

Power Unleashed

by Steve Gallagher

Jesus demonstrates his power over nature and demons, showing his authority and humanity in the process.

Duration: 55:08

Scripture: Mark 4:35 - 5:20, Luke 11:24-26, Revelation 20:1-3

Topics: "Divine Authority", "Spiritual Restoration"

Description

This sermon delves into the power of Jesus Christ over nature and demons, focusing on the stories in Mark chapters 4 and 5. It highlights the eyewitness account of Jesus calming the storm, the deliverance of the demon-possessed man, and the reactions of the people to these miraculous events. The sermon emphasizes the need for repentance, the authority of Jesus over evil forces, and the importance of finding rest and restoration in God amidst the demands of ministry.

Transcript

Lord, I just ask you to come to us now and subdue my flesh, Lord, and help me to be in your spirit and to be able to speak forth out of your word these stories from your life that really happened. And I pray, Lord, that you will just anoint your word this morning. Holy Spirit, I ask you to make real to us Jesus Christ as he lived here on earth in the body of a man but possessed by the spirit of the living God.

Make those things real to us, we pray in Jesus' name, amen. We're going to be in Mark chapter 4 and 5 this morning if you want to turn there. I want to kind of take a different turn with our story today.

Actually, we're going to pick up the story from where we left off last week. But we're going to look at the power of the Son of God, the power of Jesus Christ over nature and over the entire realm of demons even. So we'll be getting to a couple of stories here this morning and trust that the Lord will make these things real to us.

I'm going to get right into the story. We're going to read starting with verse 33 and then I'm going to make some observations. Mark 4, 33, with many such parables he was speaking the word to them so far as they were able to hear it.

And he did not speak to them without a parable but he was explaining everything privately to his own disciples. Okay, so that was last week. On that day when evening came, he said to them, let us go over to the other side.

Leaving the crowd, they took him along with them in the boat just as he was and other boats were with him. And there arose a fierce gale of wind and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. Jesus himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.

And they woke him and said to him, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? And he got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, hush, be still. And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And he said to them, why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith? They became very much afraid and said to one another, who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? What a thing.

Really, if you can just get outside of having heard this story all your life and get into the reality of a man standing up in the midst of a fierce storm like this and just speaking a word and the entire atmosphere instantly stops, ceases motion. And the sea that's been churning just instantly is placid. How do you wrap your mind around that? It's no wonder they were astounded and even full of fear.

This is Jesus who they love and who they have felt nothing but love from him. But to see that kind of power come forth at his word must have been just amazing. All right, I want to make a few observations about this little incident.

First of all, it's obvious by the details that this is an eyewitness account. But Mark would have only been a teenager at this point and so, you know, realistically he would not have been in that boat with them. This was just a small boat like that, I don't know, it seems to me like even getting 13 men in that boat might have been a stretch.

But definitely, there would not have been extra guys along, you know, and so he almost certainly got this story from Peter later on, years later when he wrote his gospel account. The first thing that really stands out is about this story is that, you know, this was one terrific storm for some of these men who were fishermen and had spent their lives out there on that sea. They had faced storms before, but for it to be so overwhelming that they were in fear of their lives, this must have really been a real powerful storm.

And apparently, I don't know this from personal fact, just reading what others say, but apparently the makeup there of the physical makeup is such that the cold air, the warm air, you know, all that kind of atmospheric stuff going on, and those winds would kind of funnel down through the gorges down into the Sea of Galilee, and it just was the perfect conditions at times to create these powerful storms across that lake. Another thing that stands out here is how exhausted Jesus must have been to be able to sleep through that. You know, we're not talking about an ocean liner.

We're talking about just a, you know, I don't know how big those boats are, 25 feet or something like that maybe. For him to be able to sleep through that, the boat would be filling with water, you know. He must have been exhausted.

We have to remember that Jesus was a man, just like us. He experienced the same things we experience, getting worn out, being hungry, being thirsty. You see that throughout the Gospels in different incidents where his humanity comes forth, and this is one of those times.

He was probably just pouring himself out all day long, ministering to those people, and was just exhausted. This is now probably late into the night, and, you know, you just see the humanity of Jesus here. I like what Dave Leopold once said.

He said, he was talking about this story, I guess. It's been years since he gave this illustration, but I always think about it. He said that, you know, Jesus was in that boat, and that boat was going across that lake.

You know, when he said, let us go to the other side, there was nothing that was going to stop that boat from getting over there. And it didn't matter if that boat completely filled with water, and if you were out on the lake and all you saw were these 13 heads above the water level, you know, it didn't matter. This is the Son of God, the creator of the earth that's in that boat.

It is not going to sink to the bottom of that sea. There is no way. It's not possible.

And, you know, it's just kind of comical to think of it like that. But that's Dave Leopold's way, of course. Another thing that stands out here in verse 40, Jesus says, why are you afraid you still have no faith? This word still, used here, shows that Jesus expected more out of them by this point.

They're, you know, what, a year and a half into this thing, or maybe more than that. He expected by now that all the miracles they have seen, the gracious words of life coming forth through his lips, the way that the Holy Spirit worked through him, and all that they had experienced, he expected that they should be further along than this at this point. So, you know, actually this is the first of a number of occasions, even in this book, I won't list them out, but where he's rebuking them for their little faith.

And Alexander McLaren brought out something that was really interesting. He talked about how fear and faith work hand-in-hand in this story. You see them in this story.

The disciples were afraid. Even though they had seen all the miracles and all that stuff, you know, they were full of fear about the circumstances they were in. You know, that is true.

But on the other hand, they knew where to turn. You know, they did go to Jesus and somehow, apparently, understood that he was the only one, excuse me, who could do anything about this situation. So they did have some faith.

Jesus says you have no faith, but I think that that's kind of just an expression, a way of saying things. It was hyperbole, you know. It was kind of an exaggerated thing.

Not that he was trying to exaggerate, just a way of saying something. In other words, the way it works, the Lord allows circumstances to come into our lives at times that will provoke or create a situation where we have nowhere to turn but the Lord. You know, we are perplexed.

We see no way out. And I have been in those circumstances so many times down through the years. But every time you go through a situation like that, all you know to do is to cry out to the Lord.

You know, I don't see any possible way through this thing facing us, this trial, this overwhelming need or whatever it is. You see no way out, but we know where to turn, don't we? You know, we perish. That's the language of fear.

But save us is the language of faith. Paul said later that, you know, we are perplexed. Perplexed means that you just can't see any way through.

You can't come up with a, you know, how are we going to solve this or get through this? And that is the way it is sometimes in ministry, in real ministry. But he said, we are perplexed, but we are not in despair. See, despair is utter hopelessness.

Despair is you don't have any faith that if you were to cry out to God, anything would change. That's despair. That's where, that's what causes people to commit suicide.

You know, they're perplexed, but they are also in despair because they don't know the Lord. And they don't know that they have someone to cry out to. Or they may cry out in some superstitious way and still holding on to their own life and will and, you know, not really repentant at all.

Just like people at the top of the World Trade Center, you know, no doubt were crying out to God to save them before they plunged over the side of that building. But that wasn't the prayer of faith. That wasn't a prayer of God, forgive me for my sins.

I've been a sinner my whole life. Forgive me for that, Lord. No, it was save me from these circumstances.

I don't want to die. Completely different thing. Anyway, let me read a couple of quotes here.

Dwight Pentecost says this about this situation. He says, Christ was here demonstrating the same authority he had when he created the world by the word of his mouth. The authority that brought the world into existence can control the elements within nature.

One day, all nature will be subject to his authority and controlled by his power. I'm surprised Dwight Pentecost has that kind of revelation knowledge because that is the truth. Now, one day, this whole entire planet is going to come under the complete control and sway of Jesus Christ and there will be no devil to oppose him and so on.

McLaren says this, Christ's royal word is all powerful. We see him rising in the stern of the fishing boat and sending his voice into the howling darkness and wind and waves cower at his feet like dogs that know their master. As he lay asleep, he showed the weakness of manhood, but he awoke to manifest the power of indwelling divinity.

So it is always in his life where side by side with the signs of humiliation and participation in man's weakness, we ever have tokens of his divinity breaking through the veil. All this power is put forth at the cry of timid men. The storm was meant to move to terror.

Terror was meant to evoke the miracle. The result was complete and immediate. There had been a great tempest and now there was a great calm.

As the fishermen floated peacefully to their landing place beneath the shadow of the hills, the wilder the tempest, the profounder the subsequent peace. That's why I read these quotes because they're just so well spoken, written, that I could never say it like that. So this is Jesus Christ exerting his power over nature.

Now let's get into chapter 5 and see how he exerts his power over the world of demons. Verse 1, they came to the other side of the sea into the country of the Gerasenes. Now before I get into the story any further, let me just say that it's obvious that Jesus wanted to get away by himself.

This was one of those times, you know, that he probably had been going for weeks on end, just pouring out, giving out, ministering, preaching, healing, just he needed to get away from the ever-pressing, demanding crowds and just get off with God, quiet himself with his father, get filled up spiritually, whatever that would mean for him, and, you know, get rest. But it's also possible, you know, that the Holy Spirit was

playing a part in this. I think always of the Samaritan woman, that when Jesus said, I must go through Samaria, that it was for that woman because God was going to do something in that sinful woman's life.

And, you know, it very well could be the same thing with this. There's a wild man over on the other side of the lake. It's the perfect time now, Jesus, I want you to go over there, you know.

Now how much did Jesus know ahead of time? I don't know. I kind of think he didn't really know that, but I'm not sure about that, so I won't press that. Anyway, verse 2, when he got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.

And he had his dwelling among the tombs, and no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain, 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. How does a human being break chains? You comprehend the power that it would take? You know, but, man, I'm telling you, demon-possessed people have a superhuman power that we just cannot believe. And I know I've heard plenty of stories of people trying to cast demons out of those who are demon-possessed, and just, you know, a mob of men trying to hold them down, and they could hardly do it.

So powerful were they. Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones. Wow.

Luke says, in his account, says that this man was without clothes. He lived, you know, just naked all the time. Now, that says something to me right there, just that alone.

Because the power of social acceptance is, that's not the right way to say it, the influence of social acceptance, peer pressure, is something very powerful in all of our lives. And for a man to live that way means that he was so possessed and taken over by something else that he had completely lost that sense of social decency, even to that point. You know, people sin, they do terrible things, but they do it in secret, because they don't want to face public humiliation and so on.

But this guy was so far gone, he didn't care. Anyway, Matthew said that he was so violent that no one dared even pass that way. He had become the terror to the local population.

The biblical expositor says, fresh from asserting his mastery over winds and waves, the Lord was met by a more terrible enemy, the rage of human nature, enslaved and impelled by the cruelty of hell. That was well spoken as well. Famous in Fawcett Brown says this, terrible as he was to others, he himself endured untold misery which sought relief in tears and self-inflicted torture.

You know, we hear these sad stories of kids cutting themselves and that sort of thing, and you know that somehow the enemy's involved in that. It's just terrible. McLaren says this, we see the quiet landing on the eastern shore, and almost hear the yells that broke the silence as the fierce demon-ridden man hurried to meet them, perhaps with hostile purpose.

He lives up in the rock-hewn tombs which overhang the beach, for all that belongs to corruption and death is congenial to the subjects of that dark kingdom of evil. Restless, sleepless, full of hatred, he has made the night hideous with his wild shrieks, and fled swift as the wind from place to place among the lonely hills. Insensible to pain and deriving some dreadful satisfaction from his own wounds, he has gashed himself with splinters of rock and howled in a delirium of pain and pleasure at the sight of his own blood.

His sharpened eyesight sees Jesus from afar, and with the disordered haste and supernatural agility which marked all his movements, he runs towards him. Such is the introduction to the narrative of the Cure. It paints for us not merely a maniac, but a demoniac.

Verse 6, Mark says, seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before him. It reminds me of a hostage, because the demons are going to start speaking through him here. It reminds me of a hostage, and maybe he's on the telephone with the police or something, or the police are at the door, and the kidnapper guy is right around the corner or something with a gun on him, and he's forced to say the words that the kidnapper is telling him to say, but that's not what he wants, you know? And so this man, it's like he sees Jesus, and somehow instinctively inside him, maybe he feels a commotion from these evil spirits within him, and he makes this mad dash towards Jesus, I think he did that in the hopes that maybe he could get free of this horrible, tormenting presence inside of him.

I mean, that's kind of how I see what happened. McLaren again, they force him to utter their wishes, their terrors, their loathing of Christ, though he says, I and me, as if these were his own. That horrible condition of a devil, or as in this case, a manifold personality, speaking through human vocal cords and overwhelming the man's volition, mysterious as it is, is the very essence of the awful misery of the demoniacs.

What black thoughts, seething with all rebellious agitation, the reluctant lips have to utter. Yeah. And if you've ever been around a demon-possessed person, man, it is so sad and just, I mean, it's frightening, because you don't know what they're going to do, you know? And I've seen them before in the jails in Los Angeles.

Man, wow. Some frightening people. Verse 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.

For he had been saying to him, Come out of the man, you unclean spirit. So Jesus was telling these demons to come out. And even Jesus, you know, there's a hesitation there.

It's not like they just flew out the instant he said it. They couldn't resist his power of his words, but it wasn't like just an automatic thing, either. Anyway, Jesus conceived it past the words this man is saying.

Kind of like this Syrophenician woman, when she's saying the stuff she's saying, and Jesus sees past it. It's the same thing here, where he can see past these hostile words and all the things these demons are saying. He sees past it down into this man's heart.

And he sees a man who has finally come to an end of himself. A man who is finally now ready to be set free. Who's finally ready to give his whole heart to Jesus.

And it probably took him getting to this point in life. This point of complete torment and misery and, you know, all that he was experiencing. Before he got to the place of true repentance.

I mean, some people just have to go through a lot of stuff before they're willing to give it up. Ferrar says this, It must be kept in view as characteristic of the demonized, that they are incapable of separating their own consciousness and ideas from the influence of the demons. Their own identity being merged and to that extent lost in that of their tormentors.

Self-consciousness, or rather what may be termed individualism, and with it the ability to think for oneself and make moral decisions, is what distinguishes the human soul from the mere animal spirit. The presence of a superior power of evil dominates the man's mind, driving him into homicidal violence and a suicidal frenzy. I think about, well, the most recent example I could give of a demon-possessed man, I think I've shared it with you all before, was a year ago when I was in Amman, Jordan, and I was sitting in my hotel room looking out the window, and I could see this man, just filthy, you know, long, stringy, filthy hair.

He just looked greasy from top to bottom, long beard, and he had his pants, like, down to his knees, and he's just standing out in the middle of the street, just acting bizarre. It's obvious the man was demon-possessed. You know, it's the same kind of thing, except in this case, probably even more so.

Just the complete loss of social, whatever it is. The pulpit commentary says this. There were two conflicting wills in the man.

The one sought Christ. The other was separated from Christ by an impassable barrier. The one hoped for mercy.

The other looked only for torment. The devils had no part in Christ, nothing in common with him. There was an intense antagonism between them and the Holy Son of God.

The poor man, amid all the horrors of his miserable condition, felt that his one hope was in Christ. Christ might save him. Only Christ could save him from the horrible tyranny that oppressed his soul.

Well, at least he knew where to turn. Verse 9, and he was asking him, What is your name? And he said to him, My name is Legion, for we are many. All right, now, I have a couple of thoughts on this.

Two completely different trains of thought, so bear with me for a second. Legion, first of all, represents to me just a large number. I mean, that is what he's trying to communicate.

And I was thinking about this, praying about this whole scenario, you know, just considering it in my mind. Actually, it was just this morning, my prayer time, this came to me, that, how do you illustrate this? And it just came to me, and it's kind of a crass illustration, forgive me, ladies, but I'm just going to, it's the only way I can think to articulate it. That is, to use a teenage girl who's promiscuous as an example.

Maybe, you know, it all starts, she has some infatuation with some guy. And so she gives up her virginity for this guy. And, you know, he uses her and dumps her.

And so then she finds another guy and has an infatuation with him. And she starts going down this path. One guy after another after another.

And she starts becoming addicted, either to the feeling of just being wanted, that women tend to have that feeling inside them. And when it gets out of control, this is what can happen with a woman. Or could even be just addicted to the sexual act itself.

Whatever the case may be. She goes from man to man to man. And before you know it, she has a reputation amongst guys as being easy.

Easy. In other words, she has opened this door up so many times that it's hard for her to keep it closed. And guys instinctively know this.

They know inside that there's a girl that it won't take much to get that door open. That's just the way guys are. We're just animals that way.

So they are more than willing to take advantage of the situation. And when you think about this man, what got him to this point? I suppose it is possible for a child, because of the sin or whatever in their family history or something, that demons can maybe even possess them. I don't know.

If you ever read Mickey Cruz's story, Run Baby Run, man, from a young, young age, that guy was crazy. I don't know. And his parents were into... they were witch doctors and all that stuff.

So I don't know how much of it is that, but setting aside that possibility, more common probably is a history of opening the door to the enemy. Opening the door, opening the door, opening the door, going down that path of saying yes to the devil, yes to the things he's offering, just one after another, kind of like that girl, and pretty soon the door is just like on a hinge, just constantly flying open at anything. Listen to what Jesus said in another situation.

This comes from Luke 11, 24, and I'm taking it out of context, but nevertheless what he says is true. He says, When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest. Now that alone, we could really sit and talk about that and think about that, but that would get me off track.

And not finding any, it says, I'll return to my house from which I came. My house, he says. And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order.

And that represents someone who tries to clean up their life without Christ. That's basically what that's all about. Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there, and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.

So what starts off as a demon somehow gets in because of opening the door to sin and the enemy. Pretty soon it's seven demons, and before you know it, it's 6,000 or whatever. I don't take this number.

Well, that brings me to the second part, which is to use the term legion in those days, the reference to that is the Roman army because a legion is a Roman army of 6,000 men. So now don't take that literally like there were 6,000 demons inside this man. I don't know how many.

Who knows? He was just using that as a term that there were a lot of them in there. But we also can't let it escape us, the imagery behind that word, because a Roman army is there for one purpose, to destroy and annihilate Rome's enemies. That's the whole purpose of a Roman legion, and that's what is this demonic army, is to destroy, kill, or... I got myself all mixed up.

Kill, steal, kill, and destroy. I thought you said heal. Why would they heal? Steal, kill, and destroy, and that's obviously what they had done in this man.

So anyway, I don't know. That just gives a little more backdrop to how this man got to the place that he got. Remember, down underneath all of it is his will.

His own volition has opened the door for the enemy. I know you can get to a point where you have given up your will to the enemy so much and for so long that his will actually comes in and takes over your will. And I'll tell you something.

It's the cry of my heart to be possessed by the living God just like that, that he completely takes over my inner life, that he speaks his words through me, that I do exactly what he wants me to do, but I do it cheerfully, happily, not in a tormented way, but through this wonderful spirit of love who has done nothing but goodness and kindness to me. All right, let's continue on with our story. Also, I should mention in regards to this legion, whatever that may mean, and I'll just stretch it a little bit here, okay? I can be a preacher occasionally.

Think of it if it was an army of 6,000 demons. Think back. Remember our first talk, pre-incarnate Christ, the king of heaven, the king of glory, when he was on his throne and Lucifer and a third of the angels rose up against him? This legion could have been one of those armies marching on heaven.

Well, it was just a nice thought. You should applaud me for my great preaching. All right, verse 10.

And he began to implore him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now, there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. The demons implored him, saying, send us into the swine so that we may enter them.

Jesus gave them permission. Why he did, who knows? And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about 2,000 of them, and they were drowned in the sea. 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.

They came to Jesus and observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed in his right mind, the very man who had the legion, and they became frightened. Oh, man, there's a lot there, too. When I think of right mind, I think of the prodigal son who came to his senses.

How many times have we needed to come to our senses, come into right thinking? I need it every day. I mean, I don't know about you, maybe you're more squared away than me, but I need God to correct my thinking constantly, because it's just so in me to think wrong and to have self-thinking, and et cetera. But anyway, let me read what the pulpit commentator says, just a little blurb here, it's interesting.

There he sits, as though the bear had changed its nature and become a mild domestic creature. There he sits as Mary at the feet of the same Savior. There he sits with thoughtful countenance and attentive mind and listening ear to drink in every word that falls from the Savior's right.

Man, when Jesus sets you free, it can be so instantaneous, and you can turn from a raging devil in one instant, you know, into someone who just is sitting at the feet of Jesus. That's the power of our Savior. Verse 16, those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man and all about the swine, and they began to implore him to leave their region.

Now, a few weeks ago, I shared the story about Peter, had a similar experience, where he saw Jesus do a miraculous thing, and he said something very similar to this, didn't he? He said, depart from me, for I am a sinful man. Now, they're telling Jesus to depart also, but it's not with the same mindset that Peter was saying it. Peter was saying it because he was overwhelmed by his own sinful condition and the holiness of this man, this God-filled man who's there in his boat with him.

It was so overwhelming that Peter just fell to his face and said, depart from me, Lord. Not that he wanted him to go away, but just he became so overwhelmed. These people are telling him to leave, but they mean it.

They don't want him there. I'll tell you what it reminds me of. I remember studying through the book of Joshua, and you hear about the Canaanite people.

In fear and trembling, because they had heard of this mighty God at work amongst these Hebrews who had just come from Egypt, they heard the stories, and when they heard that these, whatever it was, couple million people, whatever it was, had crossed the Jordan River and were now in their land, people were just full of fear and trembling. You can kind of feel sorry for them, but if they had the right kind of fear, they would come out and say, we want to serve your God. Like, who's the prostitute in there? Rahab.

Rahab, that's right. You know, that's the right kind of fear. I fear your God.

God, please show me what to do to be in right relationship with you. But they didn't want that. They wanted their demon gods.

They didn't want to give up their idolatry or their sin. They just wanted to be protected. Same thing as the kind of fear of those people on, probably, most of them anyway, those people on top of the World Trade Center, or a thousand other situations like that, when people cry out for God to save them and protect them or whatever.

It's that same kind of fear. Not a fear that brings them to repentance, but a fear that they're going to lose their life or whatever. Well, anyway, these people are in a different spirit.

Jameson Fawcett Brown says this. Irritated, the people could not suffer his presence. Yet awestruck, they dared not order him off.

So they entreat him to withdraw. They became diplomatic in a hurry, not because it was in their hearts to be nice to Jesus, but because they were afraid of him. Wessel says, The townspeople recognized that a mighty force was at work in Jesus that they could neither understand nor control.

If it destroyed an entire herd of pigs, might not this power strike again with even more serious consequences? Fear, ignorance, and selfishness because of the material loss through the destruction of the pigs dominated their considerations rather than compassion for the former demoniac. So they asked Jesus to leave. And he did.

He does not stay where he is not wanted. Man, that is such a frightening thought. He does not stay where he is not wanted.

It's very much like the Lord giving people over to their sin. The pulpit commentary said, These garrisons showed no consciousness of sin. Without this, he could do nothing for them.

So he granted their request. Okay, finally, let's read these last three verses. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring him that he might accompany him.

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. And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him.

And everyone was amazed. Wow. Why did Jesus refuse him? Well, there's a lot of speculation, different ideas.

It's hard to know exactly. I guess the bottom line is that Jesus knew that he would be okay. This man was probably terrified at the thought of being left there for those demons to come back.

But his house had been swept clean, but the door had been slammed shut, and they could not get back in. That's the difference, because he had repented and he had come to know the Lord in a real way. Farrar says, Love bound him to his benefactor.

Dread made him shudder at the thought of losing his sole protector and being again left in that partly heathen land, solitary to battle with the strong foes that had so long rioted in his house of life. All right. Now, if you read the rest of the chapter, which we don't have time to get into, you'll see that Jesus gets in the boat.

He goes back across the other side. He's probably been up all night long, or at least almost all night. He gets over to the other side and is overwhelmed again with the pressing demands of the crowds.

And I didn't read it all, but I can kind of remember. First, Jairus comes to him. His little girl has died.

And then the woman with the issue of blood puts her hand on his cloak or something, and she's healed. And it's like one thing after another. It's just the way his daily life went.

That's how Jesus lived his life. And, you know, sometimes ministry is that way. There have been many times when Kathy and I have been put in situations where, you know, you've been ministering all weekend or whatever, and you think, I can't go on.

Not one minute more. You know, you just are at an end. You feel like you just have nothing left to give.

The tank is empty. You're exhausted. And then all of a sudden, there's something right in front of you, and you can't get away from it.

And what are you going to do? You know, I'm tired. I'm sorry. I'm going to bed.

You can't do that. And so there are just those times when you just have to do the mercy. And God comes.

You know, it's like that trip I took last year. I don't think you guys probably grasped what that really was like. 49 times for me to speak, and most all at night.

It was miraculous what the Lord did. I could not do that. I just couldn't.

I mean, I could stand up for an hour at night. I could do that. I could say some things.

But to really be in a preaching mode and all that stuff, there is no way I could do that. Just no way. I couldn't physically do it.

Not the condition I'm in anymore. But the Lord came, and he did it. And he just carried me through.

It's just not anything on my part. It's just the Lord. That's the way he is.

And so you see this exact thing happens with Jesus here. He didn't want to go back. He wanted to get away with his Father.

And I want to just take one second also to say something about finding relief from the exhausting effects of ministry, or however you want to say it. The tendency is to go find relief in the world. That is just our first default.

It's my first default. I want to go plop down in front of a TV set and watch a movie or something. I'm really careful about what I watch.

You guys know that. But just give me some relief. That's how I feel.

And there's a place for that. We've got to find the right balance. In my days of being the radical guy who wrote the Babylon book, when I wrote that book, I was railing on Aunt Bea, for heaven's sakes.

Now I could probably watch Andy of Mayberry and I'd get offended. I've calmed down a little bit. There is a place.

I'm trying to give you guys a reasonable compromise. I don't even like using the C word. Middle ground.

There is a place to, yes, to go and just plop down and watch a documentary. Watch a decent movie or something. There's a place for that.

What you have to be careful of is not to just get into a mindset of, yeah, I'm going to do it now, I'm going to do it now. Before you know it, your bucket is so full of holes that you have leaked out every bit of spiritual life and now you're really in trouble. See, that's what we don't want to do.

Yes, keep it in reason. There's a time and a place for that, but it's going to God is where you get your rest. That's where you get restored.

That's where you get reinvigorated. It's not watching a movie. Am I getting it across? I hope I'm saying it in the right way.

Anyway, you just have to be careful. Be aware that that's what your flesh wants to do, but there is a place for your humanity as well. But I'm just telling you, from a lot of experience, if you go down that path too far... Carla, are you listening to me? If you go down that path too far, you're going to have holes all through your bucket.

Make sure you're on track here. I want to wrap up by just making a couple of comments about verse 10. Look back at verse 10.

The demons are imploring Jesus not to send them out of the country. Now, whatever that means. That may mean something along the lines of what I read in Luke 11, where they're going about looking for a place to rest.

These wastelands. Who knows what that means? I don't know. But anyway, in the Luke version, I can't remember what chapter it is now, but Luke's version of this story, I think it's chapter 8, but I'm not sure.

He records the demons as saying, don't send us to the abyss, the abyssos, the bottomless pit. Now, let's just say a couple of things about this word. Abyssos is used in the New Testament nine times.

Seven times in the Revelation. Only two other times. Once here, or in Luke, and once in 2 Peter 2, verse 4. Let me read that.

God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness. That's abyssos, of darkness, reserved for judgment. What in the world does that mean? Let me read it in a few other Bible translations, just to bring a little more flavor out.

The basic Bible in English says, God sent them down into hell to be kept in chains of eternal night till they were judged. The TCNT says, committed them to caverns of darkness to be kept under guard for judgment. Amplified pits of gloom till the judgment and their doom.

Goodspeed says, dark dungeons to await their doom. I don't know exactly what that means. But the next time we hear about the abyssos, is in Revelation 9, where we're in the middle of the tribulation.

God is sending forth his judgments upon earth. In chapter 9, verse 2, he opened the abyssos, the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them as the scorpions of the earth have power, etc., to torment the unsaved people on earth for five months.

That happens in the tribulation. The next time we hear about this word is in chapter 11 of Revelation, where it says the spirit of Antichrist emerges to take possession of the beast. That's interesting.

Well, it doesn't say it like that. That's my terminology. But it says the beast came forth from the bottomless pit, but obviously a man didn't do that.

It was a spirit. Then finally in Revelation 20, Satan and his demons are thrown into that pit to be kept there for 1,000 years, until he releases them for a short time. I don't know exactly how this works.

It's one of those anomalies or whatever. Apparently, many of these demonic spirits have been locked away in this bottomless pit since maybe before earth was formed. I don't know.

But obviously, there's many of them still at work on earth, possessing men, tempting men, deceiving men, attacking men, etc. So why some are... I don't know. I'm just telling you what the Bible says.

I'll leave it up to you to figure it out. But I will say this, that whenever these demon-possessed people came into contact with Jesus, the demons went berserk in fear because they were terrified that he was going to send them to the Abusos. So one day he will.

You know? One day he will. Praise the Lord. All right, next week we will look at the great refusal.

God bless you. I hope it was a blessing to you today. See you next week.

End

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