



## Looking Toward Missions Mark 5:1-20

**August 4, 2019**  
**Pastor Trevor Cooper**

I want to say thank you to everyone who volunteered their time, their energy, and even their paychecks to be a worker at our VBS Sports Camp! It was incredible to see each of you serve and love on these kids with God's love and truth of the gospel. Many prayed for the kids and even shared your testimony with them. I will say, there is a deeper appreciation for Children's Church workers and teachers. We averaged for the week 46 kids a night. With about 25 workers!!! Faith Fellowship sent about ten kids every night plus five great workers who partnered with us. And next year, we are already making plans to join forces for a bigger and better Vacation Bible School. We also had three salvations and one rededication decisions were made.

Last week, we studied Jesus having power over nature when we read about the disciples being caught in a storm while Jesus calmed the sea and the wind. We realized the promise is not that the storm may cease, but the promise is that God will be with us through the storm. If we study the entire setting of passages that surround Chapter 4, we notice the scripture teaches Christ having power over disease, disaster, demonic spirits and even death! In verse 41 of chapter four, the only thing more terrifying than having a storm outside the boat was having God inside the boat! Let us read what happens next.

*"They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. 2 And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. 3 He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 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. 5 Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. 6 And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. 7 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." 8 For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" 9 And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." 10 And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. 11 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, 12 and they begged him, saying, "Send us to*

*the pigs; let us enter them." 13 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." **Mark 5:1-13***

Gerasa was thirty miles southeast of the lake. There is also a village named Khersa on the eastern shore with the kind of cliffs and tombs described in the story. Jesus enters an area that will eventually be the future Gentile mission of the church. This is where we see Jesus starting this work and allowing even us, the church, to complete it. Jesus is looking toward doing missions for the Gentiles. He was no longer surrounded by His Jewish countrymen but has chosen to go to the other side of the sea. The Gentile character of the population is apparent since the Jews did not raise pigs, which were unclean under Mosaic law.

In verse one, we see **Jesus Modeled EVANGELISM and MISSIONS for His Church**. He did not have to go to Gerasa but Jesus chose to go to the other side for the setting the stage for the future work of the church. Are we willing to go to the other side for the purpose of Evangelism and Missions? Evangelism is applying your personal walk with God to your everyday walk in life. God command us to evangelize and simply says to go! **God expects us to evangelize because with the blessing comes the RESPONSIBILITY of taking this blessing to the world.** Yet, there is the reality of having fears of Evangelism. Rejection is one of those fears many people have. Much like a waiter or waitress serves customers by refilling their drinking glass, some may accept the service of the waiter or waitress while others may completely reject such service. It is with our responsibility to share the gospel with those around us that many people may accept it or reject it. If you are unable to perform in the arena of faith, then obviously you have not been exercising your faith. Quoting Gandhi, one of the most highly honored men of India because of his leadership and stand for Indian Dependence, who said this about believers, "I like their Christ; I am not sure about their Christians!" May we take the gospel to the other side of the street, the other side of the wall and even to the other side of the world.

In verses 14-17, we realize **sharing the Gospel has BARRIERS that makes the task DIFFICULT but NOT impossible.** *"The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. 15 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. 16 And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. 17 And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region."* One of the barriers Jesus faced was of personal struggles of this man endured. This man was living among the tombs, having tremendous strength but no control was a threat, thus separated from his village and family. The second barrier Jesus faced was of spiritual warfare the unclean spirits gave. These demons had already identified Jesus as the Son of the Most High but by this question "What have I to do with you?" reveals Jesus having superior power over them. Jesus forces the demon to unmask himself. He is not one but many. A Roman legion was 6,000 men. Yet the demons cower in verse ten knowing Jesus'

absolute power! The demons wanted to stay in that area and begged Jesus for them to be sent to the pigs. The third barrier is the herdsman who raised up in a different culture, are very furious and frightened – begging for Jesus to leave. Ralph Winter (in 1974 addressed the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization stating that people groups are being overlooked. Winter identifies 3 different kinds of evangelism to help communicate the gospel effectively. **E-SCALE** focuses on the cultural distance crossed by those who **DO** evangelism. **P-SCALE** focuses on the cultural distance of those who **ARE** evangelized to be part of an existing church. The three different kinds of evangelism of the E-SCALE: **E-1** is doing evangelism with people out the church, but within one's culture. There is only one barrier to cross which is the "stained glass" membership boundary of the church. Ralph Winter says that E-1 is the most powerful and effective way of evangelism. **E-2** is evangelism of people from different, but similar cultures. There are two barriers to cross: the membership boundary of the church and the cultural distance sufficient to require separate church fellowships. The last kind of Evangelism is the E-3, which is the hardest stage of Evangelism and the highest priority from a strategic viewpoint because are at least three barriers that need crossing: the "stained glass" barrier, a language barrier, and a major lifestyle barrier. Notice Jesus does not try to evangelize to the rest of the people but gives a specific command to the man in verse 18 and 19.

*"As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. <sup>19</sup> 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." <sup>20</sup> And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled." **Mark 5:18-20***

**Being a Missionary is Not a Matter of IF I Am Sent; It is WHEN I Am Sent.** Jesus is about to leave with his disciples in the boat, when the man approached the boat asking if he could go with them. Jesus usually demands silence for His time is not yet to be revealed. He is preparing for the future mission of the church to begin. Jesus tells this man to go home – implying that this man becomes the first Gentile missionary. Jamie Zumwalt was a missionary for years in East Asia and is the co-founder of a Mission Agency in Oklahoma City said "The calling of a missionary is the calling of who will be in control!" This was the same man who was once controlled by culture as a Gentile. This was the same man who was once controlled by demons as an empty lost vessel. Since Jesus came to other side, this man now is ready to go on mission to evangelize with the message of salvation as he goes home obeying the Words of Jesus. This man is allowing God to be in control of His life. Who will be in control? As we go home today, may we allow God to be in control of our lives and may we share the gospel and evangelize wherever He may send you.