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**Grace Fellowship Church, Port Jervis, New York**

**November 1, 2020**

**Communion Sunday - The Demoniac of the Gerasenes**

**Selected Scriptures**

**Prayer:** *Father, we just thank you for your grace, we thank you for this day that points specifically to your cross and what you've done for us on the cross, and we just are amazed at the gift of that cross. We praise you and thank you for it. We thank you for the gift of your Son. We thank you also for the gift of your word that enables us to grasp even further what your gift is. And so I pray this morning, Lord, as we open up your word again that we would have the presence of your Holy Spirit accompany us, lead us, give us the ability to make this of permanent value, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well it's once again the first Sunday of the month, and again this is that Sunday that we remember Christ and his cross. Jesus on the night before he died, he met with his disciples for one last Passover meal. It's described in *Matthew 26* which says: *Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it*

to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Jesus took bread and he took wine and he offered them up as symbols of his flesh and his blood and then he asked the disciples to eat the bread and drink the cup so that they might symbolically eat his flesh and drink his blood. And he asked them to repeat this remembrance of the sacrifice on a regular basis, and it is what we call the Lord's table and we celebrate it once a month, and we do these four things, we meditate on what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross, we examine our conscience, we ask God's Holy Spirit if he would come into us and convict us of sins, we confess our sins and then we participate in the elements. *John 6:53* says: *So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."*

We've been doing the life of Christ in the gospel of Mark and one of the things that Mark's gospel emphasizes as opposed to the other gospels is really Jesus's interactions with demons. I mean Mark's gospel starts off with Jesus's baptism by John the Baptist but then it's immediately following we see Jesus being driven into the desert for a confrontation with Satan himself. And Jesus

thoroughly defeats Satan and he uses one weapon and one weapon only, it's the word of God. *"It is written," "It is written," "It is written,"* Jesus says, three separate times. And after that confrontation, Jesus returns to begin his public ministry.

And so coming into Galilee to begin to gather his disciples together, he has his first public meeting in Capernaum and there at that meeting he has a second demonic confrontation. This time it's with the demon-possessed man. Jesus demonstrates his absolute authority over the demons by commanding them to leave. This is *Mark 1:24*. We find the demons responding. They say, *"What do you have to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are -- the holy one of God."* But Jesus rebuked him, saying, *"Be silent, and come out of him!"* And the unclean spirit convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. The folks witnessing this event, they're astounded at the authority that Jesus has over evil spirits. I mean the People are astounded. The Pharisees are deeply offended. Jesus' very authority over these spirits is what caused the Pharisees to claim that he was able to cast out demons because he himself was beholden to Satan. So Jesus responds in *Mark 3:23*, he says: *And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will*

*not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house."*

You know it was that claim by the Pharisees that Jesus was able to cast out demons by the power of Satan himself, that was the final straw for Jesus. It was the final straw that caused Jesus to begin speaking in parables which was literally God's judgment on Israel for rejecting the light. And from that moment forward Jesus began to speak in ways that even his disciples struggled like crazy to understand. In *Mark 4:11* Jesus says to them, *"To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God but for those outside everything is in parables, so that "'they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.'"* So Jesus is speaking in veiled language and yet he still makes it very clear when he says no one can enter into a strong man's house and plunder his goods until he first binds the strong man. Jesus is laying out what his intention is to do. He's going to enter into the strong man's house and that just happens to be this planet. I mean the kingdom that all of us are in right here and right now, it's enemy territory. I mean we know from Revelation 12 that there was a war that took place in heaven. Revelation 12 says this: *Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels*

*fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world -- he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

So the strong man landed here on earth where he set up shop with the goal of plundering us. His first and most successful conquest occurred with the very first humans created, Adam and Eve. By getting them to fall he rendered every single one of their subsequent offspring imperfect and no longer capable of fellowship with their creator. I mean it was an absolute disaster. Consider the very first child of Adam and Eve commits the very first murder of Abel. Things go downhill for the human race from there. For the strong man things are getting better and better and by the time Jesus begins his public ministry, Satan is in full control. It was the apostle John who said in *1 John 5:19: The whole world lies in the power of the evil one.* Jesus himself as he saw his crucifixion draw near said this of the strong man's power in *John 12:31*, he said: *"Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out."* Jesus is saying Satan is indeed the ruler of this world but now he's serving notice that he's now publicly entering into that world with every intention of binding Satan and then plundering his house. And the plunder in case you're

wondering is us. Satan's control over us centered on our fallenness and on our imperfection. By causing Adam and Eve to fail, he had rendered all of us as failing as well. God himself took on flesh and he entered into our world in order to enter this strong man's house and take back the sheep that belonged to him. Jesus' public ministry was all about this war that he was engaged in with the strong man. I mean Jesus wasn't here so much as a teacher or a ruler or as a leader but as a king come to ransom and rescue his own by making the ultimate sacrifice, a payment, if you will, by God to God for the sins of his sheep. Jesus knew that the ultimate battle would take place at the cross. And it was there that he initiated the great exchange. In order to satisfy his own justice, God himself took on our sin at the cross and exchanged his righteousness for our sin. As *2 Corinthians 5:21* says: *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* So when we place our faith in Jesus Christ, his righteousness becomes ours. We can therefore stand before a holy God now by faith in Jesus made worthy of heaven and able to enjoy fellowship with God forever. That's the big picture of what Jesus was doing in this confrontation that he had with the enemy. I mean he had met him face to face in the desert, skirmished with him as he dealt with this demon at his first public meeting and dealt with his earthly representatives as the Pharisees tried to accuse him of being in league with Satan himself. But now

in this fifth chapter of Mark we find yet another confrontation. This one reveals a little bit more of the true nature of Christ and his main adversary Satan.

This is *Mark 5:1-10*. It says: *They -- and of course this is the disciples and Jesus -- They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. You know, it's interesting that we're covering this topic right around Halloween. We're looking at a man who lives in a graveyard. We're looking at someone who is deeply troubled who lives among the tombs. For some*

reason Halloween has become a celebration of that kind of thing. I mean when I was a youngster, Halloween was one of the most incredible times of the year. It was the only time that little kids ever really felt wealthy. You got that bag and it's full of stuff and holy mackerel, this is like cash. It's a big deal. Back then we used to dress up like pirates or ballerinas or princesses and you went out trick or treating. Now so much of Halloween is obsessed with this celebration of death. You got kids' costumes that are full of rotting flesh or zombies or they got axes coming out of their heads. Houses seem to feature murder and torture and mayhem. It just seems like a far cry from the fun that we used to have years and years ago but then our culture has changed dramatically from those days. The strong man has gotten increasingly stronger and the darkness he represents has grown and our present day celebration of Halloween is just a little representation of that. I mean it's become much, much darker over these last twenty or thirty years. I've mentioned before one commentator who described the light of the gospel in our culture as one of this blazing campfire, one that has grown progressively weaker and weaker. And as the light of the gospel's fire has dimmed you now begin to perceive these glowing red eyes of the strong man's minions that have been pushed out into the darkness by that light. Now they're coming in closer and closer, getting more and more aggressive as they see that light grow dimmer. Just turn



on your TV or just read a newspaper, just go on the net, you'll see those glowing eyes, they're everywhere. The enemy is clearly advancing because the Christian consensus in our culture has evaporated. That's why I love the story this morning. There's one thing that stands out in all of Christ's interactions with demons and with Satan himself. You see the demons all recognize one thing. They all recognize that they are dealing with a vastly superior force, a true King, if you will. My kids used to be frightened of ghosts and demons. I always used to tell them if you look in the Bible, every time you see Jesus confronting a demon, the one thing that stood out is that it was the demon who was terrified. It was never Jesus. I mean I used to tell my kids it's because Jesus is the boss of everything including demons. And when things start to look grim and when the darkness seems to be advancing and those glowing red eyes seem to be getting bigger and bigger, it really helps to remind ourselves that we serve the boss of the whole universe. The king of the universe also loved me enough to come to this planet and die for me. And what we're reading about this morning is just another instance of Jesus binding up the strong man so he can plunder his house. That tells me all that I need to know about the power of demons over me. I recognize that as long as I have Jesus in front of me, I am absolutely safe.

So consider this morning the love of our king for us. Consider the power that he has over the forces of darkness. As we anticipate taking the bread, consider also God's warning about taking communion found in *1 Corinthians 11* which says this: *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.* Just to repeat what I say every month, I say communion is incredibly serious business and to enter into it in an unworthy manner as to literally court disaster. I beg and plead with you if you're not absolutely confident that you're a child of the King, if you haven't been faith trusted in Christ as your savior, if you first need to be reconciled to your brother and sister by bringing the sacrifice of yourself to the altar, then just pass the elements on. Do not participate. Err on the side of caution and get right with God first.

As I also say, you can also make the mistake of thinking, well, I guess I have to be perfect, flawless, spotless in order to receive communion, and that too is a mistake the enemy loves. Being a child of the King doesn't mean that you are sinless and spotless

and that you never fail. Being a child of the King means you recognize that the salvation you have is a gift, and it's a gift that no one could ever earn by being -- quote -- "good." Once again I repeat Dane Ortlund's quote which says: "In the kingdom of God, the one thing that qualifies you is knowing that you don't qualify, and the one thing that disqualifies you is thinking that you do." It also means that when we do fail we recognize that we have sinned because we have God's Holy Spirit now inside of us, convicting us of sin and it grieves us and it grieves us as children who know we have a Father who longs to forgive and to cleanse us. We know that because God says in *1 John 1:9*: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* So being a child of the King does not mean that you are flawless. It does mean that we understand that we have an advocate for us speaking for us up in heaven itself, someone speaking on our behalf as *1 John 2:1* says: *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father -- Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.* And there it is, I mean because we have Jesus' righteousness by faith, because we have that righteousness, we're now free to eat from his table. So if you love your Lord, don't deny yourself the privilege that Jesus purchased for you. He lived the life that we were supposed to live and then he died the death we deserved to die in our place so that

we could be made worthy of heaven itself. The psalmist understood that if you have Christ behind you, you have absolutely nothing to fear from anything that hell has to offer. *Psalm 27* says: *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?* The King of the universe has your back. He's arrived to plunder Satan and destroy his kingdom. *1 John 3:8* says: *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.* So thank God for the gift of his Son come to rescue us. Take your bread, your wafer.

*1 Corinthians 11:23* says this: *For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."* So take, and eat.

*Mark 5:1-4* says this: *They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue*

him. How'd you like to have a confrontation with this guy? I mean he clearly has superhuman strength. And somebody at some point apparently tried to restrain him even with chains and shackles and the scripture says *he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces*. I mean I've heard descriptions of people who were in a psychotic state either from drugs or from mental issues and these folks are clearly terrifying. Mark's gospel gives us only the bare facts once again that's all you really get from Mark. You look at the other gospels, in different parts in Mark and you see some added facts about what Satan plays here, and *Luke 8:27* tells us this guy is naked, says "*For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs.*" *Mark 5:5* tells us not only is he naked, he's screaming and he's self-mutilating. It says: *Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.* *Matthew 8* tells us that he was so aggressively violent no one, no one would go near him. And by the way he's not alone. It says: *And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way.*

Now there's a lot of folks who look at this say here you go, there's your classic contradiction in the Bible, I mean, you got Mark and Luke and they're describing one such demon-possessed man

and here's Matthew and he's describing two. But understand, none of these descriptions says there was only one. Mark's account describes what happens to but one person and Matthew's account simply adds the fact that there was at least one other accomplice. And you know Jesus isn't alone in this either. Remember Jesus is in the boat with the disciples and that boat's pulling up to shore, to this God forsaken place. Again *Mark 5* says: *They came to the other side of the sea to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.* Now this place where Jesus lands, it's described as having hills that go right down to the water itself, and the hills are said to be full of caves, each of which serve to be a tomb. So Jesus, he steps out of the boat and he sees immediately somebody sprinting towards him out of the tombs. And two men, one of whom is described as having superhuman strength are approaching but he's focused on this one man who is naked, he's bloody, he's incredibly violent and he's screaming and he's not alone. *Mark 5:6* says: *And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."* For he was saying to him, *"Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"* Now it doesn't tell us where the disciples were at this precise moment, but just looking at the whole picture it seems to me pretty apparent they

are probably still in the boat and they're probably in a state of shock. Here's what I want you to see in this. I mean there's screaming going on here, there's terror going on but it's not coming from Jesus at all and it's really not coming from the demon-possessed man. Instead it's coming from the demons themselves who are inhabiting this poor man. And Jesus sees the man and immediately begins commanding the demons to leave and their response is almost laughable. I mean they're clearly terrified of Jesus, they clearly understand his power and what is laughable here is the statement they make, they say, "*I adjure you by God, do not torment me.*" I mean "to adjure" means "to solemnly urge or request." I mean who do the demons appeal to in asking Jesus not to torture them? They appeal to God. I mean as soon as the demons realize the shoe is now on the other foot and that they are now the ones who are terrified, they immediately begin asking for mercy. What does that tell you about the awe and the might and the power that Jesus possessed?

Again pan back and look at the big picture here. I mentioned before that Jesus was giving his disciples lessons that they could never, never learn from a book. We're looking at the timeline here if you look at the timeline, we realize that Jesus and the disciples, they just arrive on the Gadarenes shores but they were in the boat that almost sunk that very night. I mean Jesus has

just demonstrated to his disciples his absolute mastery over nature itself and now he's going to demonstrate his complete control over the demonic host. If you remember back to when Jesus had that first meeting with the demon-possessed person, if you remember what the demon said, he said, *"What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are -- the Holy One of God."* See, you've got to understand that as far as the demons are concerned, there's no contest here. I mean all we see here is simple uncontested acquiescence. I mean the fact that Jesus could have destroyed them is acknowledged by that statement: *"Have you come to destroy us?"* Well, Jesus' answer is not now and not yet but certainly inevitably. And Jesus is demonstrating his complete mastering over each and every one of these demons in a way the disciples could now see firsthand. The demoniac of the Gerasenes is this poor person who was yanked back and forth by his desperate desire to escape the demons within him and their overpowering ability to control him. Verse 9 it says: *And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many."* And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. And again we don't know how many demons inhabited this poor man but by their own admission they're lots. And once again they're acknowledging Jesus' absolute power as they start begging for mercy. And actually they beg him not to send them out of the country. Again Luke gives us some more information in *Luke*



8:31. It says: *And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now the abyss is the bottomless pit that demons are consigned to, so that they know their fate. They just don't know when their sentence is going to be carried out. In this case the demons are begging Jesus not to carry out that sentence. They're desperately looking for an escape. And a herd of pigs just happened to provide it. This is verse 11, it says: Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea. The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened.*

You know lots of folks have a hard time with this passage. I read a lot of commentaries and it's amazing to me how people try to think about the big question that stands out in this passage and that is why in the world would Jesus give permission to demons to enter into a bunch of pigs? Well, folks raise all kinds of ethical objections to this. I mean one says they're grossly unfair to the people who were raising the pigs, I mean, obviously 2,000 pigs represents a huge amount of resources and having an entire herd of swine rush headlong into the sea and drown represents a huge loss

of income for these pig farmers. Another group claims that it's grossly unfair to the pigs. I mean after all pigs are just minding their own business and next thing you know because Jesus gives them permission, they're all inhabited by demons and they all rush headlong into the sea and drown. And there's explanations that people give and one says that Jesus wanted to demonstrate his distaste for these unclean animals, so he allowed the demons to destroy them or someone else says that Jesus wanted to demonstrate the evil power that resided inside the demoniac by showing that it could cause a whole herd of swine to commit suicide. Well the fact is we don't really know why Jesus gave them permission. One thought that I had was that Jesus was not prepared to send the demons into the abyss because their final defeat was not going to be at this moment but at the cross instead where it says in *Colossians 2:15: He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.* It's simply not the right time or the right place for Jesus to ultimately defeat this demon host, but it sure looks like Jesus didn't mind putting them to open shame. I mean causing a herd of swine to drown themselves is not exactly a feather in your cap. But why Jesus allowed them to enter into a heard of pigs I have no set answer. And I have none because Jesus doesn't give us any. I do know this though, that there's lots of things that God does that I can't quite figure out. The one thing that I do know is that I am

a creature and he is the creator. And when mysterious things like this occur, I simply relegate it to the fact that God knows what he's doing and I really don't. That's good enough for me. Verse 14 says: *The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.*

Well we need to take a moment and just kind of focus in on what this scene is saying. Just take a look at the picture, I mean, the demoniac was completely naked, now he is clothed. He was vicious, he was bloodied, he was screaming and all of the scripture says is that he's now clothed and in his right mind sitting at the feet of Jesus. I mean the people know precisely who this man was and they know exactly what he has become all due to Jesus, and instead of worshiping Jesus, they beg him to leave. This is perhaps the biggest indictment of the people that surrounded the demoniac. I mean in a very real sense Jesus is showing them that they too could be freed from this incredibly awful power that took over this man that wanted nothing but his destruction what that freedom was going to cost. In this case it cost the herdsmen in the community the

herd of pigs, and the community opted for the pigs rather than the Savior by asking him to leave. I mean when it is put that starkly it seems so overwhelmingly pathetic. I mean had the entire community said we prefer pigs to Jesus. But truth be told, our community also prefers pigs to Jesus. They at least begged for Jesus to leave; we demand it. There's also a reminder that if it wasn't for the grace of God in our own lives, we too would find our own selves choosing swine over savior constantly.

There's another lesson that Jesus wants us to see here and it has to do with the demoniac who is now totally restored. The crowd tells Jesus that they prefer pigs to him and Jesus accommodates them. Verse 17 says: *And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."* And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled. I mean the demoniac who is now completely healed is so grateful and so in love with Jesus that he begs him if he could stay with him to be one of his disciples and Jesus says no. I mean the lesson here is that sometimes God will say no even to good things if he's got better things in mind. Sometimes we can't help but think that we

can make up God's mind for him but God, thank God is quite willing to say no. In the case of the demoniac Jesus saw the role that he would have as missionary to his own people, the very people that had rejected Christ. And so he tells him, *"Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he's had mercy on you."* Well Jesus is basically telling the demoniac what he tells every one of us, he tells us that we are to be missionaries in our own hometowns, missionaries in our own neighborhoods, missionaries in our own families, telling anyone and everyone how much the Lord has done for you and how he's had mercy on you. So this man becomes a missionary not only to his own people but beyond. It says to the ten cities of the Decapolis. Verse 20 says: *And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.*

So let me conclude with a question, and that is do folks in your hometown, in your family, in your circle of friends, do they marvel at -- quote -- *"how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you?"* Begin to take the cup and ask yourself is it fear or faith that is driving my life? *1 Corinthians 11:25* says: *In the same manner he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."* So take and drink.

This is what we call heads, hearts and feet, it's where we try to have some kind of practical application of just what it means to remember Jesus and his cross. As you probably have guessed by now that Tuesday is election day -- just a reminder -- for most of us this is a time of serious nail biting. You know folks have said that the stakes have never been higher than they've been this time and they are absolutely correct. So the first and most obvious point of practical realities of remembering Jesus is to remember how incredibly important it is to vote. Folks claim it's a sacred duty and under our system it is clearly a God-ordained opportunity for us to have a choice in who governs us, but never, never forget who is going to make the final decision on this election. When Nebuchadnezzar was desperate to have somebody interpret his dreams, Daniel explained to him how political systems work, and this is what he said in *Daniel 2:20*. He said: *"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding."* Understand something. To the extent that you believe that will be the extent that no matter what the outcome of this election, you will be at peace.

I mean four years ago I remember seeing videos of people that were screaming. They were absolutely apoplectic at the idea that

Hillary had lost and Donald Trump had won. I made it very clear I want Mr. Trump to win, I want Mr. Biden to lose. But trust me, I will not be screaming and moaning in horror if that doesn't happen and there's a reason why. It's because I know the King. I also know what Jesus said. He said *"my kingdom is not of this world."* We serve a kingdom that is not governed by earthly rulers. It's not governed by human beings. We also serve a King who says that his ways are not our ways, whose thoughts are high above ours. He's a God who says in *Proverbs 19: Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.* So if things work out like I hope, I'll praise God and I will celebrate. But if they don't, I'm going to put on my big boy pants and I'm going to trust that God knows precisely what he is doing. I'll remember his words in *John 14* where he says: *"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me,"* and I'll continue to do what Jesus told us to do -- quote -- *"Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."* Let's pray.

*Father, we just thank you for who you are. We thank you for the gift that you are to us. Oh Lord, you loved us enough to send us your Son to die for us. What an incredible gift we have. Father, help us to focus in on who you are and the awesome power that you represent, that demons tremble at the thought of you. Father, give*

*us the courage that we need to understand that and to trust in you  
no matter what the outcome of this election is, we pray in Jesus'  
name. Amen.*