

He Saw. He Ran. He Worshipped.

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Alright, if you'll turn with me this morning to our text, our text is found in Mark 5:6.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, how glorious thou art. We thank thee, Lord, for this day that thou has brought us here to worship thee, Lord. May it be in Spirit and in truth and, Lord, where two or more are gathered, thou has promised that thou would be there in the midst. Lord, may it be in thy name this day, may you be with us. May you open up our hearts and our minds to the hearing of thy word. May you be pleased to preserve the food, Lord, let the crumbs fall from thy table today to our souls. O Lord, direct it deep, direct thy word deep to our souls that we may commune with thee. May you block all the things of this world far from us this day and, Lord, I pray that you be with Paul's family, they're on the road now, Lord. May you give them safe passage and bring them back to us safely. For those of us who will be leaving today, Lord, if it be thy will, that thou would indeed go before us also, deliver us safely. Lord, we pray that this is thy day that, Lord, you would give us the joy, the joy to rejoice in thy finished work. Lord, glorify thy name this hour and the hour to come. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Peter said in 2 Peter 1:10, he said, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." I think today most religious men look at that and says, "I have to look at my works. I have to take an inventory to what I've done for God." That's what we give diligence to, but the truly taught soul by the Holy Spirit, is brought to see that in giving diligence, it is a desire. It is a desire that the Lord Jesus Christ himself put in the souls of his people for his presence is with them. It is a fervent desire to know, to know if the Lord's presence is there.

And notice what Peter said, he said, "your calling and your election." Two things that are outside of us. We can't call ourselves and we can't elect ourselves no matter what the Arminian will tell us today. So the thing that as we're brought to the word of God and as the Lord brings us here to this passage today, my prayer is upon reflection, upon reflection in our souls in this hour. Is the Lord's presence there? We have a lot of things going on this morning, those of us who will be leaving here shortly, have a lot of

thoughts but is he worthy? Is he worthy this hour and the hour to come? Is he the one with the preeminence? Do you have a desire in your soul and is that desire the Lord Jesus Christ?

So as I said, our text is found here in Mark 5:6, "But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him." I know that when we look at the account when the Lord was drawn and went to Samaria, we always emphasize how that began when the Lord went there for his lost sheep, the woman at the well. And that whole account started, it was written, "he must needs go to Samaria." Now, we've always emphasized that point, that Jesus goes to find his children wherever they are for the Lord knows where his children are. We like to pretend we know where they are. We like to look at people and look at how they act and we'll cleave to them. We'll say, "Oh, well, you've got this in you or you've got this." These are the things that we're looking for. But how many times have we been mistaken in that? The Lord makes no mistakes. When he goes to search out his sheep, he goes and finds his sheep. He goes and finds them wherever they are.

We have something like that for us this morning in this account in Mark 5. Before we go there, though, as we have this similar account, I wanted to back up in 4 and start at 35 at the end. It says, "And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them," to his disciples, "Let us pass over unto the other side." The words of red, it means that they're the words of Christ and Christ purposed to pass over to the other side. What is key about this is that the Lord's desire and the Lord's will was to pass to the other side and to go and rescue one of his but his disciples didn't know that. His disciples didn't know what was in the purpose of Christ.

The Lord said, "Let us pass over to the other side." In 37, we begin to see all the providences and all the hindrances that came up that would forbid Jesus to get to the other side and I know we can say, yes, it's the Lord's providence and he brought the storms and that's true, but there is also a prince of the power of the air that will stir up things to try to show his preeminence, his power, as he did with the conniving and trying to get those to put the ward in front of Jesus' tomb and said, "You know, there's not way he's going to escape from here." But his purpose has always been defeated by the Lord Jesus Christ. John tells us that was a purpose of Christ coming, to defeat Satan and defeat the devil.

And we have, like I said, in 37, "there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full." And then we read in 38, "he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." The Lord is not bothered by the storms, he is the Lord of the storm. He is sovereign over them all. Plus, he must needs get to the other side. The other side is where his purpose is. The purpose of his election. The purpose of his to go out and to call that one out of the fire, to pull that one out of certain death.

So he's asleep, at perfect peace, but those around him they wake him and they said, "Lord, unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?" And what I want you to see in that is look at our eyes, our eyes are always on the carnal. It's always on the storm. It's always on what's going on around us. That's where our fixation is. "Oh but, Lord, isn't

there a storm?" But in the purpose of Romans 8:28, the Lord's purpose is a much higher and much deeper understanding than his disciples had at that moment and that you and I have a lot when God's providence is bringing things into our lives. We see it and we fret. We fret over the storm that has been brought to our lives. We fret about, "Lord, we're going to perish."

And the trials that the Lord brings us and the things that are so hurtful to us. How many times have we said that to the Lord, "Oh, it's going to break my heart. This hurts me deeply. I can't recover from this. My fears paralyze me. I don't know if I'm going to live or not. I'm going to die." These are the very same things that the disciples are saying as their eyes are fixed on the circumstances around them but Christ isn't labored. Christ is the all-knowing sovereign one.

You see our dependence again, our dependence on the Lord to take our eyes off the storm, but what does the Lord do? He says, "Peace, be still." And everything is calm and the disciples are left, look, it says in 41, "they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" And I'll tell you, that's where the child of God is brought. He's brought to great wonder at what the Lord does. We sit and we look at the circumstances and we focus on the circumstances but the Lord is greater than our circumstances and all of these what we would deem to be cross providences.

Now we pick up in chapter 5, "And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes." Now, this is what you would call a borderland. It was mixed with Jew and Gentile, and it was a very rough place to go. People didn't go there. You know, I've got places in Lakeland, I could tell you now, I could name off streets up here and I could tell you, "Don't go there. Don't make a wrong turn there." I tell my children that when they're driving. "If you ever end up over here, get out of here. This is not the right neck of the woods you want to be in. There is danger here." This was one of those places. It was a mixture of people and they were real rough people, but the Lord must needs get to that side. He must needs get to the country of the Gadarenes.

"And when he was come out of the ship," when Jesus came out of the ship, "immediately," don't miss that, "immediately there met him out of the tombs." What do we know about the tombs? We're going to talk more about that in the next verse. The tombs is where dead people are, right?

"Immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit." The first thing I hope you see in this is that Christ brought his child to him immediately while he was possessed with the legion. Not when he was all cleaned up. Not when he had a formalized set of worship. Not when he put his tie on and he put his nice clothes on and he went to worship the Lord. When the Lord came to that place, he drew his child to him while his child was possessed with what is called here an unclean spirit. So far we don't have an understanding of how deep that goes so we go to verse 3,

"Who had his dwelling among the tombs." Now, I ask you, dear ones, do you know anything about your dwelling among the tombs? Have you ever in your life had a dwelling among the tombs? Have you ever lived in your unregeneracy, in before the Lord revealed himself to you, did you surround yourself with dead people? Were you part of those that have a past? Are you one of those where the Lord said and called you out from among the dead? This child of God is found in the tombs. He's found there amongst the dead. My first question to you as you sit there this morning is: does this resonate in your soul? Remember how we started this morning, Peter's words were, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Have you been called out of the tombs or are you still in the tombs? Do you still surround yourself with dead people? When you go and you take inventory of your days, is your time spent more with dead people than with living people? And what I mean by living people is I mean the children of God where Christ dwells in their soul; where it is evident that the Lord Jesus Christ dwells in their soul. His presence is there mightily, where you can say without a shadow of a doubt, "Christ dwells there." Is that where you spend your time? Do you have that kind of understanding?

Now, just hold your finger there because we're going to go to the only place that we're going today other than this text and that is in Ephesians 2. Some of you probably thought that's where we were going because the first three verses tells us exactly what these tombs are; what this place is where there are dead people, dead professors. And they all may say those cute words, you know: grace, God, Christ, salvation. We know those people but they're dead. There is no life in the soul.

This is what Paul says about it in Ephesians 2, he says, "And you," this is one of those "you," am I one of these? Is this my testimony? Could I stand up in this seat today and say, "Yes, Lord, I know what you're talking about when Paul wrote this."

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Lord, you have made me alive because I used to dwell in the tombs. I used to live among dead people. I can look at that in my life, I can look back at a very dead time in my life. I can look back at a time that I enjoyed those seasons with the world and we're going to get to that too. It's all laid out for us in our text today.

But there is a time that in my life the Lord called me away from that and that deadness that I clung to and that I felt right at home in, in the tombs, I didn't know I was dead. I mean, sure there were times I had deep thoughts and thought, well, there had to be something else other than this. Little prickings but not the depth of knowledge that that's where death is and life is only in Christ. That's what quickening is.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." And when you are dead in trespasses and sins, you like to be around people who are dead in trespasses and sins because you have a commonality. Just like if you have life in your soul, if Christ is in your soul, you want to be with those who have Christ in their soul. It's his presence. It's the Spirit uniting the children of God. It's the bond of unity that the Holy Spirit produces. But there is a bond in the world too, it's the bond of death.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein," is this your testimony, "in time past ye walked," past tense, "you walked according to the course of this world." Now, you might be going, "Yes, there was a time I walked that way," but, you know, that was just like yesterday because we struggle. You're going to see this one struggle. It's laid out for us beautifully here today. But there is deliverance in every one of those struggles and the child of God, the life that he has in his soul, he can look back to a time where there was no deliverance. There was nothing but a continuous living and walking in this death.

"According to the course of this world." Not according to Christ's course but this world's course where you ran after the things of this world; where you buddied up to the things; what your desires and the riches of this world. That's what you had. Had.

Now look who it's according to, not the Prince of Jesus but "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." That's where he's dwelling. He's in the tombs.

"Among whom also we all had our conversation." I tell you, this passage just cuts you up. It cuts you up to the soul and you sit there and go, "Well, these are past tense but, Lord, I still stray there. I still go out to the world and I want my conversation with the world. I need it." Then I would say to you today, what did Peter say? "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Is Christ's presence in you? I can't answer that for you. As you look at this passage today, you read what Paul said here in Ephesians, you see how Christ delivers his people out of bondage, that's the question, have you been delivered out of that bondage? Have you returned back to the society of this world? What do you put your emphasis on in your life? The things of this world? The carnality of this world? The names in this world? The frivolity of this world? The people of this world? The kindness of the people of this world?

What do you have? Do you have what Paul said here, "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Now, that's where we're going to stop. We know that there is a "But God" that comes next and we're going to see that in our text today.

So turn back to our text in Mark 5, "Who had his dwelling among the tombs." Notice it said "had" because Christ just called him out of the tombs. He called him out from where he dwelt.

He "had his dwelling among the tombs," and notice this, "and no man could bind him, no, not with chains." No man could bind him. Now, we take this back to the child of God that is sitting in the seats today, have you ever tried to be persuaded by man? You've had parents that have tried to persuade you to the truth or in some of our cases, we had parents that tried to persuade us to a false truth or whatever it is you want to call it. There has been a time in your life where traditions, where customs, where the things of this

world, where there has been a huge persuasion in your life to follow a certain way. Is that not the case? Do we not have that? Have you ever had anyone try to bind you? Have you had people say, "Here, follow me. Follow my way. Follow the way I'm going." Now, whether those people are of the truth or whether they're not, it really doesn't matter because the Scriptures testify they must all hear the Shepherd's voice. They must all be taught of him.

And this one, every man that comes next to him, listen to the desperation of man here, "no, not with chains." They tried to bind him with chains. "Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him." No man can bring you to Christ. No man. It is beyond the power of man to tame an unregenerate and I'll go a step further, it is beyond the power of man to tame a regenerate. Man cannot be the influence in your soul and he could use chains of persuasion, he could use money, he could use titles, he could use whatever. Look at all these desperate things: chains, fetters, broken in pieces, no man could tame him.

"And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." Why is he cutting himself with stones? Because he's trying to tame himself. Have you been there? Man will try to tame you. Man will try to give you his wisdom. Man will give you the wisdom of this world. You will even try to give it to yourself. The things that you have picked up in this life, the little sayings, the little things that have been influential in your life, you've picked up and you've said, "Hm, if I can just do that, I would be happy. If I would just do that, Christ would receive me." And all of that isn't working. It's not working for this one who is consumed with a legion and you and I are consumed with ourselves, and you and I are consumed with the prince of the power of the air at times, and you and I are consumed with this world at times. And no man, and not yourself, is going to get you out of that.

What we see today in this passage, yes, is a beautiful miracle just like last week when we saw the zeal of Christ. We see it here again. His zeal is to go and say to his child and nothing is going to thwart that, not even 2,000 evil spirits. That's strong.

"And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." Dear ones, this is a desperate time and it's a dangerous time. It's a low time, right? Would we all agree this seems like a hopeless time? He's got nothing. He's got no one.

But remember how we left off in verse 4 of Ephesians, "But God"? Look at verse 6 in our text, "But when he saw Jesus." This is the depth of grace. This is what grace does, it subdues the one who is not in his right mind.

"But when he saw Jesus afar off." And dear ones, that's where we are. "But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him." And you know I love to quote Psalm 110:3. Everybody know what that is? "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." This is the day of the Lord's power. Do you see the desperation? No man could save him.

No man could bind him. No man could tell him, "This is how you're going to act." And for you and I in this room, we are no different. We must be taught of him. We must have our flesh subdued by him. We must have our evil spirits cast out by him. We must have this world put down under his feet by him. Because as we prove every day, we're not going to do it. In fact, we're going to go back to the tombs because those dead people...well, I'm not going to get ahead of myself.

"But when he saw Jesus afar off." Then later in Ephesians it says, "for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves." Isn't that what he tried to do? He tried to cut himself. Not of yourselves, "it is the gift of God." What we see in verse 6 is the gift of God. What we see is the power of God. What we see is the zeal of Christ to go and get his lost sheep and to save them.

But maybe you're confused with verse 7. Maybe that bothers you, that verse 7 comes along, "And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus." What have I to do with thee, Jesus, "thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." A lot of religious people come to this and say, "Oh, Satan is talking here." But the Bible doesn't tell us that. It doesn't tell us that Satan's talking. It says, "But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice."

So my question to you this morning is: what do you know about these two armies that war in us? What do you know about Christ bringing us to his feet but yet something in us that says, "Lord, what do you have to do with me?" What is that? What is that that the child of God has in him, these two armies that Song of Solomon 6:13 says, "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite?" What will you see in her? What will you see in the church? What will you see in them? "As it were the company of two armies." And Rebekah cried out and said, "Lord, if it be so, why am I thus?" O Lord, if your presence is there, if you have called me out of the tombs, why? But do you not identify with this? Do you not find yourself crying out to the Lord going, "But what about my circumstances? What about what's going on in my life? What about what's going on in my body? What about what's going on with my family? What about what's going on...? That's that self comes up and that's the whole thing.

"What do I have to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." Have you ever risen up against the Lord's sovereignty that way? Has that old nature been so strong in you that it fights that way to gain the upper hand? "I don't want to leave the world. I love what the world gives me. Oh, and, God, what if I'm out there to save the world? What if by my presence? What do I have to do with you, Lord? You save to the uttermost, you call your sheep but, Lord, what if I do it? What if I go out and have a hand in it? What if I did...?"

Do you see that? Do you see that struggle? I hope you do and I hope you understand it. I hope you've lived it because, you see, in the Shulamite, in the church, there are two armies and they're warring against each other and the carnal part of us wants to look at

this world and it wants to get involved with the affairs of this life, and it wants to get involved with the carnal things in this life no matter how close they are to us and the closer they are to us, the more that pull is to go out and to do something.

"Lord, what do I have to do with thee, thou Son of the most high God?" "Lord, don't come now. I command you. I need time." Remember all those that made excuses? "Well, I've got this to do. I've got a piece of land to do. I've got a wife. I've got all of this." What are yours today? What are mine today?

But what we see in 6 is the depth of grace. But grace came when he was afar off. Yes, there's a warfare going on. I tell you what, in him there is a legion going on. You and I can identify with the warfare though, I hope we can. That's why I said verse 6 just seems so far out of whack here. I mean, is that not the power of God, the depth of his power? He's still possessed. He's still has legion but when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him and notice that he saw Jesus afar off. Where did we begin today? With it being afar off. Later in Ephesians 2:17 Paul writes, "and came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh." Do you know what it's like to be afar off? Yes. When that second army is having the upper hand in us, we are afar off.

"But God." I would never want to leave this pulpit when I'm done with you in despair; that this word of God paints a picture that the child of God doesn't have victory because I don't see it. We do have victory. But we don't have victory in this world and we don't have victory in our might, we have victory in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation.

Immediately when he saw Jesus, he saw him afar off. Grace saves to the uttermost. And he ran and he worshipped. He ran. Song of Solomon 1:4 says, "Draw me, we will run after thee." This is the church again. "Draw me, we will run after thee." How did that happen? Do we just up and run? We don't testify of that every day. Do you testify of that? Do you get up and run to Christ? Did you get up this morning and say, "Oh, this is the Lord's day. I can't wait to hear what the Lord has. I can't wait to commune with him." Or was it more likely we were caught up with formalized religion, "Oh, it's Sunday. I've got to put my nice clothes on. I've got to eat. I've got to do this. I've got to go and I've got to sit in my chair. We're going to have this. We're going to have that." There is no formalized religion here with this one.

He called out of the tombs. When he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him. Draw me, we will run after thee. "The king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee." That's what the church says to Christ who is their life, whose presence is in them.

But I have to stress it again: he saw, he ran, he worshipped all while being possessed with a legion. A legion. A legion of evil spirits that verse 13 tells us that was 2,000 of them. And let me tell you something, if the Lord's power can bring that one to his feet, he certainly can bring you and I in the day of his power.

Have you ever wondered about that verse in Matthew 11:12 that says, "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force"? Back in the day, I thought that meant we had to beat down the door, we had to violently take Christ by force. It wasn't until the Lord revealed himself in me that I knew it was his force and, yes, we are violent. Our nature is very violent against Christ. But that passage says the kingdom of heaven suffers violence. That violence comes from you and I, what we do against the kingdom of heaven. However, the violent take it by force but it's not our force, it's his force to subdue our violent nature; to subdue our wandering nature; to subdue our nature that wants to run away from Christ.

As I said, he saw, he ran, he worshipped. And you and I today would say, I don't know about this worship thing, I mean, he came with 12 legions, 2,000 legion. I've got to tell you something, we all came through that door today with our own baggage. We came through that door today with our own sin. We came through that door today to worship in a formalized way with all kinds of thoughts in our mind but true worship, true worship is what we have in front of us when the Lord subdues all of it. He does it. He is faithful to do it.

"Where two or three are gathered in my name." How do we get there? We just say we're here. There are thousands out there today doing that. "God's here because this is the church of Jesus. Jesus is here." Listen, I want you to see what the power of Christ does: he brings you to the end of yourself and in a brokenness.

For the rest of our time here, we're going to go ahead and finish up this text. "And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit." Do you see that voice? When the Lord commands that unclean spirit, what can it do? We give a lot of allegiance or credit, whatever you want to say, we give a lot to the enemy because they are more powerful than we are and we lose sight of the omnipotent power of our Triune Lord.

"Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them." I guess they thought they'd be safe there.

"And forthwith Jesus gave them leave." He said, "Go. Go to the swine."

"And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand)." Two thousand evil spirits in one man. In one man and Christ subdued them by just coming and drawing him. He didn't say a word. Immediately the man ran after him while he was possessed with those 2,000. Is anything too hard for our Lord? That's the question today.

"And were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed," that was owned, "with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind." And why was he in his right mind? "For God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power, of love, and a sound mind." That's what Christ gives, a sound mind.

And I'll tell you, I've said it once, this is a convicting passage. He saw, he ran, he worshipped, all while the legion was in him. And I look at myself today and I say, "When I want to see, I can't see. I'm blind. When I want to run, I feel lethargic. I make excuses like the church, 'Oh, but I don't have my shoes. I've already put them off for the night.' When I want to worship, I feel so carnally dead at times. I stand in need of the same power to cast out the deadness that's in me." And you do too.

"And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts." I told you what type of place it was, a pretty rough place. "Oh, get out of here." I've got to say this, I've got to say this about my Lord. My Lord who came to seek his sheep did not, did not proselytize everybody else there. Did not invite them to him. Did not offer salvation. Did not say, "Why are you so hard of heart? Come to me." Did not because he sovereignly came to save his children and he sovereignly came to damn those outside of him. That's my Lord. "Get out of my coast. Get out of here. We don't have anything to do with you. We will not have this man to reign over us."

"And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." Notice, it wasn't go tell them how you came to me and saved yourself. "Tell them what the Lord hath done for thee and hath had compassion on thee."

Now, do we know that he was converted? Do we know that he has life in him now? Do we know that he's a child of God? Yes. Listen to his testimony. "And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him." Do you hear that? That's the voice of a child of God. That's the Gospel conversation, what Christ has done for me. Not what I've done for religion. Not what I've done for man, what Christ has done for me. That's how you know that Christ is in the child of God, what Christ has done for me.

"And all men did marvel." And do you know what? They still marvel today, and they marvel with contempt and they marvel with anger and they marvel with bitterness but it will never thwart the purposes of our Triune Lord to save his people to the uttermost and to bring them out of the tombs and to establish his kingdom in their soul. All power, all glory belong to him. He is worthy.

The text one more time, "But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him."

Dear heavenly Father, may that power that brought this one out of the tombs bring us to thy feet in this hour and the hour to come. Subdue anything, Lord, that will bind us from coming and may you be exalted. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.