

How To Deal With An Evil World

Series: How God Changes Our Attitudes

Have you ever met a really evil person?

What Does The Bible Say?

3 This man lived in the burial caves and could no longer be restrained, even with a chain. 4 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. 5 Day and night he wandered among the burial caves and in the hills, howling and cutting himself with sharp stones. (Mark 5:2–5 NLT)

We live in a world of evil people.

9 “When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, be very careful not to imitate the detestable customs of the nations living there. 10 For example, never sacrifice your son or daughter as a burnt offering. And do not let your people practice

fortune-telling, or use sorcery, or interpret omens, or engage in witchcraft, 11 or cast spells, or function as mediums or psychics, or call forth the spirits of the dead. 12 Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord. It is because the other nations have done these detestable things that the Lord your God will drive them out ahead of you. (Deuteronomy 18:9–12 NLT)

Stay away from the occult!

14 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. 15 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. (Mark 5:14–15 NLT)

When we truly meet Jesus, He changes us.

16 Then those who had seen what happened told the others about the demon-possessed man and the pigs. 17 And the crowd began pleading with Jesus to go away and leave them alone.
(Mark 5:16–17 NLT)

People who live in darkness do not appreciate Christians.

16 Even those closest to you—your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends—will betray you. They will even kill some of you.
17 And everyone will hate you because you are my followers.
(Luke 21:16–17 NLT)

Your faith will make you unwelcome in even your closest relationships.

How Can You Obey?

18 As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with him. 19 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.” 20 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. (Mark 5:18–20 NLT)

Never stop telling people about Jesus!

Additional Notes:

If you would like to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at www.crosswaveschurch.com/host. Cross Waves has produced short videos to train you how to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

Explore:

Today's Bible & Science segment comes from the book, Lee, Robert G.. What's the Big Idea?: A Comedian Explains God, the Universe and Other Minor Stuff (p. 19). WordCrafts Press.

Explore:

Devils “on the other side.” Jesus needs to escape and relax. Instead, He sails in the wildest seas of physical and human nature. Like us, He learns that there is no escape from reality. The “other side” may be as literal as the eastern shore of the Galilean Sea, or it may be as symbolic as our desire to retreat into the past, seek an alternative for the present, or assume that the future will be better. How many times have you heard people express the wish for the “good, old days?” The truth is that those days are peopled with the demons of the past. Senility frequently uncovers those demons. After a series of little strokes in the brain, the elderly person may blank out current events one minute after they happen, but assume astonishing clarity for events in the distant past that everyone else has lost. Yet, those memories have their demons. A senile person not only sees an instant replay of the glory of the past, but also recalls with equal clarity the traumas and the fears. On a recent visit to an aged and

senile friend, we witnessed the glow in her eyes as she spoke of her childhood home and then, without warning, the glow turned to pitiful weeping as she relived her mother's funeral. The mother had died fifty years ago.

Other people long for the “other side” by wishing for alternatives to present circumstances. “If only I could do something different” is their motto. They fail to realize that any alternative has its trade-offs. At one time, I survived a process that brought me to a finalist role for a Cabinet position in the Reagan administration. Enticing thoughts about the glamour of being close to the center of world power swept through me. Then, a friend sent me an article entitled, “So You Want To Be a Cabinet Officer?” The trade-offs paraded before me like demons “on the other side.” My healthy margins of independence, privacy, and leadership would be substantially narrowed by politics, public life, and governmental bureaucracy. Jesus speaks with profound wisdom when He asks, “For which of you,

intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—?” (Luke 14:28). Half-finished towers are monuments to the demons “on the other side.”

McKenna, D. L., & Ogilvie, L. J. (1982). Mark (Vol. 25, p. 108). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc.

Explore:

The demon tried to bind Jesus with a vow, Swear to God that you won't torture me! The phrase for Jesus had said to him gives the impression that Jesus had already spoken to the man. It is possible that Jesus, upon departing from the boat, immediately assessed the situation of the man and commanded the demon to leave. This could have caused the man to rush toward the boat and bow before Jesus.

Cooper, R. L. (2000). Mark (Vol. 2, pp. 84–85). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Explore:

Nowhere does the Bible explain either the psychology or the physiology of demon possession. The man who spoke to Jesus was under the control of a legion of demons, and a Roman legion could consist of as many as 6,000 men! It is frightening to think of the horrors this man experienced day and night as thousands of unclean spirits tormented him. No doubt the other demonized man experienced his share of agony too.

Satan tried to destroy these men, but Jesus came to deliver them. By the power of His Word, He cast out the demons and set the men free. Demons even believe in prayer, for they begged Jesus not to send them into the abyss, the place of torment (Mark 5:7; Luke 8:31). It is encouraging to note that the demons did not

know what Jesus planned to do. This suggests that Satan can know God's plans only if God reveals them. In fact, there is no evidence in Scripture that Satan can read the mind of a believer, let alone the mind of God.

Mark 5 tells of three requests: the demons requested that Jesus send them into the pigs (Mark 5:12); the citizens requested that Jesus leave the area (Mark 5:17); and one of the former demoniacs requested that Jesus allow him to follow Him (Mark 5:18). Our Lord granted the first two requests but not the third one.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). The Bible exposition commentary (Vol. 1, p. 126). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Explore:

Are you deeply scarred? Do you have filthy habits—perhaps a mouth that is totally out of control, that has said little that is

clean in years? Perhaps you are dishonest. It is your way of life. Maybe your scar is sexual, whether heterosexual or homosexual, and you feel you are beyond help. Not so! Jesus who calmed the stormy seas also calms the storm-tossed soul. He can do this with a word.

Hughes, R. K. (1989). Mark: Jesus, servant and savior (Vol. 1, p. 122). Westchester, IL: Crossway Books.

Explore:

To read more about what the Bible says about the occult, check out: <https://christiananswers.net/q-eden/edn-occult.html>

Question 1 of 5

Were you surprised to learn that the first missionary was a former lunatic? Explain your answer.

Question 2 of 5

Why should we stay away from astrology, Ouija, and fortune tellers?

Question 3 of 5

The demons implored Jesus to send them into a herd of swine, and Jesus does so. But why would the demons make such a request if they immediately drove the pigs to their death? What does this tell you about demonic character?

Question 4 of 5

Why do you think the people asked Jesus to leave their territory after He had delivered the demonic? Raw fear? Fear of change? Fear of further economic loss?

Question 5 of 5

When Jesus told the formerly demon-possessed man to go home to his family and tell them how much God had done for him, it was one of the few times He instructed someone to broadcast the news of a healing. What was different in this man's case? Why

did Jesus tell this man to testify, but the others to keep quiet (see Mark 1:40–45)?