

The Gospel According to Mark Unrivaled Power and a Zealous Witness

Mark 5:1-20

Sunday, July 19, 2020

Introduction

As Jesus and His disciples sailed across the Sea of Galilee Jesus revealed Himself in a way beyond anything the disciples had witnessed. With the power of His Words He calmed howling winds and a raging sea prompting the question: *Who then is this, that even the wind and sea obey Him?*

That night on the sea they saw the power of Jesus to calm a chaotic storm (4:35-41) and just a matter of hours later they witnessed the power of Jesus to calm a chaotic man (5:1-20). Not only does Jesus have authority over the natural world, He has authority over the supernatural world.

In both of these events we see Jesus revealed for who He really is: God Himself, the all-powerful One. And in His confrontation with a demon possessed man we also gain insight into the reason the almighty God came to earth. Jesus came to earth on a mission to save people and His mission continues as those who have witnessed His saving power tell others about the Person and the power that has changed them.

The Setting

- **Met by a madman** – After their eventful trip across the Galilee Jesus and His disciples arrive on the eastern shore only to be met by another chaotic situation – this time it’s a demon-possessed man.
- **Unclean and Untamable** – Mark goes to great lengths to describe the state of the demon-possessed man. He lives outside the city in caves used as tombs. He’s unclothed and is a danger to Himself and others. People have tried to bind him but he cannot be bound.

The Deity of Jesus – Jesus is God and has the authority of God

- **Falling before Him** – When they see this man running toward them the disciples may have expected a fight, but when he gets near he falls before Jesus. As Jesus arrived the demons who possessed the man recognized the presence and authority of God. Just like the wind and the sea were subservient to the words of Jesus – these demons were in complete subservience to Christ and bowed before Him.
- **Son of the Most High God** – ‘Most High God,’ a title often used by Gentiles, acknowledges that the God of Israel is the God above all gods. The demons recognize who Jesus is and identify Him as the One with the power and the One in control of their fate (See Mark 1:23-25).

- **Pleading for Mercy** – Not only do the demons know who Jesus is, but they know that One day He will defeat all evil. They know that Jesus is God, that He has the power to destroy them and they are begging for some kind of lesser outcome.

The Power of Jesus – Jesus has no rival and all must submit to Him

- **The power of Jesus in the submission of the demons** – Mark doesn’t hold back in allowing us to see the power of the demons. There were thousands of them (Legion) and no one could stop them – until Jesus arrived. The power of Jesus is seen in their absolute submission to Him. They couldn’t do anything without His permission and His allowance.
- **The power of Jesus in the transformation of the man** – After Jesus deals with the demons the man who was running around unclothed and wild was found sitting, fully clothed and calm. No doubt this is a parable of the kind of change Jesus can bring. He takes people ruled and ravaged by sin, sets them free and makes them whole (2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).
- **The power of Jesus in the response of the people** – The townspeople respond to the display of Jesus’s power the same way the disciples had after the calming of the storm – with fear. They were afraid of someone who yielded that kind of power and insisted He leave. Still today there are many who hear of the power of Jesus and yet do not believe.

The Mission of Jesus – Jesus came to save and we are called to participate in that mission

- **The mission of Jesus to proclaim salvation to the world** – Up this point in the Gospel of Mark Jesus has been ministering among Jews in Jewish cities and Jewish synagogues. This trip across the Galilee took Jesus, for the first time, into a predominately Gentile region. Jesus goes there, knowing that He won’t stay long, but that He will have a chance to display His power and commission a witness among the Gentiles.
- **The mission of Jesus is accomplished through faithful witnesses**
 - **An example of a true disciple** – The man whom Jesus freed from the demons is a great example of a true disciple. After Jesus saves Him his desire is to follow Jesus as a disciple, to be with Him.
 - **An example of a true witness** – Jesus doesn’t permit the man to join Him, but instead He commissions Him as a witness. He tells Him to go and tell others of what the Lord (God) has done for Him. The man faithfully obeys, leading many to marvel at the power of Jesus.
 - **Application** – As those who have experienced the saving power of Jesus our calling and commission are the same: To go and tell others how much the Lord has done for us and of the mercy we have been shown. We should talk often of what God has done for us.