

LEARN FROM LEGION Mark 5:1-20

Int: After a harrowing storm on the Galilee, Jesus and the 12 beached their craft and climbed up a steep gully on the eastern shore. There broke on their sight a line of limestone cliffs dotted with dark caves where people of the area buried their dead. The only sound was the grunts and squeals of a great herd of pigs feeding nearby. It was enough to spook the superstitious disciples who thought pigs unclean and graveyards the haunt of demons. Suddenly a blood-curdling scream shattered the silence. From a hillside cave sprang a naked brute who charged down on them, raging wildly. Pause the action a moment to take a closer look at this man. Learn from Legion about

SIN

Legion had not always been a wreck of a man. What happened? Trace back the mess of Legion's life and at the last you come to sin! The man of Gerasa shows just how far a man can go into sin. There is no limit! He began by choosing sin and kept on yielding to it until he woke one day to find his freedom gone and evil in firm control. See what sin did!

Sin separated him from friend and family. It destroyed love and gentleness. It robbed him of decency and left him incapable of shame. It drove him to suicidal mania. It led to demonization, i.e. he became home to a host of evil spirits.

Legion never meant to end this way. Sin took him farther than he meant to go, kept him longer than he meant to stay and cost him more than he meant to pay. He intended only to play with sin. Too late he found that sin plays for keeps! Sin may not take every man as far as it took Legion but it will take him much farther than he meant to go.

If men were wise they would learn from Legion and run from sin. But the only thing anyone learns from history is that no one ever learns anything from history!

SAVIOR

In this breath-taking collision between the Prince of Heaven and the powers of hell two facts about the Savior stand clear. Learn from Legion that

JESUS LOVES A RUINED SINNER. Jesus crossed the Galilee in a storm that day to save this one man. He did nothing else and left immediately. He could have sent a couple of disciples to do this job but he went to give this one man his personal attention and love.

JESUS CAN SAVE A RUINED SINNER. Legion went the limit into sin but could never get beyond the Lord's power to save. No one is that "good" a sinner (Rom5:20).

SALVATION

Learn from Legion that Jesus gives a man new life. When the townspeople came to see, they found the man clothed and in his right mind, resting at the feet of Jesus.

The Savior gives a new **MASTER**. Jesus sets men free from their bondage to evil.

The Savior gives a new **MISSION**. Legion's old mission was to terrorize the coast and the Ten Towns. Now he would "Go home as a monument to Jesus' power and mercy."

The Savior gives a new **MESSAGE**. "Tell what great things the Lord did for you."

Jesus is mighty to save. He will give to any man a new master, a new mission and a new message.

Con: Time after blessed time the scarred and battered giant, who had been brought back from the dead, would bare his head; and with sunlight playing on his tear-streaked face, he would try to tell his listeners how beautiful life had become for him since Someone Else had wrenched hell's dirty hands off him and brought him safely home.