DON'T CHOOSE PIGS OVER FREEDOM

September 27, 2026
Jason Parker

INTRODUCTION: HEALED AND WHOLE

We've been going through a series called Healed and Whole. Healed and Whole. We I believe some folks are getting some help. This is not one of those things that is typically preached on too terribly much.

It's kind of taboo in the church house. Even though it's a reality. Outside the four walls of the church and inside the four walls of the church. Just because people walk in doesn't mean they are not possessed and oppressed by demonic spirits and demonic powers.

But this is the healing place. This is where God can do business in people's hearts and lives. And we pray that God would change some people's hearts and lives this morning. So we're in Mark chapter five.

We're going to be looking at 20 verses here in Mark chapter five. And this is a familiar story if you've been if you've done much reading at all on demons and demon possession and those types of things, you'll recognize the story pretty quickly but this is most of what is taught or or shared on about this particular passages. We call this man so to speak this is the man who was possessed by the demons. the name was legion. Because there was many of them.

Uh a legion of an army is a lot. And this man was possessed by a lot of demons. Um so, let's that's kind of the preface of the story. Let's let's go ahead and read.

Mark

MARK 5: A MAN AMONG THE TOMBS

We're in Mark chapter five. We're going to be looking at twenty verses here. This is a familiar story if you've done much reading at all on demons and demon possession. We call this man the man possessed by Legion, because there were many of them.

A legion of an army is a lot, and this man was possessed by a lot of demons. So that's kind of the preface of the story. Let's go ahead and read.

Mark 5:1–20

> They arrived at the other side of the lake, in the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus climbed out of the boat, a man possessed by an evil spirit came out from the tombs to meet Him. This man lived among the burial caves and could no longer be restrained, even with a chain. Whenever he was put into chains and shackles—as he often was—

> he snapped the chains from his wrists and smashed the shackles. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Day and night he wandered among the burial caves and in the hills, howling and cutting himself with sharp stones.
>
> When Jesus was still some distance away, the man saw Him, ran to meet Him, and bowed low before Him. With a shriek, he screamed, ‘Why are You interfering with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In the name of God, I beg You, don’t torture me!’ For Jesus had already said to the spirit, ‘Come out of the man, you evil spirit.’ Then Jesus demanded, ‘What is your name?’ And he replied, ‘My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man.’ Then the evil spirits begged Him again and again not to send them to some distant place.
>
> There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding on the hillside nearby. ‘Send us into those pigs,’ the spirits begged. ‘Let us enter them.’ So Jesus gave them permission. The evil spirits came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the entire herd of about 2,000 pigs plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water.
>
> The herdsmen fled to the nearby town and the surrounding countryside, spreading the news as they ran. People rushed out to see what had happened. A crowd soon gathered around Jesus, and they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons. He was sitting there fully clothed and perfectly sane, and they were all afraid. Then those who had seen what happened told the others about the demon-possessed man and the pigs, and the crowd began pleading with Jesus to go away and leave them alone.
>
> As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with Him. But Jesus said, ‘No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful He has been.’ So the man started off to visit the Ten Towns of that region and began to proclaim the great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed at what he told them.

JESUS IS STRONGER

there's a lot of different things kind of going on in this particular story and I want to we're going to take some time to focus on the demon-possessed man and the torture that he must have been in but we're also wanting to kind of tie this into with some of the things that we allow ourselves to be exposed to and the things that we allow ourselves to accept Um so, here in this particular story in in Mark chapter five, we find a man who wasn't just struggling with a problem. This is not just a problem, okay? He had completely, he had been completely dominated by the forces of darkness. His life had been reduced to isolation.

He was he was away from everybody. He was tormented by these demons and there was complete hopelessness in this man But no matter how strong and this is, I'm telling y'all, today, there's going to be some, I'm going to hit you in the face—or the Bible is going to hit you in the face but there is some encouragement behind all of this because no matter how strong the bondage, no matter how long the struggle is, no matter how long it has been in your life. No matter how impossible the situation seems, Jesus still has authority over every demonic force, every stronghold, and every chain that holds people captive. Jesus is stronger.

Amen. So, there is hope. Just like there was hope for this man. There's hope for us today and you see in here in in Mark chapter five, the torture of this man He was tormented by these demons.

This man was living among the tombs. It tells us. He wasn't living at home. He wasn't living with his family.

He wasn't part of the community. He wasn't producing or being productive in society. He was living in a graveyard. Amen.

Today, it would be like us driving down 23rd Street and us going that by Kent Forest funeral area, the graveyard there at Kent Forest and they have some of those some of those tombs that are in there. Mausoleums, it would be as if someone demon possessed, living among those tombs in there and screaming like a wild man, screeching like a wild person, running up and down the street, cutting themselves, doing all types of crazy things because the demons had stolen everything from this man. It stole his peace, his dignity, his relationships, all of that torn apart, his sanity. Good Lord.

His purpose. Scriptures tell us that no one could restrain him anymore. Even with chains, people had tried to bind him but every chain was broken. Every effort had failed.

If you've ever been around people that are demon possessed, that have been demon possessed for a long time. I can promise you this, this is not to freak nobody out. This is not to scare you. This is just to say this is real.

It can be the scraniest person alive but I can promise you that they can fling you around like a rag doll because there is super supernatural power in demonic power but there is so much more supernatural strength and power in the name and of Jesus and the blood of Jesus. Amen. Can you just imagine the torture that this man had endured? He cried out day and night.

He was cutting himself with stones. He lived among death Like that was his company. Death was his company. The demons had turned him into a prisoner in his own body.

Nobody wanted to be around him really. Yup. Some people wonder. Some of us wonder and and that's what I want to prove to you today.

Cut and dried. This is what I want us to get and understand in our heads that demons are real because there are people that wonder if demons are for real. Let me tell you, they are for real. The evidence was standing right there in front of Jesus and in front of the disciples on that shore,

WHEN DARKNESS GOES UNCHALLENGED

when they pulled in to to to port there There was this man that came out and Jesus recognized him and he had already spoken the evil spirits to come out and be cast out of

that man and that man ran to him. He recognized authority. The demons recognized authority. Demons are real.

This man wasn't free. He was tormented. He was in constant anguish and the enemy. we'll repeat this over and over and over again. The enemy always comes to steal, kill, and destroy.

He doesn't care about your future. Matter of fact, the thing that he cares about your future, that he cares about for your future is that he does everything he can to destroy your future. So, the enemy always comes to steal, kill, and destroy. He doesn't care about your future.

He doesn't care about your family, your calling, or your destiny. His goal is bondage. He wants you bound. And here's kind of something that we're going to kind of transition to here in just a few minutes.

The townspeople had learned how to live with the problem. They couldn't control him. So, they simply avoided him. They accepted his condition as normal.

No one could restrain this man until Jesus showed up. Jesus stepped in and everything changed. No one was strong enough to subdue him. The Bible says, no one but Jesus.

What chains couldn't do, what society couldn't do, what the townspeople couldn't do, what medication couldn't do, what the doctors couldn't do, what human effort couldn't do, Jesus accomplished with a word. the moment Jesus stepped off the boat, the demons recognized him. The man ran toward Jesus. The demons knew their authority had met greater authority. They had encountered the greater authority.

The enemy may be strong but Jesus is stronger. The addiction may seem powerful in your life but Jesus is stronger. The depression may seem overwhelming but Jesus is stronger. Praise God.

I mean, hey, would somebody testify? I know some of you can testify about that from last week because Jesus has healed you. Jesus has touched you. Jesus reminded you how strong he is.

The generational curse may seem unbreakable but Jesus is stronger. Praise God. One encounter with Jesus changed what years of restraint could never change in this man's life and he can do it for you. Amen.

He can do it for you. Something that was interesting is I was reading this and kind of studying it. The demons were having their way The demons were having their way. They weren't just controlling the man.

They were influencing the entire region. Can I say something? Here's probably some of the part that we skip over and some of what we're going to hone into today. How did this man become possessed?

Probably by what he was exposed to in that town. Just being honest because let's let's dig a little bit deeper. I mean, I'm not trying to read into the word of God too much but I mean, it kind of says it right there for us. It's kind of black and white for us as their response to what Jesus did for this man.

So, the demons weren't just controlling the man. They were influencing the entire region. Everyone knew about this man. Everyone knew about him.

Everyone adjusted their lives around him. Everyone said that this was just how things were and nobody interfered. Nobody challenged the darkness. Nobody confronted the problem.

Sound familiar? I mean, we are reading the news right here right now. The demons were having their way with the man and with the town because nobody was willing or able to stop them. And it still happens today.

It still happens right here, right the enemy thrives where he is unchallenged the enemy thrives in your life, in my life, in my community, in my home, in our church where he is unchallenged. He works in homes where compromise is accepted He whistles his way in to communities where sin becomes normal. He works in churches that become comfortable with things Jesus wants to remove. We have to be careful That's what this story to to me this story is this story is a glaring warning to us to say, look at the handwriting on the wall and the warnings I'm trying to give you, you can't just accept everything.

Darkness expands when nobody confronts it. It'll happen. If it's never confronted, all it's going to do is continue to expand, expand, expand, grow, grow, grow but Jesus disturbs the comfort of the community. I like when he steps in and makes us uncomfortable When Jesus commanded the demons to leave, they begged to enter a nearby herd of pigs.

Jesus permitted it and we see that about 22,000 pigs rushed down a steep bank

MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PIGS THAN THE PERSON

into the lake and drowned. What a sight to see. Yeah. Like Jesus is talking to this guy.

The herdsmen are over there off in the distance. They're probably like, oh my word, somebody has come ashore. And they have the town freak and then all of a sudden, the pigs that they're watching over and herding around just absolutely go into some chaotic frenzy and run off a steep cliff and drown themselves in the lake. What in the world is going on?

The demons left the man. The man was free. The man was healed. The man was finally whole.

But in instead of rejoicing, what do the people do? The townspeople became upset They got upset. They got irritated. Ain't that crazy?

I mean, we look at that and we say, man, that is just nuts. Who in their right mind would get upset for something like that happening? Don't be too quick to judge. A man who had lived in misery is now sitting clothed, calm, and in his right mind.

But the people are more concerned about the pigs than the person The people got got more concern and more heartbreak and or more uncomfortable about what happened to the pigs than then what they then what has happened to a person. The loss of this livestock bothered them more than the restoration of a human life. God help us. and here's what happened Again, about two 2,000 pigs decided to commit suicide. Quite the show I mean, it would probably freak most of us out here.

But what happened? This town, this community their economy had been touched. God touched the nerve. Jesus struck a nerve on them.

Their economy had gotten touched. Their livelihood had suddenly been affected. Their comfort had been disrupted. And they asked Jesus to leave.

God help us. Because don't we do the same thing? I know I know we I know pigs ain't flying around. Alright?

Pigs ain't flying off the cliff. But when Jesus makes us uncomfortable when when He starts getting disruptive in our lives. When Jesus starts putting and poking a finger on our wallet or he starts poking a finger or or starts highlighting and enlightening us to see something that He wants to cast out of our lives, some sin, some secret sin, pet sin that we have allowed to enter into our homes and into our families that we come become comfortable with and accepted when that happens, we telling Jesus the same thing. I just wish you'd leave me alone.

I really am sick and tired of you picking on this. I've tried to overcome it. I've tried to do better. I've tried.

I've tried. I've tried and Jesus is saying, I don't need you to try. I need you to let me in and let me cast out the demons that have you possessed and oppressed. Amen.

They asked Jesus to leave So, will we accept demons until they affect our lifestyle? This is where the story gets really close to home. The town's people tolerated the demonic presence as long as it did not interfere with their lifestyle. Again, we're reading the news this morning.

Nobody wants Jesus around. We will accept everything as long as my, as long as I can do what I want to do, be who I want to be, live life as me. Well, the only one who knows who you are is the one who created you. And the world wants to lie to you and tell you who you are.

The enemy wants to lie to you and feed you full of lies of who you think you are or who he wants you to be, to steal, kill, and destroy you. They could live with a demonized man

among the tombs. That's just where he lives. He likes to hang out with the dead people. They could live with the screams.

They could live with the chaos. They could live with the bondage but when Jesus cast the demons out and it cost them something, they wanted him gone. And we respond the same way today We will tolerate things that Jesus wants to remove because we've learned to and I and boy, I'm sorry. My blood boils.

When I see them little stickers on the back of people's cars. that say coexist. I don't mind being nice to you and yes, we live in a free country but you need Jesus. He is the truth, the life, and he is the only way. That's it.

But we'll tolerate things that Jesus wants to remove because we've learned to coexist with them. We tolerate bitterness. We tolerate unforgiveness. We tolerate pride.

We tolerate addiction. We tolerate lust. Gossip, jealousy, compromise, as long as those things don't disrupt our comfort, we leave them alone. Let it be Let it be.

Because this is what we say. It's just how I am. That's just who I am. That's just my personality Everybody does it It isn't hurting anybody.

Tell that to your family I've thought about this more and more and more with Benton being born and Charlotte being born those generational curses. Those things that have sometimes been passed down You know, and a lot of it is we've just spoken those things over one another. And Jesus wants to cast them out. I pray that they get all of the good stuff but I pray that the generational curses of some of the Parker anger and bitterness and rage be broken in Jesus name.

Because I don't want to excuse it and be like, well, it's just who us Parkers are. You know, we got this short-tempered and this short fuse and we want to and the thing is like, we want to doll it up and cutesy it up. Like, oh, ain't that cute? That's just who I am.

You know, when somebody says, Parker, that's what they think of. Nope. Exactly. I rebuke it in Jesus name Now, I want to leave a legacy.

I want to leave a life worthy of of of Benton seeing his his poppy and Charlotte and Sophia seeing their Poppy. Loving Jesus, not getting angry, not getting bitter, not not getting full of fits of rage, not wanting to, you know, punch somebody's lights out or punch a hole in the wall or in the door, whatever it is, you know, I don't want them to see that. Yes, I get angry. Yes, I get mad.

Sometimes, I hit my finger with my hammer and it hurts. And I want somebody to know about it. And I'm not going to be perfect but I am forgiven and I don't have to keep just

living with it and excusing it and compromising it. Because the truth is, I may say it's not hurting anybody but it is hurting people.

I'm passing that on to my kids, to my grandkids and it has to stop somewhere. But when Jesus starts confronting those things, suddenly, we're uncomfortable We get uncomfortable with it because freedom always costs something We celebrate it because we live in a free country. We celebrate it on the 4th of July. We celebrate it.

We'll be celebrating it here coming up in in November when we honor our veterans, those who fought for our freedom because freedom cost this country something. It cost many, many lives and if we're going to go to battle, if

FREEDOM ALWAYS COSTS SOMETHING

we're going to go up against the enemy, it's going to cost us something but the reward is so much greater. The freedom is so much and what you pass on to your children and your grandchildren is so much sweeter and so much better because freedom always costs something. The pigs have to go. The pigs need to go.

The pigs have to go. The demons had to leave. The status quo had to be disrupted. Couldn't live with it anymore.

We can't live with it anymore. We cannot accept this stuff anymore. We have got to call it what it is. Sin is sin and I don't need to tippy toe around it.

Because when you call sin, what it is, then it gives opportunity for people to be set free by a loving, beautiful, wonderful, forgiving savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. So, what have we become comfortable with? The question today isn't whether Jesus can cast out demons.

We know that he can. The question is, what have we become comfortable with that Jesus wants to cast out? What have we been excusing? What have we been dialing up?

What stronghold have we accepted as normal? What attitude have we excused? What habit have we protected? What compromise do we defend?

What relationship have we allowed to pull us away from God? What secret struggle have we simply learned to manage instead of surrendering it to Jesus Christ? Some of us have become comfortable with anxiety comfortable with anger, comfortable with division, comfortable with fear, comfortable with spiritual apathy. Jesus didn't come for us just to manage or he didn't come for us just to manage our bondage.

He's not that's not what he is He's a healer. He came to set captives free. So, after Jesus delivered the man, the people found him sitting

HEALED AND WHOLE

peacefully, clothed in his right mind and that's what Jesus does. When Jesus steps in, he makes them healed and whole. He doesn't just stop the screaming. He restores the person.

He doesn't just remove the problem. He restores the purpose. He doesn't just heal the wound. He makes you whole and in your right mind.

The man who once lived among the tombs became a testimony. The man nobody could restrain became a messenger for Jesus. The man everyone feared became a witness of God's power. Jesus told him, go home to your family and tell them everything the Lord has done for you.

I mean, think about it. The man wanted to go with Jesus. He went back after the townspeople had said, we want you to leave this place. The man that had been possessed and been the demons cast out.

He came to Jesus and please let me go with you and Jesus said, nope, you got a job to do. Go back to your family and tell em everything that the Lord's done for you because here's the here's the point. Here's the purpose behind it. Your healing is not just for you.

Amen. Your healing is not just for you. Your freedom is a testimony. Your deliverance is a witness to God's power, God's grace, and your restoration declares that Jesus still changes lives today.

Amen. So, this man He teaches us that no bondage is too strong for Jesus. No matter what you're going through, don't matter what you're facing, don't matter what you're up against, what you've had, what you've held onto, and for how long you've held onto it, it's not too strong for Jesus. Chains couldn't hold him, people couldn't help him.

Society couldn't fix this man but one encounter with Jesus changed everything. Amen. And you aren't here by accident this morning because one encounter with Jesus today in this service, you thought, oh, I'm just going to go to church. God had other plans.

Oh, I'm just going to keep dragging this thing along but God's got other plans. I'm going to keep living with this thing and keep excusing it but Jesus has called you out this morning and said, I want to cast it out. I want to really set you free. So today, Jesus is still asking that same question, what have you become comfortable with that I want to cast out?

Don't choose pigs over freedom. Honestly, like I hope, we're we're laughing about that. Yeah. But I hope that line sticks in your brain.

Because funny things have a way of getting to us. Like somewhere down the week ahead something is going to pop up and you're going to remember, don't choose pigs over freedom. And it's going to take you back to the power of Jesus and the power of a changed life Don't choose comfort over deliverance Don't choose familiar bondage over complete restoration. Let Jesus do more than just heal you.

Let him make you whole whole in your right mind, a peaceful mind No longer tormented, no longer bound by chains because whom the Son sets free is free indeed. Amen?

HOW WE FIGHT

2 Corinthians 10:3–5

> We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We take every thought captive and teach it to obey Christ.

RUN TO JESUS

That is where business picks up. And we do that by pleading the blood of Jesus over them. Because Jesus is the one who will make all the difference in the world. None of us have power.

There there's not a one of us that's got some kind of crazy power or anything. All it takes is our obedience and calling on the one who is all power. Amen. And all powerful and all forgiving and all merciful and all gracious and the one who can really truly bring about continual, complete healing, and not just healing but make you whole and right that can establish in you a foundation like you've never had before because you're standing on the rock that is Jesus Christ and you're going on and you see that you're standing on a firm foundation and now, there's not this sinking sand and this shifting sand under you and you're wondering you're going to tip over and fall because then he also breathes into you new life and peace that passes all understanding.

That's how he makes you healed. That's how he makes you whole and he wants you to be broken of those chains of addiction. That thing that you've excused for far too long. That thing that you've gotten comfortable with.

He has brought you here today to make you uncomfortable. To say want to cast that thing out. I want it to be removed from you. I want to set you free.

So now the ball's in your court. I can't do it for you. Because it takes your obedience. Because the demons recognized the authority of Jesus but so did that man and can you imagine what that man was going through and the torment that was in him and there he is in those tombs in that grave but then Jesus steps on shore and it took every ounce of strength and everything in his being and he, what did he do?

He ran to Jesus. This morning, what do you gotta do? Run to Jesus. Amen.

Run to him. Let Him do what he wants to do in your heart, in your life, and set you free.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, have Your will in us. God, help us not to be like those townspeople and get comfortable and compromise and say, we want you to go on because you've made us so uncomfortable. God, you have, you have exposed and you have lit up in our life and allowed things to be exposed that you want to cast out. You've made us uncomfortable in this moment in this on this Sunday morning because you want to do a mighty work in our hearts and in our lives.

So, God, help us to run to you so that we can find that healing so that we can be made whole in Jesus mighty name. I rebuke the enemy. Lord, I rebuke every stronghold. I rebuke right now every distraction in Jesus name that would want to come against the people right now that are doing business with you, that are talking to you.

Lord, I pray that this time, Lord, you would wash over us right now with your presence and with your peace. God, you would speak and you would move in us in our hearts in our lives and help us to Lord step out and be courageous and bold enough to run to you with every fiber in our being, with every amount of strength that we can muster. Lord, help us to run to you In Jesus' name. Lord, do business in us.

Be obedient to him.