



RECOGNIZING OUR BLESSING
MARK 5:1-20





Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart

- “Focus on your strengths, not your weaknesses. Focus on your character, not your reputation. Focus on your blessings, not your misfortunes.”
- “Count your blessings, not your problems. Count your own blessings, not someone else's. Remember that jealousy is when you count someone else's blessings instead of your own.”

Anthon St. Maarten, Divine Living

- “If we never experience the chill of a dark winter, it is very unlikely that we will ever cherish the warmth of a bright summer’s day. Nothing stimulates our appetite for the simple joys of life more than the starvation caused by sadness or desperation. In order to complete our amazing life journey successfully, it is vital that we turn each and every dark tear into a pearl of wisdom and find the blessing in every curse.”

Both recognizing blessings and being thankful follow the same path of; identification, comparison, and understanding wrapped in truthfulness

- It is difficult to truly be thankful, to grasp the blessing of the meal set in front of you if you have never experienced gnawing hunger for a long period
 - Or the meal set in front of you is limited and meager at best

Both grasping blessing and being thankful follow the same path of comparison, understanding and experience wrapped in truthfulness

- Or we have witnessed the starving hunger of many in our world today
- We identify the truthfulness of the comparison and thankfulness enters our heart and we see ourselves as blessed
- Same with the gifts, our homes and family

As Christians we take for granted the relationship we have with Christ and the eternal blessing and we at times go through the motion of being thankful and feeling blessed

- We never stop to apply real truthfulness to this relationship
 - What were we really when we were forgiven?
 - What was our potential being fully separated from God?

As Christians we take for granted the relationship we have with Christ and the eternal blessing that we at times go through the motion of being thankful and feeling blessed

- We never stop to apply truthfulness to this relationship
 - How would our lives be different today if Jesus had never entered our hearts and lives?

As Christians we take for granted the relationship we have with Christ and the eternal blessing that we at times go through the motion of being thankful and feeling blessed

- We never stop to apply truthfulness to this relationship
 - **Jeremiah 17:9 NLT** “The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?

The nation of Israel was a religiously proud nation

- God had chosen them out of all the families on earth to be his precious treasure
- God had given them his word on how to live to receive all the blessing promised through this relationship
- God has desired them to be the same kind of blessing to the separated world that He had been with them

The nation of Israel was a religiously proud nation

- Instead, they became proudful, stubborn, hard-hearted, even calling non-Jews dogs
- They were not grateful for what God has done nor did they truly understand how very blessed they were
- It was all about them and not God
- Before we point our finger to them today, we must understand many in the Church today have the same mindset and opinion

In our verses this morning Jesus is taking his disciples to a person when evil rules to show them the effects of a life given over to sin

- Not to condemn him, but to show them where they could be if it wasn't for the grace and mercy of God
- To show them the answer to this evil is in the person of Jesus Christ, not the keeping of the Law
- **Mark 5:1-20**

Setup

- The disciples had had a very active day and night
- Jesus took them to a Gentile area
 - Jesus loves those separated from the church as much as he loves us within the church
 - Jesus walks among the lost as much as the church
 - We are to be the same kind of blessing to the lost as Jesus is to us

Setup

- How this man got like this does not matter
- Satan tries to mar the image of God in human kind
 - **vs. 5 NLT** Day and night he wandered among the burial caves and in the hills, howling and cutting himself with sharp stones.

Setup

- Periods where the demons would overwhelm him, and nothing could be done to subdue and help him control himself
- Please see this is/was the potential of each one of us here this morning
- Truthfulness is needed here
- As you are looking into this event, set aside some things in your mind to be thankful for and truly see your blessing

Jesus went to him personally

- Of all the places the boat could have landed, Jesus chose this place
- The disciples would have gladly gone further up/down the coast
- Don't mess with this one Jesus, he is not worthy of your time or touch, he is too far gone plus he is a Gentile

Jesus went to him personally

- This man would never have been able to reach Jesus on the other side of the lake
- Would never have been allowed close
- Would have been forced out of whatever area they were in usually by stoning

Jesus went to him personally

- **vs. 6-7** running toward Jesus screaming, “What do you want with me Jesus?” (*Why calling me to you?*)
 - This is a great question we all must ask ourselves
- **Isaiah 9:6 NIV** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given
 - Why?
 - To call us to himself

Jesus went to him personally

- **Galatians 4:4 NIV** But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem (*buy back, set free*) those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.
- **John 6:44a NIV** “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them
- Can you say with me this morning, “Thank you, Jesus, for coming to me.”

Jesus demonstrated His authority over every single part of evil

- To show the depth of this evil Jesus asks the demon its name
 - **vs. 9** My name is Legion because we are many
 - Can you imagine what disciple are thinking?
 - Oh great, one Jesus and up to 6,000 demons

Jesus demonstrated His authority over every single part of evil

- Notice the demons were seeking mercy from Christ or bargaining with him **vs. 11-12**
- **Matthew 28:18 NIV** Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Jesus demonstrated His authority over every single part of evil

- **vs. 13a NIV** He gave them permission
- There is no sin or evil in your life that Jesus does not have authority over, but it is in relationship with your deep desires

Jesus demonstrated His authority over every single part of evil

- So often we would like Jesus to change us if it is easy
- Will you allow Him to strip you bare until there is nothing left but you and Him?
- Can you say with me this morning, “Thank you, Jesus, that your authority exceeds completely every evil that can come against me, even if I have allowed it in.”

Jesus wanted this man to understand the completeness of his redemption and to show the disciples the desires of evil in their lives

- Never misunderstand the desire of evil or sin in your life, it wants to separate you from all that is good and destroy your blessing

Jesus wanted this man to understand the completeness of his redemption and to show the disciples the desires of evil in their lives

- Can you imagine the scene?
 - The crying/squealing of every pig as they were invaded with evil
 - The sound of hooves pounding on the dirt to try and get away from what was happening in them

Jesus wanted this man to understand the completeness of his redemption and to show the disciples the desires of evil in their lives

- Can you imagine the scene?
 - The sounds of the falling, landing the mashing of bodies
 - Then complete and total silence as the last one landed
 - Horror and peace all in one place

Jesus wanted this man to understand the completeness of his redemption and to show the disciples the desires of evil in their lives

- Not a single shred of demon remained in this man
- The evil was completely destroyed, never to return
- The man was totally and completely redeemed from the effects of evil

Jesus wanted this man to understand the completeness of his redemption and to show the disciples the desires of evil in their lives

- Jesus did this all without the man's help
- **John 8:36 NIV** So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed
- Can you say with me this morning, "Thank you, Jesus, for the completeness of my salvation in you."

Jesus desires all of us to see the blessings of a life given over to God

- Here was a man who wanted nothing more in life than to be a servant of Jesus, **vs. 18**
- I hear the words appreciation, thankfulness, understanding, truthfulness, blessedness

Jesus desires all of us to see the blessings of a life given over to God

- If we are truthful with ourselves, we would have to say, “That could have been me.”
- Or maybe, “That was me.” We would quickly add, “Not to that extent of course.”
- Can you say with me this morning, “O God, my Father, regardless of my present circumstances I am truly blessed, and I am truly thankful? I have all I really need, because I have you in my life.”

May we be like minded with Habakkuk

- **Habakkuk 3:17-19 NLT** 17 Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty,
- 18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation!
- 19 The Sovereign Lord is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights.



Amen

“O God, my Father, regardless of my present circumstances I am truly blessed, and I am truly thankful. I have all I really need, because I have you in my life.”