

MARK — The Mercy of Jesus

Mother's Day Panel

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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.” 10 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 x how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mk 5:1–20.

Question Prompts

1. We are in study reading the gospel according to Mark and asking "Who is Jesus". When you read this text how do you answer that question?
2. The man healed someone's son. We don't know if he had family alive or dead, or how many relatives he still had. What are your thoughts on this?
3. In verse 19, Jesus tells the man to go back and share the mercy of God. How does this impact you at this stage in your parenting?
4. Obviously we have more than just moms in the room, What is one thing from this passage that you think is a practical application for anyone who is influencing someone- whether it's parenting, discipling, or working alongside?
5. Is there anything else you think we should include in this moment?

Susan's Observations

Question 1

Jesus is merciful, and sought to meet the needs of that man on that side of the lake.

Jesus is the aroma of life, which is the aroma of death to demons and that man in his depraved state. The man ran to him and worshipped him, but the demons were terrified.

Question 2

The community needed to hear this man's testimony. When people have a radical transformation, they sometimes want to go to another country, but other times the Lord will first share with us to reach our friends and family.

Question 3

I have more grace and mercy now that I am younger. I now find myself remembering the mistakes that I have made over the years. As these memories come up, I have approached my children and apologized for things that I did and said that 'what I did wasn't right, but for some reason I thought it was.' And then I finish my apology by asking if there is any unfinished business between us. It's never too late to see who Jesus is and then reflect him.

Question 4

Praying first; the first response to my children's sin is very sinful. I have to pray and ask the Lord to soften my heart. Sometimes our controlling response overtakes us; and if we

don't find the wisdom for how to deal with that in the word, phone a friend.

Question 5

As moms, we forgive a lot. Apologizing for mistakes is part of the journey, but also receiving forgiveness.

Marcia's Observations

Question 1

Jesus is faithful and has authority, focusing on the man. He grants the demon's request because he's prioritizing and looking at the human being first.

Question 2

Jesus sends restoration back to the community because Jesus knows that this man's transformation has equipped him to share that message of restoration back to the Decapolis region.

Question 3

We're on a journey of mercy. There is a need to see behind the disorder. We see a front of whatever dysfunction or disorder of wherever they are today, and to have a heart of mercy to see who they are behind that and remind them that they are loved and seen and encourage them as they progress in their journey to the next stage. It's not all about the correction but the love and mercy that transforms their heart.

Question 4

We have received supernatural grace. We have received it, we can offer it.

Question 5

What Jesus did follows a pattern. He saves and heals us, equips us through the transformation and sends us out. This man's story and the difference in his life resulting from his encounter with Jesus was all he needed. Jesus sent the man to a community where the formerly possessed man is known, has relationships, and a sphere of influence. He is called to where he had greatest impact. It is clear that the man did have an impact as it says ALL of the people were amazed.

An encounter with Jesus changes, upsets and disrupts the status quo. He brings order to disorder. (Aside: this is a trait of God that we see through each of the three persons,

i.e. the Holy Spirit in the beginning hovering).

Notice that the power of Jesus is undeniable. Yet, it has a different impact for different people. Two main responses were:

To draw near, kneel submit, acknowledge and come under divine authority

To draw back, push away, react in fear

May it be that we draw near and experience the deep peace, order and purpose God has available for us.

Ashley's Observations

Question 1

Jesus is Son of the Lord Most High, who just quelled the winds and now commands a horde of demons and they must obey him.

Jesus genuinely cared for the person's deliverance and restoration.

Question 2

Jesus probably told this man to go back to his people so that he could reunite with his family and friends because of his exile. I see God's purpose for community, for this man to be given back to his family so that the man can share God's vision for community.

Question 3

I am reminded and humbled to rely on this mercy of Jesus daily because parenting is a mission of mercy. Mothers must become aware of the needs of children, and learn how to meet that need with mercy and compassion. And then be willing to expend energy and time daily to be on this intentional mission of mercy. Every day is a new set of opportunities to be on this mission, to shower my kids with grace and model the grace that I receive from Jesus daily.

Question 4

Our sphere of influence needs to see what God is doing in our lives and how merciful he is. I am who I am because of what God has done in my life, and they need to see me changing daily. We don't need to put together a polished front. If we're going to show the mercy and compassion of Jesus, we need them to see our weakness and vulnerability. It's through our vulnerabilities and listening to others that we're enabled to rescue, restore, help, and forgive others.

Question 5

This mission that God has put me in is not a specific event but an extended process. God is a God of the process, which consists of many moments that needs my constant patient commitment. And the constant reminder that the Gospel of Christ is at the center. God has given me this mission, but he hasn't left me alone. His grace is with me and his presence surrounds me on this mission that we're on.

Danielle's Observations

Question 1

This passage has been preached so many times to focus on Jesus' authority, and we can clearly see that Jesus' compassion flows right alongside his authority.

Question 2

The fact that Jesus told this man to declare God's mercy differs from earlier when he told people to stay quiet about him. This is possibly because Jesus is in Gentile territory, and he will not be entering the Decapolis region himself, so he sends emissaries/missionaries there to be a light to the Gentiles.

Question 3

The longer I've been a parent, the more importance the Gospel becomes to me and parenting, and it has become more important than teaching righteousness. Teaching righteousness is necessary, but the ultimate point is not to correct them, but shape who they are in the image of Jesus. In the South, a lot of priority is placed on their external behavior, but if the internal need is never met, their behavior will turn to reflect that eventually. I now see that they need me to choose mercy over judgment often when interacting with my children and allow Jesus to work on them.

Question 4

We are not meant to call wrong things right (the world says we show mercy by calling the wrong things right), but calling out truth and acknowledging what isn't right, but seeing the human behind the oppression and mess, connecting with other human beings, and through our weakness help restore people in the image of God.

Question 5

You can walk free in the forgiveness of Jesus and walk in Jesus power to rest in that covers our weakness and sin. We don't need to minimize our own sin: "we are that bad,

but he is that good.”

The pigs represent that this is a Gentile region, and Jesus goes to every tribe, tongue, space, and mess. And why did the pigs commit suicide? The demons did to the pigs what they wanted to do to the man. The Jesus did not sent the pigs to be drowned, but the demons did. Their ultimate goal is to drive people to their ultimate destruction. Along they way, they distorted the man’s humanity and image of God, twisting him into something unrecognizable. When we’re messing with things in the world, we might be playing with forces whose ultimate goal is to drive us toward our ultimate destruction. The pigs reveal the end goal of the demons. But even with that, it didn’t matter what the demons intended to do. Jesus’ authority was greater and they trembled at his feet. He had the capacity to bring that man freedom and deliverance.

Tracy’s Observations

Question 1

He is patient. and compassionate. He took the time to listen to the demons and fulfill their request, even when he didn't have to. He could have fully demonstrated his power and authority by not even conversing with them, but chose to interact with the demons and show mercy instead.

Question 2

The people were afraid of the change that came over the man. They demonstrated this by pleading with Jesus to leave their region.

In general, people tend to be afraid of change and/or what they don't understand. The people who witnessed Jesus' power had not seen it before and likely didn't know how to process what they had witnessed. In contrast, those who heard of the miracle in the Decapolis were amazed.

Question 3

Reading this passage and meditating on Jesus' mercy reveals to me that Jesus is not overwhelmed by anyone's mess. While others had given up on the demon possessed man, going to great lengths to separate him from others, Jesus showed mercy, compassion, and healing power. No one's mess it too much for Him. This gives me hope when my kids and all their junk are too much to handle. He meets us in overwhelming times to provide encouragement and hope.

Question 5

When a person is hesitant about influencing someone because of the person's trauma, messy circumstances, poor choices, or conflicting personality, know that the person is not too much for Jesus. Continually give the person to Him in prayer. Ask For His strength and influence. We are not called to restore people in our own strength and effort, but to partner with Him.
