

'The King's Power to Save'

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Date: 12 April 2026

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Today we're continuing our series, going to the series from the Gospel of Mark. Our passage today is from chapter 4, verse 35, until the end of chapter 5.

! But we don't have time to cover everything in this sermon, so we'll focus only until verse 20 of chapter 5. How big and strong is Jesus for you?

Have you seen how kids throw themselves into their parents' arms? Very trusting. Trusting that they can and will catch them.

My kids do that. And the opposite, sometimes. When I already carry them in my arms, sometimes when they want to reach something, they throw themselves off my hands, trusting that I will still catch them somehow.

They see their parents as strong, protective, and trustworthy. Is that how we see Jesus in our lives?

[1 : 13] The stories here that we just read show how big and strong Jesus is. So first we see Jesus as bigger and stronger than material creation.

So verse 35 to 37. That day, when evening came, he, Jesus, said to his disciples, let us go over to the other side. That is, the other side of the lake.

Leaving the crowd behind, the disciples took him along, just as he was, in the boat. Because Jesus was already in the boat preaching at that point. There were also other boats with him.

A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped. Now, their boats were probably small, and that's why in verse 36 there were multiple boats for the disciples.

So to be in that storm, in small boats, must have been scary. People died, and still do, when there are storms. In the news earlier this week, a plane from Sydney to Fiji had to divert to Tonga because of a cyclone.

[2 : 29] So the plane attempted landing three times but didn't succeed, so they had to go elsewhere. Apparently, people were spewing up and down the aisle.

You could imagine a similar situation here. But the disciples could not have gone elsewhere. They were stuck. The boats didn't have any machines that could take them outside of the storm.

They were basically pushed around by the storm. They were not just worried about vomiting. This was a life-threatening situation.

Meanwhile, Jesus was sleeping. In verse 38, Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, Teacher, don't you care if we drown?

It reminds us of Jonah in the Old Testament, who was asleep in a boat when there was a storm. But as the story progresses, it becomes obvious that this is not Jonah at all.

[3 : 44] This is the God of Jonah who can control the wind and the waves. Of course, he's calm. In verse 39, Jesus got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the waves, Quiet, be still.

Then the wind died down, and it was completely calm. What? Who can do this? I have a dog, Rosie, who's obedient to me.

If I give her a bone, and while she's eating it, I tell her to leave it and come to me, she'll do that. If I walk her off leash, and there's a dog that she wants to chase, and I tell her, leave it, come here, and she'll do that.

Once we had guests over, Rosie was curious, so she would sometimes... Go and sniff them. One of them got annoyed a bit. So he said, Go to bed.

In your bed. In your bed. But she was just staring at him. So I said one word. Rosie. I pointed at the bed.

[4 : 56] Straight away, she went and stayed there. She knows her master's voice. People are often amazed when they see that. But I can't do this.

I cannot do this. No one can do what Jesus did. Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves. Have you ever thought of rebuking the wind and the waves?

And the wind and the waves obeyed. Creation knows its master's voice. We should be amazed by this.

The disciples were amazed and scared. In verse 40, Jesus said to his disciples, Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith? They were terrified and asked each other, Who is this?

Even the wind and the waves obey him. That's a crucial question in the Gospel of Mark. Who is this man?

[6 : 05] Well, if we look at the Old Testament, The answer is clear. Just one example in Psalm 89.

It says, Who is like you, Lord God Almighty? You, Lord Almighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you. You rule over the surging sea. When its waves mount up, You steal them.

Isn't that what Jesus did? So who is this man? The answer is clear. Jesus was not just sent by God. He was not just representing God.

He is the Lord God himself. So of course, creation obeys. Jesus is bigger and stronger than creation.

And because he's bigger and stronger than creation, He's bigger and stronger than our sickness And even our death. We are his creation, aren't we?

[7 : 08] So in the next chapter, There are two stories that we don't have time to explain. But these stories tell us about this.

There's a story about Jesus healing a woman Who had been bleeding for 12 years Just through a touch. And there's another story of Jesus raising Jairus' dead daughter back to life.

No one can do that. In both stories, the message is the same. Jesus said to both the woman and Jairus, Have faith.

Do not fear, but believe. Jesus is bigger and stronger than the material creation And all its brokenness, including our brokenness.

Do not fear, only believe. That's the implication, isn't it? Of Jesus' power. So if we go back to our story, In verse 40, Jesus said to the disciples, Why are you so afraid?

[8 : 22] Do you still have no faith? Do you still not believe? Being afraid in the middle of the storm Is normal, it's natural.

But the disciples were not sailing With someone normal or natural. They were sailing with God himself. And so, Jesus said, Have faith.

Trust. You know what my four-year-old son, Kai, Does when he's scared, But I'm right next to him? He closes his eyes, And then he holds on to me. Is he still scared? Of course he is. But he trusts me. I'm bigger than him.

So he just closes his eyes and holds me, Trusting that I will protect him. And of course I will. He's my son. I love him. Isn't that what our Old Testament passage says From Isaiah 43, God says to us, I love you, do not be scared.

[9 : 33] When you cross over the waters, You will not drown. Do we believe that Jesus is this powerful, And he's in our midst, And he loves us, Just as he said.

When this creation, This life, This world, Seems out of control, Of course we are scared. But do we trust him? Is he that big and strong in our minds?

When we hear news about natural disasters, Or wars, Or famine, Or if we experience them ourselves, And Jesus seems to be silent, Do we panic and scream, Like the disciples hear, What are you doing, Jesus?

Don't you care? Don't you care about me? Or do we trust him? When we struggle with sickness, And even the prospect of dying, Do we trust him?

There's a well-known story from church history, You might have heard or read about it, Horatio Spafford, The writer of the song, It is well with my soul, He lost almost everything in life, He lost his business in fire, And then not long after that, He sent his wife and four daughters, On a ship across the Atlantic, And the ship sank, All four of his daughters died, His wife survived, And sent a telegram to him, With just two words, Saved alone, And so, As Spafford travelled across the ocean, To meet his wife, The captain pointed out the place Where the ship had gone down, Where his daughters had died, And it was there, Over those waters, That he wrote that hymn, When peace like a river attendeth my way,

[11 : 45] When sorrows like sea billows roll, Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, It is well with my soul, That doesn't mean that he wasn't grieving, Of course he was, But it means that even in the face of death, Real devastating death, His trust in Christ, Was deeper, Than his fear, Or his grief, I must admit, That I don't often do that, When life is chaotic, And out of control, I often do what the disciples here did, Screaming and doubting, Whether Jesus cares, I pray, Of course I pray, But my prayer, Sounds more like a complaint, Rather than, A shout of trust, But the good news, Is that Jesus' power,

And his care over me, Don't depend, On the strength of my faith, In him, But on his faithfulness to me, Just as his protection, Towards the disciples, In this passage, Didn't depend, On the strength of their faith, But only on the fact, That he was present, And he was faithful to them, That's great news, Isn't it?

Now, Jesus is not only bigger, And stronger than material creation, He's also bigger, And stronger than spiritual evil, In chapter 5, Verse 1 to 2, They went across the lake, To the region of the Gerasenes, When Jesus got out of the boat, A man with an impure spirit, Came from the tombs, To meet him, We need to understand, The significance of this scene, The Gerasenes, Were a Gentile region, Gentiles were unclean, For Jews, And not only that, Jesus meant, A Gentile man, Who had an unclean spirit, And in verse 2, This man had spent time, Hanging out in the tombs, Which was also unclean, For the Jews, Later on,

In verse 11, We're told that, Next to the graveyard, Were a large herd of pigs, Which were also unclean, For Jewish people, This scene, This condition, Situation, Was the epitome, Of spiritual uncleanliness, Which for them, Was a symbol of evil, And then, Verse 3 to 5, This man lived in the tombs, And no one could bind him anymore, Not even with a chain, 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, Night and day, Among the tombs, And in the hills, He would cry out, And cut himself with stones, This man was totally dominated, By spiritual evil, His life was a mess, Both physically and spiritually,

But notice how even strong, Spiritual evil, That could not be handled, Or controlled by anyone, Bowed down to Jesus, In verse 6, When he saw Jesus from a distance, He ran, And fell on his knees, In front of him, The possessed man, Saw Jesus from a distance, And instead of running the other way, He ran towards Jesus, To bow down to him, It's like, He knew, That he couldn't have run away, From Jesus' awesome power, We can even sense, The spirit's fear of Jesus, In verse 7, He shouted at the top of his voice, What do you want with me Jesus?

[16 : 05] Son of the Most High God, In God's name, Don't torture me, For Jesus had said to him, Come out of this man, You impure spirit, Then Jesus asked him, What is your name?

My name is Legion, He replied, For we are many, And he begged Jesus again and again, Not to send them out of the area, Legion was the name of the Romans' army troops, It's revealed here, That this man was possessed, Not only by one impure spirit, But by an army, Of strong, Spiritual, Evil spirits, No wonder his life was a mess, And people could not control him, This was great power, Of spiritual evil, But they were so scared of Jesus, Weren't they?

They even begged Jesus, Over and over again, Not to send them out of the area, Probably with the implication, That they would be sent away, To eternal punishment, And so in verse 11, A large herd of pigs, Was feeding on the nearby hillside, The demons begged Jesus, Send us among the pigs, Allow us to go into them, They needed permission from Jesus to run away, So in verse 13, Jesus gave them permission, And the impure 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, This was great evil power, It's so destructive, And uncontrollable, That when it was exorcised, It destroyed a big part of God's creation, Two thousand pigs,

But Jesus could control it, Jesus is stronger and bigger, Than spiritual evil powers, He's stronger than demons, And even the devil himself, Do we see Jesus that big, And that strong, What does that mean for our lives, If Jesus is stronger than demons, And even the devil, Well first, It means demonic threats, Like in this passage, Are nothing in front of Jesus, You've seen how the many demons, Are so scared in front of Jesus, We might not see or hear, About demonic threats often, In modern western countries, Like Australia, But I have seen, And experienced demonic threats, They're scary, They're scary, And I know some people, Even here, In this church, Who have experienced,

Demonic threats, But to have Jesus in our lives, Means we can, Trust him, Even when we are scared, He is stronger, Than demons, Second, It means Jesus is stronger, Than demonic temptations, Demons don't only attack us, Like in this passage, Demons tempt us, To rebel against God, And to follow our sinful desires, But having Jesus in our lives, Means we have someone, Who is stronger, Than Satan, And his demons, And he can silence, The enemy, And his temptations, That means when we are tempted, We can ask, Jesus for help, Third, It means Jesus is stronger, Than demonic accusations,

[20 : 03] This is Satan's, Primary job, Not job, This is what he loves to do, The name Satan, Means the accuser, He accuses us, Day and night, Telling us, That we are not worthy, Of God's love, That we are sinners, And God doesn't love us, That we are sinners, And we cannot change, That we are condemned, Because our sins are weighty, And they are many, But when we face, Accusations like that, We remember, That Jesus is stronger, And he has, Silenced the devil's accusations, Through dying, On the cross, Of course our sins are many, Of course our sins are weighty, Jesus has died for all of them, Like a hymn says, When Satan tempts me to despair, And tells me of the guilt, With him upward, I look, Not inward, I look inward, I see all my sins,

Upward I look, And see him there, Who made an end, To all my sin, Jesus is stronger, Jesus is stronger, Than material creation, And he is stronger, Than spiritual powers, And their temptations, And their accusations, So how do we respond?

First option, We can choose to respond, Like the people, Who lived in the Gerasenes, Verse 14, Those tending the pigs, Ran off, And reported this, In the town, And countryside, And the people went out, To see what had happened, 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, Those who had seen it, Told the people, What had happened, To the demon possessed man, And told about the pigs, As well, Don't forget about the pigs, They're important, Then the people, Began to plead with Jesus, To leave, Their region, Remember how the disciples, In the previous story, Saw Jesus power in the storm, And they, Became afraid, But they stayed with him, These people saw Jesus power,

And were afraid, Then begged Jesus to leave, Is that your response? Having someone strong, Like Jesus in our lives, Is threatening, It threatens our status quo, These people's livestock, All 2,000 of them, Died, Because of what Jesus had done, That's a high cost, One man who liked to hang around, The tombs was healed, Sure, That's good, But 2,000 pigs, Which were the source of food, And money, And jobs, Were destroyed, Having Jesus with us, Can be costly, Especially if we don't, Really want him to save us, Especially if we don't want him, To move us from the, Comfort of our lives, Especially if we don't want,

His power to disturb, Our pigs, Our jobs, Our money, Our career, Our livelihood, Or our lives, Is this your response, To Jesus power, Go away Jesus, I don't want you, I'm perfectly fine, With my 2,000 pigs, Or second option, We can choose to respond to him, Like the possessed man, Who was saved, Because we know that we too, Have been saved, In verse 18, As Jesus was getting into the boat, The man who had been demon possessed, Begged to go with him, Jesus did not let him, But said, Go home, To your own people, And tell them how much the Lord has done, For you, And how he has had mercy on you, So the man went away, And began to tell in the Decapolis, The Gentile area, How much Jesus had done for him, And all the people were amazed,

[24 : 35] While the others begged, For Jesus to leave, This man begged, To follow Jesus, Leaving behind his people, But Jesus told him, To stay there, And tell everyone about, How the Lord, That is the God of Israel, Had saved him, But pay attention here, In verse 19, Jesus told them, To tell everyone, How much the Lord, Had done for him, But in verse 20, He told everyone, How much Jesus, Had done for him, Again, The Lord, God, And Jesus, Are put in close proximity, Just like the case with the storm, It reveals that Jesus, Is the Lord himself, We can choose, To be threatened, By Jesus' power, And we don't want him,

To disturb our lives, Or we can choose, To follow him, What does that mean, Well that means, If he tells us, To go somewhere else, To follow him, We go, Trusting in his power, But if he tells us, To stay where we are, Like he did to this man, And tell the people, Around us about him, We stay, And tell people about him, Trusting in his power, Because he's stronger, Than anyone, And anything, I think this is, The appropriate response, To the power of Jesus, In this passage, Jesus is the one, With power over all, Will we trust him, Will we throw ourselves, Into his arms, When life seems, Out of control, Will we hold on,

To him tightly, When we fear, Jesus is not calling us, To pretend, That life is easy, And not scary, Of course it's scary, It's chaotic, And out of control, But he's calling us, To trust him, Because he, Is the king, Who has the power, To save us, Let's pray, Indeed, Lord Jesus, You are the king, Over all, In this world, Over all, In heaven, And on earth, So help us, With the power, Of your spirit, To trust you, More and more, In our lives, To surrender, More and more, Control, Over our lives, Trusting that, You have the power, To save us, From anything, In your name, In your precious name, The king, We pray, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen,