

Good morning, everyone. Good morning. So glad to see so many of us back. It seems like the sickness is just about through our congregation. Praise God for his healing on that. Still missing a few faces, though. So continue to keep everyone in your prayers. It seems to be going around this time of year. If you would take your Bibles with me, turn to Mark chapter 5. Mark chapter 5. We're going to embark on another

chapter in Mark that's going to continue with the theme that he's been, or has recently started in the text that we had last week, where we're going to focus on four different miracles back to back. This will be the second of those four. Mark chapter five, verses one through 20, probably a miracle that many of us are familiar with. So if you would rise with me in honor of the one who gave us this word for our time of reading. Mark chapter 5 verses 1 through 20 reads, Then they came to the other side of the sea, into the region of the Gerasenes, and when he had got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs, with an unclean spirit, met him, who had his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him any more, 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. And constantly, night and day, among the tombs and in the mountains, he was screaming and gashing himself with stones. And seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, what do I have to do with you, 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. And he was asking him, What is your name? And he said to him, My name is Legion, for we are many. And he began pleading with him earnestly not to send them out of the region. But there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain, and the demons pleaded with him, saying, Send us into the swine so that we may enter them. And 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. And their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the countryside. And the people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and observed the demon-possessed man sitting down, clothed and

in his right mind, the very man who had the legion, and they became frightened. And those who had seen it recounted to them how this had happened to the demon-possessed man and all about the swine. And they began to plead with him to leave their region. And as he was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was pleading with 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 preach in the Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him, and everyone was marveling. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you so much for the opportunity today to gather as a body. I know in this new year, facing all the challenges that we have, the gathering of the body and praise and worship becomes more and more vital. I pray that we will be ready to receive your word this morning, that your spirit would apply what we learned to our hearts, that we would be able to praise you and glorify you for the miracle that is salvation, for the tormented that are set free by your grace. I pray that you would remove any hindrances for me, anything that would cause any stumbling tongues or nerves or anything else that would impede the message that you have for this body today. I pray that we do all that we do for you and for your glory in your holy name, I pray. Amen. You can be seated. All right, so this morning, Mark chapter 5, a fairly familiar miracle, I'm sure, for many of us. And the beautiful thing about it is we get to now see Jesus as Lord of Spirits. So last week we saw Lord of Nature. This week we're going to see Lord of Spirits. So if you recall, Mark has been teaching us who Jesus is. So he revealed through his actions very little teaching, then he had five parables from Mark to reveal to us his teaching about the authority, and now he's going to reveal in several miracles the authority of Jesus in different aspects of reality. In this one we're going to see a rather detailed recount or retelling of a man who has been wildly tormented. And this is the third exorcism. This is the one with the most details and marks so far. So the third in this gospel. And it's got rather graphic descriptions of the torment this man was going through. And we'll be digging into that in just a few moments. But it's important to keep in mind that the story that we've just come from, the miracle that we've just seen last week is the calming of the sea. And we saw in the calming of the sea last week, the way that Jesus calmed the storm was reminiscent of an exorcism, reminiscent of, we talked about the demonic presence in nature, how sin tainted nature as well. And there's gonna be many parallels that we're gonna see here as Jesus calms the internal storm of this Gentile. So keep your mind in tune with what we learned last week, because this is gonna be a very similar calming just inside of a man instead of on the sea. Now it's also very important to remember that the setting of this miracle is in the Decapolis. The Decapolis is 10 major cities on the eastern front of the Roman Empire. It's really just a completely

Gentile location that they've arrived in on the eastern part of the sea. And everything about this area, everything about this miracle is unclean to a Jew, everything. They're in unclean land, around unclean people, around a demoniac, which is considered unclean, who came from the tombs, which was considered unclean, who was bleeding, which was considered unclean. And then there's 2,000 pigs within earshot, which is also considered unclean. So everything about this miracle is in an unclean realm. And as Satan has done and always will do, we see the distorting of what God has made. So in this miracle, we're going to be able to see Satan's goal is to either distort or destroy what God has made. It's been that way from the beginning. All throughout scripture, you can see that. And I think all of us can vouch throughout history, we can see Satan distorting what God has made. But in this miracle, The most important thing that we're gonna see is the most beautiful picture of the mercy and grace of Jesus. Because if you recall, in chapter four and verse 35, it was Jesus's plan to cross the sea. Do you remember that? That was a significant part of last week's miracle, that Jesus planned to take them through the storm. But remember, the plan wasn't just for the storm. The plan was to go here. He said, let's cross the sea. He went across to save this Gentile man who was in torment. So let's keep all those things in mind as we begin to dig into this passage and see the beauty of salvation so vividly displayed for us. So the points today are essentially one long sentence split up into three different points. The first one is the tormented meats, the tormented meats. And when it's all done, hopefully it'll make sense. So the tormented meats verses one through seven, let me reread verses one through seven. Then they came to the other side of the sea into the region of the Gerasenes, which is the Decapolis. And when he got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met him, who made his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him any more, 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. And constantly night and day among the tombs and in the mountains, he was screaming and gashing himself with stones. And seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he says, what do I have to do with you, Jesus, son of the most high God? I implore you by God, do not torment me. So now the storm has been calmed. So if we pick up right where we left off last week, the storm has been calmed. It was told to stay calm, if you remember. And so they've made the rest of the trip across the sea. On a good calm day, it's roughly a two hour trip to get across the sea from one side to the

other. Now with the storm, it's hard to say. There's no way to know what time of day they would have landed, but now they're here and they've arrived at their destination. The disciples still not knowing why they have crossed. This is unclean land. Why are we here? Jesus, why are we here? And they arrive according to his plan. And the first thing that occurs is this tormented man, no sooner had Jesus stepped out of the boat, that this man comes running up. Now, it's hard to picture how all this is happening, because this covers a large geographical area. But from an archaeological perspective, there's a city there called Kursai. In the common tongue there, in the local dialect, it was Gergesa, so you might see it referenced as that. But Kursai is thought to be the city that's there, because several other cities of the Decapolis are simply too far away from the edge of the sea for this to make sense. So he lands at Kursai, And just within about 40 yards from Kursai is the tombs where they would bury their people in the hills there. There's evidences of people living in these tombs even from an archaeological perspective today. And so it's very much thought that these tombs are the ones that would have been inhabited by this man. And so this tormented man that has clearly had a history of torment, you don't try to subdue and shackle someone who's not causing violence to others. The only reason they would try to subdue him and shackle him and tie him down is because of the torment that he was causing himself and others. So we know this is a long time of torment. It was likely that he had not had rest for days and days, if not weeks and months, or even years at this point. He's gashing himself, he's bruised, screaming, and as soon as he sees Christ, He has a dualistic response. And I want to make sure we break this down on the wording here, because it's really amazing to see what he does. So this man who's got this storm raging inside of him, not unlike the storm that was on the sea, this demonic overtone, this demonic possession inside of him has driven him to Christ upon sight. All he had to do was see Christ and he was compelled to run to him. and to fall on his knees. In fact, in the original language in verse 6, where it says, bowed down, he ran up and bowed down, that is the original, in the original language is the word for falling prostrate in reverence and worship. So this demon-possessed man that has, we'll find out later, a legion of demons in him can do nothing more but physically run up and fall down on his face. He was likely naked, had no clothes, gashed, bleeding everywhere, runs up, falls down in reverence. And yet, his voice, what he says, reveals the true intentions or the true motive behind these demons. Look at verse 7. What do I have to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore

you by God, do not torment me. Now, if you remember back whenever we talked about the exorcisms earlier in Mark, there is a thing in that culture, a way of fighting demonic power or even authority between humans, is that it was thought that if you could use and articulate someone's full name and position, that you could assert authority over them. Do you guys remember that? The demons were trying to come up to Jesus and articulate his full name so that they could get authority over him. So you see this dualistic approach from this demon who is compelled to fall down in worship because of who this is. He knows who it is, but still he is trying to assert his authority over Jesus and articulates his full name. What are we to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? And not only does he say Jesus, he calls out Son of the Most High God, the title that helps him fulfill the Adamic promise from all those years ago in Genesis. That I will bring forth a Son, the Son of the Most High. The demons knew exactly who this was, and that this is the one that came to defeat them. I compare this with, has anyone, of course, when we were teenagers, I'm sure, maybe I'm not, maybe I'm just the only one, Did anyone ever have to do what your parents told you, but were mumbling under your breath the whole time, how much you hated it, like the disrespect? You had to physically respect, otherwise there'd be consequences, right? But inside you're like, there is no, when I turn 18, I'm out of this place. I'm not putting up with this. Anybody else besides me ever? Okay. That's the idea, right? This demon has no choice, but to physically fall down and worship. This is Jesus, son of the most high God. This is the one that's been promised for thousands of years. He's here. but he still has to worship. But he doesn't want to just worship. He wants to take authority. That's what the demons did to begin with. So this constant battle that we've seen through all the scripture is evidenced here. And what's so interesting is that the demon essentially asked Jesus to swear by God that he will not torment him. In the original language, the way it's worded there where it says, I implore you by God, it's the idea of swear by God that you won't torment me right now. They know what's going to happen. The demonic forces know what's coming. They know what will happen one day. And they know what it means for this Son of God, Son of the Most High God that has been promised for so long that when He arrives, it is almost the nail in the coffin. It's not quite the culmination of Christ's kingdom hasn't fully come yet, but they know that this is the first step. that there's a time coming when there will be torment for them. So you have this dualistic response from this demon-possessed man. He can't help but worship, but he can't help but try to take authority over Christ. And it

cannot be missed that this unclean man full of unclean demons and an unclean land must give praise to him. He must bow in reverence. He has no choice. and this verbal pronouncement of who God is and who Jesus is and his full character and his full title of exactly who he is is a proclamation that has not been uttered in the Decapolis. You have to understand this is completely Gentile area. And in fact, whenever later on the demon asks, please don't send me out of this region, there's a lot of good argumentation in scripture that demons are actually segregated to certain areas, almost like authoritative rulers over particular areas. You can see that this Gentile area and the response of the people later on makes us understand that this is an extremely dark, demonic, oppressed area. And yet they pronounce who Jesus is. And this is almost in answer to what the demons asked, I mean, excuse me, the disciples asked on the boat. You guys remember last week, the storms were calmed, Immediately, the supernatural has been there and all the disciples can ask then is, who is this? Who then is this man that even the wind and the storms are calm? And this demon, almost as though he's responding to it, runs up, throws himself on the ground and pronounces who this is. So these first seven verses sets the stage for what we're going to see. We see the sin, the torment, the demon possession, the man in need, someone who can't do anything for himself. Humanity can do nothing for him. They've tried to protect him from himself. He broke free. They ended up having to run him out into the tomb. That's the whole reason he was there. They had to run him out of the city. So he couldn't even live with them. He's been in torment. We see this setting and the Lord of glory is here. But what we need to take away from these first seven verses is this is our Savior. This is the one that indwells us. The one who has absolute authority, who commands the authority without even saying anything. The kind of authority that only God can have. This is the same Savior that's calmed our storms. This is the same Savior that indwells us. What do we have to fear? This is all the more reason to be pointed to Christ, to rest in Him, to understand what He completed, to understand who He is, Son of the Most High God, that we can wholly and completely trust and rest in Him and what He has done. So I want us to remember that. I want us to remember the authority that we're seeing exerted both over nature last week and over the spirits this week. For me, and this is just my own humanity, This is a greater supernatural expression of his authority than the storm was for me. This shows the storm inside man. No one can get in there to help. No one can. With our technology today, you know, I'm always thinking there may be something that can come

out that can help weather, right? We're getting better and predicting. Nothing can help inside. Nothing can. There's an entire division of science. I don't consider modern secular psychology to be science in the true sense of it. But there's this whole scientific study to try to fix what's inside of man. How many different theories have we seen over the years from a psychological perspective? But nothing can fix it but Christ himself. So we've begun with the tormented meats. So point number one, the tormented meats. Point number two, the Savior who makes him. So again, this is a partial sentence.

So the tormented meats, the Savior who makes him, verses eight through 13. It would seem like they were having a conversation. So when we pick up in verse 18, it reads, for he had been saying to him, so this may have been, there may have been more said here than what Mark records, but let's read verses eight through 13 again. For he had been saying to him, come out of the man, you unclean spirit. And he was asking him, what is your name? And the he, of course, being Jesus, asking the tormented man, what is your name? And he said to him, my name is Legion. for we are many. And he began pleading with him earnestly not to send them out of the region. But there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain, and the demons pleaded with him, saying, Send us into the swine so that we may enter them. And 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. So now they've entered in this conversation, this man has ran up, thrown himself down, and Jesus has no incantation, no mantra that he has to chant, simply upon the authority of who he is says, come out of the man, you unclean spirit. And Jesus, unlike previous exorcisms that we've seen in Mark, allows this demon, these demons, to ask questions. which is a little different than what he's done before. There's no way to know for sure what the motivation is there. Some would think it's just simply him trying to get who he is and assure his authority even in more detail. Or perhaps for those witnessing it to really understand the battle that's going on, there's several speculations. But ultimately, Jesus allows him to speak more than he has in previous exorcisms. And so in verse nine, he asked him, what is your name? And the demon is, I'm sure many of us are familiar. This is a very, very familiar story. My name is Legion for we are many. Now, the original language here is legio, which is a Greek word that the Romans used, and the Roman legion, again, we're in the Decapolis, the Roman Empire, so we really have to understand the context of a Roman legion. Now, I'm not saying this number is for sure how many were inside this man, but a Roman legion was 5,600 troops. 5,600 troops. Now if we

were to take that completely literal from the name, now demons deceive, okay? So I'm not putting my foot down saying there were 5,600 demons inside this man, but it gives us a perspective of the kind of chaos, the absolute torment and chaos that this man was in inside of him. And I want you to think about the kind of chaos that we were in before Christ relieved us. of the kind of storm that we were in, the kind of torment that we were in from our sin and death. I want you to identify yourself with this man. Identify your pre-conversion self with this man, because we are in no less torment than this man. Physically, it was coming out, yes. We may not have been possessed to the point where we're cutting ourselves, but we were no less lost and separated from God than this man was. No less whatsoever. So this man who potentially has upwards of 5,600 demons inside of him, tells him his name. And this one man that's allowed to have this many demons, that this many demons has come into him, really shows the darkness of that area, the strength of Satan in that area, that this would come about. This is a dark area. This is a dark region. This is a Gentile region. You have to remember, this is not a Jew at this time. This is a Gentile. This is likely or even possibly a Roman citizen himself. And yet with all this power, potential of 5,600 demons, what did they do in the first point that we just looked at? They had no choice but to fall at the feet of Christ. Christ's authority here is on display throughout the passage. Now it's interesting, I mentioned a few moments ago, but I'll talk about it a little bit more now. In verse 10, the demons, after giving him the name, began pleading with him earnestly not to send them out of the region. These demons were quite literally begging him not to leave the Decapolis, the Gentile region. Again, there's been study, there's been a lot of study on an argumentation on Scripture subtly revealing that demons have almost a hierarchy. Paul, in the way he words things about princes and principalities of the air, the authorities of those who are in the air. You'll see references in the Old Testament about demons and fighting in different regions and angels having to go to different regions. I won't go into all that right now, but this leans towards that particular argument that there are geographical coincidences or things that coincide with potential demonic and Satan activity being laid out geographically. In other words, almost like demon lords of particular areas, those kinds of things. And you can kind of see that today. You know, I'll throw my hand out there. I think all alien activity UFOs are all demonic, you know, manifestations, and you see those in the same areas over and over and over and over again, right? You see those in a particular area concentrated.



There's things that lead towards that, and this passage definitely leads towards, or leans towards, backing that particular thing up. So they clearly don't want to leave this area. They have a foothold here. They want to stay here. It could be that if they get sent out, and this is complete conjecture, but possibly if they get sent out from their particular area, they're destroyed before the time comes. Remember when they were begging him not to torment them? Perhaps it has something to do with that. But they would rather go into this group of swine, in verse 12, they're still begging him, send us into the swine so that we may enter them. Now notice again, this demon ran up, these demons, ran up, fell down in worship, tried to take authority over Christ by using his full name, but also had to submit saying, please promise me by God that you won't torment us. They've moved on the conversation Jesus has said come out of him and for whatever reason, Christ has allowed the conversation to continue past that. They've gotten a name and yet Christ still has to give them permission to do what they've asked to do. Again, the authority of Christ, the Lord of the spirits is on display in verse 13. And Jesus gave them permission, and coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine, and the herds rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about 2,000 of them, and they were drowned in the sea. There's been a lot of archeological work in this area, as I mentioned earlier. There's an embankment that would fit perfectly with this kind of analogy or this kind of story, excuse me, of that area on Kursai about two miles away. They think it could be the embankment that was used, just the way it runs into the sea, but it's super steep and it rolls down. It's not just a cliff, but you could actually get to the water. It's just very steep. Don't know for sure if that's it, but it conjures up for us in our minds, something that we can see. So Jesus was stepping out of the boat. The city was over here on the hill, most likely. The tomb's off to the side here, the sea at his back. And there was 2,000 swine over here. And this 2,000 swine wasn't owned by a particular person. In those days, number one, the primary meat in Gentile world was pork. The Roman Empire had herds and herds of swine. And the way they would do this is the local cities would pay herdsmen. Anybody ever had pigs? They don't smell nice, right? You don't keep those in cities. Those are kept out. And so all the different people would hire herdsmen to keep their herds out into one large area. And so there were probably multiple herdsmen from many different cities around that area that were attending this particular herd. And I'm going into this much detail because when the demons left and entered the pigs, left them in and entered the pigs, and they were all drowned, the economic collapse of that area was nearly certain. This was the livelihood of probably

every town within miles around in this one 2,000 pig herd. Remember when I mentioned earlier that demons continually over and over distort and destroy what God has made. Think about the impact that that man had inside of him when these demons entered a herd of swine and drove them so mad instantly that they ran down and killed themselves. Imagine what that man was going through before they left him. And the economic collapse that happens here is just, it would be similar to us and having every major factory within a 50 mile radius shut down at the same time. Everybody's out of work. Everybody's out of work. There's nothing we can do about it. And so these demons have been inflicting pain on this man for so long and now they've broadened their destruction to cities around them. But notice what doesn't happen. Neither Jesus nor Mark mentions the economic collapse. Neither of them do. There's a reason for that, I

think. One soul redeemed is worth more than any economy or group of capital. or really anything in this physical world. One redeemed soul is worth more than all of that combined. And that's what the rest of the story focuses on as we move on in just a moment is what this man has become now that Jesus has intervened in his life. So none of these detestable pigs have ran down this two miles, likely two miles south of Kursai, jumped into the sea, they've all drowned, and the herdsmen had nothing they could do but run away. Can you imagine being the one paid and entrusted with the economics of the entire region, that group of men, and having them all just suddenly absolutely lose their minds and kill themselves?

I'd run away too. And so they run away and they're telling the city, and I don't want to get ahead of myself, This herd being driven to its death was so much more than just something humorous to think about pigs running down a hill. The destruction of demons and the intent that they have to hurt humanity, God's pinnacle of creation, is so evidenced in the story. They tormented this man for who knows how long, and now they're bringing the local economy to its knees. And the application of this point

is, the number of the enemy, there's several points here I want to make, the number of the enemy was no match for Jesus. Remember what I was talking about in point one? The authority that Christ has by his mere presence over the demons, and then we find out that it's not a demon, it is a plethora of demons. It's hard to say exactly how many, but upwards of potentially 5,600. And yet, the number means nothing. The number means absolutely nothing.

They know who He is. They know their position before the Son of God Most High. And the last point I want us

to really drive home, and I've already mentioned it. But by Jesus and Mark not making the comment about the loss of the herd shows us the importance that a redeemed soul is to God over capital. Now, when we think about ourselves today, do we have that same mindset? Now, please don't hear me say, go home and sell everything. That's not what I'm saying. But what I'm asking you is, where is your priority? Where is my priority? Christ's priority was the tormented man. Where is our priority? The pigs and all the disaster that it's going to bring was nothing compared to the beauty of a redeemed man being set right. And we'll see in just a moment, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. Do we put our stock in capital of things that are going to burn and pass away? Or do we put our stock in what God is doing in the redemption of his people? Point number three, the disciple by mercy, the disciple by mercy. So the sentence as a whole is the tormented meets the Savior who makes him a disciple by mercy. So maybe now all the points will make better sense. but the disciple by mercy, verses 14 through 20. And their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the countryside. And the people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and observed the demon-possessed man sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had the legion, and they became frightened. And those who had seen it recounted to them how this had happened to the demon-possessed man and all about the swine. And they began to plead with him to leave their region. And as he was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was pleading with 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 preach in the Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him. And everyone was marveling. So far, we've seen a couple of parallels between the storm on the sea and the storm inside the man. And now we get to see the authority of Jesus. We've seen that paralleled in both stories. And now the reaction of the sea and the man are going to be a clearly evidenced parallel as well. The sea became absolute calm. Remember from last week. Jesus spoke and the sea became calm. This man, Jesus gave them permission and the man became calm, clothed in his right mind, seated at the feet of the Savior. So we've seen him display his authority as Lord of nature. Last week we've seen him display his authority of Lord of spirits this week. And then the herdsmen running away and reporting it to the city brought all the people out to them. And I would imagine if I was

owner of the swine that had all my pigs run down and get killed by this amazingly just crazy story that my herdsmen are now telling me, I'd probably come out and investigate too. And so now we're drawing in from possibly Hippos, which is the biggest city there. It's a few miles down the road where people were probably running in a hurry. They're coming. They want to see what's going on. And this man who had been tormented is now one of the most beautiful descriptions of salvation, verse 15. And they came to Jesus and observed the demon possessed man. And what was he doing? Sitting down, clothed, and in his right mind, the very man who had the legion. And they became frightened. Mark is wanting to make sure we understand this person that is now sitting here was the exact same person that was tormented at the beginning of this story. When Jesus got out of the boat, here's this man that's tormented, and now he's not. And the only difference is an encounter with Jesus Christ, who planned to come and have that encounter. Now I want you to think back to your, if you're converted back to your pre-salvation self, and the torment that you had, you may not have had outward torment, perhaps you did, but there was torment within all of us. Sin and death ruled us, did it not? And what Jesus did for us is not unlike what he did for this man who was tormented in the Decapolis. He came and he spoke to us by his spirit in our day. And he brought the tormentor out of us. You guys remember the strong man that we talked about earlier in Mark? And he brought that tormentor out of us, and he clothed us in his righteousness, and he seated us, changing our minds first. What is repentance and regeneration? By definition, it is a change of mind. It is becoming new. Repentance is changing your mind about something. So God comes in and changes our minds so that we are right-minded, clothes us in His righteousness, and we can do nothing but simply set at His feet in awe. Isn't that a beautiful picture of salvation? This man who was tormented under the control of Satan, led by these demons, is now in his right mind, clothed and sitting at the feet of Christ. Oh, that every one of us would sit at the seat of Christ again. You guys remember that feeling at salvation? When you really had nothing you could do but sit and look up in awe and go, what just happened? And I pray many of us do that still. Don't lose that all of that feeling after salvation. When you know that your mind is changed and you're clothed in something different, you're in your right mind and all you're doing is sitting, looking up in amazement, in awe and worship. And that's what this man has done. That's why I wanted you to Identify yourself with this

man. Yes, you may not have demon possession in the true sense of the word, but we were tormented by Satan, by our sin, by our death. We were under his control and power, and yet Christ set him free. And it was by his plan to go set him free. The demon possessed man did not cross the sea to find Jesus. Jesus crossed the sea to redeem one of his children, did he not? The authority of Christ in salvation is evidenced here. This is Christ making an impact on this man's life. And that's even what he tells him to go and do in just a couple of verses when I get there again. He says, go and tell everyone that God had mercy on you. Christ is the one with the plan that came to save this tormented man. And the people's reaction is not unlike people's reaction today when they encounter Christ. So in verse 16, those who had seen it, so I'm assuming the herdsmen, or possibly those around, recounted to those who were coming out of the city how this had happened. And the demon possessed man and all about the swine. And what was the people's reaction? They began to plead with him to leave their region. People, when they have an interaction with Christ, have one of two reactions. This is where the parallel between the storm and the parallel between this tormented man diverge. The disciples saw the authority of Christ, didn't they, in the storm? They saw the authority of Christ. Their reaction was not to get away from Christ, but to ask, who is this man? The people's reaction to seeing this calming of the storm, the people of Decapolis, was no, get away from me. I want to have nothing to do with you. What's the difference? What's the difference between the reaction of these two groups of people? Christ chose the disciples. pulled them off the sea and changed who they were. He taught them. He said, this is who I am. I've been revealed to them physically who he was in the sea. These people had never heard of Jesus before. These are Gentiles. They don't care about the Jews. They don't want to know about the Jews. They would have known who Christ was. They were not impacted by Christ. Christ did not save them. That's the difference in the reaction. The difference in the reaction is Christ. He drew the disciples to himself, revealed himself to them, and they wanted to know when they saw the awe-inspiring, the calming of the sea that drove fear into them, their response was, I want to know more. The people who had no idea who Christ was saw the same kind of authority on display over these spirits, and they wanted nothing to do with them because they had not been impacted by Christ. Do you see the difference? The difference is Christ. And Jesus did what they requested. The very next verse in verse 18. And as he was getting into the

boat, the man who had been demon possessed was pleading with him that he might accompany him. So this new disciple here wants to go. He's begging with him, please let me go with you. And yet in verse 19, Jesus says, 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. Now this is interesting to note that this is exact opposite of what he had told others to do upon healing them. You guys remember in Mark, almost every time in Mark that he's had a healing or an exorcism so far, he said, don't talk about me. The difference is the geography. When he's at home doing healings, he needs, you guys remember we talked about it, he needs to make sure that the false idea of what the Jews thought a Messiah would be is not what they run away with, right? It would basically bring about an insurrection against the Romans. But here in the Decapolis, the Gentiles, they have no idea. There's no preconceived notion of a Messiah for them. And so what Jesus does is send this man out as the first missionary recorded in Scripture. If you want to make that note, this is the first missionary recorded in Scripture. a Gentile saved sent to the Gentiles as the first missionary. And I think there's also an aspect of not bringing a Gentile back to impede his ministry to the Jews. Had he brought a Gentile back as, let's say, a 13th disciple, for example, it would have dramatically impeded his ministry to the Jews. They would have absolutely disregarded him from that moment forward. So I think as part of his plan obviously it was, was to send him back to his people and not bring him back to the Jews. And the only one that wanted to be with him was the one that had the change brought about within him. All the other people of the area, whether it be that they were worried too much about the economic collapse, why would we want this guy to stay here? He just killed 2,000 of our pigs. We're all gonna suffer through the next however many months it takes to rebuild a herd or whether it was they were truly fearful from the change in this man. And again, likely that everyone in the area knew who this guy was. He was in the tombs, screaming, cutting himself. But for whatever their motivation was, they wanted nothing to do with Jesus after they had interacted with him. And now this man did as he was instructed. And in verse 20, it says, he went away and began to preach in the Decapolis. So that's 10 major cities of the Roman Empire. What great things Jesus had done for him and everyone was marveling. And the message that he took was what Jesus told him to take. Go report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how he had mercy on

you. Notice Jesus referencing himself in the divine. He makes himself equal with God. Who just did the miracle physically?

Who just did the miracle? Jesus, the Son of God. And now he says, the Lord has done this for you. He had mercy on you. Anyone that tells you that Jesus never claimed to be God has not read scripture. Because right here, he is interposing himself, the miracle worker with God, the one who gave mercy, as being the same person. He is claiming to be God. And the message that he was carrying forward, this Gentile, was that God had mercy on me. That's as simple as the message is. God had mercy on me. I was a sinner. Christ came.

He changed me. And now I'm not. I was tormented, and now I'm calm. I was naked in unrighteousness, and now I'm clothed in Christ's righteousness. I had a mind bent for destruction and death, and now I have a right mind set on the things of God by His mercy. This particular miracle is such a beautiful picture of salvation, we cannot miss it. In our application for this last point, is that everything that we do for Christ should come from the motivation of what He has done for us. This man was motivated because of what he was delivered from by Christ. The motivation was not a set of Jewish laws or regulations. of thinking that you have merit

that you have to earn. He knew that he was nothing before Christ and he has everything because of Christ. And his motivation to go through 10 cities in a hostile Gentile area that clearly has a footprint of Satan in it was simply because Christ made a difference in his life. That's it. Out of gratitude, he went and obeyed. So I would ask you, what is your motivation? And I pray that it is not to earn merit. I pray that your motivation is gratitude, love and appreciation for what he has done for us according to his plan. That's your motivation. That is our motivation as a church body for serving God. It's not to be better than the person next to you. It's not to compare yourself to other churches. It's not to compare ourselves to anything, but we're looking at Christ, resting in what he has done and going, I want to serve the one who brought me from this tormented storm to this calm state. Lord, I love you. Thank you. That's where the motivation should be. So I would ask you, are you sitting at Christ's feet proverbially, looking up at Him? I pray that we are. So in conclusion, today we saw in this passage, the tormented meeting the Savior who makes Him a disciple by mercy. And every one of us can say that same sentence, can we not? That we were the tormented who met the Savior who made us a disciple by his mercy. Every one of us can echo that. And just like in the first miracle that we talked about last week,

I said that each one of these miracles brings people to a point where they have to make a decision about who Jesus is. The people who saw this made a decision. Last week, the disciples made a decision. You remember that? Last week, the disciples said, who is this man? And they leaned in. The people in this area said, we don't want you here and they pulled away. And I would ask you, have you made a decision about who Christ is? I pray that this story, if you have made a decision for Christ, reinforces who it is that we serve, the authority that he has in this world, the beauty of salvation. I hope it brings you back to his feet, clothed and in your right mind. But if you haven't made a decision about Christ, I challenge you today to look at this passage and go, who is this man? Don't recoil. Lean in. Read from last week about the storm. Lean into who he is. Don't pull away. Because he does offer salvation. And so I want each one of us to think about as we go through this week. That we have been made disciples by the mercy and grace of Christ. Remember that every one of us are now seated before him, looking up in that beautiful face that has now made a change in us according to his plan, not by our own. We didn't cross the sea to find him. We didn't open a door that was being knocked on. Christ came in and by his mercy and grace changed us, clothed us and gave us a right mind. So let us leave today glorifying God for what he's done And remember that at the end of Mark, or excuse me, at the end of Matthew, Christ gave us the same, the same duty that he gave this man. Go forth, making disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you. That's the message that we were left with, no different than this Gentile was. So let us be about the work of the Savior out of gratitude and love and appreciation for what He has done. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the opportunity to look again at salvation, to look at the beauty of what you've done in not only the tormented man all those years ago that we saw today, but also the beauty of what you've done within us. the salvation that you have brought to your people by your mercy and grace and nothing else. According to your plan, you came to us when you deemed right. You clothed us in your righteousness when we had nothing. You changed our mind when we were bent on self-destruction and sin so that we would look differently at it and have a mind more like yours. Let us understand what has happened to us so that we would glorify You and in our glory and love towards You, live out and be disciples that You have called us to be. We love You and praise You and ask that You would give us the grace that we need this week to glorify You in all that we do. In Your holy name, I pray. Amen.