

Jesus & the Demoniac

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! So Mark chapter 5, look at me in verse 1.! This is the Word of God. They came to the other side of the sea, that is, disciples and our Lord, the other side of the sea to the country of the Gerasenes.

And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. And Mark has a little aside here and gives us some details on this man.

And 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 chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces.

No one had the strength to subdue him. Now he brings us up to the present. Night and day among the tombs and among the mountains, he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.

[1 : 19] 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 God?

I adjure you by God. Do not torment me. For Jesus was saying, Come out of the man, you unclean spirit.

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

And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. And a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, Send us to the pigs.

Let us enter them. So, Jesus gave them permission.

[2 : 26] 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 were drowned in the sea.

The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. 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 had the legion, sitting there clothed in his right mind, clothed in his right mind, and they were afraid.

And those who had seen it described to them what had happened. To the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.

Verse 18. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with them. And he did not.

Jesus did not permit him, but said, Go home to your friends 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.

[3 : 44] And everyone marveled. And everyone marveled. Yeah, the Gospels are a bit like a song from the Sesame Street.

If you were born in the last 45 years or have been parents in the last 45 years, you probably remember the hit show song, The People in Your Neighborhood.

The song is meant to introduce the children to all the folks in the neighborhood. It begins the same way every time. Who are the people in your neighborhood? Who are the people in your neighborhood?

I'm not going to sing it. Then the song continues each time and introduces you to a different person in the neighborhood. Like a police officer. A grocery store person.

A baker. A mail carrier. A fireman. And so on. And the chorus of the song kind of concludes the same way every time. They're the people you meet when you're walking down the street.

[4 : 47] They're the people you meet each day. And the Gospels are a bit like that song. They're chock full of interesting people that Jesus meets.

You know, if we were to write a song on the Gospels, no doubt it would include people like Peter and James and John and Nicodemus and Mary Magdalene. Bartimaeus, blind Bartimaeus.

Mary and Martha and others. But if we were writing a song on the Gospel, particularly the Gospel of Mark, there's no doubt we would introduce you to this character today. The Gospels. Often referred simply to, simply as, the demoniac.

The demon-possessed man. This man is hard to forget. And these verses capture a most memorable encounter with our Lord.

You know, the encounter is memorable for a number of reasons. One is the longest account of demon possession in the whole Bible. Obviously, in all the four Gospels.

[5 : 48] It's particularly insightful into the demonic. Now, we're not going to be splitting the hierarchy of the demonic this morning. But it's particularly insightful, striking details into the demonic.

And what goes on in demon possession. And these casting out demons that we've saw throughout Mark. So it's memorable. And it's downright spooky. You know, one scholar said, it's the eeriest episode in the life of Jesus.

I mean, this story is more suited for the scream chamber down the street than for a Sunday morning. But it's also, it's so memorable.

It's so well known that we may think we totally understand it. My hope for us is that we press in to see, just like we saw last week, how this story is trying to tell us something amazing about Jesus Christ.

Trying to tell us about who He is. So we're going to kind of pry into the details a little bit. And see, we're going to ask three questions. The first is, who is the man? Who is the man? Who's the man?

[6 : 55] Jesus comes to the other side of the sea and He encounters a man with an unclean spirit. Look at verse 1 and 2. He came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasene. And when Jesus stepped out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit.

And so Jesus docks in this town, probably the town of Gergesa. And when He arrives, He's immediately met with this man with an unclean spirit.

We've already encountered unclean spirit several times. We've seen exorcisms, if you want to call them that, which I guess is their official name, twice in chapter 1 and 3.11. And so we've heard about casting out the demons.

But then He gives us background information into this man. Look at verse 3 and 4. He lived among the tombs. No one could bind Him, not even with a chain. We've often been bound with shackles and chains. But He wrenched them apart.

He broke the shackles. No one had the strength to subdue Him. All day long He's crying out and cutting Himself with stone. There's no more pitiful man in Scripture besides Job.

[8 : 02] The unclean spirit has overtaken Him in such a way that there's no one that can help Him. So three times it says He's, you know, no one could bind Him, right?

No one could keep Him in shackles. No one had the strength to subdue Him. The idea there is not that people were trying to put Him in prison or something like that. The idea is the straitjacket folks of the day, so to speak, were trying to keep Him from harming Himself and other people, like you would have in a psychiatric hospital in our day.

But they don't work. So they've tried. And He wrenches the chains apart. He breaks the shackles. He lives alone.

Thankfully, He's not a threat anymore to the town. He lives kind of outside the city limits, so to speak. But He continues to be a threat all day long. He cuts Himself with stone.

Self-harm. Why? Does He know to hurt? It seems to me that the internal spiritual turmoil and torment is so great that He cuts Himself to feel something other than that.

[9 : 21] If just for a moment. I would say anybody doing self-harm, I hope this passage invites you to see the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

But it gets at the death of His depression. He lives alone. He lives among the tombs. So three times that thing. Mark says He lives among the tombs.

He lives among the dead. Now this, for a Jewish reader, this immediately sent off buzzers. He's unclean then. He lives among unclean Gentiles.

And the Decapolis, as we read in verse 20, a group of ten cities devoted to pagan, Hellenistic, Greek culture. He lives among unclean pigs, animals no Jew was allowed to eat.

He lives among the unclean dead. If you went to visit a tomb, there was a cleansing ritual in order to return to the community.

[10 : 18] So He lives among the unclean. And He lives in a place no one dares go. One of my favorite episodes of the Andy Griffith show is the haunted house.

If you've ever seen that, but Barney and Gomer throwing baseball, and somebody hits it through the house door. It's the old rimshaw mansion down the street. And they get inside there.

It's a little spooky. You know, you can imagine Gomer. If you've ever watched Gomer, I mean, he's just a barrel of laughs. And I won't spoil the show for you, because that's just the beginning. It's just a wonderful show.

Some wild things going on in Mayberry. But it was a house that no one dared go, and that's what the tombs were. We're meant to say, Who is this man? Mark's been very careful in introducing people by name.

He has no name. He has no family. He has no future. He lives in the misery and torment of constant struggle.

[11 : 28] Yeah, perhaps out of a morbid curiosity, you'd be the judge. I love reading obituaries. Because they're rare, honest glimpses into the meaning of life and the source of joy.

But there's some that are so painful to read. I read one the other day. Our beloved Madeline died on Sunday, October 7th. While her death was unexpected, Madeline suffered from drug addiction.

And for years, we feared her addiction would claim her life. We're grateful that when she died, she was safe and she was with her family. Madeline was a born performer, had a singing voice so beautiful, it would stop people on the street.

Whether she was on stage in a musical, around the kitchen table with her family, when she shared her voice, she shared her light. She was a member of a dance and musical troupe that toured the world. She loved to ski and snowboard, and she swam on the YMCA swim team.

When she was 16, though, she tried Oxycontin for the first time at a high school party, and so began a relationship with opiates that would dominate the rest of her life. It's impossible to capture an obituary, a person, especially someone whose adult life was defined by drug addiction.

[12 : 45] To some, Maddie was just a junkie. They stopped seeing her. Maddie loved her family and the world more than anything else.

She loved her son, Aidan, who was born in 2014. Every afternoon, in all kinds of weather, she'd pack him in a backpack and take him on a walk. She sang rather than spoke, filling his life with song.

After having Aidan, Maddie tried harder and harder, more relentlessly to stay sober than we ever had seen anyone try to do anything. But she relapsed and lost custody of her son.

During the past two years, especially, she was brought to places of incredible darkness, and the darkness compounded on itself.

Her addiction stalked her. Though we would have paid any ransom to have her back, any price in the world, this disease would not let her go until she was gone.

[13 : 56] That may be today's demoniac. In some ways, Oxycontin took away from Madeline, left her in misery and the torment of constant struggle.

It took away her family, it took away her talents. Eerily similar to the man in this passage. This is looking on the cloudy side of the world, the dark side of society.

Darkness and torment may overtake our souls in any number of ways. Demons, drugs, and suffering. And so we ask, who is this man?

It's precisely here that the meaning of this passage begins to open up. Jesus goes where no one else goes. And it's found by those who aren't seeking.

You know, we saw last week, you know, this is this cluster of stories, you know, that Jesus arranged and beginning with the storm and the sea, they're specifically designed to show us more about who Jesus is.

[15 : 17] And so we miss it if we're enamored with the demoniac and even with his darkness that is so distressing. And so after delivering the disciples to the storm, Jesus leads them to this land to find this man.

This man had gone to live among the tombs because no one was there. He'd gone to live among the tombs because no one would look for him there. No one would find him there. And he was gone there so he could be alone in his anguish, but it is for this reason that Jesus goes to find him.

A lot of scholars would say Isaiah 65 is behind this passage. We have it for you. Look at this. He says, I'm ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me. I'm ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, here I am, here I am to a nation that was not called by my name.

I spread out my hands. Remember I mentioned that. That's Romans 11. Paul picks that up at the end. I spread out my hands all the day to rebellious people who walk in a way that is not good following their own devices.

Listen, who sit in tombs and spend the night in secret places and eat pigs' flesh. Pigs, tombs, and both are tainted meat.

[16 : 23] And the broth of tainted meat is in their vessels. So you see these parallels. Parallels. And I think it powerfully brings together. Jesus, he seeks those who aren't seeking. He finds those who aren't looking.

So many parallels here, but Jesus does not wait to be sought. He lands on the land of the Gerasene and says, as it were, here I am. That's incredible.

Point two, who is Legion? So who is this man? We don't know. We don't know his background. We just know he's a man that's been chased down by the devil for a long time. But who is Legion?

When Jesus arrives and finds this man with an unclean spirit, the man falls down before Jesus. Look at verse 6. When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran to him and fell down before him.

We just think good stuff is about to happen because he's fallen down like everybody else. But this unclean spirit does not come out so quickly. And Mark describes this loud back and forth, this loud encounter between Jesus and the man with the unclean spirit.

[17 : 30] It begins in the way like the previous exorcisms have. In verse 7, he cries out, what have you to do with me, Jesus? Son of the Most High God. He rightly identifies Jesus as the Lord.

And he says, what is it? That's all it means. What is it between me and you? What do you want? Why are you here? Why are you here? But he doesn't back down.

Remember, he says, I adore you by God. Do not torment me. You know, that's this weird mix between submission and opposition. I want you to swear to me that you won't torment me.

This is a last-ditch effort of somebody who knows they're cooked. It's like Kawhi Leonard going superhuman last night trying to save the series. It's like my kids trying to team up and promise not to hurt us too bad if we wrestle you right now.

You know, he's kind of trying to make a deal before the demise because Jesus has already been saying come out of him. Impressed by his resolve, look at verse 9, Jesus says, what is your name?

[18 : 37] He responds, my name is Legion for we are many. Do you see that? My name, now there's all sorts of singular and plural use of the pronoun that's kind of confusing in this.

My name is Legion for we are many. My, we. Legion is a military term referring to 5,000 to 6,000 troops, Roman troops, which means this man is not possessed by one demon but by thousands of them.

Many interpreters, I think they misstep here. they go psychological on us and they try to explain what's going on with this man psychologically. Surely he's got a split personality disorder.

My name, we, split personality, you know, or maybe he's got this, like, he's lost his individualness in the demons or something like that.

Severe sexual trauma, some scholar, I mean, some psychologists would say but I think a focus on psychology misses the point. This man is definitely suffering psychologically but his psychological suffering is not due to temperamental or situational factors.

[19 : 47] His psychological suffering is due to the demons. This name, Legion, is not meant for us to ponder psychology but, as one author says, it's meant to be a chilling reminder of the number, power, and intention of the demons.

Chilling reminder of the number, power, and intentions of the demons. This man is under control by an untold number of unclean and unholy spirits. He's possessed by demons, what verse 15 and 16 says.

He's fallen into the snare. Now, we have to pause for just a moment here. Demon possessions not mentioned in the Old Testament. It's mentioned very rarely in the New Testament after the Gospels.

Mark mentions it the most. Satan uses a barrage of tactics, accusations, deceit, suffering, and so on, but demon possession seems to be, you know, if you wonder what it is, demon possession seems to be when someone's will is completely dominated by Satan such that the individual is completely overtaken by him.

Now, can this still happen? Now, I say yes. You know, I disagree with me, but I believe yes.

[21 : 11] I don't see any biblical warrant otherwise. But believers cannot be possessed by demons.

To be a believer is by definition to be one who's been born of the Spirit, not of water and the Spirit. And therefore, it cannot be dominated by an unclean spirit any longer.

Satan can still tempt us, can't accuse us before God. So there's no more chains to break for believers. We say break every chain, break every chain.

Yes. No. That's where I land. So, little aside. I got some books I can tell you. If you're really interested in this stuff, I can give you some books that have helped me.

So back to the story. This is, the episode gets bizarre after this, if we're honest. After finding out his name, Jesus doesn't command the demons to come out. So, we are many. The next part of the story is not, come out of him.

[22 : 20] Instead, the demons begin to beg Jesus. they beg him, hey, don't send us into the country. I didn't find a good explanation for that. I don't know, you know, maybe, I thought you are in the country, but I don't know.

Don't send us into the country. And then seeing a herd of pigs walk by, they say, hey, send us into the pigs. I've got an idea. And then Jesus grants permission without any fog or smoke or grandstanding, without any chance or spells or magic like a king granting someone an audience or commanding an order.

Jesus sends them out with a word. I read this morning, 2 Kings 18, you know, with Elijah up on the mountain and the prophets of Baal and they were all doing all sorts of grandstanding.

Elijah said, just pour water all over the thing three times and the Lord will come and lick it all up. And so he sends him out. Look at this. He gave them permission. Could there be a more wonderful explanation of Jesus' authority?

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 were drowned. The same sea that threatened the disciples is the sea that drowned the pigs.

[23 : 42] Supporters of PETA would not like this verse. PETA, PETA, is that how you say it? I don't know. Animal lovers. Not like this verse.

Come on, Jesus. Why the pigs, man? Why all the bacon? Pork belly. You know, some go even further and say, not just why the pigs, but there must be a moral defect in Jesus' character.

How could he destroy this man's herd with seemingly no regard? how could he permit, Jesus permit the demons to destroy someone's property?

Bertrand Russell, you ever heard of him? Famous atheist? This was one of the texts that he went to and said, Jesus is a, he's an imperfect man. I think that misses the point on a number of reasons.

You know, Jesus loves the birds. They don't sow or weave. The Lord provides for them. Jesus loves the lilies. They don't toil or spin. The Lord clothes them. Jesus loves the pigs, even though they're an unclean animal and the people aren't supposed to eat them by the law.

[24 : 48] Thankfully, a sheet happened in Acts 10 and 11, so you can't eat meat. I mean, you can't eat pigs, so have no fear. But, are humans, those whom he's made in his own image, not of much more value than birds and flowers and pigs?

So, it's a wonderful way of saying that. You know, in some ways, I think it whispers, who can talk about personal property when this man has been given his life back? There's another thing here, though.

Why drowning the pigs? Why killing them by pigs? Is there another place in Scripture where God defeated all his enemies by drowning? Yeah.

Remember Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea? After delivering the people through the Red Sea on the dry land, the Lord swallowed up the Egyptians who were chasing after him, so too, and these two passages clustered together, after delivering the disciples through the storm of the sea, Jesus swallows up the demons in the sea.

The water that provided the way of their salvation leads to the full victory over these demons. So, this dramatic drowning alerts us to something very important.

[26 : 04] Jesus did not come just to free the oppressed, but to destroy all the works of the devil. Jesus did not come just to free the oppressed. He did not just come to usher a word to free the oppressed, but to destroy all the works of the devil.

That's why the pigs were drowned. They were unclean. They represent a world of uncleanness, a world enslaved to the devil following the prince of the power of the air. And Jesus came to take them all the way down.

We know this. 1 John 3, 8 says the reason the Son of God came is to destroy the works of the devil. Jesus did not come to set you free. Merely, He came to gain the full final victory by destroying all the works of the devil.

Colossians puts these beside each other in Colossians 2. And you who are dead and trespassing sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made a life together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with illegal demand.

This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed in so doing the rulers and authorities and put them in an open chain by triumphing over them in Him. That italicized part, Christ not only forgives sin, but gains a victory, disarms every enemy.

[27 : 16] He throws them down. He triumphs over the cross. You know, some of the scholars back in the day used to refer, Augustine, Martin Luther, others referred to the cross as a trap, a mouse trap is what Augustine said.

Mouses were even back then causing trouble, you know. But a mouse trap. Jesus incited constant opposition from the devil and his henchmen because of his signs and water.

They resolved to destroy him. They assumed that if they killed him, he would be finished. Satan assumed that he'd won when he did finish him on the cross, but his death was a trap. It was planned long ago.

As a man, he suffered for us on the trap, securing our forgiveness and acceptance for God. As a God man, he rose again, tricking the deceiver himself, securing victory over sin and death and the devil and all his words.

He put them to open shame. So the demons wanted to go in the pigs. I don't know why. But what they wanted led to their demise.

[28 : 27] So it's a whisper of what God is doing in Jesus Christ. Thirdly, who is Jesus? So who is Legion? Who is Jesus? After Jesus drowns, the Legion of unclean spirits, the people hear about it and don't know how to respond.

These verses give us a fascinating look into the effect of this dramatic miracle. The responses are very different.

Both responses uncover who Jesus is. The townspeople see the power of Jesus and are afraid. Look in verse 14. The herdsman fled, told it in the city, in the country.

People came to see what it was that had happened. I love how simply that's worded. What it was that had happened. Verse 15. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there clothed in his right mind, and they were afraid.

Just like disciples on the boat. They were afraid. They were thinking. I think they were thinking. This is what they were thinking. It's one thing to have demons nearby. It's a whole other thing to have a man who can cast out demons nearby. The demons keep to themselves.

[29 : 35] They do their own thing. Sure, they tormented that poor guy, but it was only him, and he was alone. He probably deserved it. We felt sorry for him, but he was far away from us, and never really bothered us.

But what are we to do with Jesus? We know how to handle that man. We just push him out to the tombs, but how are we going to handle this man? There's no telling what to do next. I have a herd. I have a house.

I have a family. What's he going to do next? So the town's been in many ways, in large measure, getting the message that Mark is trying to reach. Don't be deceived. Jesus is the all-powerful Lord.

That's what Mark is threading through this passage. Don't be deceived. Jesus is the all-powerful Lord. He's the one who's strong enough. Remember, there's no one strong enough. He's the one who's strong enough, mightier than I, is what John the Baptist said.

And here he is, in the flesh. He's the one who's in charge. He's the one giving permission. He's granting permission to everyone around him, to disciples to take him across, to the demon there to go into this one or that one.

[30 : 34] He is the son of the Most High God. The idea is his kingdom is over all and his power is unrivaled. So they're right to be afraid. He's the Lord.

He's the Lord. He's the Lord. He's the Lord. He's the Lord. He's the Lord. That's not all they need to see about Jesus Christ.

But that's all they do see. Look in verse 17. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. Even there, he grants their request.

The one who expelled the demon is the one who's expelled from the land of the Gerasenes. That's ironic. All right.

So Townsville see his power and they're afraid. The man experiences his mercy and is saved. Look in verse 15.

[31 : 34] They came to Jesus and saw the demon possessed man. It's almost like he correct himself. The one who had had the Legion sitting there clothed and in his right mind and they were afraid.

They saw him there sitting there sitting down clothed and in his right mind. I mean, my imagination just goes crazy.

What happened? Come on, Mark. Give us a little bit more detail. You know, like what happened? Did he fall down? I mean, when the demons went out, did he just fall down before the Lord? Did he cry?

Did he wipe Jesus' feet like Mary? Did he wipe his feet because he'd been forgiven so much? Did he just buckle in wordless wonder and joy?

We don't know. We'll be able to ask him, what is your name, man? We've been calling you a demoniac for thousands of years.

[32 : 32] What is your name? What happened? We only know that he encountered Jesus' mercy in a way that he was never the same.

My guess is it was a bit like the conversion of William Cooper. William Cooper is a hymn writer famous for writing There's a fountain filled with blood. God moves in a mysterious way.

Cooper battled depression and darkness like no one I have ever read about. He lost his mother at six. He was sent to boarding school by his father where he was cruelly bullied and likely abused.

He never recovered in his mind. After a two year engagement his fiance's father forbid the marriage. He dated he was engaged for two years he forbid the marriage.

Neither one of them got married. She helped support him until the end of his life. At the age of 31 he suffered a psychotic breakdown tried to kill himself three times and was committed to an asylum what we would call a psychiatric hospital.

[33 : 45] It was run though by a Christian. And it was there that six months later Cooper became a believer. He read John 11 about the story of the Lord and Lazarus and marveled at the love and mercy Jesus showed Lazarus and for the first time realized the Lord was extending the same mercy to him.

And this is where you describe what happened. I think we have a couple sentences for you. Unless the almighty arm had been under me I think I should have died with gratitude and joy.

My eyes filled with tears and my voice choked with transport. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear overwhelmed with love and wonder.

Some people think some people find it easy to believe that God loves them. Not Cooper. Not this man.

But when he finds the strength to believe it and he sees it plainly in the word of God he crumbles with gratitude and joy. I think that's what happened to the man. He was the one people avoided but the Lord came and showed him mercy.

[35 : 06] Now the passage is coming in full now. Where we're going the main point where we're going where we've reached that don't be deceived Jesus is the all powerful Lord who shows mercy to everyone who believes.

Don't be deceived don't be misunderstand Jesus is the all powerful Lord who shows mercy to everyone who believes. He goes into an unclean land to find an unclean man living among unclean tombs so that he might show that his mercy breaks the banks that we prescribe for him.

Can you see I mean the stunning this passage comes together the stunning display of Jesus' power is not meant to leave us cowering in dread not meant to leave us quandering about the morality of Jesus with the pigs whatever but to leave us crumbling in gratitude and joy because this all powerful Lord is the one who shows mercy to sinners like you and me.

it's meant to leave us marveling at the mercy of God amazed at the mercy of God the one who has all powers the one who shows mercy and that's what can happen to you this morning.

Some of you are in this type of darkness some of you are convinced no one cares for you some of you are convinced no one wants you or loves you or longs to see you some of you are battling addiction some of you are pushed around by the enemy and his henchmen but there's one who has a heart full of mercy for you there's one who's not driven away by the your fears and your failures and your sins it's the Lord Richard Sibb says there's more mercy in Christ than sin in us but don't be deceived we do that you know we think

[37:15] I just can't go back and get mercy again well let's let the Lord decide he's the all powerful Lord it's his delight to show mercy to everyone who believes ironically again as the all powerful Lord the only request Jesus denies in the whole passage is this man's request to go with him look at verse 18 he's getting into the boat the man who was possessed by the demons begged him that he might be with him I mean that's a good request right I want to be with you but Jesus did not permit him but said to him go home to your friends tell them how much the Lord has done for you he could say tell him how much I have done for you but he underlines that he's the Lord but he has done for you

Jesus grants the request of the demons he's sending the pigs not into the country grants the request of the townspeople to depart but he does not permit this man to come with him because he wants him as Jesus is expelled from the land of the Gerasenes he's leaving the first missionary there sometimes we want to go to the ends of the earth sometimes we want to go to live where you've been called go home boy tell him the story tell him the old old story about the one who was rich and became poor that he might make many rich the one who was completely free that came to free the oppressed that freedom might go to the ends of the earth so go and tell the world about this one let us pray father in heaven we worship you and praise you thank you for the privilege of just this word

God we praise you it's living and active sharpening two edged sword piercing this vision of soul and spirit joint and marrow able to discern the intentions of our hearts from afar your word is the truth so we pray sanctify us in the truth in the truth of your word we pray for anyone who assumes that there is not enough mercy for them that you would come by your spirit and help them to see the mercy of God displayed in Jesus Christ we give you all the glory all the praise amen you've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens Tennessee for more information about Trinity Grace please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com to see you in the next to