

THE
WAY
OF
JESUS

AS FOUND IN THE
GOSPEL OF **MARK**

SPIRITUAL GUIDE
FOR JUNE 27-JULY 4

READ**MARK 5:1-20**

They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!"

Then Jesus asked him, "**What is your name?**"

"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "**Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.**"

So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

REFLECT

There's a few important observations about Mark 5:1-20. First, the man who comes before Jesus would have been considered completely unclean. He was among the dead, naked, and covered in cuts. Not only that, the man was in a Gentile territory, in Decapolis. When Jesus casts the demons into the pigs nearby, he is completely restoring the man. He's not only healing him psychologically or physically, he's restoring him back to society. The same thing has already taken place in Mark 2 where Jesus restores the lame man physically, as well as spiritually.

Secondly, when Jesus sends the pigs into the lake, he is sending them into the dwelling place of evil. 1st Century Jews would have understood the sea (or lake) as the place of evil. But notice the different reactions to this mans healing. Some are amazed, but many demand Jesus leave!

If you remember back to Mark chapter 4, Jesus speaks about different soils and responses to the Kingdom. Here, in chapter 5, we see the outworking of that exact principle. Some can only see the financial loss of the pigs, and completely miss the larger in-breaking of the Kingdom. They're preoccupied with the practical realities of life and completely miss the restoration of a human being and the presence of peace.

One of Jesus' go-to phrases is "those who have ears to hear, let them hear." This phrase challenges his audience to think bigger and deeper. It encourages them to see beyond practicalities. What are the areas of your life where you need to see beyond financial, practical or even physical elements? Where are the areas where the Kingdom of God is breaking in, that God might be inviting you to notice and participate in? Take some time to reflect and ask God to give you ears that truly hear, and eyes that truly see.

KEEP READING

Take time this week to read through a few other texts. Note how Jesus restores people in more ways than just physical, even in the same chapter.

- Mark 5:21-34
- Luke 5:12-16
- Luke 17:11-19
- John 5:1-15

Where do you need healing, and the welcome embrace of coming home to the Father? Invite God to meet you and restore you there.