

Mark 5:1-20

Pre- Sermon Thoughts

Do you remember the game “Simon Says?”

- Most of you have played that.
- Some of you are too young—there’s no app for it.

Why is “Jesus Says” so different?

- People have turned “Jesus says” into- “We don’t have to do it. We just have to memorize it.”

“Go out and make disciples”...how many people in churches are doing that...But they memorized it.

If I tell my son Elijah to “go clean your room” then 30 minutes later he comes to me and says, “Daddy, I memorized what you said. ‘Go clean your room.’ I can even say it in Greek. My friends going to come over and we are going to have a study on what it would like if I cleaned my room.”

Do you know what it takes to make a difference where you live?

- You don’t have to have a high IQ or high EQ.
- You don’t have to master a lot of things...
- you have to be mastered by one thing— Jesus command to make disciples.

I’m praying that everyone in our church will be mastered by the Great Commission.

Today is the day that we hold our Annual meeting.

- After the service we will have a brief meeting to look over 2019-2020 fiscal year's finances and a few other important items.
- I'd like to cover a few of those items now before the meeting.

1. Growth groups have replaced small groups.

- That's more than just a change in language. It's a change in philosophy. **We expect growth.**
- We always expected growth in our small groups- but we want to emphasize the importance of these gatherings.
- You will not fully experience First Baptist Church as if you are not a part of a growth group.
- If you really want to dig in deep, join us on September 6th as we start our growth groups.

Here's how it works:

1) To be a part of a growth group you must sign up in the lobby for one of the groups.

⇒ There are 5 groups to pick from currently

⇒ It is a first come first serve basis for which group you get.

⇒ Groups max out at 10 committed adults.

○ Example: **there could end up being 15 people in one group- 10 adults and 5 kids.- The adult number maxes it out.**

○ There will also be days that you have more than 10 adults because you will have visitors join your group. That's okay.

⇒ If a group received more than 10 adults it can either split into two groups or have some members go to a different small group.

Bottom line- **If you want to pick your group you better sign up fast.**

- 2) After you join a group your group leader will meet with you every Sunday after the AM service to go over the study material.
 - ⇒ In addition to that your group leader will be keeping you accountable to your group by praying for you and making sure you know you were missed if you can't make a meeting.
- 3) Childcare will be provided during growth groups. 0-2 and 3-5 class. 1st graders and up are invited to attend and learn with the group.
 - **Example:** One of the graduates in our recent graduation ceremony only thanked a handful of people for their help due to not having much time--- two of those people were older adults that were like family to her that she got to know by faithfully attending small groups at her church... IT MAKES AN IMPACT!!! GET YOUR KIDS THERE!

Growing out of Growth Groups

2. We will be starting Community Groups.

- Community groups are Sunday morning Growth Groups meeting up with another Growth Group at someone's house.
- Community Groups will take place on the 2nd and 4th Sunday night of every month.
- Two goals for community groups:
 - 1) Opportunity for church family to fellowship together.
 - 2) Opportunity for church family to invite outsiders to a backdoor ministry.
 - Something that's not a church service
 - get them comfortable with the people before the pew.

These are wonderful opportunities for you to start the process of becoming the disciple makers Jesus has commanded you to be!

3. Starting on September 9th Pastor Ethan will be hosting a class teaching through the New Hampshire Confession of Faith.

- FBC adopted this confession by vote on October 28th, 1854.
- This will be a class like setting rather than a typical Service style.
- Class will held Wednesday nights at 6:30.

4. Starting in September we are reserving the 3rd Sunday night of every month for a pastor-lead, corporate prayer meeting

- The Wednesday night prayer meetings that we held before often times didn't even have one pastor in them- let alone all of them.
- This new prayer time will be a type of prayer meeting that you might have never experienced before. We are going to pray in themes and on many different topics.

There is more that we will talk about after the service... But bottom line- **We have a lot going on these days.**

- Construction all across the property
- A growing school that is thrilling to be a part of and serve in.
- A church ministry that is restructuring to focus of growth through discipleship.

These are some exciting times, exhausting times, and difficult times...

- **Hudson Taylor** said, "There are three stages to every great work of God; first it is impossible, then it is difficult, then it is done."
- **This is my prayer:** May God lead us this year from impossible, to difficult, to done.

Last week we learned in **Mark 4:35-41** that **Jesus is the calm you need.**

- An exhausted Christ is sleeping on the boat, but with a purpose!! **He was teaching the disciples that HE was what they needed!** **The storm revealed a lack of faith in them!**
- The calm of your storm won't be enough... It's the calm that Jesus brings that you need! Don't fear the storm.. fear Jesus.

Last week it was, **"Jesus is all the calm you need"** in **Mark 4:35-41**
This week its **"Jesus is all the strength you need"** in **Mark 5:1-20**

Introduction

TWO EXTREMES give Satan great satisfaction.

1) Some fall into the trap of disbelief in his reality.

- Kenneth Woodward, for example, regards the devil as merely a **"trivial personification . . . hardly adequate to symbolize the mystery of evil."**

2) Some are overly interested in the demonic.

- A few years back I read through a famous book called "Screwtape Letters" by C. S. Lewis. He said in that book, **"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive**

and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves (demons) are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist and magician with the same delight.”

Growing up in my teen years it was fun to hear the crazy stories that my family has “experienced” ...

- If it came from my brother it was immediately written off as a lie before it even started.
- If it came from my mother it had a bit of weight to it.
- If it came from my dad... then you know it happened.. (He never told any)

No doubt though--- people can go overboard on this stuff quickly!

Illustration: It was not long ago that in the suburbs of one of our major cities a promising renewal took place among a number of professional families—doctors, lawyers, and business executives.

- It gave birth to a joyous, thriving Bible study. More of their friends came to Christ.
 - Marriages were enriched, families restored, and the church infused with new life.

But some of the leadership became overly fascinated with the subject of spiritual warfare and took their eyes off Christ to become self-styled experts in demons and exorcism.

- Things were clearly getting out of hand when one night they became convinced there were demons in the dining room chandelier and ended the “Bible study” by dis-assembling the light fixture so each could take a part of it and bury it in a different part of the city.
- The crowning embarrassment to the Christian community came later when one morning some of their children were seen by neighbors running down the street shouting, “The devil is going to get us! The devil is going to get us!”
- Responding, the neighbors found the group’s women in the backyard hacking a rosewood chest to pieces to dispose of supposed demons.

The lesson?

- If Satan CAN’T pull you down, he will just as happily push you overboard.

In our passage today we are going to affirm the reality of Satan and his demons... But I want to refrain from promoting an unhealthy fascination with them.

Mark 5:1-3 “And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:”

Everyone recognized this was a demon-possessed man.

- They didn't say he needs more sleep or he's just emotionally weak
- No one claimed that I was just his personality or that he was a Kentucky Wildcat fan.
- No! He is clearly demon possessed.

The town blacksmiths would forge huge iron chains to restrain the madman.

- He broke them.
 - He was not a Houdini...an escape artist...
 - he was a hulk... a breakout artist.

The village children feared him...possibly waking up at night crying after hearing his ear-splitting screams.

- He wasn't just a maniac. He was a demoniac.

It says in **vs. 2** that he “lived among the tombs.”

- Don't picture coffins underground, a headstone with writing, or flowers on top of the grave.
- These tombs were caves usually in shape of houses.
- He lived among these hewn out places in the rocks.

Then Jesus comes visiting the TOMBS!

Years later Jesus will visit another tomb... A borrowed tomb...

- he'll **go over to the other side** crush the head of that old snake Satan and come back alive never to die again.
- But for now...he's not facing Satan...he's facing one of his demons.

In order for us to grasp how powerful Jesus is...we must first understand how powerful demons are.

Do you remember in the book of Acts where Paul was casting out demons in Jesus name like it was his job?

- Seven itinerant Jewish exorcists heard of Paul's "work."
 - They didn't know Paul. They certainly didn't know Jesus.
 - They decided to try Paul's method on a demon.
 - The evil spirit spoke back (Acts 19) "I know Jesus and I've heard of Paul, but who are you?"
 - Then the possessed man went berserk—
 - jumped the exorcists, beat them up, and tore off their clothes and sent them running naked out of town.
 - That's one demon "punking" 7 "Jewish Demon Bouncers."

In **Mark 5**, this demonic man gave his name as Legion.

- A legion consisted of around 6,000 Roman military infantrymen.
- 6,000 demons vs. one Jesus.

Acts 19 = 1 demon vs. 7 men.....

Mark 5 = 6,000 demons vs. 1 Jesus

Mark 5:6-7 “But when he *(the demon possessed man)* saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not:”

He was literally saying, “Swear by God, You won’t torment me.”

- Literally, the word is torture.
 - It’s a wartime word that speaks of eliciting truth by use of torture.

James 2:19, “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!”

Let’s do a little demonology 101.

- **Demon theology here...**
 - 1) first thing...they're real.
 - **Ephesians 6:2** we wrestle against the rulers of the darkness of this world.
 - 2) Demons can inhabit and take possession of a person.
 - 3) Demons are fallen angels.
 - Created by God, they had a moment of free-will and chose to follow Satan and are now stuck in that decision.
 - They can’t switch teams. A fallen angel will always be a fallen angel.

Here is the truth that the text presents.

1. Demons are powerful...Jesus is more!

2. Demons are controlling...Jesus is more!

In **vs. 6**, This demon possessed man begins running toward Jesus.

- The disciples hold their place, but give Jesus “the look.”
- He says, “I’ve got this.”
- The Disciples, “You know he’s naked right?”
- Jesus ignores them.

One pastor says here: “If I were a disciple and a naked dude was running towards me...id be like...*“Look you got this just like you had that storm. I'm just going to go ahead and step out and let you handle your business. Call me when he has some pants on.”*”

This demon controlled the man.

- He lost control of his natural mind, his will, and his emotions.
- He constantly gave an unearthly shriek that sent chills down one’s back.

He’s lacerating himself with stones.

- Do you remember what happened when the prophet Elijah took on all of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18)?
⇒ Baal’s prophets began to... what?... cut themselves with stones and sharp instruments.
- That was part of the demon worship.

He was distorting the image of God in man (Imago Dei).

⇒ If you’re cutting...you don’t have to. You are loved. You are made in God’s image. Put down the knife...Christ was cut for you!

The Old Puritan Richard Baxter preached a sermon on Depression. He said the causes could be:

- **Physiological** -- so you need rest, nutrition, exercise
- **Moral**-- caused by guilt and shame// you need confession
- **Mental**-- caused by discouragement// you need love, support, community
- **Demonic**-- you need prayer and Word of God

How many of you have ever struggled with anger? Bitterness? Pride? Selfish Ambition?

- Satan can have influence in your life.
- Consider these “normal” problems and the involvement of Satan:
 - Eph. 4:26-27: “Be angry and sin not...give no opportunity to the devil.”
 - (Bitterness) – See the relationship between anger/bitterness and the devil
 - 1 Tim 3:6-7: “Puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil”
 - ... See the relationship between pride and the devil.
 - James 3:15-16 says there is a wisdom that is “earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”
 - There is the relationship between selfish ambition and the demonic.

You should not read this story and say, “I’m glad I wasn’t like that man.” You should say, “I’m like that man – not just like – but like him... and if Jesus can change him, he can change anyone.”

Look what Jesus does: (Mark 5:8) “For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. ⁹ And he asked him, What is thy name?

And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. ¹⁰ And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. ¹¹ Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. ¹² And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. ¹³ And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

- The Greek tense graphically pictures the disappearance of pig after pig into the sea.

Why did Jesus allow the demons to enter the swine?

There have been a few reasons proposed:

1. The presence of two thousand swine indicates big business.
 - It may very well be that the swine-herders were compromising Jews who saw a great profit in selling pork (unclean to Jews) to the Gentile market on the eastern side of the lake.
 - If this was so, then Jesus was taking a swipe at their secularization and materialism.
2. Some scholars think that Jesus used the swine to send them off the cliff because it disembodied the demons and confined them to the Abyss to await final judgment.
3. Some believe that the dramatic end of the swine was to relate to the dramatic change that was made in the ex-demoniac's life.

Whatever the reason, it for sure is showing us the power of Christ.

#1: Demons are powerful...Jesus is more!

#2: Demons are controlling...Jesus is more!

3. Demons are commanding...Jesus is more!

Look at the peoples reaction:

Mark 5:14 “And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. ¹⁵ And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. ¹⁶ And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. ¹⁸ As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. ¹⁹ And he did not permit him but said to him (Listen... this is key), “*Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.*” ²⁰ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

This is a beautiful picture of the Gospel: sitting, clothed, in his right mind.

- Sitting – insomnia. Jesus gives us rest
- Clothed – Jesus covers our shame
- In his right mind – Jesus changes our minds.

The First missionary sent out in the Gentile region was a demoniac!

- **From mad-man to missionary!**

In the Jewish territory, When he did a miracle he said “don't tell anybody. They don't understand me yet. I'm going to unfold it gradually to them.”

In the gentile territory, Jesus said “tell everyone.” And this man did!

Just some thoughts:

- **The next Billy Graham may be in rehab today...**
- **The next great women's author may be a prostitute today...**
- **The next Charles Spurgeon might be sitting down the road at the crystal lounge.**

When you become a Christian, you become a missionary because to be a Christian is to be a little Christ - and Christ was a missionary.

Jesus said in **John 20**, "**As the Father sent me, so I send you**"

You say,

- “I'm not strong enough...
- I'm not smart enough...
- I'm NOT ENOUGH....

Mark chapter 5 just taught us that **Jesus IS.... He's Enough!**