

You Have a Demon Story to Tell



Mark 5:1-20

Go to Mark chapter 5 as we see Jesus cast out a legion of demons out of a man. It should be a lot of fun! Before I begin, I want to tell you that I love mountains, I love climbing mountains, and I love hiking mountains. We were in Arizona this last summer and we went to Chuichu and we went with the youth group to do missions with Eric and Brittany. I ran into these three teenage boys, and I am trying to talk to them, looking for a way to share the gospel with them. As I'm talking with them, I see in the background of this reservation they lived on, a mountain. It is just beautiful. I was almost distracted talking to this kid because I'm looking at this mountain thinking how much I want to climb it and hike to see the top. I just asked the teenage boy I was talking to, "Have you ever climbed that mountain?" He looked at me as if I had asked the strangest thing in the world. He says, "Well, of course not!" I said, "Why have you not hiked the mountain?" He said, "That mountain belongs to goatman. I said, "Who?" He said, "Goatman." I said, "Ok, well tell me about goatman." He said, "He is half goat and half man, and he lives on the mountain. That is his mountain and you don't go there. If you do, you don't come back." I found myself beginning to chuckle a little bit. I found myself beginning to laugh, but I could tell these three teens were not laughing; they were dead serious about goatman on the mountain. I said, "So what does goatman do?" He said, "When we're sleeping, he will come into our community and eat stray dogs and cats and chase children around." I said, "Really! Have

you seen goatman?" He said, "We haven't actually seen him, but we've seen what he does, we know who he is, and we know where he's at. We just don't go near goatman." I found myself not believing the story of goatman.

As I studied Mark chapter 5 this week, we're talking about Jesus casting out demons, I thought it would be really easy to preach this sermon in Arizona with the natives because they would assume of course it is true! Of course there are demons. Of course there is a goatman, and it would have been very easy to speak, but I'm not in Arizona with natives; I'm with you guys. Some of us might say, 'I'm not sure I believe in demons.' 'I'm not sure that was really going on.' We might have misunderstood what was really happening because we are modern, progressive, and we've gotten away from the whole demon thing. I just want to ask, have we really? When I watch sporting events on TV with my kids, I find myself having to hold the remote control, pausing, and then fast-forwarding through the commercials. What the commercials on our TVs tell us is we love horror and horror films because time after time, I see, in thirty-second commercials, the most graphic and horrific demonic activity you could ever imagine. There are trailers of movies like *Us* and *It*, *Pet Cemetery*, *Walking Dead*. Everything seems to be about demons. So, why is it that we as modern people can't get away from loving and paying to go see demonic activity? It is because, if we are willing to admit, we believe in demons a little more than we're willing to say. I stood there talking to this kid about goatman and almost laughing at him, but I still didn't hike the mountain. I could remember as a boy that feeling that I got when my dad would say, "Go turn out the lights in the hallway behind the church." It would be late, dark outside, and he would send me to turn the light off in the middle of the hallway. It is the downtown campus, and there is a long hallway that seemed to never end. For some reason, they put the light switch in the middle down another little hall. In order to turn out all the lights, you had to go down the hall, go into another hall, and flip the switch. Once you did, it was dark. Then, you were in the middle of it all and you had to actually get out! as a young boy, I can remember walking down that hall, full of confidence, it's bright, lights are on, everything is fine, and I would talk to myself...*this is not going to happen again*. I would go and shut the light

off, and the moment I did, panic would happen. Terror would begin to stir in my bones and I would try to walk as slowly as I could as a ten year old, but then I began to jog, then to a full sprint because I could see doorway after doorway and I was convinced that as I crossed each doorway, something would reach out and grab me. There has to be demons living in that hallway because I could feel them somehow in my bones. See, we would say we don't believe in demons anymore, but take a walk in the woods at night without a flashlight, and what do you begin to feel? This eeriness, like maybe there is more than we can see. It is why Halloween has become so popular. It is second only to Christmas in the amount of money we spend. There is something about the spookiness that we identify with. Even at Trunk or Treat when we see all our kids dressed up in little outfits, there is something about that one kid that comes who is dressed as a zombie bride. We see her, a little six-year-old zombie bride, but somehow, that is more like her nature than the other girl dressed like Cinderella. We see these little boys dressed as zombies, and somehow, that's a little bit closer to reality than the little boy dressed as Bob the Builder, because you see the tantrum they are creating because they didn't get the candy they want. Somehow, we can feel, even in our culture, there is more than the eyes can see. There are forces around us that sometimes we can't explain.

Yes, we're going to talk about demons because demons are real, but Jesus has power over all of the demonic forces. What I hope you see as we walk through Mark chapter 5. I hope you are sort of shocked a little bit because what you will find is you actually have a demon story. Secondly, you will see that Jesus is mighty to save. Yes, you have a demon story, but Jesus is mighty to save, and because of that, mercy compels mission. You had a demon story, but because you've been redeemed from it, the mercy of Jesus leads you to go on mission for Him and your life is about telling people the great change God has done in your life. Let's turn to Mark chapter 5:18-20 as we see a man possessed with demons, and then we will walk back through chapter 5.

Scripture

"As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled."

(Prayer)

God, I pray that You help us to see in this text that we are much more like the demon-possessed man than we would dare to admit, but that Jesus has rescued us from the demonic powers to be and we have a story to tell. If we would tell it, people might just marvel. We pray this in Jesus good name, amen.

You Have a Demon Story

Let's walk back through this text. In verse 1, it says, "They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes." We see right there that the first words in this text is they came to the other side of the sea. I think it's cluing us in that they're not on their side of the sea. They're not on the comfortable side of the sea, not on the Jewish side of the sea, not in Galilee anymore. They're going across, somewhere else. Where they are going into this place, it is Gentile territory. That is where the Gerasenes were. That's where the Decapolis was. It was a place of Gentiles, where pig farmers lived, where Jews didn't really want to go and probably really didn't go, but Jesus is going to a hard and uncomfortable place. I can imagine the disciples protested, 'Jesus, why are we leaving Galilee? Why don't we stay with our people? Why are you going over to them?' The Jews didn't really care for Gentiles. If they touched a Gentile, they thought they were unclean. They wanted nothing to do with the Gentiles. But Jesus gets in a boat and He crosses the sea to make it to the Gentiles because Jesus knows the people on the other side of the sea, the people on the other

side of the tracks, the hard places, those people you might think are different than you, they need Jesus and they are just like you. Jesus is willing to go to hard places.

I just want to pause and ask; as believers, are we willing to go hard places because people on the other side need to hear Jesus? A hard place might be the Middle East, it might be China, or it might be North Korea. Who knows, the other side might be somewhere really scary, but it could also just mean the cubicle next to you. That might be the other side. That might be the hard place. Your golfing buddy might be the hardest place to bring up a gospel conversation, so when you're sitting in the cart driving you talk about the weather and what's going on, but you're not going to cross over to him or her to speak the gospel. Maybe for you, the other side, the hard place, is at home because your spouse doesn't believe. It is so awkward to bring up Jesus, so you just remain silent. It is really hard to talk to your kids, so you just remain silent. What is your other side? What is the person or place that's hard to go that you know would be awkward to go, but Jesus is calling you to go because you know at that place people need to hear the good news of Jesus? Jesus was willing to cross to the other side. He was willing to get out of His comfort zone, and I think He calls us to do the same because people on the other side need the gospel as well.

So what happens when Jesus gets to the hard place? What happens is what is expected to happen. Let's read what it says in verses 2-5, "And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones." That is some guy. Mark is not a detail guy. He's been flying through, telling us very little: Jesus was tempted; let's go on. Jesus got baptized; let's go on. But now he stops and gives us more details than Luke or Matthew about this guy. He just pours on detail after detail; his past, his present, how he's feeling. He gives us all these

details. Why does he give us so many details? It is because he doesn't want to miss what is said about this guy. He's uncontrollable. No one can control this guy. No one can harness this guy. In fact, he goes back to the guy's past and said there was a time when the townspeople actually tried to help him. Their thought of helping him was to just put chains around him and try to bind him. That sounds like a really good way to help a friend. So they put shackles and chains around the guy, but because he's possessed by a demon, he's got supernatural strength, and he is breaks the chains. Can you imagine wrapping your buddy with chains to try and subdue him and he breaks the chains? That is a strong guy. That is a supernatural empowered guy. That's a demon-possessed man. The community realized they couldn't subdue him. No one could subdue him, he is out of their bounds so they forsake the guy and have him live among the tombs. This guy leaves his home, leaves his community, he is in isolation living among the dead, and he is uncontrollable. He can't control himself, he can't harness himself, he cries out night and day, and he's taking sharp stones and cutting himself. That's who this guy is.

Here is what I want you to feel just for a moment. That guy might look really, really scary, he might look really, really freaky, but in reality, he's not that much different than you. He's not that much different than me. Yeah, he sure looks different. He sure looks a whole lot crazier with a whole lot more problems. He looks like he can't be tamed, yet how different were we? What I want you to see before we move any further is that yes, this guy has a demon-possessed story, that was part of his part, he was uncontrollable, he has a legion of demon, but you also have a demon story. You might not be possessed by demons, but the reality is you were certainly influenced by the demonic age, by the powers to be.

How do we know that? Paul, writing to a church in Ephesians chapter 2, tells us who we were before we met Christ. He's not talking to people living in tombs in graveyards. He's talking to people who have gotten ready for church, who have come and look good, eating donuts, drinking coffee, and they're sitting down and he says let me just remind you of who you were before Christ. Here is what Paul says about the human condition in Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which

you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” Paul says that is who we were. Before Jesus, that was our identity. Here is a guy living in tombs, uncontrollable over his actions, completely demonic possessed, and then I asked a question, how much different is he really than us before we meet Christ because before we meet Christ, the Scripture says we are dead in our sins and trespasses. We are cut off. We are in the land of the dead. We are walking zombies, spiritually, before the Lord. How do we know that we are dead? We know because we live in sin. We reject the glory of God. We reject the ways of God. We live for our own self and our own sin. Paul says in doing so, you're actually following the course of this world. You're following the powers of the air to be. In other words, you are following the demonic influence all around that you might not even be able to see. How do you know that? Here was your life...it was all about your passions and your desires, whatever you wanted is what you went after. If truth be told, you couldn't control them. They were out of control. You would tell yourself you were not going to do that again, but then you would do it again. You would say you were not going to go there again, but then you would go there again. You were reckless, self-destructive; you weren't much different than the guy we find in the text. You too have your own demons story. I have my own demon story.

Here's the problem. For this guy, it is really obvious that he was demon-possessed. For us, it's a lot more subtle, the reality that we also follow after demonic influence. Ours tend to look a little more different. Coveting often seems calmer than demon possession. Lust seems a little civilized today. It seems ok; it seems like it's what everybody does. Lying doesn't really seem that bad; it seems like a little thing. Yet those things smell like sulfur just like this guy's out of control behavior does. It's hard for us to notice the influence of the demonic world all around us. It's hard for us to walk into a mall and look at the displays of the mannequins and what they are wearing and not be aware of what is really going on in our heart and telling us if you just pull the credit card and buy all that you can and you

look just like this, you will be happy. You will have all that you want. It's hard for us, when we hold our piece of glass and we scroll through things, to see that behind that there is a whole course of this world that is taking us places we wouldn't want to admit to each other we're going. We're clicking on things that we can't believe in daylight that we're actually clicking on. We're watching and being exposed to things that we think are natural and normal and we don't even realize the demonic forces to be are carrying us and giving us desires that are contrary to what God would desire and want for us. We are unaware of all of the demonic forces around us, how social media can be used for good, but it can also be used for ill. When we see in our social media feed if we get comments, likes, and hearts and more people interact with us, the better we are. That equals value. The more clicks I get, the better of a person I am, so I'm going to live based on how many people are reacting to me. My audience is going to be everybody else rather than God. We look at those things as completely normal. It's not graveyard activity. It's not demonic possession, but we don't see there is an influence behind so many of those things. They get us to do things that are contrary to God's will for our lives as image bearers of Him. What we can sometimes miss is that we also have a demon story, that we, before Christ, are dead, living in tombs, cutoff, separated, and we live a life for selfishness, sin, the world, and we're not even aware of all of the influence all around us. We think we're free. We think we're making all the decisions on our own, and what we don't realize is we are bound and shackled, and we are in isolation. We are screaming and crying and we can't even see it.

Jesus is Mighty to Save

We first need to see in this text is that we're not really that much different than the demon-possessed man. Yeah, maybe we're not possessed by a demon, but we are definitely influenced all around us by the demonic forces. This is who we find, a crazy guy, but we also find a mirror. We see a little bit of ourselves in this man. So what happens? What does this guy do? Verses 6-9 say, "And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God,

do not torment me." For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." Here is this guy. He's in the tombs. He's isolated. He's a man that nobody can control or tame. They've tried, but he's helpless. He's out of control. Jesus set foot on the shore and this guy, Luke tells us, is also naked. So just imagine this guy who's a crazy man, he's cutting himself, he's yelling, he's demon-possessed, he has the power to break chains, he's completely nude, all of a sudden Jesus sets on the shore and this guy runs at Jesus as fast as he can. Just put yourself in the disciple's shoes for a moment. Imagine if you're the disciples and you're standing there watching this. Ah, Jesus, maybe we should get back in the boat. That guy looks scary! I would imagine the disciples are back in the boat, like they're jumping, they're covering, and they're like, what's going to happen? Can you imagine the herdsmen who are herding two thousand pigs in the area? Can you imagine them watching? They know who demon man is. They see him on a daily basis. They stay away. All of a sudden, they see a new guy, an outsider, who steps on the shore and they see demon guy running full sprint ahead to tackle him. I can just imagine the herdsmen are like hey, check this out! This is not going to be good. Watch this! This guy who just stepped out of the boat is about to get taken out. This is his last trip to the Decapolis. He's decapitated...this is not going to work out good. So the guy runs to Jesus full sprint, but what happens when he gets there? This guy who is completely out of control, wild, who can't control anything about himself goes and falls down at the feet of Jesus.

The question I had reading this text is who is running and who is falling. This guy is possessed by demons; so are the demons running to Jesus, are the demons falling down, or is it this guy? The text really doesn't answer, so here is my imagination. I think the demons didn't run to Jesus. I don't think demons like to run to Jesus. I think demons run the other way from Jesus. I think this guy, who the demons are tormenting, trying to get him to end his life, sees hope. He sees a moment where somebody had stepped on the boat that he hasn't seen before. He hasn't seen this guy, but for some reason, though nobody could help him, this guy seems like he could be a helper. So the guy takes the last little bit of his own will power

and he runs as fast as he can to that guy. This is his last ditch effort, his last hope. So he runs as fast as he can to Jesus. This is the man running after Jesus, but when he gets to Jesus, the demons, in the presence of Jesus, throw themselves at His feet. This guy probably saw Jesus as a man who might could help him, but the demons knew who Jesus was. Jesus is not just a helper; Jesus is God who is way more powerful than them. Notice, they come and meet Him and have this conversation. Jesus is telling these legions to get out of this man. These demons are talking to Jesus, 'please, don't send us out! Please, don't torment us!' They know their end is coming. They know their time is short. They don't want Jesus to banish them just yet. They want to stay a little bit longer. Jesus asks what their name is and they said Legion, which means a legion in Roman army was six thousand. Imagine how powerful the demonic force in this man was. But notice what the demons say about Jesus. See, Mark has left a question in the air. Do you remember the story of Jesus crossing the sea? When He calmed the wind and calmed the storm, the disciples looked at Jesus and said who is this who can calm the wind and calm the sea? Who is this guy? They fall down and they fear, but they don't answer. Jesus doesn't answer. So the question is who is this guy? Who is this Jesus who calms a wild storm, and now calms a wild man? Now we get the answer of who Jesus is from the most unlikely source, from the demons. What do they say? 'Jesus, it's You, Son of the Most High God!' In other words, 'You are the authority. You are the power. We can do mighty things like break chains, but we bow and submit to You. You are the God of the cosmos.' They are begging Jesus to have mercy on them.

So, we see they request something of Jesus. Verses 10-13 say, "And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea." Just visualize that. Somebody said after first service, "This would make a great movie." It really would! Could you imagine this scene? Here is this guy who is the wildest guy imaginable. Nobody can control him. Nobody can contain him. The text says he's just

uncontrollable. He runs full sprint at Jesus. Everybody thinks Jesus is going to get taken out, but he falls down in complete submission to Jesus. The demons are in submission to the Lord Jesus, and they ask to be cast out, not into hell, but into these pigs. They don't want to leave quite yet. They don't want to meet their end quite yet, so Jesus gives them permission. Imagine you're a herdsman, you have your two thousand pigs, and you're just watching. Your buddies have gathered like what's going to happen to this guy who just jumped off the boat, like He's going to get taken out. All of a sudden, you see the scariest guy you could ever imagine, like Boo Radley, if you're into *Kill a Mockingbird*, when they first meet. This story of we don't know what's going to happen. But when they meet, the guy falls down at Jesus' feet. The uncontrollable guy suddenly gets controlled by Jesus. These pig farmers are watching what is going on, and suddenly hear screaming and squealing, and all of their two thousand pigs start running. Can you imagine? If you're a shepherd, a keeper of pigs, a herdsman, when your herd runs, you run too. You run after them. You're trying to keep them and you can't keep up. The whole herd is running, you're calling them, and one after one they jump into the sea to their death. Can you imagine being the herdsman standing at the edge of the sea just looking at all of your pigs, all of your money, your income floating, and then looking at this demon man who is not demon man anymore, who has been healed, who has been changed? Then you look at Jesus.

I don't exactly know the meaning of the whole pigs in the sea. There is a lot of speculation on what that means, but here is what it shows us. It shows us this man wasn't faking. This wasn't just a legend; this was real. He really had a legion of demons in him. I think secondly what it shows us is what the demons have in mind for all of us. Here is the goal of the demonic forces. It's not for our good. It's not to help us and see us succeed. They will help us a little bit and make us succeed for a little bit, but do you know what the goal is? It is to steal, kill, and destroy. That's what Jesus says in John 10. The whole purpose of the thief is to kill, steal, and destroy. We see what they were trying to do to the man, get him to end his life. As soon as they went in the pigs, the pigs just ran and did it. This was the goal of the demonic forces. They want to steal, to kill, and to destroy, and you can visually see their intended goal. They reached their

purpose. They destroy a whole herd of pigs, what they intended for the image-bearer of God, but couldn't quite do. We see that is the demonic forces goal for us. What the forces want for us, not through maybe demon possession, but through demon influence and even affluence, what they try to get is for us to live a life that ignores God, lives for self, and eventually it is destructive. It destroys us, it hurts us, and we end up being in destruction rather than life. That's the goal of the demonic forces, steal, kill, and destroy. But in John 10, Jesus says, "I came that you may have life and have it abundantly." That's what Jesus is doing. The intent of the demons for this guy was death; Jesus comes and brings him life. He frees him from his bondage. He sends, with His power and His authority, the demons out. What we see is yes, this guy had a demon story, but Jesus is also mighty to save. All of a sudden, the demons are gone and the pigs are floating.

Mercy Compels Mission

Here is what we see in verses 14-15, "the herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid." Word gets out. This happened, the power of Jesus is displayed, He is mighty to save; it is shown. The herdsmen run out and tell! You would be doing the same things. You would be videotaping this whole moment. This is going on every social media I've got! I'm texting everybody! This is like YouTube! This is going to be great! But this is nuts what is going on. So the herdsmen run and tell everybody, 'You're not going to believe it! Demon man has been freed, and the demons went in the pigs and they all ran off a cliff!' I can imagine everybody like, 'wait...what? No...that's not...no way. There's no way demon man...we know demon man...' He was a common figure in this place. He was known in the community. Everybody knew about demon man. You could imagine the teenagers would sneak out at night and try to see how close they could get to demon man. I could imagine they would go and throw rocks at him to see. I imagine if demon man ever did fall asleep, they would try to go and see who could touch him. I could just imagine, teenage boys, this is

something they would probably love to do. I could imagine all of the parents told their kids, 'never go to the graveyard because demon man lives there. You will not come back.' Everybody knew about this guy; the whole town knew about this guy.

When I was in Nicaragua last year, I was in the backseat of a pickup truck riding to where we were going to do ministry. Garland says, "Hey, get ready to look out the window to the left because you're going to see naked man." I said, "What?" I looked out the window to my left, and sure enough, I saw him. I could tell who it was...pick him out of a crowd. He was just walking down the road. I see him, and I said, "Garland! How did you know that guy was going to be there?" He said, "Everybody knows he's there. He's there every single day. This is what he does. He walks one mile back and forth every day, just free as a bird, walking back and forth. He's naked man. The whole community knows about him!"

This is like that; everybody knew about this guy. Everybody knew about the cemetery. Everybody knew about demon man, and now, they're getting the demons that demon man has been changed, and I can just imagine like, 'um, no.' If someone in Nicaragua said they saw naked man at the restaurant and he's clothed and talking normally, people would be like, 'what? No, there's no way!' They would all be going 'we've got to see this! This can't be true!' So, the whole townspeople come and they see, with their own eyes, demon man, but he's not demon man anymore. He's not naked, he's not uncontrolled, he's not crying out, he's not tormented, but instead, he's "sitting down." He's resting. He's calm. He went from uncontrollable to sitting at the feet of Jesus. What else? He's also clothed. He went from naked, to now he is fully clothed, but not only that, he is sitting there clothed and he is in his right mind. He's not out of his mind anymore! He's not possessed anymore! He's not wildly running around anymore! He's calmly having a conversation with Jesus and the disciples. He's telling people, 'hey come! Check out me! I'm free! Hey, remember I'm who I used to be! I'm back! I no longer have demon possession!' He's in his right mind, all of the people can look at demon man and look into the ocean, and they can see what just happened. What they're hearing might not sound like it could happen, but what they're seeing with their eyes they

cannot deny, the supernatural power of God. God is greater than the demonic forces. God is mighty to save; Jesus just proved it. So they all gather and they all see it, but do you know what happens? A very sad thing, they have a really bad response to Jesus. It says in verses 16-17, "And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region." They see all of this, the mighty power of Jesus, He cast out demons, He is conqueror over the demonic forces, they're looking at pigs, they're looking at this man clothed and in his right mind, and their reaction to the power of Jesus is 'get out.' We don't want anything to do with you. Life is fine just the way it is. We don't want any of this. We liked demon man where he was, but You casting out demons and having all authority, we're not sure who You are and we are afraid. You get out. They want Jesus to leave. They begged Jesus to leave. What a sad response to the power of God, to the power of Jesus' word as you see its impact. The people wanted Him to leave, they wanted Him to go; they wanted to cast Jesus out. That's the wrong response to the power of God.

Go Tell

Let's see what the man says in verses 18-20. "As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled." The people are saying get out, we don't want this, we don't want Your power, we don't want Your goodness; we're fine just the way we are. We want You away Jesus. The guy who got changed by Jesus just wants to be with Jesus. He begs Him, Jesus, can I just come with You. Jesus denies the guy to follow You. He says no, don't follow Me, don't come after Me, don't cross to the other side of the sea; I want you to stay right here, but here is the deal. I don't want you to come and follow Me, I want you to go for Me. I want you to go home, go to your family, go to your friends, and I want you to tell them all the Lord has done for you. I want you to tell them about the mercy that you have received. Here's a guy who had a demon

story, but Jesus has saved him. Because he's been saved, that mercy that he felt compels him to missions, and that is for us that we realize we too have a demon story. It might not be demon possession, but it's definitely demonic influence. We followed the world, we followed our heart, we follow what we want to do all of our lives, and it didn't lead to happiness; it led to destruction. We also have a demon story, but if you're in Christ, you also have a 'but God' story. You also have a Jesus is mighty to save story. I love in Ephesians, that word that we read that was so harsh to hear about who we once were, here's how Paul continues in verse 4 of chapter 2, "But God, being rich in mercy because of His great love which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved." Yes, Paul says you had a demon story. Yes, you were following the course of this world, but God, but God, who is rich in mercy. What is this guy receiving? Mercy. What is he supposed to talk about? Mercy. You've received mercy. God is rich in it. He's given it to you. He's actually made you alive. You no longer live among the tombs. You no longer chase after the prince of the air, but you follow the Spirit of God. You have been brought into the living, and as one who has been brought into the living you have a mission.

Here is the mission: go tell your story. That's what Jesus wanted this guy to do, go tell people. Go tell people what I have done in your life. That is same thing Jesus wants for us. What is amazing for us in this text is all of the people wanted to expel Jesus, but the reality is they were still stuck explaining demon man. In other words, the people could get rid of Jesus. They could say, Jesus, we don't want you here anymore, but they were left with this guy who had been radically changed by Jesus, this guy who didn't just go home, he went to the whole Decapolis, which is ten connecting cities. He goes everywhere telling people about Jesus. I think for us, if you think about the moment we live in, in a lot of the places and spaces that we go, Jesus is not welcomed. Think about the school you go to, the workplace you are at, the hobbies, maybe your own home. There are a lot of places that say Jesus is not welcomed. The Word of God is not welcomed. Don't talk about Jesus, don't bring up Jesus; they've expelled Jesus, but the problem is they are left with you and they've got to explain you. They might can get rid of Jesus, but they can't get rid of you and your

changed life. You are a picture of what Jesus does; Jesus changes people. You were once uncontrollable, once not able to control yourself, out of your mind, wild; but now, because of Jesus, He has raised you from the dead. He's given you the mind of Christ. He's clothed you. He's give you rest. You have a changed life. You have a different life, and Jesus said I'm going to leave you right where you are and you go and proclaim to the world the story that I've given you. Yes, it was a demon story, but it has surely been redeemed by Christ if you're a believer, so go and tell your story. I know what some of you are thinking. Yeah, if I had a story like this guy, I would go tell everybody. If I was a guy who was dwelling in the cemetery, completely out of my mind and Jesus did this to me and had to whole pig thing to add to it, I would tell everybody! If my story were that big, I would tell the whole world! Here's what I want you to see. If you are a believer in Jesus, your story is every bit that big. You were just as far-gone as that guy. It might not have looked like it on the outside, but on the inside, you were just as trapped in your own sin following the course of the world, but God, rich in mercy, redeemed you. You have a big story to tell because Christ has redeemed you. You have a demon story in your background, but you have a God who rescued you and saved you. What He is telling you is now go and tell that story, because if you tell that story, do you know what happened with this guy? They marveled at it and some of the people you tell your story to will marvel, and they might even believe, and they might even follow Jesus as well.

The reality is I don't know if goat man is a real thing or not. I was in Arizona and looking at those guys thinking that mountain looked cool, I really don't believe in goat man, but I still didn't hike the mountain. I still wasn't exactly for sure about goat man. I don't know, maybe goat man is real, maybe he's not, but what I do know is the story in Mark 5 is absolutely true. There was a demon man who got redeemed. There was a demon man who found new life. Do you know how I know that story is 100% true? It is because I am demon man. I, too, was just like him. Living in the tombs, a walking zombie, spiritually, living for my own passions, my own flesh, my own desires, wrecking my life, but the Holy Spirit drew me to Christ. I ran as fast as I could to the cross, and through the cross, to the death and resurrection of Jesus, this demon man was redeemed. This dead

man was made alive in Christ. I have a demon story in my past, but I have been made new. Do you know what that means? I have a story to tell and so do you. What we've got to do is be willing to tell that story because there are many people on the other side, and on this side, who need to hear how much God has done for you. Mercy compels mission. If you've been given mercy, you have a story, a demon past, but a Jesus present and a Jesus future. You have a big story. This week, let's go and tell that story.