



Mark 5:1-15

And they came to Jesus and observed the man who had been demon-possessed **sitting down, clothed and in his right mind**, the very man who had had the “legion” (v. 15)

This man who was tormented has been delivered—He has been **renewed** (Cf. 2 Cor 5:17)

- I've seen this—renewal & transformation (severe and nuanced) = beautiful

Jesus cast out demons as one of the functions of His mercy of ministry¹ and as a demonstration that the Kingdom had come

- **If I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you** (Luke 11:20)

What the **In-breaking Kingdom of God** does is **challenge** every other claim to power

- Everything that comes against the loving rule of God
- Everything that keeps people in bondage
- Everything that keeps people from right created order
 - **These things are engaged and challenged**

“Christianity is a fighting religion. It thinks God made the world—that space and time, heat and cold, and all the colors and tastes, and all the animals and vegetables, are things that God ‘made up out of His head’ as a man makes up a story. But it also thinks that a great many things have gone wrong with the world that God made and that God insists, and insists very loudly, on our **putting them right again.**”²

Christ calls us to be a partner with Him in His **renewal** of all things—and it's a fight

In Mark 4 and 5 Jesus demonstrates His power and authority over nature, evil, sickness, and death

- In each case Jesus is exhibiting **renewal**—the correction of something gone wrong

Jesus works these acts of **renewal** by merely speaking

- He rebuked the wind and **said** to the sea “hush, be still” (4:39)
- He had been **saying** to him, “Come out of the man you unclean spirit” (5:8) (even with legion)
- He **said** to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your affliction (5:34)
- And taking the child by the hand, He **said** to her, “Talitha kum!” (which translated means, “Little girl, I **say** to you, arise!”) (5:41)

¹ Mark 1:23-27, 32-34, 39; 3:11-12; 5:1-20; 7:25-30; 9:17-29, 38; 16:9, 17

² C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 37-38

The words of Christ affected change—The Word of God affects change

- **Hebrews 4:12 and Ephesians 6:17**

In the same way that ideas change and shape history and the world

- God's ideas (which we call truth) confront and correct all that is wrong in history and the world
- This is why to be on mission is to be a truth-teller

The truth about demons is that they are defeated!

The victory was won at the cross, is displayed in history, and is consummated at the final judgment

- **Revelation 19:10** tells us that **the devil will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone and tormented day and night forever and ever**
- The devil and his demons know this and this is why in **Mark 5:7** the demonized man says **“do not torment me”**
- In the parallel account in **Matthew 8:29** the question is put this way: **Have you come to torment us before the time?**
 - I.e. the appointed time of judgment
 - Cf. Mark 1:24—**Have you come to destroy us?**

The devil and demons know they are defeated and their fate is sealed

- It is not a struggle between **equal and opposing** powers... God is greater!
- Demons **shudder** at the identity and in the presence of Jesus (Cf. **James 2:19**)
- Jesus is the **victorious King of Glory!**

Because His Kingdom has come, **we should see** and experience victory over evil now

- But because His Kingdom is also coming **we will not see** the fullness of that victory yet
- We see **signs of renewal**, but **not yet complete renewal**

We see this with our salvation as it pertains to sin

- Penalty, power, presence...
- All accomplished—but unfolding

We understand this with **miraculous healing**

- Since His kingdom is 'already' **we should** experience healings today
- Since His kingdom is 'not-yet' **we will not** experience complete healing (**renewal**) until He comes again in victorious glory and **renews all things**

Some do not quite get this and think either: Miraculous healing should always happen, or that miraculous healing never happens

- **They fail to see the “already/not yet” nature of the kingdom**

Perhaps it would be helpful to think of this in terms of death

- Jesus did not only conquer sin, but also death (Cf. **1 Cor 15**)
- But people still die... one day, they will not (**Revelation 21:4**)
 - Death is defeated, but still present for now (Cf. sin and sickness)

As it is with sin, sickness and death, so it is with Satan and demons

- They are defeated but still present
- Just as we deal with sin, sickness and death, we have to deal with demons
 - One day we will not—the victory will be consummated
 - **When Jesus ascended, there was still death, sickness and demons**
 - But their defeat was secured at the cross
 - **When He descends again they will be vanquished once and for all**
 - **Newness will come in fullness**

For now the victory is experienced in signs of renewal that foreshadow the fullness

But, we **should** see and experience **signs of victory and renewal** now (the miraculous!)

- This is what we see in the Gospels and in Acts

The Gospel is **the good news of renewal**—we are called to **be, do and tell** the Gospel

- This action will always result in demons being dealt with
 - When Jesus began to preach the gospel in Galilee “**demons also came out of many**” (Luke 4:41)
 - When Philip went and preached the gospel in Samaria “**unclean spirits came out of many... crying with a loud voice**” (Acts 8:7)
 - Jesus sent Paul to preach among the gentiles “**that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God**” (Acts 26:18)

Because the model of Scripture is that when the gospel goes forth demons are dealt with

- Then we should expect opposition
- But we should also expect to see **immediate and tangible evidence** of Christ's victory over evil as we live life on mission
 - = **Normal Christianity**—signs of Christ's kingdom, victory and renewal

What should also be normal to Christian mission is **dealing with demons the way Jesus did**

- He is our model for mission

So, how did Jesus deal with demons and so display **renewal**?

- He **verbally commanded** them to leave (Mark 5:8)

Subsequently, how did the church in Acts deal with demons?

- They **verbally commanded** them (Acts 16:16-18)

How should we deal with demons?

- The primary model we have from Jesus and Acts is the **verbal command/rebuke**
- This would have been what the disciples would have seen Jesus do and so what they would have done
- This is what we ought to do when confronted directly with demons

Why would God want us to speak directly to demons rather than just pray and ask God to do it?³

- That is a little bit like asking: Why do we share the gospel with people rather than just pray that God would reveal it to them directly?
- Why encourage someone verbally... or rebuke someone openly... (as told in Scripture)
- **Because throughout Scripture and history we see that God has chosen to work through people rather than independent of people**
 - Part of this is praying (2 Cor 10:4 and Eph 6:18)—part of it is more direct involvement and action

“Thereby he enables us to gain the joy of **participating in eternally significant ministry and the joy** of triumphing over the destructive power of Satan and his demons in people’s lives. It is not that God could not deal with demonic attacks every time we prayed and asked him to do so, for he certainly could and he no doubt sometimes does. But the NT pattern seems to be that God ordinarily expects Christians themselves to speak directly to the unclean spirits.”⁴

We should also think about this: Scripture gives no indication that demons can know our thoughts, so it makes sense to speak commands and rebukes out loud

Some object to commanding demons verbally because of Jude 9 says: **Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”**

- However, in context this passage is not talking about Christians and their encounters with demons but rather **“ungodly persons” who deny Jesus Christ**.
- They are described as people who **“live immoral lives, defy authority, and scoff at supernatural beings.”** (Jude 8, NLT)
- **The point is** these ungodly people have no understanding (v. 10) of spiritual beings and overstep **their** bounds when they scoff at (or revile) them
- The reference to Michael the archangel is to illustrate that even such a powerful creature did not go beyond the authority that God had given him
 - He did not dare rebuke the devil in and of himself, but relied upon the Lord’s authority (**“The Lord rebuke you.”**)
 - **Hello:** He still spoke to the devil (how some deduce from this that we should not is beyond me)
- **The lesson** of the verse is simply “Don’t try to go beyond the authority God has given you.”⁵

Jesus gave us authority to cast out demons in His name to all believers! (**Mark 16:17**)

- And he gave us the model of verbally commanding them

So, what do you say?

- Jesus said, **“Come out of the man you unclean spirit”** (Mark 5:8)
- Paul said, **“I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!”** (Acts 16:18)
- Do what you see Jesus and Paul doing in the Bible—**be biblical!**

³ For these thoughts I am indebted to Wayne Grudem’s *Systematic Theology* p. 428

⁴ Grudem, 429

⁵ Grudem, 428.

- We may do this in **intercessory prayer** (out loud)
- We may do this on behalf of somebody while **in their presence**
- We may use Scripture (Ephesians 6:17 and Matthew 4:1-11)

Be biblical and be thorough

- In Mark 9:25 we read
He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him **and do not enter him again.**"
- Cf. The Ventura House

The authority found in name (I.e. identity) of Jesus is the key

- Not as a magical incantation
- But as pertaining to His identity and our being truly identified with Him
- **Acts 19:11-16**

When the name of Jesus is invoked correctly, as the one who we ourselves worship and see as supreme, and our identity with Him is authentic, then we rightly exercise that authority

When it comes to living life on mission, Jesus wants us to use what He has given us!

- And He has given us authority to cast out demons in His name!
- He delegated this authority to the **twelve** (Mark 3:15; 6:7), to the **seventy** (Luke 10:17), and to **all believers** (Mark 16:17)
 - **And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons...** (Mark 16:17^{a-b})

This was the model of Jesus. It is the model in the book of Acts. It was the practice of the church after Acts:

"All the authority and power we have over them (evil spirits) is from **our naming the name of Christ**, and recalling to their memory the woes with which God threatens them at the hand of Christ their Judge, and which they expect one day to overtake them. Fearing Christ in God and God in Christ, they become subject to the servants of God and Christ. So at one touch and breathing, overwhelmed by the thought and realization of those judgment fires, they leave at our command the bodies they have entered, unwilling and distressed, and before your very eyes put to an open shame."

(Early Church Father Tertullian ca. 160 – ca. 220 A.D, *Apology*)

Because the identity of Jesus is always the issue...

- This is where demons attack
 - Which is why the **Word of God** is necessary to a life of mission
- And this is how demons are exposed
 - 1 John 4:2-3
 - 2 **By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;**
 - 3 **and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God...**
 - This actually works
 - The true identity of Jesus is always the issue!

The basis for our authority is (1) the identity of Christ, (2) His work on the Cross, and (3) our identity in Him

- 1. The identity of Christ
 - Philippians 2:9-11
...God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- 2. Christ's work on the Cross
 - Hebrews 2:14 tells us that Jesus took on flesh and blood "that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil"
 - Colossians 2:15 (NLT) tells us that Jesus "disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross."
 - Because the blood of Christ speaks of His death we read in Rev 12:11 that while in conflict with Satan in this world believers "they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony"

- 3. Our identity in Christ
 - Galatians 3:26 (ESV)says "for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith."
 - 2 Corinthians 5:20 calls us ambassadors for Christ

These things allow us to confront demonic opposition without fear

- 1 John 4:4
You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.
- 2 Timothy 1:7
for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control
- Ephesians 6:10
Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.
- James 4:7 and 1 Peter 5:9
Resist the devil and he will flee from you
- 2 Corinthians 10:4
the weapons of our warfare... divinely powerful
- Ephesians 6:16
the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Sometimes, it is still difficult

- In the dozens of demons I have cast out in the name of Jesus there have been a couple times where I was unsuccessful
- This was true for the disciples as well

Mark 9:17-29 (story)

- Jesus rebuked their **unbelief** (9:19)—it was a faith issue
 - And Jesus said **certain kinds require prayer** (9:29)
 - He did not mean that they had to pray instead of practice the normal verbal rebuke they had learned from Jesus
 - Jesus does just that and casts it out
 - What He seems to have meant (in light of that fact that he first rebuked their faith) was that they had to have already been **cultivating a life of faith building prayer**
 - In other words, the boys were just not on their game at the moment—they were spiritually weak
 - **You want to be effective in mission, you have to be practiced in prayer.**
- Our spiritual condition (which is largely determined by our prayer lives) is a major factor in our success in dealing with demons

It is not enough to just expel demons, but we must also install Christ

- Matthew 12:43-45
 - 43 Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it.
 - 44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it **unoccupied, swept, and put in order.**
 - 45 Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first...
- **The idea being, I think, it is not enough to confront evil, we must also install Christ**
- This is why so many non-Gospel centered organizations and mercy ministries are falling short in my opinion

We have to be (1) Christ and gospel centered and (2) we have to have Gospel bold humility

- 1. Our only hope in these matters is Christ and the truth of the Gospel
- 2. The Gospel gives us bold humility (Cf. The Lion and the Lamb)
 - Pride is Satan's sin—it should not be ours

Luke 10:17-20

17 The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

18 And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

19 Behold, **I have given you authority** to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.

20 **Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."**

And that we belong to and are identified with the Glorious King who is making all things new!

And in Him we have victory!!!