

The Man Jesus Came to Save

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[0 : 00] Please dig out your Bibles to Mark chapter 5. When the World Trade Center crumbled to the ground on September 11, 2001, more than a few people were deeply affected.

One of those was an accountant who lived in Connecticut named Dave Carnes. Carnes, who worked for Deloitte and Tooch, watched in horror the destruction that occurred that morning on TV as so many of us watched from around the world.

Instead of just being emotionally troubled with what he saw, Dave decided to do something about it. The first thing that Dave did is he went in, saw his manager and said, listen, I'm taking a couple of days off.

He followed that with a visit to the barber shop where he said to the barber, I want a high and tight Marine haircut. He stopped by his home and put on his Marine military fatigues.

Dave knew that if he had the right uniform on, he would be granted access to where he wanted to go and then blocked off the area surrounding Ground Zero.

[1 : 38] Dave drove to Manhattan that day at speeds at over 120 miles an hour and arrived on scene later that afternoon. While rescue workers were being called off the wreckage pile because of danger, Dave, the former Marine of 23 years, was able to stay because of his attitude, credentials of his military uniform, the military, and the other Marine.

Finding another Marine nearby, the two men walked the pile together, seeking to save the lost. After searching for over an hour, they heard the faint sound of tapping pipes and yelling.

What they found was Will, Jimeno, and John McLaughlin, two Port Authority police officers who were on the bottom floor when the South Tower fell.

And they amazingly survived as all 100 stories collapsed on top of them. When Dave found Will and John, they had been trapped for nine hours, completely incapable of working themselves free.

Yet in the midst of the rubble, a Marine who earlier in the morning had been working a spreadsheet in Connecticut, found them. Of the 20 people found in the heaped up remains of the Twin Towers, Will and John were numbers 18 and 19.

[3 : 05] All because Dave Carnes took off his suit, put on his military fatigues, and stepped into the despair and darkness of the despair.

If you were a believer of Christ, you know a similar story. But to a much greater degree. We know the story of God, who took off his royal robes, stepped into our dark and depraved culture to save us.

Today we are going to meet a man that Jesus specifically came to save.

Scholars debate about what is the reason on this fateful day that Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee to visit this country of the Gerasenes.

R.C. Sproul states that in all of Scripture, only one man's misery could be rivaled more than this man. And his name is Job. Here, we meet a man tormented moment by moment by the focused power of hell.

[4 : 19] In one of the most lamentable stories of human righteousness in the Bible. And it's him, Jesus, purposely came to save.

So, would you follow along with me as we read through this gospel and learn exactly what happened that day?

Beginning in verse 1, it says, They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. This is Gentile country.

This is the first time Jesus in his ministry, who's been ministering in Galilee, which is the northern part of Israel, on the northwest part of the Sea of Galilee, had been ministering to.

But one day, for whatever reason, he asked his disciples to jump in a boat and we're going for a ride. It's here where it's called the Decapolis, which is ten Gentile towns are found.

[5 : 19] So, here in this country of the Gerasenes, we find this wonderful, amazing story. One commentator states that this story is so compelling and so, so bizarre, yet so fascinating, that it is one of the most riveting accounts in all of Scripture.

In 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. He lived among the tombs.

And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been bound with shackles and chain, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces.

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.

Let's just say that you probably couldn't find a more revolting man to welcome you to your city or village or home.

[6 : 28] Matthew records that this man was so violent that you could not even pass through these graveyards, these tombstones. So here we have Jesus arriving in a boat that we believe is between 15 and 20 feet long, several feet across through a storm, landing on this ground.

And this man who's been sitting up in this mountain. And we get this picture, and it says he's crying out on the mountain day and night, continually crying as the forces of hell are absolutely coming against this man.

Immediately, Jesus shows up on the shore, and he rushes down. Now, I want to give you the context of what is going on.

This is Gentile land. To the 12 Jewish disciples that are with Jesus, this is the place of the unclean. So they are coming ashore to unclean Gentile territory to meet probably the most unclean man they could ever imagine.

[7 : 49] First of all, he's unclean because he is demon-possessed. What happens is when you were unclean, you could not worship in the temple. You would have to take a time apart from that.

So here they are coming into an unclean land. They're met by a man with an unclean spirit who lives in unclean tombs.

To be Jewish and be in the contact with the dead of the things of the dead required you to be purified again. Not only that, but Luke tells us that he ran up to them buck naked, no clothes on them, which is an illustration of absolute perversion.

Not to mention, as we all know, this is where they raised swine, another unclean animal that the Jews were not permitted to touch or eat.

What Mark is painting for us is probably one of the saddest scenes that one could ever encounter. One author says, even in life this man is consigned to the land of the dead.

[9 : 03] Clearly this is a man in need of help. Whatever philosophy or rules of life he followed did not work so well for him. Now if you know about the gospel of Mark, the gospel of Mark is written to prove that Jesus Christ is indeed the son of God.

Not because of so much what he teaches, but what he has power over. If you understand the gospel, you see that God has power over nature. He's got power over disease.

He's got power over the unclean. He's got power over Satan. But here we're going to see that Jesus' power extends beyond Galilee into this Gentile area as well.

Mark 3.27, Jesus reminds us that no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man.

So as we continue reading in verse 6, And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him.

[10 : 15] And crying out with a loud voice, he said, What have you to do with me, Jesus, son of the most high God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.

For he was saying to him, Come out of the man, you unclean spirit. So Jesus, in this process of driving out the spirit, is interrupted by the demon.

And Jesus responds, What is your name? He replied, My name is Legion, for we are many.

Several things we need to keep in mind here. One, a demon is a fallen angel. And as an angel, he was one of God's first created beings.

He existed previously in the presence of God. Now, they're spirit beings because they sided with Satan in his rebellion against God and were banished from heaven.

[11 : 28] But they have the ability to occupy the body of living things. Demons come to destroy. We see they have driven this man to a madman, a deranged, irrational, dangerous, sociopathic, intensely evil man.

Not only that, he's got supernatural strength and he is so strong that chains cannot even bind him. Today, with such people, we do not bind them with chains, but we bind them with drugs.

We've gotten away from actually admitting they are people that are demon-possessed. We give them other names. Now, the sad part of this story is he is from this town.

He was someone's friend, someone's son, perhaps brother. He had sisters, uncles, aunts. He was not a stranger that lived in the town, but he was one who was from the town, who lived in the tombstones, crying night and day.

And now, this man cries out to Jesus and we see him actually bowing before Jesus. Before we get to this encounter, Jesus encountered a demon in Mark 1.25.

[13 : 01] And when confronted with this demon in this synagogue, the demon actually tried to overpower by Jesus by calling out his name as if his name could assert some sort of authority over the Son of God.

Jesus paid him absolutely no attention. But this demon does something very different. We don't know why. Maybe he was tipped off by other demons.

Listen, if you try saying his name and thinking that's getting you anywhere with him, it's not going to work, right? We've tried that, not working. You've got to take a whole other line of attack with this guy.

So he uses this different strategy. One, he calls Jesus Son of the Most High God.

Now this is important for the Jewish disciples who are with Jesus to hear. because Jesus is no longer in Galilee.

[14 : 07] And if you were living in that first century, you had gods that were territorial gods. So all of a sudden we have this God who is being recognized as Son of the Most High God in a Gentile land.

It's amazing, right? When you go through the scriptures, the people who recognize Jesus are the demons. We see over and over the people who walk with Jesus just don't always get it.

So he's calling the Son of the only one, the only true God. And instead of trying to control Jesus, he begs Jesus.

And we're going to see this word beg come up several times. Verse 10, and he begged him earnestly with all their might not to send them out of the country.

Matthew shed some light on this, on this conversation. Matthew states that the demon states, have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?

[15 : 19] Luke records, I beg you, don't torture me. And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the abyss.

These demons know exactly who Jesus is. They know that Jesus is sovereign. They know that Jesus has authority. They know that Jesus is in control.

They know and recognize that Jesus has every right to sentence them. That Jesus can execute them and Jesus can eternally incinerate them.

Matthew 8, 29, the word time is used. The appointed time. These demons knew that there is a plan of redemption for man.

They know that there will be a time when they will be tossed into the abyss of hell. They just didn't expect it to be happening on that very day.

[16 : 22] But it was time. It was time for a specific man who had known nothing but pain to be freed from the power of hell. Verse 11.

Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. And they begged him again saying, send us to the pigs, send us to the pigs, let us enter into them.

Anything than complete a banishment. Just send us to these pigs. So Jesus gave them permission. The unspirits, 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 there. This is huge.

This is a man who had nothing good in his life. This is a man who only knew torment and pain. This is a man who had no escape.

[17 : 27] We read he had no rest. But now he is free. He is free from the powers of hell tormenting him. Remember, he would be in so much pain of his flesh that he would take rocks to scrape off his

skin just for that moment of freeing himself from this pain.

So what happens next? Verse 14, the herdsmen fled and told it to the city and in the country. And people came to see all 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.

Wow. The man that they had known who'd run around naked breaking chains, beating on people was now sitting at the foot of Jesus.

Clothed, no longer depraved, no longer perverted and in his right mind. And they had every right to be fearful as the disciples we would read and understand in Mark chapter 4 the storm that Jesus calmed did not excite the disciples and actually they got fearful because all of a sudden they knew they were in the presence of someone very great and powerful that the waves and winds would listen to.

[19 : 10] And now these people are in the presence of a man who can drive a legion of demons and out of a man and finally bring him peace.

So what happened next? Well as we clearly read here they rolled out the red carpet they drew a great party and celebrated the return of their friend.

They rejoiced that he went free. That's not in my version of the Bible and it's not in yours.

In fact there is no record of them being happy at all. Verse 16 and those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon possessed man and to the pigs and they began and here we were see the word beg once again to beg Jesus to depart from their region.

what would you do? What we see here is the power of depravity.

[20 : 34] We see men and women that are more comfortable with an agent of Satan in their midst than Jesus Christ. The son of Satan is more welcome than the son of God.

Let me ask you a question. Is there a character in this story that you relate to? Perhaps you're the one with your sins that you try to scrape off whether it be pornography alcohol addiction drug addiction anger gossip you're continually trying to scrape that sin off yourself?

But whatever you try you find it is as useful as this man using a rock to scrape off his skin to save him the pain?

Or maybe you're the one who feels more at ease with the unrighteous than you are with the righteous because after all when you're with the unrighteous no one accuses you of any unrighteousness there's no accountability and everybody kind of has this live and let live attitude. Sometimes you prefer these people around you why? Because it makes you feel better. at least I am not like them.

[22 : 18] Have you ever wondered if Jesus appeared today and he did many of these great miracles do you ever think that many people would be saved?

That our long broken relationship with God severed from the time of Adam would now be repaired and that with this work of Christ we could now come fearlessly before the throne of God?

You see like the men trapped under the twin towers before Christ came we are buried in the depths of rubble of our own foolishness with zero chance of pulling ourselves out by our own will.

will. We were without hope until the Holy One of Heaven Jesus Christ clothed himself in humanity to rescue us like he did this demon possessed man to become sin for us on the cross.

Paul writes to us in Philippians 2 5 to 11 the following saying. He says have this mind among yourself which is yours in Christ Jesus who though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death even death on a cross therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name so that the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

[24 : 27] Why wouldn't we be excited if Jesus came and did the miracles that he did that day in our presence? Well one of the reasons is we need to say is that our own junk is not working.

The Bible tells us clearly in 1 Corinthians that this cross this cross these two pieces of wood where our Savior died is folly to the perishing.

It is a stumbling block to the Jews who demand signs and foolishness to the Greeks who demand wisdom. Like the townspeople who saw the man who was once out of his mind now sitting

peacefully as a worshiper of Jesus couldn't get over themselves enough to accept Jesus into their own village and simply say thank you for saving my friend.

God now what are the reasons why the town people couldn't do this when they saw the clear and true power in Jesus over Satan.

Why can't they be excited about this? Well one I'm going to tell you today I believe they had three barriers. They had three barriers preventing them from doing this. The first barrier is ignorance.

[25 : 50] They had conceived in their mind their own gods and their own way to worship their gods. We see this today. We live in Squamish.

This is a place where people worship the created rather than the creator. I just had a conversation with a man several weeks ago where his God is plants.

Plants are an incredible thing but that's where his worship stopped. the essence of the plants to him was his God.

For some who even exist in the churches today they've reinvented Jesus to look a lot like us.

They're always forgiving, loving, accepting, always patient with our sin but impatient with everybody else's.

But for us we're gold, right? We create this new Jesus who is just like us. We strip him of his authority and we strip him of his power.

[27 : 01] So when we end up calling out his name he is incapable of helping us. But boy, oh boy, do we like having this Jesus near us. He doesn't confront us.

He doesn't face us down on our issues. He's comfortable just as we are and there's no need to change. The second barrier to accept Jesus is actually found in the words of John, 1 John 2 16.

And John here lays out, for all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world. What he means to say is we are finding more greater satisfaction from the world than we are in Jesus.

Jesus. There's three things that he names here. One, people want to be satisfied with their money and comfort more than they want to be satisfied with God. I know many people when problems and trials come along, their faith all of a sudden appears.

Their security is in what they control, not the God who controls all things. And often we see those people lapse from the faith because God isn't doing what they've commanded him to do.

[28 : 21] The people, the second type of person that John is describing for us is people that want to be satisfied with their relationships and sex. They believe a person will answer the greatest need of their life.

The deepest hole in their life can only be filled by another human being regardless of the relationship before the Lord or not. And the third person that John describes here is those that desire respect and success.

Those are the type of people who fear man more than they fear God. These are the people that want other people to look at us and be impressed by what they see.

Whether it's possessions, degrees, education, or employment. they'd rather feel entitled rather than feel the comfort of the true knowledge of God.

But John aptly tells us these things are fleeting. But the third biggest hindrance which stops us from truly experiencing the power of Jesus Christ in our lives is our own unconfessed sin.

[29 : 36] our junk. This is a problem that gums up a lot of us. What's kind of funny about not confessing sins is this is God we've sinned against.

He already knows it, right? We think by not confessing our sin, we're hiding it from God. but he's God who's all-knowing.

He already knows it but yet in our own stubbornness and pride we foolishly try to deny the impact of this sin. Sadly, there is no place we can go.

There's no thoughts that he does not know. We run away from him and try to find comfort in the things that don't ask much of us.

But sadly, the one answer to our problems, the one who can solve our problems, remove our junk, we run away from and make it worse than rather run to and experience freedom.

[30 : 49] When convicted, we often run to what gives us temporary relief. For some, it's food. For some, it's escapism, whether it's books or movies.

Others, it's pornography. But when you find you are feeling better, you come back to God hoping he's forgotten what he originally told us to do.

I'm here to tell you this morning that that cycle can stop because God has already made provision for us in Jesus Christ.

God is going to believe and obey. We should run to God and not from God. Why? Because he already knows.

We're just compounding our problem. Matt Chandler writes, the cross should continually testify to us that God fully knew we would need to be saved.

[31 : 54] That we could never do it on our own and we needed not just help but someone to actually do it for us.

Therefore, unconfessed sin is actually the foolish decision to run away from our healing and growth rather than towards that.

You see, when we sin, that is the time to run to the cross, not from the cross. God already knew you were going to screw up.

God already knew you were going to have a hundred floors of tons of rubble on you. You see, to confess our sins is to violently pursue our own joy glory and glory of God.

This is what increases our worship. So we know how the townspeople felt when confronted with the reality of Jesus.

[33 : 02] What did this man who was possessed by Jesus feel? Look at verse 18. For me, this is the most beautiful picture in all of scripture.

If I had the ability to picture this in my head and hire an artist to draw this picture, I would. Verse 18. And he, Jesus, was getting into the boat.

The man who had been possessed with demons begged him again that he might be with him. the only place this guy wants to be is next to Jesus now.

He doesn't even know where Jesus is going. But he just sees Jesus getting into the boat. There's these 12 other guys and he's going to get in with them. I love that picture.

But Jesus does something. He did not permit him, 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.

[34 : 19] Jesus tells us right here is how to evangelize. You know that? Just tell people what God has done for you. What has he freed you from? And it said, this man went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him and everyone marveled.

That's awesome. What's interesting is the first missionary wasn't an apostle. The first missionary person wasn't a guy who took an evangelism course.

The first missionary wasn't a guy who spent four years at seminary. It was a Gentile, not even a Jew, who simply experienced the wondrous freedom that only Jesus Christ offers.

What we see here is a perfect disciple. one who longs to be next to Jesus and obeys him when commanded.

Whenever you're struggling with whatever God would have for you, turn to this story. I'm going to guess none of you were in as bad shape as this guy.

[35 : 54] This guy had the entire focus of hell against him. You know what Jesus did after this? He went back to the other side.

The whole purpose Jesus had was to save this one man. And he makes that same journey to us. None of us are too far from his kindness, his love, and his mercy. If you have already experienced that mercy, grace, and love, amen.

My prayer is that you would share it with others. Look, look, what the Son of God has done for me. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. ladies foodie, geg Grace, let's good, let's put that go.