

Introduction

We live in an age when some people deny the existence of Satan and his demonic forces. They try and explain everything with physical, medical, and psychological explanations. They treat most medical and psychological problems with drugs. There is a complete denial of the spiritual forces of darkness.

We also live in an age where many treat the demonic realm like a fairy tale. We have movies about witches, demons, and the occult. It is entertaining, and sometimes scary entertainment, but it is still just entertainment. Disney is full of Corilla Devilles, witches, and other satanic characters. There is not a respect or proper fear of involvement in witchcraft and the occult. They do not see the danger of the occult. People have artifacts and many other items that are full of the occult and paganism. To most of these people, it is just a fairy tale.

We live in an age where some people in the church blame everything on the devil. Every cold virus, heart condition or body ache is from the devil, and is a spiritual attack. There is no consideration that our outer man is decaying (2 Cor 4:16-17). There is no consideration that many of these afflictions and hardships are due to our sins, poor decisions, poor diet, or just natural causes that affect everyone.

Jesus came to earth to destroy the works of the devil. There was no denial of the existing of the devil or his demons. There was no playing around with demons or the occult for entertainment. Jesus did not blame everything on the devil or his demons. Some people he cured by casting out demons. Others, he cured simply by speaking to the condition, rebuking the sickness, or by laying on His hands. He understood that not everything was demonic, but He was very discerning about what was demonic and what was not demonic. He understood the spiritual forces of darkness, and He did not mess around with them. He destroyed the works of the devil.

(1 John 3:8) "the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil."

God has revealed a lot about the principles of darkness in His word. The account that we read today gives us great insight into the kingdom of darkness. The account today is about a man who was suffering greatly in the kingdom of darkness, being possessed by demons, and was delivered into God's marvelous light. He was then told to proclaim the excellencies of Him who called him. In 1 Peter 2:9-10, Peter wrote that we are called out of darkness into His marvelous light so that we might proclaim the excellencies of God. This exactly what our passage today. I have called it Luther's Testimony. We see his life before. We see how Jesus cast out the demons in his life and set him free. Finally, we see him declaring what God had done for him.

(1 Peter 2:9) "But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

Luther's Testimony (Mark 5:1-20)

1. His Life Before Jesus (Mark 5:1-5)
2. His Experience With Jesus (Mark 5:6-13)
3. His New Life (Mark 6:14-20)

(Mark 5:1-20) "They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. {2} When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him, {3} and he had his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; {4} because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. {5} Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones. {6} Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; {7} and shouting with a loud voice, he said, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!" {8} For He had been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" {9} And He was asking him, "What is your name?" And he said to Him, "My name is Legion; for we are many." {10} And he *began* to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country. {11} Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. {12} *The demons* implored Him, saying, "Send us into the swine so that we may enter them." {13} Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand *of them*; and they were drowned in the sea. {14} Their herdsman ran away and reported it in the city and in the country. And *the people* came to see what it was that had happened. {15} 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"; and they became frightened. {16} Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and *all* about the swine. {17} And they began to implore Him to leave their region. {18} As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might accompany Him. {19} And He did not let him, but He said to him, "Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and *how* He had mercy on you." {20} And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed."

1. His Life Before Jesus (Mark 5:1-5)

The disciples had just gone through a big hurricane and had seen Jesus hush the winds and the waves, and they were more afraid now than they were of the storm. They recognized that they were in the boat with the Son of God. Jesus had told them that He wanted to cross to the other side. Our text today says that they came to the other side of the sea. They had left from Capernaum, but we are not told exactly where on the other side of the sea they went to. Mark records that they went into the country of the Gerasenes. In Luke's account he also said they sailed into the country of the Gerasenes. However, in Matthew's account, he wrote that they came into the country of the Gadarenes. The KJV says the country of the Gergesenes, but older manuscripts all say Gadarenes. The KJV and the NKJV are the only versions that translate this as the Gergesenes. Most scholars attribute this difference to Origen, a scholar from Alexandria, Egypt. (184 A.D. to 253 A.D.) He introduced this based on just a conjecture, as all the early manuscripts clearly state Gadara. This has caused some people to doubt the inerrancy of Scripture. I hold to the truth that the word of God is inspired and it is inerrant. Our understanding is lacking at times, but the Word of God is true and can be trusted. The translations can be flawed, but the original text as were written are inerrant, accurate and trustworthy.

(Luke 8:26) "Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee."

(Matt 8:28-34) "When He came to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs. *They were so*

extremely violent that no one could pass by that way. {29} And they cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" {30} Now there was a herd of many swine feeding at a distance from them. {31} The demons *began* to entreat Him, saying, "If You *are going to* cast us out, send us into the herd of swine." {32} And He said to them, "Go!" And they came out and went into the swine, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the waters. {33} The herdsmen ran away, and went to the city and reported everything, including what had happened to the demoniacs. {34} And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw Him, they implored Him to leave their region."

Our passage ends today with Luther proclaiming in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him. He was sharing his testimony with people in Decapolis. What is Decapolis? It is a region or state south of the Sea of Galilee. Decapolis is Greek for ten cities. It was a state that had ten cities. Scholars say there were as many as eighteen cities there, but there were ten primary cities, thus the name, Decapolis. One of those cities is Gerasa, or Gerash. It is 42 miles south of the Sea of Galilee. When Mark said the region of the Gerasenes, he is referring to the region dominated by the people from Gerasa. Gerasa was the capital, and the largest city in Decapolis. It was established by Pompey the Great about 175 BC. It is a very pagan area, with many false gods and goddesses. They built temples dedicated to Zeus, Hera, Apollo, Poseidon, Artemis, and Nemesis. There have been found coins throughout Jerash with inscriptions invoking Nabatean gods. So, it was a very pagan area with a lot of false gods. The area was known as the region of the Gerasenes.

(Mark 5:20) "And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed."

When Matthew records that Jesus came into the country of the Gadarenes, he was also correct. Gadara was a little north of Gerasa, and it is in between the Sea of Galilee and Gerasa. Gadara was also part of Decapolis. Gadara was the closest city to where our account was, so this was also the country of the Gadarenes. Either term would be correct.

(Matt 8:28) "When He came to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs. *They were* so extremely violent that no one could pass by that way." (Note: Gergesenes in KJV)

But, where did Jesus actually cross over to? We have another clue in Mark 5:13. Jesus gave the demons permission to enter the herd of swine and the herd immediately rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned. The Jordan River feeds into the Sea of Galilee at the north end and flows out of it at the south end, where it goes down to the Dead Sea. At the south end of the Sea of Galilee, it is a lush valley that is great for farming. There are no steep banks at the south end. So, you have to go northeast side a few miles to get where there are some steep cliffs or banks that go to the water. We don't have an exact spot, but we do have a very good approximation of where the scene took place. There are also some ancient tombs in that area, which also are supported by our text.

(Mark 5:13) "Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand *of them*; and they were drowned in the sea."

As soon as Jesus got out of the boat, He was immediately confronted by a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit. The first part of our testimony is our life before Christ. In the next few verses we have the description of this man's life before Christ, that I am calling Luther. First, Luther had an unclean spirit. Actually, He had thousands of unclean or demonic spirits. The spirit mentioned here is the head demon in this man. I will get into that a little later. Second, Luther has been dwelling among the tombs. Normal people do not live in a graveyard or among the tombs. Third, we see that no one was able to bind him, even with a chain. He had supernatural strength to even break chains. This was evidenced by the fact that he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces. Furthermore, no one was strong enough to subdue him. He had supernatural strength. Fourth, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains. Fifth, he was gashing himself with stones. He probably had a demon of destruction among the many other demons.

(Mark 5:2-5) "When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him, {3} and he had his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; {4} because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. {5} Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones."

Sixth, in Luke's account we find that this man had not put on any clothing for a long time. He went running around naked. This is not natural. This is a sexually perverted and immoral individual. This is a person who was clearly possessed by demons. This man was controlled and under the bondage of these cruel demons. This was Luther's life before Christ.

(Luke 8:27) "And when He came out onto the land, He was met by a man from the city who was possessed with demons; and who had not put on any clothing for a long time, and was not living in a house, but in the tombs."

Before I move on to Luther's encounter with Jesus, I want to make a few more comments about demons. Many people have asked me over the years how to know if someone has a demon. I think that it is pretty easy to see that Luther had a demon. There is a lot of evidence of this. But, sometimes people with strong personalities get accused of being demonized. Some people are hard to get along with. They are stubborn, strong-willed, and unreasonable. This could mean that there are some evil spirits, but it does not automatically mean that. My experience has been that when you start accusing people of having demons, you can really offend people. Jesus was accused many times of having demons, and He was not offended. But we are not Jesus and I am telling you that people get offended when people accuse them of having demons. The first church that I planted was growing and doing well until this small group of people started accusing a woman in the church of having a Jezebel spirit. We lost 60% of the church in a couple of weeks. The husband of the woman accused was a small-group leader and all the families in his group immediately left. We ended up losing three of the five life groups in our church over it. This is not something to take lightly. The devil is the accuser of the brethren, and we should not be involved in doing his work. So, the determination of who has a demon is very important.

I used to fast regularly. One Monday, when I was fasting, I arrived at work and a man that worked in a different department came into my office. He told me what was going on, and I immediately had an impression from the Lord that he was being chased and tormented by a demon. This was a word of knowledge, and God sometimes reveals things through words of

knowledge. I called Joe Warner and made an appointment for Wednesday so that the two of us could minister to the man. Unfortunately, the next morning when I arrived at work, I heard the terrible news that he had jumped off the fifth floor of a hotel and had died. This demon had been chasing him and he could not get away from it. I asked God to forgive me for not dealing with the demon immediately. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will clearly tell you that a person has a demonic spirit.

In Acts 16, Paul was in Thyatira and there was a girl with a spirit of divination. She was making a lot of money for her master by fortune-telling. Paul knew that the girl was not getting this revelation from the Holy Spirit; she was getting it from demons. She had a spirit of divination. Even though Paul knew this, he did not do anything about it immediately. It says that she continued to do this for many days and Paul was greatly annoyed. Finally, he turned to the spirit and commanded it to come out of her in the name of Jesus Christ, and it came out at that very moment. Sometimes there are distinguishing manifestations like this girl had that alert us to the person being under the control and influence of a demon.

(Acts 16:16-18) "It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling. {17} Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." {18} She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment."

In 1 John 4:2-3, he tells us how to know the Spirit of God and a spirit from the antichrist. If someone has the Spirit of God, he will confess Jesus Christ has come from God and will confess Him as Lord. The demons know that Jesus is from God, but they will not confess Jesus as their Lord and Master.

(1 John 4:2-3) "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 is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world."

In James 2:19, he states that the demons also believe and shudder. They know who Jesus is, but they shudder because they know that He is God and that their judgment day is coming. A believer is going to live his life for Christ, and His faith will be evidenced by his works. A person with an unclean spirit is not going to be living for Christ.

(James 2:19) "You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder."

One of my favorite texts concerning demons is in James 3. He compares the wisdom of God with earthly, natural or demonic wisdom. He gives some fruit of earthly or demonic wisdom. He mentions bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, arrogance, disorder, and evil. Then, James gives the wisdom of God. It is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy, and its fruit is righteousness. When you are looking at someone and wondering if they have a demonic spirit, don't jump to the conclusion that the person has one, but test the spirit. Look at the character of the person and look at their fruit. Is this person

reasonable? Is this person driven by selfish ambition or bitter jealousy? Is this person gentle and full of mercy? Or is this person sowing strife? Is this person unreasonable and unrelenting? What is the fruit of the person?

(James 3:13-18) "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. {14} But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. {15} This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. {16} For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. {17} But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. {18} And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

In our text, Luther was not reasonable. He had supernatural strength. He gashed himself. He went around naked. His life was characterized by disorder and every evil thing. He was not gentle, but was screaming all the time. This man obviously caused trouble and strife and so people had tried to bind him with shackles and chains. He was not a peacemaker. We have looked at Luther's life before Christ; now let's look at his experience with Christ.

2. His Experience With Jesus (Mark 5:6-13)

Luther saw Jesus from a distance and ran up and bowed before Him. All creation, including demons, must bow down before God, and the demons know that Jesus is God's Son. The head demon, Legion, begins shouting with a loud voice, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God. I implore You by God, do not torment me!" We are called to sing and to shout our praise to God, but that is not what these demons are doing. They are not trying to exalt Jesus. Instead, they are saying, what are you doing here? Get out of here. They want nothing to do with Jesus. They are also asking Jesus not to torment them. In 2 Peter 2:4, we see that there is a pit reserved for fallen angels, which are demons, and they are being kept there until judgment when they will be cast into the lake of fire. This pit is called tartaroo in the Greek and it is a place of torment. These demons do not want to get cast into tartaroo and be tormented until the time of judgment, so they are imploring Jesus not to send them there.

(Mark 5:6-7) "Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; {7} and shouting with a loud voice, he said, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!"

(2 Peter 2:4) "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;"

Here are my thoughts on the spiritual warfare that took place. When Jesus said to His disciples that He wanted to go to the other side of the Sea, demons could hear that. I believe the storm that they went through could possibly have been demonically induced. The text does not say that, but we know that the thief has come to steal, kill, and destroy. I don't think the demons wanted Jesus coming over to their territory. Jesus calmed that storm and they are now on the other side. Demons have territories. The shoreline was the edge of this demons territory or dominion. When Jesus got out of the boat, he ran to Jesus and said, "What business do we have with each other?" This demon is the gatekeeper and he does not want to let Jesus into his territory. He is there to guard his territory.

In Daniel 10, he had prayed to God for understanding of a passage about the latter days. God sent His answer through an angel, but the angel was detained for twenty-one days by the prince of the kingdom of Persia. There was a chief demon over that specific territory, the kingdom of Persia. Michael, one of the chief princes came to help this angel and he was able to get through to Daniel. We find out in verse 21 that Michael was assigned to Daniel as his angel. As we read down, the angel said that the prince of Greece is about to come. Some angels and demons are assigned over territories. Some angels and demons are assigned to specific people. We also see that these angels and demons are at war. There is spiritual warfare going on that we are not even aware of. One of the things that I have been praying for is re-enforcements for this area that our church is located. I am declaring this area to be the Lord's domain. I am declaring that this area belongs to the kingdom of God. I want the demons and demonic strongholds out of this area.

(Daniel 10:12-21) "Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding *this* and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. {13} "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia... {20} Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. {21} "However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these *forces* except Michael your prince.

One of the reasons that Legion said to Jesus, "Do not torment me." Was that Jesus had been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" When Paul cast out the spirit of divination, he commanded the spirit to come out. Paul was greatly annoyed so I think his voice might have had a little umph in it, but the text does not say he yelled at it. Jesus was not yelling at this unclean spirit; He had been telling the unclean spirit to come out. Demons do not respond to the loudness of our voice. We don't cast out demons by yelling, screaming, or trying to scare them out of someone. There is one thing that demons respond to: AUTHORITY.

In Mark 1:27, the people were amazed at Jesus' teaching. They said, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." The people recognized that Jesus had authority to cast out demons. In Mark 6, when Jesus sent out His twelve apostles, He gave them authority over the unclean spirits." You must have authority to cast out demons. Where does our authority come from? It comes from Jesus, the same as the apostles.

(Mark 1:27) "They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

(Mark 6:7) "And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits;"

In Acts 19, people saw that Paul was performing extraordinary miracles (Acts 19:11) and evil spirits were being cast out. Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, tried to cast out some spirits. Then they did, the evil spirits said, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" And the spirit leaped on them, subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. These seven sons were not operating under the

authority of Jesus. They had not submitted their lives to Jesus and were not under His authority. To have authority, we must be under authority.

One morning this week I was talking to Karen and I told her that many people that call themselves Christians have no idea or understanding about spiritual authority. Most of them are living their own lives and are not submitted in a church to the elders (pastors) of that church. They are out from being under authority and are in a dangerous place. If Christians and leaders knew and operated under this, the churches would be full and the kingdom of light would be making far greater advances than it is currently making.

(Acts 19:13-16) "But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." {14} Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. {15} And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" {16} And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

In James 4:7, he wrote, "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." This is not talking about deliverance, but it is most certainly talking about spiritual warfare. There are a couple of keys given here. We must submit to God and we must resist the devil. It is not just for ministry purposes that we must be under authority; it is also for our own protection. When we submit to God, we are submitted to those that God has put over us, the pastors of the church. The pastors, according to Hebrews 13:17, must give account for those under their authority. I am afraid that not many people understand this or they would not be staying away from church. They would be running to the church and getting under proper authority.

(James 4:7) "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

I want to mention one more thing about authority before moving on. When Jesus gave the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, He starts by saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." Jesus has ALL authority. When we do what Jesus is telling us to do, we are operating under His authority. If you are in Jesus and submitted to His authority, you can operate under His authority. Notice what Paul said to the spirit of divination in Acts 16:18, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." Paul was in Christ, submitted to Christ, and was casting out the demon in the name of Christ. Demons operate by authority.

(Matt 28:18-20) "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. {19} "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, {20} teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

(Acts 16:18b) "...and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment."

Next, Mark records that Jesus had asked the spirit what his name was. The angels had names and even demons had names. This demon responded and said, "My name is Legion; for are many." The word legion is a Roman military unit. At the time of Christ (Marian Reform), a legion

consisted of between 3,000 and 11,000 soldiers. The legions were comprised of cohorts. Each cohort had ten units. Each unit had six centuriae. Each centuria would have ten contubernia. Each contubernia had eight soldiers. If they needed more, they would have up to 160 men in a centuria. Over all the centurions would be a legion commander. Jesus had been commanding the legion commander to come out of the man. When the legion commander leaves, all the forces under his command also must leave. There were two thousand swine that rushed into the sea. Legion had more demons than that, as he would have had 3-11,000 demons under his authority. The kingdom of God operates under authority. The demons recognized who was speaking to them. They understood authority.

(Mark 5:8) "And He was asking him, "What is your name?" And he said to Him, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

Next, we find Legion imploring Jesus earnestly not to send them out of the country. There was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain, and the demons implored him to send them into the swine. Jesus gave them permission, and once they entered the swine, the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea. The question is, "Why did they ask not to be sent out of the country?" I believe the answer lies in what I said earlier about why Legion met Jesus at the shoreline. This was Legion's territory and they did not want to get cast out of their territory. By going into the swine, they could leave the swine. Water is not going to drown a demon. The pigs may have died, but the demons were then free to go torment other people.

(Mark 5:9-13) "And he *began* to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country. { 11 } Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. { 12 } *The demons* implored Him, saying, "Send us into the swine so that we may enter them." { 13 } Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand *of them*; and they were drowned in the sea."

3. His New Life (Mark 5:14-20)

In a testimony, we have our lie before Christ, what happened, and then our new life. Luther was a wild man living in the tombs, screaming at everyone and everything, gashing himself with stones, and uncontrollable. He had supernatural strength and could not be bound. He was demon-possessed, and had several thousand demons in him. He had just been set free. Jesus had cast out all the demons and Luther was a free man. He is now clothed and in his right mind.

(Mark 5:14-15) "Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the country. And *the people* came to see what it was that had happened. { 15 } 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"; and they became frightened."

I have been calling this Luther's Testimony, and I want to take a minute to tell you why I nicknamed him Luther. This man was possessed by demons, thousands of demons. He was in bondage, and Jesus came and freed him. In Isaiah 61:1-2, Isaiah prophesied about the Messiah and what He was going to come to do. He was going to bring good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, and to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners.

(Is 61:1-2) "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; {2} To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn."

In Luke 4, Jesus read this passage in the temple and then declared, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing. Jesus had come to bring freedom to prisoner and to set free the oppressed. The Gerasene demoniac was oppressed and in bondage, and Jesus had just set him free. In Galatians 5:1, Paul wrote that it was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. The Greek word for freedom is *eleutheria* (Strong's G1657). I took the first part of this Greek word and gave this man a name that reflects who he now is, a free man. In the text, Jesus asked, "what is your name?" The demon replied, "Legion, for we are many." Legion was not the name of the man; that was the name of the demonic spirit that Jesus cast out. I did not want to keep referring to the man as the Gerasene demoniac because he was no longer a demoniac. Luther was now a free man.

(Luke 4:21) "And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

(Gal 5:1) "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery."

When Jesus freed Luther, the herdsmen ran and reported it in the city and in the country. The closest city might have been Hippos or Gergesa to the north of where I believe this happened. Even though Gadara and Gerasa were named in the two texts, they may not have been the city that these herdsmen ran and reported it to. The people from the city and the surrounding area came to see what had happened. They came and evidenced this new man. Luther was sitting down, clothed and in his right mind. The people became frightened when they saw how Luther had been transformed. The herdsmen testified to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man. They also testified about what had happened to their two thousand swine that had rushed into the sea and drowned. When people hear a testimony they have a choice to make. Are they going to believe in the Messiah that had just set this man free, clothed him and renewed his mind? Are they going to receive the Messiah or reject the Messiah. Unfortunately, the people implored Him to leave their region. Some people are going to reject Jesus, and these people rejected Jesus.

(Mark 5:14-17) "Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the country. And *the people* came to see what it was that had happened. {15} 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"; and they became frightened. {16} Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and *all* about the swine. {17} And they began to implore Him to leave their region."

As Jesus was getting into the boat to leave, Luther implored Jesus that he might accompany Him, but Jesus did not allow him. Instead, Jesus said, "Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had great mercy on you." That is the same message that Jesus gives to all of us. We are to share our testimonies to our own families and to the people around us. We are to share what great things the Lord has done for us. We are to testify of God's great mercy towards us. Not everyone is called to be an apostle. Not everyone

is called to travel around. In fact, for most people, we are called to be Jesus' ambassadors right where we live. Luther was to be Jesus' representative in that area.

(Mark 5:18-19) "As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might accompany Him. {19} And He did not let him, but He said to him, "Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and *how* He had mercy on you."

Our passage ends with Luther going away and proclaiming in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him and everyone was amazed. I explained earlier that Decapolis was the state and not a specific city. Luther did not just minister to his family and friends in his home town, but he testified regionally. I believe that Legion was the demon over that region; it was his demonic territory. The Gerasene demoniac had a sphere of influence in that whole region. Christ has set Luther free, and he is still known by that whole area. Therefore, God used Luther to reach an entire area with the gospel. All of us have different spheres of influence and ministry, and God wants to use each of us in those spheres.

(Mark 5:20) "And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed."

Conclusion and Applications

As we come to a close this morning, I want to make some applications for our lives. First, each of us that have placed our faith in Christ have a testimony. Our testimonies are all different. I don't know anyone that has had thousands of demons cast out of them. That is probably not your testimony. Each of us have a unique testimony and God wants to use us where we are at, in our own cities and region. He wants us to proclaim what great things God has done for us.

1. Have you written out your testimony? I recommend that you write out your testimony. Briefly share what your life was like before meeting Christ. Then, share how you met Christ. Third, share about your life since making Jesus Lord of your life.
2. Are you sharing your testimony with others? You should be able to adapt your testimony so that you can share in one minute, three minutes, or ten minutes. If you are sharing it, keep on sharing and pray for more opportunities. If you are not sharing your testimony, why are you not sharing it? Is it because you don't think that your testimony is spectacular? Every testimony is a spectacular one because getting transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light is a miraculous one. Don't belittle what great things God has done in your life. Don't exaggerate your testimony to make it more spectacular. Just give your testimony the way it happened. Do you not share because of fear? Ask God for boldness and courage. The early church prayed for boldness so that they could share. Pray for boldness and then step out and begin to share.
3. Are you under God's authority? Our message today had a lot about spiritual warfare. The enemy operates by power and authority, and as God's representatives, we need to be under proper spiritual authority. There are millions of people around the world who claim to know Christ but are not under proper spiritual authority. They are lone rangers and are prime targets for the enemy. Let me encourage those listening to be part of a local church, and to be properly submitted to the leaders of that church. If you don't have trust in those leaders, find

a church that you feel comfortable submitting to their leadership. Let me encourage all of you to get under proper spiritual authority. It is for your protection, and for your ability to minister to others.

4. Have you received Christ into your life? Jesus has all authority and He is Lord. To be under proper authority, it begins with submitting our lives to Christ. If you have never received Christ, let me encourage you to pray with me right now. "Jesus, I believe that You are the Messiah and that You came to free us from our sins. I believe that You died and were buried, and were raised from the dead. I ask You to come into my life today and take away my sins. I ask You to clothe me and give me the mind of Christ. I confess You now as my Lord and my Savior. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Introduction (2 Cor 4:16-17, 1 John 3:8, 1 Pet 2:9, Mark 5:1-20)

1. **His Life Before Jesus** (Mark 5:1-5, Luke 8:26, Matt 8:28-34, Mark 5:20, 5:13, Luke 8:27, Acts 16:16-18, 1 John 4:2-3, James 2:19, 3:13-18)

2. **His Experience With Jesus** (Mark 5:6-13, Dan 10:12-21, Mark 1:27, 6:7, Acts 19:13-16, James 4:7, Matt 28:18-20, Acts 16:18)

3. **His New Life** (Mark 5:14-20, Is 61:1-2, Luke 4:21, Gal 5:1)

Conclusion and Applications

1. Have you written out your testimony?
2. Are you sharing your testimony?
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4. Have you received Christ into your life?