

Title: Three Requests, Three Answers

Text: Mark 5: 1-21

Date: January 19, 2012

Place: SGBC, New Jersey

My subject is: Three Requests, Three Answers.

Let's read Mark 5: 1-21. We will note the three requests and three answers as we go. Then we will come back and see what we can learn from each. In verses **10-12** is the first request: the request of Legion, the devils, unclean spirits—**v13**—the answer was the Lord gave them leave. Then in verse **17** the second request of is that of the business men—**v18**—the Lord did it--**v21**. Then in verse **18** the third request is the request of the man who had been possessed—but the Lord did not grant him his request—**v19-20**

I. THE REQUEST OF LEGION (vv10-12)

Each one here asked of the Lord—even the devil.

The Lord Jesus Christ is God in charge over all.

The devil and devils have much power. He had power over this poor man, and is too powerful for you and me. We are no match for him. He had power to destroy the swine. But he had to ask the Lord Jesus permission to do anything. That means Christ is God over all.

Satan and the powers of darkness are under the total control of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If the devil could not go into those swine without permission then he could not have entered this man without permission. Unclean spirits can go only where Christ Jesus permits, and can only do what Christ allows them to do (v10, 12-13) (Job 1: 6-12)

Job 1: 6: Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. 7: And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 8: And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? 9: Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10: Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. 11: But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. 12: And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

1 Peter 5: 8: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he MAY devour:

These unclean spirits were only in this man by the Lord's permission. Satan is powerful but not omnipotent (Revelation 20:1-3).

Why would the Lord allow Satan to do *anything*? The same reason he allowed the unclean spirits to enter into this man and then into these swine—because it serves the Lord's purpose in bringing glory to his name in the salvation of chosen sinners.

Three reasons that occurred to me:

1. By casting Satan out of this certain man, allowing him to enter the swine--this heard of swine ran down and were choked in the sea. The Lord Jesus shows us a glimpse of what he did at Calvary and what he does in the hearts of sinners (v13.)

Genesis 3: 15: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

1 John 3: 5: And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Micah 7: 19: He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

The *unclean spirits and swine* represent the sin and uncleanness that Christ Jesus saves us from. Concerning swine,

Deuteronomy 14: 8...it *is* unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.

Remember what the Lord taught Peter:

Acts 10: 15: And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.

Matthew 12: 28: But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. 29: Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

2. By allowing the demons to destroy the herd of swine and leaving their owners to themselves, the Lord showed this man that his compassion to him was not only powerful, saving grace, but was particular grace.

3. The Lord wanted to get the attention of the people of the city.

Application: First, lesson, Christ is God over all—powerful over all, even the devil. Christ crushed the serpents head, he cast our sins into the depths of the sea, Christ binds the strongman and spoils his house, making his children clean, in our right mind, to sit at his feet and to be clothed with his righteousness. Working all things together on purpose for his own glory and the sake of those he has everlastingly loved.

II. THE REQUEST OF THE BUSINESS MEN (vv15-17)

Why did these men beg the Lord to depart from their coasts? Two reasons: 1. They coveted the power of God; 2. They coveted earthly riches.

Note what made them afraid—the power of the Lord (v15)

Wouldn't you think that would have caused them great joy? (vv3-4—says they had tried to make this man this way, but to no avail). So why did the Lord's power fill them with fright rather than joy? The power of the Lord did what *they* had never been able to do—(vv3-5, 15.) None but Christ put away the sin of his people and only Christ delivers lost souls from the power of satan.

Acts 10: 38: How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Hebrews 7: 25: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

They coveted worldly riches—soon as they heard about the pigs they begged him to leave (v16-17)

These must have been the owners of the pigs—2000 head just died—this hit them in the pocket book.

This is my speculation so it is not worth much but this country was the land given to Reuben—a Jew. The Gentile Girgisites had filled this land. Jews were forbidden to have anything to do with pigs. Pigs were used in Gentile idolatry, plus Gentiles ate them. The Jews were probably selling the pigs to the Gentiles, probably eating them as well.

Regardless, we can tell by their desire to have Christ leave that the heart of these men was idolatry, covetousness, sin. When they tried to tame this man we can be sure it was for covetous reasons. Now they wanted the Lord gone or else not only their desire for vain glory but also their income will be further jeopardized—the “hope of their gains was gone” (Acts 16:19).

Acts 16: 19: And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the rulers, 20: And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21: And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

The owners of these pigs were in as bad a shape as the man possessed with devils—as bad as you who are without Christ. By asking Christ to leave their coasts, these men were choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life as surely as the swine were choked in the sea (Mark 4: 19)

App. There is no greater hindrance to a sinner from trusting Christ than covetousness for Christ’s glory and for gain of this world demonstrated by these Gadarenes. God walked on their shores in human flesh and at least two demon-possessed lunatics were retrieved from the clutches of satan before their very eyes—yet, the power of God terrified them! They denied the power of God was in their midst.

2 Timothy 3: 5: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

That is what Christ did—he departed.

The Pearl of great price stood before them, the unsearchable riches of Christ had come into their coasts—yet, they begged him to go away because the “hope of their gains was gone.”

1 John 2: 15: Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16: For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

III. THE REQUEST OF THE MAN WHOM THE LORD SAVED (v18)

The demons prayed let us *stay in this country but depart from you*—the Lord gave them their request. The countrymen prayed *for Christ to depart from us*—the Lord gave them their request. This man prayed, “*that he might be with him.*” Those who have experienced the power of God, the riches of grace, want to be with the Lord and with his people, but Christ denied him his request.

Mark 5: 19: Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him,...

Application: It is not the worst thing for us when God does not give us what we ask him.

The Lord sent him--v19: Go home to thy friends

What a gift God gave to this man's friends. Those the Lord sends do not necessarily fill the office of a pastor, maybe not even a deacon, maybe no office at all—this man did not—but he was sent of the Lord.

Application: Where ever we work, live, shop—the believer is sent of God to bear witness of him.

“I send you forth in the midst of wolves”...but the Lord promises,...“I will never leave thee nor forsake thee”

How do we bear witness of Christ?

v19: And tell them how great things the LORD hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

1. *Tell them how great things the LORD hath done...*the Lord did it all.

- Christ came to where I was
- Christ sacrificed himself bruising the serpents head, casting my sins into the depth of the sea
- Christ came to me personally and spoke peace into my soul—life were there was only death—delivered me who all my life was in bondage
- He gave me the love of Christ in my heart

2. *For thee...*(v2-5) Don't forget for to tell them who you are?

Maybe you are one “possessed with a devil” or “the man who was born blind from his birth”, or “the leper that was healed”, or “the woman that was a sinner”, or the “woman with the issue of blood”...whatever our case every sinner saved by grace is like Paul

1 Timothy 1: 15: This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

3. Tell them...*And hath had compassion on thee...*

The greatness of his compassion is seen in how particular the Lord's dealings were with him— I was not seeking him, I did not love him, I tried to act godly—I adjure thee by God—but I was a dead God-hater.

“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” (Ro 9:16)

But what about the fact that the Lord did not give this man his request?

Mark 5: 20: And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

And the Lord blessed the gospel he sent him to declare--(Mark 7: 31, 36-37: 1-2).

Application: Remember these three things:

1. *From the devil's request*—Christ is God over all. Christ crushed the serpents head, he cast our sins into the depths of the sea, Christ binds the strongman and spoils his house, making his children clean, in our right mind, to sit at Christ's feet and clothed in Christ's righteousness.

2. *From the business men's request*—the natural heart covets—the glory of God's power and personal gain—that is the covetousness which is idolatry—preferring the vain self-salvation of pork barrels rather than Christ the Power and Wisdom of God—so Christ departed from them. Let us not make their request.

3. *From the request of the man God saved*—the work Christ has sent us to do is to tell men what great things Christ has done for you.

- The Lord did it—salvation is of the Lord.
- The Lord did it for me—chief of sinners.
- The Lord had compassion on me—all of grace.

The Lord will give us what we want. There will be some whom the Lord will give exactly what they want and they will walk in their glory and end up choked by their own lusts.

There will be others who the Lord will give what they want—they will trust in his Power and part with all else to follow the will of the Pearl of great price because they have been made willing by experiencing the day of God's Power.

Trust the Lord himself to bless the word he has sent forth.

Amen!