

WHO THEN IS THIS | ROAD TRIP | JULY 16, 2017

Summary of Mark thus-far

- Jesus and the disciples were on the Western shore of Galilee.
- The disciples had already witnessed several impressive miracles, and heard him teach and speak in parables.
- The disciples also experienced the power of Jesus when he calmed the wind and the sea with a word, and they are left asking themselves and each other - "Who is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

And this is where our story begins, we find ourselves witnessing another man encountering Jesus, and having his life transformed.

Summary of Mark 5

- We're introduced to the demon possessed man.
 - He lives among the tombs, he could not be bound or subdued by anyone in the entire region, he was alone, crying out and harming himself.
 - He calls himself, "Legion, for we are many."
 - A Roman army legion would have included anywhere from 2000 to 6000 men.
- Mark wants to sear the image of this man in our hearts: If ever there was a man of whom it could be said, "there is no hope for you", or, "there is nothing left to save" this man named Legion would fit the bill.
- However, Mark doesn't let us write that narrative over the story, because that's exactly where we find Jesus.
 - This man, was the only reason that the disciples and Jesus set off from the Western shores of Galilee. There were no other speaking engagements, no teaching moments, or parables, and the freedom of this demon-possessed man, is the only documented miracle.
- Jesus commands the demons to come out of the man, and they are given permission to enter a nearby herd of 2000 pigs. Then the demons accomplish their original purpose in destroying the pigs.
- The townspeople freak out, and gather people from the nearby towns and cities, and find the demon-filled man sitting there, clothed and in his right mind.

Important Note:

- Mark notes that the demons recognize who Jesus is, but he takes the identification one step further; Jesus is the Son of the Most High God, who will cross the abyss between Heaven and Hell in order to redeem one man's life.

Jesus crosses the abyss to clothe us.

- We may try to hide it, but we all have sin in our lives.
- The coverings that we're able to create ourselves don't resolve the sin, they merely cover it.
 - In fact, we don't need a cover at all, we need something that will make us righteous and reverse our sinful condition: moral alienation from God.

- The nature of Christ is to clothe us in his own righteousness.
 - Romans 3:21-25
 - Isaiah 61:10
- And as we receive these robes of God's righteousness, we find ourselves once again restored to a place of perfect love.
 - 1 John 4:18
- The good news of the gospel story here in Mark, is that Jesus crosses the abyss so that you and I can be saved from our moral alienation from God.

Jesus crosses the abyss to restore our minds.

- It's one thing to be exposed and to receive the righteousness of Christ, but to live in that understanding must cause a transformation of our mind.
- The demon-possessed man was obviously being controlled by this legion of demons.
 - What external influences are we allowing in our lives as we continue to follow Christ?
- Changing our minds is a challenging process, however it's a necessary one.
- By re-framing our lives around the person and nature of Jesus, our entire world transforms around us.
- Like Legion, we too need to have our minds restored by Christ, so that His peace is what flows from our heart.
- Philippians 2:5-11
- Romans 12:1-2

Jesus crosses the abyss to send us.

- This may contradict what we think we know about Jesus, normally we hear him calling us to "come", yet here, his purpose is different.
 - Remember, this is Jesus only trip to the Eastern shore of Galilee, and Jesus chooses to send this transformed man, back to his family and friends in order to till the soil and prepare it to receive the kingdom.
- Through the man's painful experience, he was able to declare what God had done for him, and the goodness of God's mercy.
- We don't always understand the miraculous way that God weaves His story into ours - but he calls us to proclaim that story to others.
- 2 Corinthians 16:21

- In the same way that Jesus crossed the abyss for us, Jesus sends us to cross the abyss for one!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you accepted the robes of Righteousness that Christ offers freely?
2. What external influences and thoughts are you allowing in your lives as you continue to follow Christ?
3. What is the abyss (or past pain) that you need to cross in your life for the sake of one person?
4. Who is God calling you to cross your abyss for?