

## **I Will Go**

### *The Man with a Story to Tell*

Mark 5:1-20

February 18, 2024

HDBC

The early Christians, and in particular the 12 apostles were not an impressive bunch, at least not when they were called. They were, for the most part, blue collar men, with limited educational achievements and very little to suggest that they would be instrumental in changing the world. But they did.

They were men who, while walking in spiritual darkness, met Jesus and were transformed by His grace out of that darkness and into great light. Peter never got over this, and in fact wrote about it in 1 Peter 2:9.

***But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light.***

**That's what** happened to Peter, and the apostles and to every other person who has ever placed true faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. We are transformed from darkness to light. **We are then called to proclaim the excellencies, the greatness of the one who has done this for us.** The apostles did this and it changed their world. But they were not the only ones.

**This morning**, I want us to look at one of the most unlikely converts in all of human history. Like every believer, the simple truth is that he was once covered in **a shroud of spiritual darkness**. Then he met Jesus, and it changed his life. From that moment on, he had **a story to tell**. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all wrote of this man's story. It was a story of rescue, redemption, recovery, and mission. I want us to look at Mark's account. Mark 5:1-20. It involved a series of relationships, interactions, or encounters. There are five.

#### **1. The man and the people (1-5)**

Let's get a little context. The healing of this demon-possessed man was the second of two spectacular miracles. It's interesting to note that we a lot of

fear being expressed in these two miracles.

**The first** miracle was the calming of the storm by Jesus. He and the disciples were crossing the sea at night when a storm suddenly threatened to capsize their boat. **They were afraid. Jesus was asleep.** They woke Him up and He took care of the storm. With a simple command the storm ceased and all was calm. They had been afraid of the storm. **Now they were afraid of Him.** (4:41)

They arrived at the shore in the area of the Gerasenes, sometimes referred to as the Gadarenes. There, in the early morning light of dawn they encountered a wretched, violent, demon-filled man. This was a man to be feared, and the people who lived in that area did. His condition and their fear led to a really bad relationship. **This man was more of a monster than a man, and the people reacted accordingly.** Note what Mark reveals about him.

### **1) He was demon-possessed (2)**

After an interesting night on the sea, they may have assumed the day would be uneventful. They would be wrong. As they stepped from the boat to the shore the early morning stillness was interrupted by the guttural, blood-curdling cries of a man in agony. The kind of sounds that stop you in your tracks and cause an instant increase in your heart-rate.

**In the dim light** they saw a man moving in their direction. He was the source of the cries. Mark doesn't tell us, but we can assume these disciples once again experienced a stabbing fear. They had no idea what was about to happen. The **Lord of light was about to confront the demons of darkness.** We will learn that this man was not simply harassed by a single demon but was controlled by multiple demons. **A spiritual prisoner was about to be set free.**

**Demons are real.** They are fallen angels who seek to disrupt all that God desires to do. They seek to steal, kill and destroy all whom God loves. Demon possession is real. This is one example of many in the New Testament. We were made to be filled with the Spirit of God, not possessed by demons. This is not what God created us for, nor what He desires for us. But in a fallen world, it happens.

## 2) He was rejected, displaced and feared (3-4)

He was misunderstood, feared, rejected, and displaced. The fear of the people was warranted. **This man was a maniac.** Just look at his actions. He lived among the tombs, he screamed almost constantly night and day. Luke said he often went around with no clothing. No one in their right mind would choose to live among dead bodies, go around naked and scream night and day. This man should have been feared!

**The people** not only wanted to separate from him but felt that they needed to chain him up so he could not come into their village and terrorize them. They often tried to bind him with chains and to lock him up. But he had supernatural strength and was always able to escape. They were not able to make chains and manacles strong enough to hold him. This man is an absolute monster. **He has been swallowed up by demonic power and had superhuman strength.**

**I can imagine** a group of strong men overpowering him, shackling him with chains and securing those chains to a fixed point among the tombs and thinking there was no way he could escape. Every time he did. The word **subdue** in verse four speaks of **taming a wild animal**. That's how they saw him and how they responded to him.

We should have a healthy fear of demons and Satan. But we should have a healthier faith in the power of God over those demons and Satan.

## 3) He was miserable, hopeless and self-destructive (5)

This just breaks my heart. This man has a family, as we will see in a moment. He had friends. But at this point in his life, he is completely cutoff from all human interaction. He is alone, oppressed and wretched. This is a rather graphic picture of the condition of ever lost person. Not all are demon-possessed. Most are not monsters. But all are in spiritual darkness and need an encounter with Jesus. Watch what happened next.

## 2. Jesus and the demons (6-10)

What happened next was a strange and unusual conversation between Jesus & the demons in this man. It is fascinating to witness the conversation between these two enemies who were competing for the soul of this poor

man. The outcome was certain, but it is still interesting to witness the verbal exchange. I find it interesting that **this man had been terrorizing the people** of his region. Now, **Jesus comes and brings terror to these demons.**

**Before** we deal with verses 6-7, let me comment on verse 9. Jesus asked the demon's name. Angels have names, so it makes sense that demons would, as well. The answer is **legion**. Not a name but a military description. This man was a prisoner in a spiritual war. Roman legion consisted of 5-6 thousand soldiers. This man is filled with demons. They have invaded every part of his body and life.

**They see Jesus** at a distance and compel this man to run toward Jesus. That is so fascinating. Why would they do this? Was it because they wanted time with Him? Absolutely not. They are pure darkness and Jesus is the light of the world. My theory is this.

**The demons** know exactly who Jesus is. And they know of his infinite power and knowledge. They know they are defeated. Rather than taking Him on headfirst, **they have come to negotiate**. Listen to the question they ask through this man's voice. **What business do we have with each other? What is your plan? What are you going to do? Please do not torment us. The voice was the man's, but the message was from the demons.**

**The demons** have an accurate understanding of who Jesus is. They know his power. They know His sovereignty. They know they are not allowed to stay inside this man. They know their future. So, they've come to negotiate for a little more time. This becomes evident as the story continues to unfold.

### **3. The demons and the pigs (11-13)**

The deliverance of this man is certain. But the demons want to know what will happen to them. They ask not to be sent out of the country. Luke makes this a bit clearer. He records that they specifically asked Jesus not to send them into the abyss. The bottomless pit. They knew they would ultimately end up there, but they were hoping to delay it. They asked instead to be allowed to indwell a herd of pigs nearby. Jesus gave permission and we can see the outcome. That entire herd rushed into the lake and drowned. This reminds us of what Jesus said about Satan. The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. His

demons have the same agenda. This is a demonic act of violent destruction. It pictures what they would like to do to people.

Without dwelling on it too much I want to point out something. Matthew indicated that in response to the request of the demons Jesus spoke only one word. **Go**. And hearing that one word, they went. They were obedient. **Don't allow a group of demons to be more obedient to Lord than you are!**

#### **4. The people and Jesus (14-17)**

The people saw the power of Jesus for good and rejected Jesus. Not everyone is going to be saved. Not everyone is going to embrace Jesus. Many will be like these people and drive Jesus away. They will reject His tender, saving grace only to one day be subjected to His judgment. This is so very sad. We are powerless to make others trust Jesus. Grieve for them, but don't become consumed with it.

#### **5. Jesus and the man (18-20)**

The man's reaction was completely different. Of course. He has been delivered from those demons and made whole, not just for his physical life but for his spiritual life. Not just for a few years but for eternity. Now watch what Jesus does. He commissions this man to go to his people.

Just as he had said to the demons, **go**, He now says to this man, **go**. But in this man's case it was to go to his own people and simply tell his story. **Don't ever underestimate the power of your story when it is joined with a clear and simply gospel presentation.** He wanted to go with Jesus. Of course he did!!!

But there were others who needed to hear his story. So, he responded to the call of Jesus to go. And people responded. They were amazed at what the Lord had done.

**The demon-possessed man was the greatest nightmare of that region.  
Jesus was the greatest nightmare of the demons.**

Let that sink in. We are surrounded by spiritual forces of darkness. And we should have a healthy fear of them. They are vastly more powerful than we are. But these demons that may terrify us are absolutely terrified of Jesus. That

should give us confidence as we serve the Lord. And especially as we venture more and more into the dark places of this world. Places where demons wield great power over people and regions. But they will lose that power as we go in Jesus name and in His power.

All over this building you see the phrase *I will go*.

**You can go because you have a story to tell.**

**You can go because you have been commissioned to go.**

**You can go because you have the protective power of Christ inside you.**

Like this man we are called to go to our own people. People Jonesboro. One way we do that is by partnering with one of our local schools.

**Play Video**