



Stories that Change Derrick Shields “A Deliverance Story” September 17, 2023

Key Verses: Mark 5:1-20

Key Thought: Jesus delivered a Gentile from the control of a “legion” of demons and sent him to his people as a witness to God’s power, goodness, and mercy.

Points to Consider:

- The author informs us that the man is from “the nations” (i.e., “the Gentiles”) by referencing the region, as well as pigs— which were “unclean” for Jews.
- The man was among the tombs, hurting himself, and under the control of what we learn was a “legion” of demons (a Roman military term referring to up to 6,000 soldiers). → While demons are not often taken seriously in American culture, God’s word affirms the reality of demons, and that they work to oppose human flourishing.
- Though having recognized Jesus, the demons resisted Him. Eventually, Jesus agreed to cast the demons into a herd of pigs. → While it is characteristic of demons to resist God’s will, they must— ultimately— submit to the authority of Jesus.
- Even though Jesus had delivered this man, the people from the surrounding area begged him to leave on account of their loss of about 2,000 pigs.
- The man begged to leave with Jesus, but Jesus refused, instead sending the man to his people in order to be a witness to what God had done for him.

Discussion Prompts:

- How does the biblical affirmation and characterization of demons offer a more adequate explanation of reality than worldviews which do not take demons seriously?
- What do we learn about the scope of God’s ability and willingness to heal and deliver?
→ How have you believed that God is unable or unwilling to heal and deliver?
- What has God done for you that you need to be intentional to share with others?
- Who are “your people,” who need a witness to God’s power, goodness, and mercy?
- Close in prayer for one another.