

# Man With an Unclean Spirit

by J. Glyn Owen

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*The sermon explores the transformative power of Jesus over demonic forces, emphasizing His ability to heal and restore individuals today.*

**Duration:** 58:22

**Scripture:** Mark 4:39, Mark 5:9, Mark 5:15, Mark 5:19-20, Mark 5:30, Mark 5:41

**Topics:** "Unclean Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the events leading up to the passage in Mark chapter 5 where Jesus calms the storm on the lake. He highlights the growing rejection of Jesus by religious leaders and the bitterness that ultimately leads to his crucifixion. The preacher suggests that chapter 5 aims to show Jesus' power and authority over demonic forces, following his display of power over natural forces in the previous chapter. The sermon also mentions the healing of a demon-possessed man and the subsequent loss of two hundred pigs, which caused a stir among the people in the surrounding area.

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## Transcript

I have had to wrestle with myself in order to come to address you this evening on this particular subject before us in Mark chapter 5. I don't know why. Demon possession has no particular attraction for me, and I'm totally unaware of any reason why I should be inextricably drawn to this passage, but I'm quite confident that this is the Lord's word for us as we gather together this evening. And so, in obedience to that conviction, I look at the passage with you and crave your prayerful indulgence as we do so.

You will notice that we are beginning to see how the case for the messiahship and divine sonship of Jesus is being proved by his life and by his teaching. That's the background in this gospel and indeed in the other gospels. But along with the accumulation of evidence for, you nevertheless find a growing rejection of the evidence by an increasingly large section of the community.

There is a bitterness that is beginning to emerge in the hearts of the most religious people of his day. And that bitterness, of course, is ultimately going to lead him to the cross. That's the kind of general background to this passage.

But there would seem to be something more than what we see on the surface of these scriptures. Following upon the revelation of our Lord's lordship and deity, divinity, his lordship particularly, over natural forces at the end of chapter four, it would seem that chapter five is now aimed at showing us that

he has the same kind of power, the same kind of authority over demonic forces. And of course, this was very necessary.

It was necessary in our Lord's day. It's necessary tonight for us to know that. But I can't help being amazed at the wonder of the way in which, in this gospel as in the others, the Holy Spirit has brought these things together.

In chapter four, the end of chapter four, you remember, that day when evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, let's go over to the other side of the lake. Leaving the crowd behind them, they took him along just as he was in the boat. There were also other boats with him.

A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern sleeping on a cushion. The disciples wake him up and said to him, teacher, don't you care if we drown? Now notice, he got up, he rebuked the wind, and he said to the waves, quiet, be still.

Then the wind died down, and there was complete calm. That's in the nature. That's in the realm of nature around us.

Here in chapter five, in this incident, the man with an unclean spirit, we have almost the identical thing happen. Only now, of course, our Lord is addressing not the waves, not the billows, not the storm and the sea, but he's addressing the demonic and the satanic entrenched in the soul of an individual. But just as there was peace over Gennesaret, so there emerged a peace into the heart and into the life of this man.

And when his friends came to see him, they could hardly recognize him for the man they knew him to be. There he was, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and it is right, my peace hath come, peace hath come. I am firmly persuaded that we need to be entrenched in the Gospels, and not simply in the records, but in the principles they enunciate, in the truths they declare, and the principles underlying these truths.

And we need of all things to see our Lord Jesus as the Lord of nature, as the Lord of demonic and satanic forces. We need to see him as the one who is able to make all grace abound towards all kinds of people, in all kinds of circumstances. And unless you and I have that kind of conviction to go out into a Monday morning after the Lord's Day, we cannot effectively witness for him.

And we cannot in all sincerity be the kind and quality of people we are called to be. Now let's look at this. Let's look first of all at the man and his tragedy.

The man before us was clearly demon-possessed. There's no question about that as far as the Scriptures are concerned. This was not, however, the first case of demon possession to be encountered by our Lord Jesus, as we see from previous passages right here in Mark.

There are two incidents in the very first chapter of Mark. One in the synagogue, and the other late the same night they bring demon-possessed people that Jesus should heal them. And again in chapter 3 and verse 15, we read that our Lord imparted power to his disciples.

He called them to be with him, and then he gave them power and sent them forth. And one of the reasons for sending them forth and for giving them power was that they should exorcise demons. That they should be able to deal with men whose needs were on this particular level.

Now let's look at this man before us. Perhaps in coming to it it's just as well for us to notice another thing too. Then in this chapter 5, just as later on in the chapter, there is a woman brought before us whom the physicians have been unable to heal.

Though she had been in a very sad physical condition for a number of years and was no bettered, as I believe the King James puts it. She had attended the physicians, but they'd been able to do next to nothing. So in this case, society had been completely unable to do anything to alleviate and to help him.

I think seeing these things enables us to realize that wherever we go into life, wherever we find ourselves, whatever the circumstances, however dark, however dire, there the grace of God may operate savingly and powerfully. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Now let's look at this. First of all, the man's condition as it is described in verse 2. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him.

We've already indicated that that word evil fundamentally means unclean, but unclean in the sense of evil. I don't need to stay with that. Our knowledge of this kind of condition is very limited, but the picture presented here is not unprecedented.

No less ferocious than the storm through which Jesus had just emerged. The spectacle was harassing and tragic in the extreme, making his home in this eerie atmosphere among the rocks. There on the cliffs overlooking the lake of Gennesaret, this crazed man now made his home.

He was restless, he was wild, and he was menacing. As much a minister himself as he was to anybody else. Apparently insensitive to physical pain, he derived some strange satisfaction from self-inflicted wounds, and he didn't feel a thing, apparently.

He was shrieking, he was yelling, he spent his time expressing his pent-up agony and anguish in shrieking and in yelling and in communicating to the countryside some sense of awe and fear. This was not the kind of place you'd walk at night alone. Scripture distinguishes, of course, between degrees of demon possession.

I say this, though I do not understand the phenomenon any more than others of you do, but I state what Scripture states. There are times when we encounter a simple condition of demon possession, if any such example can be termed simple. In Mark chapter 1 verse 23, we're told of somebody who was possessed of a demon, simply.

That's all we're told. That's bad enough, of course. But on other occasions, we're told something more than that.

On one occasion, at least, the Scripture speaks of a person possessed by seven demons. That's Mark 16, 9. And yet in another, we are told of one demon who was expelled from a certain human life, and he later returned with seven other demons or devils stronger and worse than himself. In this case before us, however, even the number seven is outgunned.

A whole legion of demons inhabited this pathetic soul. Now, if you look up your dictionary to find out how many comprise a legion, you will find that at different times in the history of the Roman Empire and the armies, a legion meant so many, and it varies over the years. It could well have gone up to 6,000.

Well, now, don't necessarily take this literally, because in that case we don't know what figure, what number to fix on. But the point is there were a multitude of demons that had congregated in the soul of this one man. Not one, not seven, not a few more, not a dozen, but a legion.

Their influence, therefore, was overwhelmingly irresistible. The point is, you see, surely the divine record is wanting us to get the impression that this man was under total alien control. Absolute, total alien control.

In this condition, it will be noticed that the man was tragically divided, divided within himself. He really didn't know where he was nor who he was. He'd lost his proper sense of identity.

He appears as a split personality, now taking more or less, speaking more or less at his own impulse, he speaks of himself as I or we. In the first person singular or plural, then he speaks of himself in another way. In this sad mental state, the pathetic creature derived strange satisfaction from his unnatural behavior and his apparently insensible infliction of pain on his own body and frightening other people.

Then look at the man's relation to society. I think this has a lot to tell us. This man, we read in verse three, lived in the tombs and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain.

Now that statement that no one could bind him anymore, implies, of course, that previously, at some previous stage in the development of his tragedy, there were those that had tried to help him. I think this speaks well of that ancient society that we know so little about. Someone cared for this man.

We don't know what they did, we don't know how they set about it but we do know that they tried to do something. To me, one of the unfortunate things in the 20th century in which you and I live is that there are so many people we may meet on our streets or elsewhere for whom people apparently do nothing, still in a civilized situation such as ours, who are utterly friendless and who, as far as they can tell at any rate, whether they, like the rest of us, have a very bad memory, they say that no one has tried to help them in their dire, difficult situations. Even here in the city of Toronto, with all its churches and all its Christians and all its ameliorative institutions.

I had someone the other day, we don't need to go into details, talking and he said that for over 15 years he had almost lived as a hermit. He didn't know how to talk to people anymore. No one cares for a guy like me, he says.

Now whether that's true or not, the fact that a man is able to say that means that it's too true to make for comfort for you and for me. And somehow or other they had attempted previously to do something for this man. Now I gather that the normal means probably, in the day and age we're talking about, the normal method of attacking a situation like this was the physicians of the age would apparently put some chains over the shoulders of the man, heavy chains if possible, not in the first place to bind him, to shackle him, they did this later, as indeed in this case, but really to put so much weight upon him and so much physical pressure upon him that the man would be made tired and incapable of doing what he normally did.

So that they would just tire him out. If that didn't work, then they tied him up, perhaps with ropes, and if ropes were of no use then, as in this case, with chains. And if it wasn't sufficient to tie his hands and his arms so that he didn't hurt anybody, they tied his legs as well so that his movement was limited.

Now I don't like to talk about that treatment, I think it's barbaric, nevertheless they cared for him and they tried to do something for him, but nothing helped. This man seemed to have a supernatural energy from somewhere. The massive chains on the backs of other people tired them out, but not this man.

He went on, he had resources, he could go, he could do what others could not, and he went on and on, and he tried to tie this man's hands, and he snapped the fetters asunder, tried to tie this man's legs, he tore them loose. There was indeed a veritable supernatural phenomenon. Neither could he be subdued, it says in the NIV at the end of chapter 4 there, there's a question about that word, as to whether that also refers to the physical attempt to tame him, or does it refer to a psychological approach? I don't want to argue, I'm not sure.

It could well refer to a psychological method of taming him, of trying to cool him down a little, to pacify him, but whatever it refers to, the point is it came to nothing. And thus, out of sheer dismay and frustration, society, as such, seems at least to have confined the man to an isolation unit, in the lonely tombs of that somewhat isolated cemetery, as we've indicated, above the cliffs overlooking the sea of Nazareth. And there, in that geery atmosphere, he continued his shrieking, and his making a nuisance of himself, frightening the children of the community, and the womenfolk, and others.

There he continued, but no one could do anything for him, the man and the Savior. Oh, isn't it wonderful that we can go on? You know, even if this were not true, wouldn't it be wonderful to spend a Sunday evening just thinking about something of this kind? But men and women, brothers and sisters in Christ, the wonder of wonders is that this kind of thing is true, it has happened, and the power of our Savior is such that it can happen today. When confronted by the Son of God, this man's sickness expressed itself in a hypersensitivity.

He was unusually sensitive, in particular, to the divinity, to the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Listen again to verses six and seven. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran, and he fell on his knees in front of him.

He shouted at the top of his voice, What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Did you ever hear of such a thing? Here is a demon-possessed man, possessed by a legion of demons, and the legion of demons, in harmony with the man, in fellowship, as it were, with the man, the man and the demons, as one entity now together, cry out to the Lord Jesus, What do you want to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I indicated earlier on that at this point in time, whereas on the one hand, the evidence for the deity and the Messiahship of our Lord Jesus Christ was growing, on the other end of the scale, opposition was mounting. But as the opposition was mounting, here, out of this eerie atmosphere, comes a demon-possessed man, an unquestionably demon-possessed, if ever there was such a phenomenon, and he recognizes Jesus from a distance as the Son of the Most High God. When men were stubbornly unyielding to the claims of our Lord, he was sensitive to the fact that something had happened in Gadara that day, and the deity had invaded the territory of demons.

This lone demoniac of Gadara was uncannily aware of the truth of our Lord's deity, and willing, apparently, to offer him some kind of reverent obeisance. I'm not suggesting that it was anything of the kind Mr. MacLeod was talking about this morning. I wouldn't be foolish enough to suggest that it was anything of that depth or of that kind, but somehow or other, this possessed man, this bewildered man, this man in the grip of evil demons, knew that Jesus was someone to bow before.

And yet you have men and women in the Christian church that hardly seem as worthy of worship. But it was an unbearably distressing sensitivity, if we consider this any further. Oh yes, he kneeled before Jesus.

He kneeled in front of him, and he called out. He shouted out on the top of his voice, but notice what he did ask for. And this, of course, unmask the real nature of the man's character.

What do you want with me, Jesus, son of the most high God? Swear to God that you won't torture me. You see, this man was afraid. This man was afraid that Jesus, whom he knew to have divine power, would literally do something to torture him.

I wonder whether I'm speaking to someone tonight, and you know exactly what this meant, or means, in the past, in your life, or in the present. So that when Jesus comes near you, when you come to a service, when the spirit of Christ is abroad, and you sense somehow or other he's coming too near, he's going to hurt me. And you become awfully excited and agitated, and you want to get away from it all.

And you want to break rank. My friend, he's the only one who can help you. And whatever your condition, and whatever may be going through your mind, whatever may be worrying you, whatever may be oppressing you, whatever may be threatening you, there is only one Savior who can lift the burden from your soul, and that is the Christ of God.

I find this terrible, you know. Jesus, you're a torment to me. I'm afraid of you.

I know who you are, but even though I know that you're the Son of God, don't torment me. Swear that you won't. I know you've got the power, but don't do it.

Is Jesus a torment to you? Are you keeping him at arm's length because you're afraid that he'll do something you don't want done? So much for the man and his tragedy. Let's turn for a moment to the divine physician and his treatment. Oh, it's good that we can come here.

First of all, Jesus asked the man's name. Now, I believe there is strategy here, psychological strategy. Then Jesus asked him, what's your name? My name, he said, is Legion, for we are many.

Notice that. My name, singular, is Legion, for we, plural, are many. Grammatically, it doesn't make sense.

In reality, it was exactly true to the facts. Now, it has been suggested that the Savior's principle was really to arouse the man's consciousness, to arouse the man's awareness to the gravity of his need. I don't know whether that is so.

I tend to agree with it. And the reason probably for that, if this is the case, the probable reason for it was this. Jesus would awaken in the man an awareness of the gravity of his need in order thereafter to get his cooperation, the cooperation of the patient along with the physician against the enemy of his soul and of his spirit as well as of his body.

But you see, not until the man is aware of the gravity of his own need will he cooperate with the Savior. Will he even want to be healed? And Jesus asked, what's your name? Oh, he knows the questions to ask. Don't you know that, Christian people? Haven't you been awake at night and been in communion with your blessed Lord and doesn't he ask some piercing, penetrating questions of you? I've never known anything like the questions the Lord asks me.

And I never will. They're so penetrating. They get at that spot that I don't want him to see and I don't want him to talk about.

But he asks the question and he prods and prods until he gets an answer. What's your name, man? It seems such an ordinary question. But then at last it comes out, you see, with all its conflicts and all its contradictions.

Our name, my name is Legion, for we are many. He's aware of the contradiction and he explains it, but it's no explanation. He had lost sight of his own true self and becomes swamped and submerged beneath the total influence of these evil forces that had invaded his life.

Men and women, there are many people in the city of Belfast tonight in this condition. I don't pretend to be a specialist in this realm, but I do recognize it from time to time and I'm sure you do too. Jesus asked the man's name and the man gave the name and recognized with the same breath his utter confusion.

My name is Legion. That doesn't make sense. We're Legion, but we're many, he says.

It's not my name, it's our name. I'm in with a host of them. I'm not sure where I am, but there I am somewhere.

And then comes the sovereign compulsion and yet the gracious concession of our Lord. It seems that as Jesus was facing the poor man, he was actually repeating a command. The tense here would suggest that Jesus was repeating something to him, and what he was repeating was this.

He was repeating to the evil spirit, come out of this man, you evil spirit. We read in verse 8, for Jesus was saying to him in the imperfect tense, come out of this man, you evil spirit. Having elicited the man's self-awareness to some extent by asking his name, our Lord then seems to have in some measure summoned him.

That is, summoned the patient to take sides with Christ the physician against the powers that have invaded his soul and made him the man he has become. This in turn results in the demon becoming sensitive to the imminence of their pending and forced exorcism by Jesus. And in their recognition of Jesus' capacity to dethrone them, they bid him not to expel them from the country but grant them permission to enter into the herd.

You see, these demons recognized that their Lord was there and that his word was final. Knowing that he would utter that word to save this benighted man, they said, don't send us out of the country. Now again, we're out of our depth.

Let's acknowledge it. Our knowledge limits our capacity even to comment with assurance. Suffice it therefore to say that for some reason unknown to us, Jesus granted that strange permission.

He granted the permission to these savage demonic powers in going out of the man to enter into the pigs that were around, a herd of swine. And this they did, with the result that the whole herd became uncontrollable and plunged headlong over a precipice to be drowned in the sea below. Now why did Jesus do that? Oh, there are a whole host of questions here I cannot address.

I'd be happy to do so in private with anybody, but let's get to what I think at any rate is the important thing. Why did Jesus do it? Why did he allow it? Well, remember this was an illicit swine trade anyway for Jews. They should not have been trading in swine, but that's by the way.

I believe that the main reason was this. How could Jesus demonstrate his infallible power to a man such as this? There's got to be something that he can see with his eye. Jesus has to do something that is evident, absolutely evident, no question about it.

Here the demons have somehow vocalized their request, don't send us out of the country, send us into the swine. Jesus allows the prayer they offered. He has a prayer answered, demonic prayer answered.

He lets them go into the swine and the man sees the consequences. He sees two things at one and the same time. He sees the awful power that had been in him now in the swine and with such consequences.

I don't know when he took all that in. I'm not sure that we've taken it all in yet. The demonic power that can drive 200 swine into the depths to be buried is sufficient power, my friend, to drag you and me to the depths of hell.

But Jesus said, go out of him and the powers left him and legion forsook him and took charge of the swine and the very man saw the swine struggling for their last breath in the brine beneath. That's why the value of the soul in the sight of the Lord Jesus was such that 200 pigs losing their lives meant nothing in comparison. He would persuade the man of the destructive power of the evil spirit and of the saving might of his own word.

You got it? We've got a wonderful savior. He wants us to be persuaded. He wants us to be sure.

And he goes out of his way. He does so many things all at once. We don't see them all, but what we do see is sufficient to recognize how much he cares for us.

Imagine his care for this unscrupulous character and what sin that made him yet Jesus cared enough for him to go out of his way to bring these things together, to persuade him that heaven loved him still. Oh, that's grace. Now come with me for a brief moment to the society and its reaction.

I don't know that I'm capable of preaching about this. Indeed, I'm not sure that I'm capable of preaching about the other sections either that we've covered, but society and its reaction frightens me. The news spread like lightning.

The herdsmen bereft of their herd scattered posthaste to the city and the surrounding countryside, announcing two things with one breath. The healing of the demoniac that lived there in the cemetery above the sea. His healing, miraculous though it was, they announced it.

They could do no other. It was so evident. And the loss of 200 pigs, judge you which was the most important in the years of those that heard it.

But they were bound together as part of the one story. And you could not declare the one without the other. The spectacle which greeted them, the people of the countryside came in.

They must see this thing for themselves. Hearing about it is one thing. It's unbelievable.

Nothing like this has ever happened before. I mean, this thing was not happening before. It's altogether new.

And so when they come posthaste, the spectacle that greeted them were told in verse 15. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons sitting there, sitting, sitting, sitting down, sitting down there, dressed and in his right mind. And the spectacle was so amazing that we're told they were afraid.

Now, you're not afraid when I'm not afraid when I see you good people sitting down. If I saw you standing up, I might get excited and drawing coming towards me with your books or something. But seeing you sitting down and clothed and in your right mind, that doesn't frighten anybody.

Why should it frighten anybody here? Well, because of course, this is not the way things have been with this man. They knew how he was. And this is unnatural.

There's something extraordinary responsible for this. This man is sitting, this man is clothed, this man's in his right mind. And it wasn't like that.

His world has been told upside down, but right side up. The identity of the man, of course, was undeniable. So that the reality of the miracle upon him was beyond dispute.

He was healed, he was clothed, he was in his right mind. He had plagued their countryside long enough to be known alike by his features and by his foul, fearsome shrieks and awesome behavior. Some of them probably had even been involved in binding him with ropes and chains.

Some of them. Perhaps some of the physicians were there. I don't know.

But recognition was one thing. It's the man, all right. It's this is, this is not somebody that's just suddenly invaded our island or our country.

But it's the man. We knew him. We've known him for years.

Recognition was one thing, however. There was this challenging difference about the man they recognized. The diabolical frenzy that drove him on his errands of hate and self-immolation had all gone and ceased.

There he was, clothed, sitting at the feet of Jesus and in his right mind. Oh, blessed be the name of God. Do not, do not fail to notice the same kind of peace that overtook the raging sea in chapter four.

That's why I referred to it earlier on. Jesus said, peace, be still. And there was a great calm.

Jesus looked at these legion of demons and said, get out of him. And there was peace, heavenly peace, redemptive peace, the peace of God. It's the same thing in a different area.

The emotions these people felt, they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man and told about the pigs as well. I like the NIV there.

I think it's very, very picturesque and very true to the Greek language. And told them what had happened to the pigs as well. Gazing at that incomparable testimony of their Lord's compassion and power, the crowd sensed the awesome wonder of it all.

With the demons expelled from the soul, the man's shrieks had not only abated, but his sanity had returned and his sense of propriety. The insane man was normal again. That meant that the one responsible for it must be incomparably more powerful than the greatest among them, the Gadarenes.

He must have had power and ability not given to their physicians, not given to the society working in concert, not given to the accumulated wisdom of the peoples. He stands above them. And beyond them, they were awed.

But what about the swine? Oh, the man was healed all right. And that was nothing short of a miracle. They would all agree about that, but 200 swine lost? 2,000 swine were lost? Oh, you notice how the gospel puts it? All turned to fear.

The healer could evidently deal with the moral and social problems of Gadara. They recognized that, it would seem. Here is one among us who can deal with this kind of problem, and probably there are many others suffering from something akin to this dear man.

And there are other problems physical. If he has this amazing power, what a man to have live among us. But if it's going to cost 200 or however many swine, each time he works a miracle of healing, is it worth it? Do you want Jesus if he is going to cost you 200 heads of pigs each time he heals a soul? And you see the issue is this.

Shall we ask him to stay? Shall we beg him to come around the countryside to heal other people? Or shall we bid him go away in case we lose more swine? Again you will notice, just as fear followed the stilling of the storm, so also a fear followed the recognition of what has taken place here at Gadara. So we read in verse 17, then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. Did I read that all right? I'm afraid to tell you that I did.

I didn't make a mistake. I'm sorry to tell you, but that's what it says. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

With all that power, with all that grace, with all that compassion, with all the untapped resources of his deity to meet their need, they ask him to leave. Why? Because he was a threat to their pig trade. Men and women, society hasn't changed a bit.

Their insane assessment of things led them to plead repeatedly, it would seem, and ardently, that the benefactor and the author of such healing should leave their territory rather than endanger their property. Their pig trade was more important to them than the healing of their sin-bound society from the ravages of Satan. Jesus must go rather than lose their pig.

I don't know whether this is good poetry or not, but have you heard this? I don't know who the author is, but I've had it in my files, I'm sure, for years, and it rose from the dead this last week. Rabbi, be gone. Thy powers bring loss to us and ours.

Our ways are not as thine. Thou lovest men, we swine. Oh, get you hence, omnipotence, and take this fool of thine.

His soul? What care we for his soul? Not good to us that thou hast made him whole, since we have lost our swine. And Christ went sadly. He had wrought for them a sign of love and hope and tenderness divine.

They wanted. Christ stands without your door and gently knock. But if your gold or swine the entrance blocks, he forces no man's hold, he will depart and leave you to the treasure of your heart.

I told you I was afraid to preach this, didn't I? I believe that there are so many ills in society tonight that could be, that could be almost wiped out just like that. The slaughter on the roads, the causes of murder and bloodshed in the homes, man murdering wife, wife murdering husband. What have we? If only alcoholic beverage was prohibited.

It's a, that's all. It's involved in, I believe, over 80 percent of the accidents on the road. It may not be the sole cause, but it's involved.

Well, in the name of God, in the name of decency, in the name of logic, in the name of care, in the name of compassion, why don't our civilized governments get rid of it? Because they love swine more than souls, money more than men. And that's but an illustration. If we wanted to, there are so many things we can do, but we love our swine.

One last little picture, can you take it? The Savior and the liberated man. The populace persuaded the healer to leave their country, and he was about to go. Yes, he was about to go.

Blessed Lord Jesus, the Lord, the sovereign Son of God. John tells us that he stands at the door and knock to come into our hearts. And he comes in, if any man will hear my voice and open the door, he comes in.

And this passage tells us, and I believe in the sovereignty of the Savior and of God, but this passage tells us that when men plead for him to leave, he leaves. Be careful how you deal with him. But what about the man who's been healed? The liberated man begged leave to accompany the Savior.

Verse 18, as Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with him. Now this request marks the new relationship, you see, that's begun between the saved and the Savior. It's always the case.

It's always the case where there is true faith that has bound the needy to the Savior. This is what happens. They become bound together, and they can't think of life separated from one another anymore.

And so this man begins to talk to the Lord Jesus. If you're leaving, he says, then let me come with you. The people of Gadara, for their part, had begged Jesus to depart.

They didn't want him. He, for his part, begged the same Jesus that he, this man, might accompany Jesus if Jesus has to go. Henceforth he belongs more to the Savior than to his natural relatives, the people of Gadara.

Do you know this sense of belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ? Just because he's heard your cry and met your need and whispered the word of grace that released you from yourself and your sin and Satan and made you a free man or a free woman, do you know what it is to be bound to him? Do you know what it is to say with this man, what we have here, or with Peter, as he says in another place, Lord, to whom else can we go? You are the only one that has the words of eternal life. Where else can we go? We're coming with you even if the crowd's going in the opposite direction. See, there's a tie that is bound when Jesus manifests his saving power towards us.

They're bound to him. The other thing is this, and I'm through. The liberated man nevertheless agreed to do as Jesus bade him, rather than press for what he himself had first desired.

His first choice was, Lord, if you're leaving Gadara, let me come with you. No, says Jesus, no, no. No, no.

Jesus did not let him, but said to him, you go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you. Notice not Jesus, but the Lord. Jesus speaks of himself as Lord.

He doesn't want the man to make any mistake. When the man goes home, he wants this man to tell the family, Jehovah, the God of Israel has done something for you and tell the people that the Jehovah of the Exodus and of the prophets and of the law, the great Jehovah God has acted in your life and tell them how great things he's done for you. So what we read is this, a great change must have been brought in this man's heart, though the New Testament doesn't say much about it because we read.

So the man went away and began to tell him the Decapolis, the 10 cities, how much Jesus had done for him. You see, Jehovah was Jesus to him and Jesus was Jehovah for him, for Jehovah had come to him in Jesus. I don't know how he said about it.

I've got an imagination too. I'm sure you have a boy. I can see this man going around the countryside, going from one to the second and the third and the fourth and the fifth of these 10 cities to tell the people how great things Jehovah had done for him in Jesus.

And so the story goes on and the miracle of the grace of God is reduplicated over and over and over and over again. Not in exactly the same way, and yet you have the same grace shown and the same power exhibited and the same kingdom extended and the same God glorified and the same salvation experienced. Is there someone in Knox tonight who doesn't trust Jesus Christ as savior? Oh, my dear friend, turn to him.

How can you deny him? How can you do other than trust a savior, the record of whose life is so completely compelling? Trust him tonight in the simplicity of your soul and say, my Jesus, I trust you. I know you've come to save me along with others, and I will trust in you and rest in you. And I too, if you don't want me to go somewhere else, I will go home to my family and I will tell my family what great things Jehovah God of Israel has done for me in Jesus, conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried.

I will tell the family and I'll show them the change Israel. Hallelujah. That's how missionaries are made.

That's how witnesses are born. May God deepen the work of his grace in all our hearts and send us out into a new week with the conviction that he is the person he claimed to be. And therefore, on the streets of Toronto today, it is possible for men to be saved from sin and all its hideous reality unto everlasting life.

Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, you know our hearts. We confess to you, our Lord, that when we ponder some of these things, we really do not know how to respond.

And we just ask you now, rather than try to put into words what we want to or what we ought to, just read our hearts. Read mine and the hearts of my brothers and my sisters here. Read our hearts.

Read our spirits. Know that in all of our hearts and souls, there should be a song of gratitude that is worthy of your name. Thou blessed Lord God, our Father, through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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