

The Gospel According To Mark

Part Nine

Mark 4:35-41 [New King James] *“On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, ‘Let us cross over to the other side.’ Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, ‘Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?’ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace, be still!’ And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, ‘Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?’ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, ‘Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!’”*

The Lake of Galilee was notorious for its storms, that came with terrifying suddenness.

The disciples panicked because the storm threatened their lives, we all at times face situations that cause us great anxiety.

We always have two options, we can assume that Jesus Christ does not care, as His disciples did in this situation, or we can put our trust in Him, He does care and will intervene on our behalf.

The disciples had lived with Jesus Christ, but they underestimated His concern for them.

The disciples did **not** yet know the power that was available in Jesus Christ to solve their problems, after over 2,000 years of Christian experience we have no excuse to not trust Him.

Jesus Christ will give us peace in any storm of sorrow –

John 14:27 [New King James] *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”*

This was said by Jesus Christ at a time of sorrow for all His disciples, [verse 19].

Jesus Christ will give us peace when life’s problems involve us in a tempest of doubt, tension and uncertainty –

John 14:15-18 [New King James] *“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”*

Jesus Christ comes to us through the active indwelling of the Holy Spirit, [Romans 8:9]. He will never leave us, as long as the Holy Spirit dwells in us, [Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19] and we keep His commandments.

Mark 5:1-13 [New King James] *“Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. And he cried out with a loud voice and said, ‘What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me.’ For He said to him, ‘Come out of the man, unclean spirit!’ Then He asked*

him, 'What is your name?' And he answered, saying, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.' Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. So all the demons begged Him, saying, 'Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.' And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea."

Although we cannot be sure why demon-possession occurs, we know that evil spirits can use the human body to distort and destroy a human's relationship with God, [2 Corinthians 4:4].

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 [New King James] "*And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*"

False teachers were claiming to represent Jesus Christ, as servants of righteousness, they were lying shamelessly.

Today Satan and his servants can still deceive us, and blind us to the truth of the gospel message brought by Jesus Christ from God the Father.

Bible-quoting leaders of cults that alienate people from their families, and lead them into the practice of immorality and deceit.

So-called "Christian" churches that are impregnated with pagan rituals and idols.

1 John 5:19 [New King James] "*We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*"

Satan still controls the world and is a liar and a murderer, [John 8:44].

Mark often highlights the supernatural struggle between Jesus Christ and Satan. The demons' goal is to control the humans they inhabit, Jesus Christ's goal was to give people freedom from sin and Satan's control.

James 4:7-8 [New King James] "*Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*"

The closer our relationship with God the more we can resist Satan and his demons, [1 Peter 5:8-9].

The demons knew that they had no power over Jesus Christ and begged not to torment them, [Matthew 25:41] send them into the abyss, [Luke 8:31; Revelation 20:1-2], but to send them into a herd of pigs [verse 13].

According to the Old Testament law [Leviticus 11:7] pigs were unclean animals.

This meant that they could not be eaten or even touched by a Jew.

This incident took place southeast of the Sea of Galilee in the region of Gadarenes, a gentile region, mainly Greek traders and immigrants, although some Jews lived in the area, which explains how a herd of pigs could be involved.

Mark 5:14-17 [New King James] "*So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been*

demon-possessed, and about the swine. Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.”

After such a wonderful miracle of saving the man’s life, why did the people want Jesus Christ to leave?

They may have feared Jesus Christ’s supernatural power.

They may have feared that Jesus Christ would, as a Jew, continue to destroy their pigs.

They would rather reject Jesus Christ than lose their source of income and security.

Instinctively people do not like their comfortable life disturbed by Jesus Christ influencing their life.

Instinctively people do **not** like giving up any possessions that they have, when they realise this will happen when they choose to follow Jesus Christ, [Luke 14:25-27, 33].

Instinctively people do **not** like their “*religion*” disturbed –

Everyone has certain beliefs about life which is their personal “*religion*.”

Jesus Christ will disrupt this when He comes into their lives with the truth, [John 14:6].

People have responded to Jesus Christ in this way in every generation.

Mark 5:18-20 [New King James] “*And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, ‘Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.’ And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marvelled.*”

Usually Jesus Christ told those whom He healed not to tell others what had happened to them.

This time Jesus Christ told this man the very opposite. Why?

This is the first sign that Christianity was for all human beings, not just for Jews.

This healed man was a living, walking, vivid, unanswerable demonstration of what Jesus Christ can do for human beings.

Christianity recreates a person completely.

This healed man was to be the first seed which in time was to become a great harvest.

Matthew 4:25 [New King James] “*Great multitudes followed Him, from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.*”

Part of this multitude was from Decapolis! Was this the result of this one man’s witness?

Mark 5:21-24 [New King James] “*Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea. And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet and begged Him earnestly, saying, ‘My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live.’ So Jesus went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him.*”

It is always tragic when a child is ill but to be at the point of death at the age of twelve [verse 42] when according to Jewish custom she was on the threshold of womanhood makes this doubly tragic.

The love this man had for his child made a dramatic change to his life when she was at the point of death.

His prejudices were forgotten –

There can be no doubt that this Ruler of the Synagogue regarded Jesus Christ as an outsider, regarded by the Pharisees, who had great influence in every synagogue, as a dangerous heretic.

Prejudice means a judging before the evidence has been examined, or a verdict given because of refusal to examine the evidence.

Nearly every forward step in human existence has had to fight against the initial prejudice against it.

His dignity was forgotten –

He, the Ruler of the Synagogue, came and threw himself at the feet of Jesus Christ, the wandering teacher who had been rejected by the religious leadership, of which he was a part.

His pride was forgotten –

It must have taken a conscious effort of humility, in public, for this Ruler of the Synagogue to come and ask help from Jesus of Nazareth, to him a son of a carpenter, [Matthew 13:53-58].

It is true to say that no-one wishes to be indebted to anyone else.

We all would like to run life on our own.

Yet the very first step every Christian has to take is to realise we cannot be anything but indebted to God for our past, present and future life.

If we enter into the realm of speculation there are certain questions that come to mind.

Did his friend object to him going to this Jesus Christ?

Would this be the end of his position as Ruler of the Synagogue?

Was he forced to go himself to Jesus Christ because none of his friends or family would go, to allow him to stay with his daughter when she was at the point of death?

It may be that this man defied public opinion and home advice in order to call in Jesus Christ.

Yet many a person is wisest when their worldly friends and family think they are acting like a fool.

Here was a man who forgot everything except he wanted help from Jesus Christ.

But because he forgot in this way, he would remember forever after that Jesus Christ was his Saviour.

Mark 5:35-43 [New King James] *“While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue’s house who said, ‘Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?’ As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, ‘Do not be afraid; only believe.’ And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. When He came in, He said to them, ‘Why make this commotion and weep?*

The child is not dead, but sleeping.’ And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those who were with Him, and entered where the child was lying. Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, ‘Talitha, cumi,’ which is translated, ‘Little girl, I say to you, arise.’ Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years of age. And they were overcome with great amazement. But He commanded them strictly that no one should know it, and said that something should be given her to eat.”

This passage is the story of contrasts.

The contrast between the despair of the mourners and the hope of Jesus Christ.

The contrast between the unrestrained distress of the mourners and the calm serenity and control of Jesus Christ.

This contrast came about because of the total trust that Jesus Christ, the human Son of Man, had in God the Father.

There is one interesting thing that is recorded by Mark about this incident.

Why did a little bit of Aramaic get embedded in the Greek of the gospel message? “*Talitha, cumi*” is Aramaic for “*maid, arise!*”

As we have mentioned, Mark got his information of Jesus Christ’s words and actions from Peter.

For the most part, outside of Palestine at least, Peter, too, would have to speak in Greek.

But Peter had been there at this healing, he was one of the chosen three, [verse 37] and he could never forget Jesus Christ’s voice as He resurrected the young girl from the dead.

In Peter’s mind and memory he could hear those words of Jesus Christ, “*talitha, cumi*” all his life. The expression of love and gentleness in those caressing words lingered with Peter for ever, so much so that he was unable to think of them in Greek at all, only the very words that Jesus Christ spoke in Aramaic.

Mark 5:25-29 [New King James] “*Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. For she said, ‘If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.’ Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction.”*

This woman had a seemingly incurable condition which would have made her ritually unclean, [Leviticus 15:25-27] and would have excluded her from most social contact. She knew that her condition would have made Jesus unclean under Jewish law if she touched him or his garments, but she was desperate.

Jesus was **not** angry with the woman but was well aware of her action because He experienced that healing power had left Him.

This passage of scripture tells us that every time Jesus Christ healed someone it took something out of Him.

The greatness of Jesus Christ is that He is prepared to pay the price of helping other people. We only follow Him if we also are willing to spend ourselves to serve others.

Romans 12:1 [NIV] “*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

The Greek word translated “*bodies*” is “*soma*” meaning the whole life, physical body, mind and human spirit, [**Job 32:8; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Proverbs 20:27**].

We, out of thanks for what Jesus Christ has done for us, the mercy He has extended to us, this is the response we should make, this is the real price of being a Christian, [**Luke 14:26-27, 33; John 13:34**].