

Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church of Beaumont
Pastor: Pastor Dwight Benoit
Superintendent: Ordained Minister Samuel O. Simon
Lesson # 4 March 21, 2023 – March 26, 2023
Teacher: Deacon Tairone Stanford

Unit 1: Called From the Margin of Society

Subject: One with a Mental Illness

Devotional Reading: 2 Corinthians 10: 1-6

Background Scriptures: Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39

Printed Passage: Mark 5:1-13, 18-20

Key Verse: The Man departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him and all men did marvel. (Mark 5: 20 KJV)

Introduction:

There are multiple mental illness examples, including depression, anxiety, disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders, and addictive behaviors. The signs and symptoms of mental illness are diverse as well and adversely affects ones daily life. In addition to the problems, risks, and challenges affecting victims and their view of God and others can lead to sinful behaviors. In the past, separation from society and institutionalization were primary means for treating the mentally ill. Isolated existence of the demoniac in Mark 5 is an example. Psychiatrists now would diagnose this man as mentally ill and recommend institutionalization. Jesus disregarded the stigma and practices of his time and intentionally met the man mental, physical, and spiritual needs.

Pointer # 1

- **A CRY FOR HELP (Mark 5:1-8)**

It was a stormy night, pitch dark and the boats pulled up on shore right in the midst of a lakeshore graveyard and immediately a wild acting man came running out from among the tombs. The man was hopelessly possessed with an evil spirit. He had reached rock bottom and he was without Jesus. He lived among the tombs cut off from society. The evil spirit caused the man to dwell in the darkest most eerie place imaginable and that darkness aggravated his condition. He represents the man who loves darkness because his deeds are evil. He did not live among the living; he resided amongst the dead. He represents the living dead, men without Christ are “Dead in their sins” and are cut off from God. The man was uncontrollable, unrestrained, untamed, often possessing super- human strength. He represents the uncontrollable evil or depravity of man and the helplessness of man to deliver or save himself. The man was naked, and stripped of all decency and righteous behavior. He represents the old man who stands naked before the eyes of God who desperately needs to be clothed with the righteousness of God and the garments of the new man. The man was a threat to himself and to others, inflicting harm upon himself. He has become dangerous given over to evil. He is depraved and so far gone and he longer has respect for human life, including his own. He is hopeless and no one can save him except for God. By saving this man Jesus is able to save anybody. The depraved, hopeless, helpless, etc.

Pointer # 2

- **Command that healed (Mark 5:9-13)**

Jesus spoke the word of power. He commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Jesus revealed the man's great need, how utterly possessed by evil he was. Jesus revealed the nature of evil spirits. He used the occasion to teach and warn men of evil spirits. There are degrees of control by Satan as well as degrees of control by God.

Pointer # 3

- **A Commission to Proclaim (Mark 5:18-20)**

The undeniable evidence that the demonic man was miraculously healed did not penetrate the spiritual blindness of the area's inhabitants. Instead of rejoicing, they begged Jesus to leave and he granted their request. Contrastingly, the healed man begged to go with him, but Jesus denied his request. Instead he commanded the man to go home to his immediate family and the citizens of his country from whom he was estranged and tell what the Lord had done for him and how he had shown him mercy. The man immediately obeyed and gave his testimony in the Decapolis, captivating the attention of many who heard it. The former demonic man was now commanded to go where Jesus was no longer welcomed and proclaim his grace and great power. Through his obedience he became one of the earlier missionaries to the Gentiles.

In closing, so often the most important mission field is among our own families and those on the margins of society. These are the misjudged and stigmatized because of the moral, physical, and mental deficiencies. Jesus sets the example and the standard for the faith community to follow.