We are made to have fellowship with our Creator through faith in Jesus. He wants us to hear Him. He wants us to love Him. He wants us to obey Him.

**This demon knows the name of Jesus.** In Hebrew, His name is Joshua, which means “Yeshua is salvation.” He knows who Jesus is. He knows Jesus is the Savior for every person, even the man they possess. He knows Jesus is “*Son of the Most High God.*” He is God the Son, our Redeemer and Lord. **This demon knows his future.** He knows of his coming torment and he does not want it to start earlier than it should. He knows that whatever Jesus tells him to do, he must do. Do you know your future? Jesus promised that “*whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16). Did these demons believe in Jesus? They knew who He was but they were unwilling to love, trust and faithfully obey Him. **True belief in Jesus causes a person to change**, to do what God wants them to do, submitting and surrendering to His will in love. The demon would have nothing to do with this type of attitude and character towards Jesus. Will you?

Jesus asked the demon, “*What is your name?*” (5:9). The demon responded, “*My name is Legion; for we are many.*” Most people refer to a legion as around 6,000 soldiers. One commentary said a Roman legion is made up of 6,826 soldiers. A legion of demons was no match for Jesus. They begged Him not to send them out of the country. They did not want to go to the Abyss, their eternal torment. It was the demons who saw the pigs. What were pigs doing in this area anyway? It was the demons who requested to be sent to the pigs. Sounds like a natural place for them to go. Jesus simply gave them permission to go where they wanted to go. As long as

they left the man for good, they could go in the pigs. These demons even made the pigs go crazy. The 2,000 pigs ran violently over a cliff and drowned in the sea (5:13).

Those who were tending the pigs ran off to tell those in the city and in the country what happened to the pigs and the crazy man. People from the farms and the city came and investigated. They saw the dead pigs, then they went to Jesus. They *“saw the one who had been demon possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid”* (5:15). There were many eye witnesses. If there was a newspaper, the headline would read, **“Cure Causes Catastrophe.”** The disciples could tell what happened. Those who watched over the pigs gave an accurate account. The evidence revealed that God had intervened and performed a miracle. The man was cured. The pigs were dead. The account was true. The townspeople were afraid when the man was demon possessed. They were still afraid after he was cured. Instead of trying to understand what had happened, they asked Jesus to leave the area. They missed their opportunity to experience God. So, without argument, without hesitation, Jesus and His disciples got in their boats to leave. The cured man begged to go with Jesus. Some say he begged to go with Jesus because he feared the return of the demons. If so, Jesus commanded him to stay, to go home and tell others of God’s great mercy and compassion towards him. Cures are not given just so that the cured can enjoy life. Cures are also given so that the message of God’s compassion can be shared with others. Also, the cured man will learn that speaking the truth of God’s work in his life will help keep the demons away. It is always good to remember all that God has done for us. God is in control.

**Questions to ask yourself:** Do you remember what God has done for you? What would you think of a person who lived in a cemetery? How can we help people who cannot control themselves? Can we help everyone? What does it mean to worship God? Do you know who Jesus is? Do you believe in Jesus?

**Actions to take:** When you have an opportunity, share what God has done for you. Worship God willingly every week with God’s people, His body. Everybody needs rest every day. Make sure you are getting enough rest.

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