

EQUIPPING DISCIPLES FOR KINGDOM GROWTH
Mark Series: Let the Gospel Tell the Gospel

JESUS' PRESENCE LIGHTS UP THE DARKNESS:
WE EITHER CAST HIM OUT OR ASK TO FOLLOW

Covenant Presbyterian Church

MARK 5:1-20

18 November A.D. 2012

Mark 5:1-5: Jesus leads his disciples from one storm into another

Jesus moves his disciples from the frenzy of the sea to the frenzy of a man in bondage.

Jesus the light walks into the darkness of the Greek cities to the east of the Sea of Galilee.

The man's cries are the groans and suffering of the creation, still in bondage (Romans 8:22)

Mark 5:6-13: Jesus leads his disciples into territory that has not yet been given the revealed truth of God's Word; the darkness is less subtle.

The unclean spirits want Jesus to leave their region, their place, to leave them alone.

Son of the Most High God: this is language that exalts Israel's God and his Son as transcendent over all pagan gods, goddesses and powers.

No incantations, formulas or spells; Jesus himself is the authority and simply speaks.

- We are not the only creatures God made.
- The rebellion and brokenness displayed in the Genesis 3 account is not simply fable.
- These unclean spirits more readily see the danger of Jesus' presence than we do.
- All creatures will ultimately bow down before Jesus.

Note that Jesus doesn't kill the pigs, the unclean spirits do.

The value of each individual human being is proclaimed by this text.

Note Mark's irony: a *legion* has been cast from the land.

Mark 5:14-17: Those who see Jesus' light, hear the truth and reject him, give themselves over to all kinds of idolatry and evil.

The response of the townsfolk is the same as Jesus' disciples in the boat: fear!

The calm of the lake after Jesus' words is now paralleled by the calm of this man, clothed and his right mind.

When fear does not turn into faith, we want to chase the light away from our place.

The issue of Jesus' acceptance or rejection by his own people and his going among the Gentiles has roots in the prophecy of **Isaiah 65:1-5**:

- 1 "I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask *for Me*;
I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me.
I said, 'Here am I, here am I,'
To a nation which did not call on My name.
- 2 "I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people,
Who walk *in* the way which is not good, following their own thoughts,
- 3 A people who continually provoke Me to My face,
Offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks;
- 4 Who sit among graves and spend the night in secret places;
Who eat swine's flesh,
And the broth of unclean meat is *in* their pots.
- 5 "Who say, 'Keep to yourself, do not come near me,
For I am holier than you!'
These are smoke in My nostrils,
A fire that burns all the day.

Note the irony of Mark 5: Jesus goes to those who did not ask for him and only demons call on his name!

When men reject mercy and deliverance we see the reality that evil runs deep in and among us.

Mark 5:18-20: God's mercy and deliverance in Christ is to be proclaimed and marveled at.

Likely Jesus' refusal to let the man follow as one of the inner circle of disciples is because it is not yet time to have a Gentile travelling in his immediate circle of disciples as continues towards Jerusalem.

- Jesus sends this man who had been outcast and alone back home, back to his people.
- He is report what great things **the Lord has done** and proclaim the mercy God had on him.
- He proclaims what great **things Jesus had done** for him: note Mark's declaration of the divinity of Christ Jesus.

They want to banish Jesus from their area, but Jesus will have a presence among them in this grace proclaiming man.

What about your region, your family, your place?