

Jesus Has Power Over Demons

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[0 : 00] This area was primarily a Gentile area, and the Jews that did happen to live in that area would have been very much influenced by the Hellenist culture, the Greek culture that was there as well.

And this is significant because the Jews believe that the Messiah was a rescuer that belonged only to them. But Jesus confronts this misconception by intentionally going to a Gentile area, by intentionally performing a miracle in the life of a man who likely was not a Jew.

And everything that takes place in this story has nothing to do with Judaism. And so, as the Bible makes clear, Jesus came to save sinners from all nations, from all peoples, from all languages, from all tongues, and his ministry made this abundantly clear.

So then we're reminded that our race, our nationality, our ethnicity is entirely irrelevant when it comes to our eternity. Who you are and your background and how you have been raised does not make you any more worthy or any less worthy of salvation. We are all equally unworthy.

And Jesus is equally gracious to all types of people from all types of places. And this is of great encouragement to us, isn't it? Because if it's true that Jesus is a Messiah only for the Jews, then none of us are included. Not one of us. And so we rejoice in these instances. We rejoice in these moments because we can reflect our own eternity as being drastically changed because of the grace of God that extends far beyond country boundaries. It extends far beyond languages. It extends far beyond ethnicity. And then we get to verse 2. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit. And this is the verse that sets the scene for us. Now you got to think at this point, the disciples are beginning to learn, if they haven't figured it out already, that life with Jesus is never boring. And it's not, is it?

[2 : 26] When you have a life that is committed to following Christ, it is never boring. The day before this was just a completely exhausting day. And then they go through this storm that was just unbelievable and unforgettable.

And they finally make it to the other side. No doubt the place where they dock the boat is probably a little bit secluded from many people. And perhaps they're even thinking that they're going to have a moment to rest. But as soon as they dock the boat, a demoniac, unlike anyone that they had seen up to this point in their ministry, probably unlike anyone that they would ever see again, sets out in an all-out sprint to come after their master teacher. But then we see that this man's condition parallels actually here the severity of the storm that they had just gone through.

But just as Jesus calmed the storm on the sea, so would Jesus calm the storm that was raging in this man's soul. And it becomes an amazing thing for us to study. We quickly learn that Jesus not only has power over nature, but he also has power over the forces of evil. And so I think it will be helpful for us as we dissect this group of verses to look at it mainly through the lens of the characters that are involved. Four of them is what I have gathered in. We're going to see the miracle working of Jesus interwoven throughout the whole thing. We're going to see the hopeless man. We're going to see the warring demons. We're going to see the wicked citizens. And then we're going to see our divine savior. Okay. I know you're not believing that we're going to get through all 20, but I promise we are.

Okay. Here's the first one. If you're keeping notes, let's look at the hopeless man, the hopeless man. Mark here gives us a description of this man that comes after Jesus and his disciples. And the first thing that he tells us in verse three is that he lived among the tombs. So he reveals to us in verse two, that this man is possessed with an unclean spirit, but now he begins to divulge more of what the actual severity of this man's condition was. Now, this isn't the first time that we've seen an instance of Jesus being confronted with someone who was demon possessed. We've seen that actually several times in Mark's gospel already, but we've not seen anything like this. This is the first

time that we've seen such a severe case of demonic possession. And it's the first time that we've seen one of these individuals that was actually living as an outcast from the community. So think back to chapter one. You remember in the very first chapter, Jesus goes into the synagogue, probably in Capernaum, and he begins to preach and the people are overwhelmed by the authority and power of his teaching.

But then remember in the synagogue, all of a sudden in the midst of the service, in the midst of Jesus's teaching, a demon reveals himself to be possessing a man that is there. Well, that's a completely different scenario than this. Both men possessed by demons, one of them living perfectly normal life, as it seems in the community. He's seated, some seems to be normally in the midst of the synagogue.

[5 : 50] No one seems to be wondering why he's there, or no one seems to be wondering or concerned about his presence there. But at some point during the message, the demon cannot help but reveal himself that he has taken over this man's life and Jesus cast him out. And I think that's mostly how we see demonic power work. It's not always through the demoniac's experience. In fact, I think mostly it's not. We actually see the evil forces of this world working in a much more subtle way, much like we saw in chapter one. But this man's experience is not so much like the other demon-possessed people we've seen. It's actually more like the leprous man that we see in chapter one. He's cut off from the community. And then he says, Mark, that his first note is that he lived among the caves, the caves that were for burying the dead. And this becomes a powerful picture of the man's condition.

He was like the living dead, much like the leprous man. Though he had breath in his lungs, he was at home among the dead rather than the living. Now remember that. We're going to come back to it here in just a moment. But look with me at the rest of verse three. 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. No one had the strength to subdue him. And so Mark tells us he's possessed with an unclean spirit. He lives among the dead. He lives among the tombs. It's very unnatural, a very unnatural way to live. And now we find out that not only could he not help himself, no one else could help him either. The people of the town seem to treat him like someone with a severe mental illness. And of course they would. Just like we would take someone in this condition and try to restrain them in a straitjacket time and time again, the people of the town try to subdue the man and restrain the man with chains and shackles and fetters. Anything that they could do to protect the man from himself and also to protect the community at large from the man's wild behavior.

I suppose that if they weren't actually concerned about the man's welfare, they at some point would have just taken his life. But they didn't do that. Just time and time again, they continued to try to tie him up. They continued to chain him up. But every time this supernatural strength was afforded to him through the power of the demons within him, and he broke the shackles, and he broke the chains, and he continued on in this life. This life of destruction. Not only to himself, but also to the community. He couldn't help himself. No one else could help him either. Again, that's important. We're going to come back to it in just a moment. Look at verse 5. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains, he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. It's the picture of a man who was utterly tormented by the demons that possessed him. 24-7, he roams the graves. He runs the mountains. And in that time, he continues to cry out, to shriek. He grabs jagged rocks, and he cuts the flesh on his body, doing anything that he can to free himself from the torment. Anything that he can to perhaps even take his own life, but it was always to no avail. This type of self-mutilation, and nakedness, and unintelligible language, and screaming is always, always, always tied to demonic power and influence in the scriptures.

Always. And we look at instances like this, and we say, okay, maybe not every person that does things like this is actually possessed by a demon, but they are certainly influenced by the demonic forces of this world. Kent Hughes described the man this way. This poor, naked man was a mass of bleeding lacerations, scabs, infections, and scar tissue, living in a delirium of pain and masochistic pleasure.

[10 : 29] And then Kent Hughes brings out this note, which I think is interesting to consider. In his lucid moments, he surely realized how repulsive and unloved and unwelcome he was. Now imagine that.

Perhaps there were moments where the demons allowed him to have some lucid thoughts just long enough to torment him further about the reality of his own condition. When he's under their control, perhaps he doesn't realize exactly how bad it is, but perhaps from time to time they would let him see exactly how bad it is, to see how unwelcome he was, to see how pathetic he was, how wretched he was.

And we may be tempted to pity this man without feeling like we can actually relate to his plight, but this man's life is a vivid illustration of the reality of the human condition.

This man's life is an extreme picture of you and me. We may not experience the extremes of demon possession, but our sinful nature puts us in just as hopeless of a situation as this man's life.

Without Christ, we're dead in our sins. In our sinful state, we are unknowingly influenced by and following Satan and his evil plan. Consider Ephesians 2. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air and the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of our body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind. What's Paul getting at there? You may not be the demoniac with 2,000 demons, but your situation is just as hopeless. You're just as dead. You're just as dead.

[12:48] You're just as helpless. Like the man, we can't help ourselves. There's nothing you can do to fix your condition. No one else can help you either.

No one can provide anything that's lasting and eternal for you. We're hopeless. Our guilt torments us. We do everything we possibly can to free ourselves from that guilt.

Even at our own expense, we will try to find some sort of relief. We drown ourselves in substances that numb our pain. We attempt to ignore the demons in our life by filling and distracting our lives with entertainment or with other things, not bad things, just anything to get our mind off of our real condition.

But it never works. It never works. Feed our flesh with all kinds of immorality as we try to find some kind of satisfaction in this life, and we just can't find it.

Other people try to help us, don't they? Just like other people tried to help this man, and they try to offer encouraging solutions that may somehow bind our self-destructive behavior. But nothing ever really truly works.

[14:12] The pain is still there. The guilt is still there. The torment is still there, no matter what we do. We're at home among the dead more than the living.

The man's situation is hopeless. So is ours. That brings us to the next category here. That's the warring demons. The warring demons. The man's condition is not only due to his sinful nature, but there is a spiritual battle that's raging within him.

The extreme nature of his behavior is due to spiritual forces at work in his body and in his soul.

Many people balk at the idea of a spiritual world that we cannot see and comprehend.

But the Bible is clear. Satan is very real. He has an army of demons that are at work in the world to destroy everything that brings glory to God.

It's a spiritual war. And it's a war that is raging around us. And many times it's a war that is raging within us. And so I want you to notice for just a moment, we won't spend a ton of time here, but notice for just a moment what the Bible says as the attention is focused in on these demons.

[15:30] Look with me at verse 6. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High?

I adjure you by God. Do not torment me. For Jesus was saying to him, Come out of the man, you unclean spirit. So as the man began to shriek and to run toward Jesus, Jesus rebuked the demons that had possessed him.

It's always interesting to see the reaction that the evil spirits have to the presence of Jesus. Though rebelling against Christ, they are in full acknowledgement of the truth of Christ.

Notice what Mark just said. This man runs to Jesus. And what does he do when he gets to Jesus? He falls on his face before him.

The word here is the word that we use for praise or worship. Proskuneo is the word. It's a verb for praise and for worship. And clearly the demons aren't worshipping Jesus.

[16:41] This is a recognition of inferiority. They know the truth of who this man is. And then they verbalize that by saying, What have we to do with you?

What are you to have to do with us? Jesus, Son of the Most High. They knew exactly who Jesus was. There was no denial of that.

And there's no one else around for these demons to try to influence and to point in a weird direction. This is the reaction of evil forces that know the truth of who Christ is.

And they cause this man to fall on his face. And they say, What do you have to do with us? Do not torment us, please. They cried for mercy.

Which is interesting because mercy is the thing that they lacked in giving to this poor man that they had just possessed. They tormented him day and night.

[17 : 37] And yet they run to Jesus and what is it that they asked for? Mercy. Don't torment us. Which tells us something else about their knowledge. They know their fate. They know their fate.

I think it's Matthew's account adds in the statement that not only did they say do not torment us, but they asked Jesus a question. Are you here to torment us before the time, Matthew writes.

Before what time? Before the time that they know is coming. When they will be cast into eternal hell. The recognition of Jesus' deity led them to cry out for mercy.

Why? Because they know that Jesus has power over them. He is in control of their fate. And it's another reminder that intellectual ascent is not what the Bible means when it says that we need to have saving faith.

It doesn't just mean acknowledging what is true. Because the demons do that very thing. James tells us that in James chapter 2. You believe that God is one? You do well.

[18 : 45] But even the demons believe. And they shudder, he says. It's not a matter of intellectual ascent. It is surrender, repentance, and faith to follow Christ.

Look at verse 9. And Jesus asked him, what is your name? And they replied through the man, my name is Legion, for we are many.

And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Legion is not a name. It's actually a military term. A legion is maybe you're familiar if you've studied the story much.

A legion was the largest unit of soldiers in the Roman army. It could have up to about 6,000 soldiers and horsemen and footmen together in this one unit.

And when Jesus asked the man his name, the demons respond through him by saying that their name is Legion. And this statement is often used to describe how many demons possessed the man at once.

[19 : 50] And there is no doubt that there were many, many devils that were tormenting this man. But I don't think that the point here in this name is to insinuate how many there was.

I think it was a declaration of war. These demons were saying that they are an army. An army that is there to war against Christ and his work.

It's a declaration of war. And it's a fitting name. Because war is exactly what Satan is engaged in against God. But what exactly is the goal if we've already said that these demons understand their inferiority and they understand their defeat?

They know that victory is impossible. So what's the point in fighting? Well, their goal is to destroy the image of God.

The image of God in creation. Especially the image of God in mankind. All the way back to the garden. That was the point.

[20 : 58] It was never about winning a war because they know they'll lose. It's just about destroying everything that they can that points to God and his glory and his work.

Now think about what they had done to this man. He's not described as a man. He's described as a ferocious animal. They'd attempted to strip away every bit of humanity out of this man that was intended at creation to reflect the glory of God.

And that's exactly what sin does. It mars the glory of the image of God in man. And that is the image that these evil spirits absolutely hate.

Though it's a war they know they will lose, they will continue to fight against God until he brings his final judgment. That's just the reality. Look at verse 11. Now a great herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside and they begged him saying, send us to the pigs.

Let us enter them. Which is just another instance of them recognizing that their fate is totally in the control of Jesus the creator. And so Jesus gave them permission.

[22 : 17] And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs and the herd numbering about 2,000 rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

Now just as Jesus demonstrated his power over nature in calming the storm, he demonstrates his power over the demons by delivering this man from their control.

And he does it in a most unusual way. Jesus wasn't the one that pointed out the pigs. It was the demons. They said there's some pigs over there.

Mark tells us there's about 2,000. Let us go into them. And Jesus gives them permission. And immediately the demons possess the pigs and they do what they always do.

They destroy what they inhabit. The pigs run down the steep hill. Well, they run themselves into the lake and they drowned. Massive loss.

[23 : 13] To whoever it was that was controlling the herd. Whoever it was that was responsible for this business. Massive loss. And there's a lot of questions about this. Unusual questions to be honest with you.

And maybe it's just because I'm not a big animal person. But one philosopher actually used this as an example of why he refused to be a Christian.

It wasn't that he wanted to focus in on Jesus' power in delivering the man. It's that he couldn't bear to see Jesus allow such loss when it came to the lives of the pigs.

To Jesus, the salvation of one person is more important than any amount of assets in this world.

Indeed, it was so important that he set aside his glory and he became a man in order to take on our sin. The expelling of the demons into these pigs is symbolic, I think.

[24 : 14] I really do think that this is probably the reason it's there. The pigs were unclean animals just like these fallen angels were unclean spirits. And the pigs drowning in the lake is representative of the fact that the demons will one day be expelled into the lake of fire.

Revelation chapter 20 tells us this. And the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Jesus mentions it in Matthew 25. We actually referenced this verse in our Good Friday service a couple of weeks ago. Jesus was speaking about the coming judgment. Not necessarily the judgment of the evil spirits, but our judgment.

The judgment of the unsaved. He says in Matthew 25, Then he will say to those on his left, Depart from me, you cursed, into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

The fate of these demons is symbolized in what happens to these pigs. They drowned in the lake just as the demons will one day find their fate, cast into the eternal lake of fire.

[25 : 30] But the warning that Jesus gives in Matthew 25 is that the fate that has been determined for the devil and his demons and the devil and his angels is actually also the fate that is determined for those who will not follow Christ.

But Jesus has power over that. Because he's God. He had the power to deliver this man from the demons that possessed him.

And he has the power to defeat them in eternity. And he alone has the power to deliver you and me from their bondage as well. Christ has the power. We can sit and be worried about the influence of the demons.

And we can be worried about the coming judgment. But there is grace and mercy in Jesus if we will but come to him and repent and believe. So we see the hopeless man, the warring demons.

Thirdly, we see the wicked citizens. The wicked citizens. Look with me at verse 14. Can you believe it? We're at verse 14 already. The herdsmen fled, told it in the city and in the country.

[26 : 36] And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had the legion, sitting there, clothed in his right mind.

And they were afraid. Those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. So these herdsmen, tending the pigs, were frightened by what had happened, just like we would be frightened by what had just happened.

They're probably worried they're going to lose their jobs. If they were the business owners, they certainly had lost their business. But probably more than that, they're just afraid that all of a sudden this man had cast demons into their pigs and they had lost it all.

But the broadcasting of this event by these herdsmen doesn't seem to be one of excitement. It doesn't seem to be one of faith. It's fear and probably even a little bit of anger as well.

But the report that they gave caused enough of a stir that the people came from both the city and the country to see what it was that was going on. To see this man that had done this thing.

[27 : 45] And when they arrived, they found the man that they had so often tried to restrain behaving like a normal person.

And this is the kind of change that only God can bring. Do you see it? Do you see why this is here for us? Turn with me just quickly to 1 Corinthians 6.

Will you do that? Maybe we'll just go to two places here and I think maybe it'll help us see this change. 1 Corinthians 6. And I want you to find with me verse 9.

1 Corinthians 6. Verse 9. Paul says, That's an allusion to homosexuality.

And then he says in verse 11, speaking to these believers, And such were some of you.

[29 : 03] But you are washed. You are sanctified. You are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

What's Paul getting at there? All of these things. It's not an exhaustive list of sin. It's just a small example of what it takes to condemn us for all of eternity.

No sinner can inherit the kingdom of God. And he says, Such were some of you. Until Jesus came into the picture. And now you are washed. Now you're sanctified.

Now you're justified. Not because you took a bath. But because Jesus in his grace has saved you. And freed you from this bondage. And now when God sees you.

He doesn't see your sin. He sees the righteousness of Christ. That's the change that is happening with this man. At one point he is possessed by these demons. Everything about his life is hopeless.

[29 : 58] But now everything has changed. That's not a change he could bring to himself. And it's not a change that anybody in the town could bring to him either. No amount of therapy could help this man.

No amount of medication could help this man. He had only one hope. And that hope is Jesus Christ. And it's the same hope that we have. Flip with me to Ephesians chapter 2.

We read it just a few moments ago. The first couple of verses. But turn with me there. And look at verse 4. Actually let's start in verse 3. Ephesians chapter 2. And verse 3.

Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past. In the lust of our flesh. Fulfilling the desires of our flesh. And the desires of our mind.

And were by nature the children of wrath. This man's life is a picture of what it is to be the. To have the nature of the children of wrath. Even as others.

[30 : 56] But look at verse 4. But God who is rich in mercy. For his great love wherewith he loved us. Even when we were dead.

Has made us alive together with Christ. This man's life is no different than your life. His condition is no different than your condition.

And my condition. He has the outward signs in extreme way. But we are all hopelessly dead in our sins. Unless Jesus Christ does a miracle of grace in our hearts.

And in our lives. We are hopeless. And that's exactly what he did for this man. Because only Jesus can change a person's heart. Only Jesus can do this.

And when the people came out from the city and the country. What did they find? They found the man that was once naked. Clothed. The man that once roamed 24-7. Shrieking in the tombs and in the countryside.

[31 : 56] Sitting in his right mind. Worshipping and learning from Jesus. And this is the wonderful truth of the gospel.

God takes sinners who are wretched and filthy with sin. And he forgives them. And he cleans them up. And he gives them eternal life. Jesus came to save sinners.

And this man's story is proof that he can save you too. No one is beyond his reach. Our sins they are many.

His mercy is more. But only he can do the change. Only Jesus can do the change.

Well I told you that this was about the wicked citizens. And we haven't talked about them yet. But we had to see what they saw. But now look with me at verse 17. And they began to beg Jesus to stay and teach them.

[33 : 02] And work miracles among them. And help them to understand the life that he came to provide. No. They began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.

How tragic. You would think that the restoration of this man's life would have brought rejoicing. But instead the people begged that Jesus would leave them alone.

His presence had cost them greatly in worldly goods. At least the herdsmen. And maybe the overall economy was going to be hindered because of these pigs. Maybe they would have difficulty providing food for some of the neighboring towns.

I don't know. It was costly. Following Jesus always is. His grace is free. But it will cost you your life. They must have wondered what this man had ever done to merit the expenditure of 2,000 pigs. And that's just the thing. He'd done nothing. Nothing to deserve that.

[34 : 15] Nothing to deserve anything. It didn't matter to them what Jesus had done for the man. They just wanted him gone. They were only concerned about the demoniac insofar as he was a nuisance to them.

There was some type of concern there. Because he was still alive. He hadn't taken his life. Maybe they tried and couldn't. But so long as he was roaming the city and screaming and causing problems.

They were concerned and they tried to shackle him. But as long as he was out in the hills and doing his thing there. It wasn't so much of a concern for them. But now Jesus was the nuisance to them. And they demanded that he leave. As it turns out. It was actually the citizens of that region that were held in such bondage to the evil one.

They weren't running naked in the tombs. Cutting themselves to death. But they did the thing that the demons wanted most of all. They rejected Jesus.

[35 : 22] And they didn't reject him because they were out of their minds. They rejected him fully knowing what he had done. Isn't that the case for most people?

He was there to save them. But they weren't interested in his salvation. They actually liked their lives just as it was. How many people will we come across in our evangelism?

How many of us today? We're fine with Jesus so long as he doesn't become a nuisance. So long as he doesn't start messing my life up. So long as he's not asking too much of me.

So long as he's not turning things upside down. But as soon as Jesus starts to make things difficult. As soon as he starts asking for repentance. As soon as he starts asking for me to leave this world behind.

Then he's just a nuisance. And we're not so much concerned with having him around. We love our sin.

[36 : 45] Well finally we're finished. Let's see the divine savior. The divine savior. We've seen the hopeless man. The warring demons. The wicked citizens.

And now we just fix our eyes on Jesus for a few moments. Verse 18. As he was getting into the boat. The man who had been possessed with the demons. Begged him that he might be with him. This verse opens tragically doesn't it? You see the tragedy in that first phrase? As Jesus was getting into the boat. That means he's leaving. Why?

Because they asked him to. Like the parables. Jesus' miracles will either soften our hearts. Or harden them. I told you about that philosopher just a few moments ago.

Some people will come to this miracle of Jesus. And they will see the wonderful grace of God on this man's life. And it will soften their heart to faith. Some people will come to the same miracle. Acknowledging all the same things.

[37 : 46] And it's not the transformation of the man that they see. It's the cost to the people. It's the pigs who lost their lives. And that hardens their heart deeper. And when we harden our hearts.

Eventually we ask Jesus to leave. And the more we ask Jesus to leave. Eventually he's going to. Eventually he's going to. But what a contrast there is. Between the people and this man.

They were begging Jesus to leave. But the man was begging Jesus to go with him. Isn't this what salvation does? When Jesus truly impacts our hearts.

It never leaves us wanting the same things. That we had always wanted before. It leaves us wanting him. Desiring him. Wanting to be with him. Wanting to go with him.

And that's exactly what it did for this man. Look at verse 19. And he did not permit him. Jesus said no. Why? He said go home to your friends.

[38 : 46] And tell them how much the Lord has done for you. And how he has had mercy on you. And he went away and began to proclaim. In the Decapolis. How much Jesus had done for him.

And everyone marveled. It's almost shocking to read that verse. You mean this man is begging to go with Jesus. To be a part of his discipleship band. And Jesus said no.

Yeah. It wasn't because he didn't want him around. Jesus had a different task for the man to fulfill. And just as a side note.

Don't be discouraged when God's plan for you is different than the plan you have for yourself. Don't be discouraged. Willingly embrace whatever task he gives you.

And glorify him in it. This man just wanted to be with Jesus. But Jesus said no. I want you to stay. Go to your friends. Tell them what the Lord has done for you today.

[39 : 45] And that's exactly what the man did. He went all over the region. The Decapolis was a grouping. A informal grouping. Of ten Roman city states.

The closest one to this area was Hippos. It probably started there. But perhaps he went to the other ten cities as well. Either way. He went all over the place. Sharing the news of what the Lord had done.

But there's a bigger point to be made here. A more important point to be made here even. Than the man's evangelism. Now the whole point of this account. Is to proclaim that Jesus is God.

And we must accept him as much. Well look at how Mark does that for us here. In these last two verses. Jesus told the man to do what? Go and tell what the Lord has done for you today.

That's the word. Lord. Yahweh. Go tell what Yahweh has done for you today. And the mercy that he has put on you today. But what was it that the man said? He went around and what was his message?

[40 : 48] Listen to what Jesus has done for me today. You say you're making too much of that. And I don't think I am. It's just another clue. Jesus is not just from God.

He is God. He is the Lord. Because of that he has the power over nature. And he has the power over these demonic forces.

That want to destroy us. And the image of God in us. And I've said it many times. Our condition is no less severe than the man that was tormented by this legion.

We may not struggle in the same way as he struggled. But we are just as hopelessly lost. And on top of that there is a spiritual battle raging. And it's raging in order that we might stay in our hopeless state.

But the point of this narrative is not to tell us what a wonderful thing Jesus did for this man so long ago.

[41 : 51] But it is to proclaim that Jesus can deliver us. Indeed for many if not all of us. He has delivered us. We may not always consider our condition to be as extreme as this man.

But as we study the Bible we actually begin to see it is very much the same. And only Jesus can make the difference. Will you be the one that wants to go with Jesus?

Or will you be numbered with the ones that just want Jesus to go? That's ultimately the question that we have to ask. Can I close it this way?

Everything in this story is categorically unclean as far as the Old Testament law is concerned. Think about this for just a moment. This is unclean spirits.

It's specifically what they're called. They're unclean spirits. They is an unclean man. Now I'm talking ceremonially. Categorically unclean.

[42 : 56] Let's pretend for just a moment that we know his ethnicity. And let's say that he's a Jew. Okay. That means that he's not merely unclean because his ethnicity is actually unclean.

Because he's running amongst the tombs. Which is something that being amongst the dead actually made you ceremonially unclean. He's naked. That is another thing that makes him unclean in this moment.

He's mutilating his flesh. That's another thing that the Old Testament says that made you ceremonially unclean. You would be cut off. He's unclean. He's an unclean man possessed with unclean spirits.

He's in an unclean Gentile region. There's nothing about this story that is fitting or clean or good. It's an unclean area. What are these demons cast into?

Unclean pigs. As far as the Old Testament was concerned, they couldn't have anything to do with pigs. Certainly couldn't eat them. Couldn't touch them. Couldn't have anything to do with them.

[43 : 52] Okay. Everything in this story is unclean. Now think about this. Jesus did not go across the sea to this area and meet this man by chance.

This didn't just happen to come about. Okay. He intentionally went there. He intentionally went there for the purpose of saving this man.

And that is what he has done for every single one of us. The clean one entered our wicked, unclean world to bear our sin and reconcile us to God.

God, everything about us is unclean. It's sinful. And in the Bible, in these categories of clean and unclean, you don't move from being unclean to clean by taking a bath.

You move from unclean to clean by making a sacrifice. That's what the people had to do. They touched a dead body. They wait a certain amount of days. They make a sacrifice. They do something stupid against the law.

[45 : 00] They don't take a bath. They go and they make a sacrifice. Cleanliness requires a sacrifice. And Jesus is that perfect sacrifice. The clean one, the perfect one comes into our unclean world in order that he might redeem an unclean people and make them righteous.

And anyone, anyone who will follow him will be washed clean.

The question is, will you follow him? Will you turn and follow him? Not simply acknowledge who he is.

Even the demons do that. But to turn away from the sinful life that you've lived, recognize your hopeless state. Cry out to God for mercy through Christ Jesus.

And Jesus says, all who come to me, I will never cast away. Never. Never. Never.