

The Legion and the Lord

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[0 : 00] In St. Mark chapter 5, we'll look at the whole chapter to an extent, but if we could focus on one verse particularly, it's summing up our own situation perhaps, it might be this.

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.

There is so much that we could say simply on that one verse. About how the devil would once have had control over us if we were not in Christ. About how when we are brought to Christ, we are clothed with his righteousness, how we sit at his feet, how we are at last in our right mind instead of being in the daft ignorance of unbelief and indifference and denial, which is the case of so much in this world.

But not only this verse speaks to us, although if you want to take a text for all of this passage, I would suggest that one to you, because perhaps we can see ourselves in it, that we would desire to be sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed in his righteousness and at last in our right mind.

But we have to recognize that the deliverance of this man, the primary reason Jesus is coming there to the land of the Gadarenes, and it is, I think, the only occasion that Jesus is recorded as landing on that particular section of the Sea of Galilee.

[1 : 38] The only reason he is there is to free this poor soul who is tormented by the legion of devils. Well, that's the primary purpose, let's say. The secondary purpose, we might say, was surely to confront the power of darkness, even, or perhaps especially, in those places where it may have seemed most secure.

If you have maps at the back of your Bible, it might be handy to look at them and to see that the Sea of Galilee there, with its sort of shape like a kind of slimmed-down Africa, the Gadarenes were in the bottom right-hand corner.

That area where Jesus is going to just now in this chapter is the southeast corner of the Sea of Galilee. And most of his ministry was conducted up on the northwest corner, and we'll come to that in just a minute, in the area of Capernaum, or occasionally Bethsaida, which is at the very tip-top of the Sea of Galilee there.

But for the moment, I want us to recognize something else. We've talked about just now, about where darkness, where the power of the evil one, was strong. The area to the east of the Sea of Galilee was known as Decapolis, and that's referred to here at verse 20.

He departed and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him, and all men did marvel. Now, Decapolis is Greek. It means ten cities.

[3 : 04] And these ten cities were kind of leftovers from the time of Alexander the Great, when he had swept east from Greece itself into Asia, down into Palestine, Egypt, and as far east as Afghanistan and India, and so on, sweeping all before him.

And he had planted sort of Greek colony cities in that area to the east of the Jordan. And they had been largely self-governing, autonomous cities.

At least then, after the Jews briefly got their independence in the time between the Old and New Testaments, they were taken over by the Jews. But then when the Romans came along, they sort of liberated them, you could say, to be pagan Greek again.

They had a measure of self-control at local level. They still paid taxes to the Romans. They still had to do conscription and so on. But they could govern themselves. But they were essentially Greek. Their culture was Greek. Their background was Greek. Their language, their method of local government, and their religion was that of the temples of the pagan Greek gods.

[4 : 11] Now, this is important because in all that area, Greek pagan idol worship is what would be prevailing. Just as when Paul confronts them in Athens, and he says, look, I can see all your

different altars, all your different gods and idols.

And here's what I want to tell you about the unknown god. Well, they didn't have an unknown god then in Decapolis, but they had all the other pagan gods and idols which were there. Now, Paul points out to us in 1 Corinthians 10, verses 19 and 20.

He said, What say I then that the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God.

And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. So, if there is the pagan gods of Greece that are worshipped there throughout Decapolis, that means effectively, according to what the New Testament tells us, that it's devils that are being worshipped under the guise of these Greek gods, these false gods, false spirits, that which is not the true God.

And if you're not giving your worship to the true God, then ultimately, whether overtly or subtly or unknowingly, you are giving it to the evil one. You are giving it to devils. And that's what Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians.

[5 : 32] So, they are effectively worshipping these devils, these false gods, throughout Decapolis. So, the devil's power is strong. So, just across the Sea of Galilee, from the Jewish communities, who are worshipping the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, is this part of the country, which is devoted to paganism and effectively devil worship.

And reaping the fruit of that. The darkness that is there, the power that the devil has there, is epitomized to this poor, tormented soul, which is so possessed.

And any companions that he might have there, Matthew mentions, for example, implies that there were two such demon-possessed men amongst the tombs there. Well, if there was two, there was certainly one.

And obviously, one of them was prominent. So, that he is filled with devils. Legion of devils. That he is. And he is a terror to all those round about.

They may worship false gods and devils, but they don't like to be terrorized by somebody who's filled with them. Matthew 8, verse 28. When he was come to the other side into the country of the Gargases, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

[6 : 50] Exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. Everybody was terrified of this man and any companions he might have.

This, indeed, was one of the means whereby the devil held sway over the whole population of that area by the massive power and the superhuman strength which he had showed and exercised in this poor, miserable soul.

The devil, then, in many things, he's strong, he's powerful, and he has many evil attributes. But one thing, he is not. And he is not a fool.

And if I would say to you that we ought to respect the devil, I don't mean that in a nice, affectionate way. I mean that we should recognize how dangerous he is. We should not believe that he is a fool. And we see evidence of this in that he would have been aware as a powerful spirit, which the devil is, he would have been aware that Jesus was coming to confront his power.

[7 : 54] Jesus was coming where the darkness was most dense around the Sea of Galilee. He was coming to the Galilee. He was coming to free this tormented soul. And the devil knows that he's coming.

So if you look at what happens in the immediate preceding verses, you've got Jesus traveling. Remember how we said that his ministry is based in the northwest of the Sea of Galilee in the Capernaum area.

Gathra is in the southeast. So it's almost the entire length of the Sea of Galilee that Jesus is having to travel. You know, some commentators have said, oh, Sea of Galilee is only 13 miles long. It's only eight miles wide at the fattest part, the widest part, and about the area of the Gadreins. It's only about five miles across, as though Jesus was only traveling five miles. He's not traveling horizontally from west to east.

He's not traveling in a straight, flat line. You know, we can fall into that trap of thinking he's just traveling from one side to the other. Much as, you know, you can look out over the mince and think that the boat from Tarver to Uy is traveling pretty much horizontally across the mince.

[8 : 59] It isn't. You look at our map, and she's pretty much traveling, not quite north to south, but certainly north, west to south. He's traveling almost up and down in a slanty line.

It's not like going straight across, horizontally across the mince. And it's the same with the Sea of Galilee here. Jesus is traveling almost the entire length and from one side to the other, from the north, west, to the south, east.

So he's traveling 11, 12 miles of water. And he's traveling it through the midst of a storm. That's what we read in the immediate preceding passage.

That the devil, we must presume, has whipped up this storm to try and stop Jesus from getting where he is going. And he is seeking to prevent, perhaps if he can even destroy Jesus, whip up the storm while Jesus lies fast asleep in the boat.

There arose a great storm of wind, chapter 4, verse 37, and the waves beat into the ship so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship asleep on a pillow.

[10 : 07] And they awakened and said, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose and rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased. And there was a great calm.

And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly and said one to another, What manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? Now, the disciples were experienced, fishermen.

You imagine that they really, as soon as they were a little bit of wind, they said, Oh, quick, wake up the master. No, they would have fought it and worked against it and tried everything before they awakened Jesus.

It's only when they thought they were going to go down, the ship was full of water. They thought they were going to die. They awakened Jesus. So they've been fighting it for a while. Why does this matter?

He'd be traveling down through it almost certainly at night. Why do we say at night? Well, because if you go back to chapter 4 again, verse 35, He has just finished teaching all the people and speaking in parables.

[11 : 08] The same day when the even was come, he says unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. Now, that doesn't tell us that it was definitely night time. It could mean anything from after 3 o'clock.

3 o'clock in the afternoon was when they did the evening sacrifice at the temple. So it could simply mean late afternoon. It could mean the evening is simply wearing on. But it takes time to dismiss the crowds.

It takes time to get into the ship. It takes time depending on the direction of the wind to get going, to get underway. So we can safely say that night had come down by the time the storm hits the ship.

You might think, well, sailing at night, 11, 12 miles, it's not that big a deal. The disciples were fishermen. They fished at night. That's what they did. So it's not that big a problem in itself.

And why are we concerned about the night time and the time factor and the length that Jesus is traveling? Well, for this reason only, the question of timing. because it means, as one commentator has pointed out, that even if he's traveling the 11, 12 miles, even if it's nighttime, even if there's a storm, it's not going to take him 12 hours from 6 at night till 6 in the morning to travel the life of the Sea of Galilee.

[12 : 23] Which means it's still going to be nighttime when he arrives at the Gadarene shore. When he arrives below the mountains and the caves which doubled up as the tombs for the people of this pagan area.

And in these mountains and amongst the caves and the tombs there dwells this man filled with superhuman strength and with such power that he can tear chains off his limbs and he terrorizes the area.

And at night they arrive after a storm in the midst of a Gadarene graveyard out of which this monster effectively comes rushing up to them crying out loud and must have been terrifying.

Now graveyards at night are not most people's idea of fun anyway. But the point is the whole sense of the spiritual darkness of the place is underscored by the physical elements of storm and danger and death and the tombs and the man who lives amongst the dead coming out of the graveyard straight to them in the middle of the night.

If anything is calculated to terrify and to use the power of darkness to make the disciples or even Jesus turn and run the devil was using everything he possibly could even the theatrical nature of night time graveyard monsters coming out of their graves and rushing down to Jesus crying their heads off ready to try and scare him off if that was possible certainly to try and scare away the disciples.

[14 : 19] This is the time at which they arrive and gather and as I say graveyards at night time are not most people's idea of fun but when a vulnerable monster comes rushing out of you out of the dark out of the midst of the graves most of us would be terrified but Jesus to whom the darkness and the light are both the same sees beyond the outer spooky circumstances to see the sorrowing misery of a tormented soul who longs to be free.

Jesus is not about to turn and run from this man because he is precisely the reason that Jesus came here which for all that we know from the record as I mentioned a week while ago is very likely the only time that he did so the only time that he came to this part of Galilee was to set this man free that is why he had come he's not about to turn and run away sometimes we can encounter people in our lives and they might seem cold or they might seem indifferent or they might seem as if they're snobby or they might seem as if they're putting up barriers and defences but we don't know what is in that person's heart and it may be that they are shy or it may be that they have been hurt in the past or it may be that they are trying to protect themselves and that's why all these barriers go up and that's why they seem cold and maybe they're afraid to engage in a friendly way with people because they've been trampled on in the past we don't know the secrets of anybody's heart but Jesus knows the secrets of this man's heart he knows the superhuman strength that the devil has given him but he also knows the misery in which he is being kept this is the purpose of why Jesus has come they came over unto the other side of the sea into the country of the gatherings the storm had failed just as Herod's bloodthirsty attempt to wipe out the Lord Jesus when he slaughtered all the little children of Bethlehem had failed Jesus was here in Gentile country now although given that some Jews would undoubtedly live amongst the gatherings and amongst the Gentiles there we don't know whether this individual man was himself Jewish who just happened to be living on that side of the sea or whether he was a Gentile now it could be either but my own inclination personal viewpoint is that he was probably a Jewish man who happened to be living over there simply because Jesus himself says that he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel now admittedly he helps the Syrophenician woman when he goes up the tire inside him but she seeks him out you say well this man seeks Jesus out he comes rushing up to him here but it cannot be coincidence that Jesus travels the entire length of the sea of Galilee has this one encounter with this one individual and the rest of the people say please go away he says yes okay fine

I'll go away and that's it he intends to be there he intends to encounter this individual it's not like the Syrophenician woman to whom he says well it's not fit to take the children's meeting given to the dogs I am only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel everything in this narrative indicates that Jesus is going there deliberately that he is seeking out this tormented soul possessed with the legion of devils to set him free and that doesn't necessarily mean he has to be Jewish but the rest of Jesus ministry would imply that this is a Jew living amongst Gentiles who is alienated in so many ways who is possessed with this legion of devils and Jesus has come to set him free it doesn't affect the content of the story of the account and he doesn't have to be Jewish he could just as easily be Gentile but I'm more inclined to think he's probably an estranged Israelite in that sense but either way he is in a state of living death among the tombs and graves he is filled with devils he is self harming he is terrifying to those around him and he is utterly without hope until he sees Jesus Jesus has crossed the sea to find this man and to heal him now you and I as mentioned this morning our ordinary condition is that of effectively living corpses we are not really coming alive until we come alive in Christ it is the power of Christ that brings us alive we are in a state of just existence of living death until we come to know Christ until we are filled with it and all that we have in this world before that it is just emptiness by comparison to what the Lord gives us and he has crossed not merely an earthly sea he has crossed the indescribable distance from heaven itself down to earth to come to seek out the likes of us to come to seek out those of us who are enslaved to sin and death and to whom the devil seems to have such an easy time just to muck up our lives and to get in there and to make misery for us so often we may often feel we are in a state of living death but Christ is the one who has come to set us free and we have no strength of our own until

such time as we encounter

[19:53] Christ and when he was coming to the ship immediately they met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit now this unclean spirit okay it's legion they describe themselves as legion which means there's thousands of them controlling this man but think of it you know Jesus encounters a lot of people with unclean spirits in the course of his ministry you know this is Mark's account of the gospel just a couple of chapters earlier at the very beginning of his ministry you know that was in the synagogue verse 23 of chapter 1 a man with an unclean spirit and he cried out saying let us alone what are we to do with thee thou Jesus of Nazareth art thou come to destroy us I know thee who thou art the holy one of God there's there's there's there's there's there's there's there's there's there's people afflicted with unclean spirits constantly or regularly throughout Jesus ministry so there's a lot of darkness in Palestine at the time of Jesus ministry there's so much demon activity in

Palestine in Jesus days so much demon possession we think well how come there isn't so much in our day how do we know do they only come out for Jesus are they only exposed by Jesus most people would seek simply to explain it away oh well it's just you know he's he's very dark in his personality or he's just afflicted he just happens to be ill you know we don't we tend to discount the activity of the evil one in our day and age and so we ignore it and he's perfectly happy with that but you can be sure that when you look at the fruits of our life and our unbelief as a nation the devil is plenty active from the current as a power all the way down to the most ordinary people in the street he is just having a field day so much broken faith broken promises so much slaughter of the unborn at one end of life and the attempts to bring in euthanasia at the other end of life the disregard for human life and souls and the valuing of that which is sin that which is oppressive that which is depraved is plugged is promoted that which is holy and pure is derided and mocked the Lord is mocked every other religion is exalted and given place for the true faith of Christ it is said of naught and the

Lord is disregarded despised in our land with the fruit that inevitably will follow from that the levels of crime the levels of violence the levels of dislocation and disintegration in our society that is what you would expect we cannot say the devil is not at work amongst us of course he is but it is only when Jesus encounters these demons that they come out they are exposed they are shown for what they are you know sometimes you see in these crime programs on TV and things you see people investigating a crime and maybe there's been blood spilt or whatever and nobody can see it with the naked eye but then they switch off the lights and somebody turns on the ultraviolet torch or something and you can see all the stains and the smears then because then it's exposed by the right kind of light and these devils these demons they are brought out into the open by the light that Jesus shines it may only be Christ that causes them to emerge into the open perhaps we don't know they obviously emerged also for the apostles at different times you know the demon possessed girl in Philippi who was fortune telling and Paul sent the spirit to come out of her that's what got them into trouble in Philippi so there are times the power of Christ is the same in his apostles as it is in himself in the days of his flesh that's what he promised he said greater things than these shall ye do because I go to my father so the devil is exposed by the pure light that Christ brings this man and his dwelling among the tombs no man could bind him no not with chains the tombs as we've already mentioned is a limestone cage that would be above the sea of Galilee there it was among the dead that he lived now if you touch the dead body in terms of the old testament law you were defiled so this man lived in a permanent state of defilement he was amongst the dead he was effectively the living dead dead and yet he couldn't be bound in the same way as death cannot be bound it can't be bound with chains or fetters you can't hold it back you can't control it and he couldn't control this man either he was too powerful restraint would have spared him from some of the harm he would do to himself some of the anguish and pain he would suffer but the devil doesn't want to be restrained the devil wants liberty to do as much harm as possible he is given this superhuman strength because he had often been bound with fetters and chains and the chains had been plucked asunder by him and the fetters broken in pieces neither could any man tame him what is his condition is he then saying hey I rule this place

I am strong I am powerful it's great to be me no but rather we read it verse 5 always night and day he was in the mountains and in the tombs crying and cutting himself with stones it is a picture of sleepless misery no peace just ongoing misery and self harm this is his condition this is the condition in which the devil keeps people where there is no peace no matter what they do no matter

how much wealth they might try and accumulate no matter how much more powerful they might try and make themselves there is no peace there is no peace says the Lord as Isaiah tells us to the wicked no peace to the wicked and yet we read here verse 6 when he saw Jesus afar off he ran and worshipped him why would the devil do that why would the devil go running to Jesus and fall down and worship him because he cannot do anything else he is compelled he is drawn he is forced to acknowledge this greater power it's like a dog when it is confronted with a more powerful look rolls over its back and puts its paws up and adopts this position of submission in the hope that it will have mercy now when the devil sees

Christ he knows this is a power but a power far greater than himself he comes rushing he abases himself he pleads pathetically for the mercy that he would never show to others because we recognize and the word of God tells us in the book of James remember chapter 2 verse 19 thou believest there is one God thou doest well the devils also believe and tremble likewise in Philippians 2 verses 10 and 11 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth whether we're talking of the spiritual realm or the earthly realm or the realm of the dead or hell itself every knee shall bow including that these devils they cannot keep away they have to come they are forced they are compelled to bow before the Christ when they see him that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus

[27 : 31] Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father even the devil acknowledges him here and pleads for mercy because he knows that Jesus is not you say you're okay just stay there in the man that's fine keep tormenting him keep on having fun you know I'm way back now across the sea of Galilee he's not going to do that as soon as the devil sees Jesus he knows he is going to be banished he knows he is going to be torn out of this body that he has inhabited and be sent somewhere else and that's why you get this sort of pathetic pleading from the devil like in chapter 1 let us alone what are we to do with the Jesus of Nazareth art thou come to destroy us I know thee whom thou art a holy one of God and here he is again pleading I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not he's content to torment others but he doesn't want to be tormented himself and so he seeks that he would have a little bit of mercy from God for he had said I've been come out of the man and he asked him what is thy name and he answered saying my name is Legion for we are many now it was thought in ancient times that if you had control or if you knew the name of a spirit then you had a measure of control over it it could be commanded it could be summoned it could be dispatched if you had control of its name now Jesus of course is perfectly able to banish the spirit without knowing its name but he demands its name partly to demonstrate its power to say I can compel you to confess exactly who you are exactly what you are and he answers my name is

Legion for we are many now of course as we mentioned in the past a Roman Legion at full strength was 6,000 men but this isn't an exact description here it is like you know in the British army a regiment at full strength might be a thousand men but who knows how many it might be in time of peace or war or reserve battalions or whatever it might be so we can't say it would definitely mean 6,000 demons but what we can say is that means an indeterminately large and powerful force it means that whilst there may or may not have been as many as 6,000 demons it does mean that they are a military kind of strength they have such power and such unity they are a numerous power they have order and they have unity they speak as one voice my name is legion for we are many they are united in the arm that they intend to do and he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country why do they want to stay in the country because in this country in the country of the

Gadarenes where pagan idols are worshipped they are having a good time they are ruling well over these people they are keeping them in darkness they are able to inflict their misery they know they are going to have to leave this individual man now but just don't send us out the country now there was nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding and all the devils besought him saying send us into the swine that we may enter into that now we don't know whether these swine were being kept by Jewish people or by Gentiles if it was by Gentiles then it was highly provocative to the nearby Jewish communities if it was by Jews then it was an illegal trade either way it was not a healthy or good thing that was going on 2000 and it's only Mark that gives us this little kind of eyewitness type detail the only Mark specifies 2000 that was mentioned in the past 2000 of anything is a lot to lose it doesn't matter what your agricultural focus is 2000 of anything is a huge amount of economic potential to lose and there they all go charging off the edge of the cliff into the

sea and are dragged choked in the sea 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 and this means some of the time has passed because if it was night time still dark when all of this is going on then they couldn't have seen clearly and be nobody's going to come out of the city in the dark and say come on to the tombs let's go and see what's happened there no way we're not going there there's that monster there that we're all terrified of no so clearly it was night when Jesus arrives at the tombs it was still night when he arrives but with all that's been going on and with all that happens with the man with the legion of devils and then with the swine the dawn is beginning to arrive the day has begun to dawn by the time they get into the city they tell their tale that people are coming out this is the dawn of the day now it's daylight clearly because they can see everything clearly those who kept the swine can see everything clearly and they went out to see what was done 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 here's another little detail view you see is that whilst

Mark's account of the gospel doesn't mention that he had no clothes it's in Luke that this is specified probably Mark again going by his account this is a story everybody knows everybody knows the mad guy who's demon possessed he didn't wear any clothes so he doesn't mention the detail but he says later on that he was clothed and in his right mind now look here later on where he has the same account in chapter 8 and he talks about this incident and they met him out of the city a certain man which had devil's long time and wear no clothes neither abode in any house but in the tombs and then at verse 35 of Luke 8 he went out to see what was done and came to Jesus and found the man out of whom the devils were departed sitting at the feet of Jesus Mark just says sitting in a clothed in his right mind but Luke specifies sitting at the feet of Jesus like Mary you know with Mary and Martha here he is sitting drinking in the things that

Jesus is telling drinking in his teaching clothed in his right mind and they were afraid you see when the devil comes rushing to bow at Jesus feet it's not a willing or a happy submission but to feel that Jesus is too pure even for our presence if we are seeking to be faithful to him it's not uncommon remember that Peter when Jesus gave him the miraculous catch of fish said in Luke 5 verse 8 he fell at Jesus knees saying depart from me for I am a sinful man oh Lord but that's not really wanting Jesus to go away saying I'm not worthy to be here I'm not worthy to be in your presence Lord go away because I can't be in the presence of one as holy as you and likewise the centurion of course when Jesus was going to come to his house and heal his servant he sent a message and said and him Lord trouble not thyself

[34 : 49] I am not worthy that thou should enter under my roof wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee but say in a word and my servant shall be healed but I also my man said under authority having under me soldiers I say to one go and he goeth to another come and he come and to my servant do this and he doeth it so to say we want Jesus to not be like where we are it can be simply because we're aware of how holy he is and how unholy we are but it's not an enmity the way that there is with these demons and yet even they are compelled to acknowledge even they have to plead to be sent somewhere else the unclean spirits enter into the unclean beasts and they are destroyed and this terrifies the local population they come back they come out they come to Jesus they see him that was possessed from the devil and had the legion sitting clothed as Luke tells us at the feet of

Jesus and in his right mind now where have he got the clothes from he doesn't have any clothes so he must have got them from the disciples one or two of them must have said well he can have my cloak and he can have my shirt or whatever so now he's got clothes again he didn't have any before but presumably the disciples have called him and there he is with his dignity restored with his humanity restored the devil has gone and Jesus has come friends if we would seek to be entering into the fullness of the manhood or the womanhood for which we will intend it because we will not enter into that fullness of humanity without Christ we must come seeking Jesus we must receive him when he comes seeking us because we are clothed in filthy rags of our own righteousness we think we're good people we think we're doing okay until we see the purity of Christ and then we have to say Lord go depart from me

I'm a sinful man depart from me I'm not worthy to be in your presence I'm not worthy that you should come into my house but Jesus is determined to come he's determined to come and to seek and to save that which was lost he's determined to set free that which was demon possessed where the devil in whatever shade he holds people sway is determined to keep his grip of that and it won't all

be as dramatic as this man here but here he is now clothed and in his right mind and we are clothed at last in the righteousness of Christ that we trust in him we are at last in our right mind we at last see things clearly we at last see the facts as they truly are and not the prejudice and bias that is pushed in us by so-called educational establishments and so-called public media which puts such a slanted one-sided prejudice view of the facts as intent to distort and deceive those who have no thoughts of the

Lord and here we are then pictured as it were by this man here they saw him and they were afraid and they began to pray Jesus to depart out of their coasts and now the devils have what they truly designed if they could have stayed in this poor man's soul they would have done it but they were cast out they don't want to leave the country altogether so what can they do they take away what is precious to these people they take away their economic power take away their swine 2,000 heart of swine they were as loth to let go of their swine as they were to let go of their sin and so they chose instead to part with the saviour the devil still has a hold over them but he's just used a more subtle tact here the best option left to the devil is to control these gatherings by their love of the world and by their love of the world they're controlled by the devil and isn't that the case with multitudes nowadays if they say oh we're not worshipping the devil we're not alcoholists we're not all hanging pentangles from our ceiling and burning secret candles and having little sort of orgies and occultic festivals no no we're not devil worshippers no devil's quite content just to let you be consumed by the love of the world and by the absolute fascination with all its glitz and glamour and empty vanities and people fill their lives and fill their hearts and their minds with these things and then when people die they say oh you'll be up there with the angels what angels they don't believe in angels they don't believe in

God they think oh yeah well you'll be in a better place what is that better place if they have not trusted in Christ there is no better place for those who will be out with Christ this year is as good as it gets because if we are without Christ whilst we live in a world where Christ is at work and active we have something of him but when we go into an eternity without him we have nothing of him this we call hell and that is what awaits us if we depart without Christ they began to pray him to depart out of their course and the devil thus has his true objective the gathering is to be controlled by the devil through their love of the world fearing Christ and yet being no more willing to have him continue with them than this man would be content to keep his devils they had lost their swine they weren't prepared to lose their sin so they are prepared to lose their saviour when he was come into the ship he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with them all inhibitions gone let me stay with the lord let me abide with them and

[41 : 21] Jesus suffered him not and said then go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the lord hath done for thee and hath compassion on thee notice the focus is not on power not in deliverance but on compassion on love pity this is what the lord has and he departed and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him and all men did marvel maybe at this stage they were not converted but throughout Decapolis these Greek ten cities the message of what Jesus had done began to be published through this previously demon possessed man so that when the gospel began to spread out from Jerusalem in the time of the apostles Decapolis had been somewhat prepared and Decapolis remembered and it was within the Decapolis that the apostles and the early church made their base in the days after the end of the

New Testament and before Jerusalem fell they moved out so that when the Romans demolished Jerusalem the Christians were already out and based in the Decapolis Decapolis remembered and those who would not have Christ yet they were compelled to acknowledge as the prophet Ezekiel put it in chapter 2 verse 5 they whether they will hear or whether they will forbear for they are rebellious paths yet shall they know that there hath been a prophet among them here we come who have endured a lifetime perhaps without the fullness of what we could be without the fullness of our potential without growing up and stepping up to what we are designed for to glorify God and enjoy him forever and we will never be able to do that until we surrender to Christ and until he takes us over and when that happens we will be found no longer in our nakedness and shame no longer hiding like

Adam and Eve in the bushes in the garden of Eden but rather clothed in the righteousness of Christ sitting at the feet of Jesus and at last instead of the derangement and vanity of this world at last in our right mind desiring to be with Jesus but not permitted it yet instead rather charged with the duty to tell others of what Christ has done for us we will be with him at the last as this man will be with

him in glory in the fullness of time and our time too will come but for now we have another task and we cannot begin it until we are at last in our right mind let us pray