

Scripture Text

Mark 5

Context

Jesus has just demonstrated his authority over nature, and now will show it over the demonic realm, chronic illness and death. In Chapter 4 he calmed a storm in nature, he comes now to calm the storms inside of people. This happens as people put their faith in Jesus.

Observation and Meaning

- How is the 'unclean spirit' (v2) explained in v3-5? What elements are described?
- In what two ways does Jesus demonstrate his authority over the spirits? And what is the effect of the man who has been cleansed (v15)?
- Vs 15-20 describe the different responses of the man and the crowd. What are the marks of faith depicted by the man, as opposed to the crowd?
- Whilst much is different between Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood, one thing is in common. What is it?
- The faith of both Jairus and the woman is tested. How so? How does Jesus encourage Jairus as his faith is tested? (v36)? How does their response to the testing show that their faith is genuine?
- All the conditions that Jesus brings healing to are forms of 'uncleanness' before God. What does this tell us about the nature of sin, and what Jesus has come to do?

Big Idea

Only true faith in Jesus can save us from the chaotic effects of being unclean before God. This faith is a full, public entrusting of our entire lives to Him.

Connecting to the Bible's storyline

Jesus demonstrates this authority over all things that bring chaos into our lives. These different forms of chaos all have one common root: they are all aspects of being unclean before God, separating us from Him. This uncleanness is dealt with by Jesus because of who He is and what He will do: enter into our chaos and absorb it's effects for our sake at the cross.

Sermon Outline

1. Jesus and the unclean spirit (v1-20)
2. Jesus and the unclean body (v25-34)
3. Jesus and the unclean corpse (v21-24, 36-43)
4. Moving from fear to faith in Jesus

Application

- The demoniac sees his need and so willingly receives Jesus' complete authority in his life, demonstrating faith. In contrast, the crowds don't see their need and so are afraid of Jesus' authority, begging him to leave. Do you love or fear Jesus' authority, and what does this tell you about your awareness of your need of Jesus, and willingness to follow him?
- What aspects of your life still indicate 'uncleanness' before God? How does Jesus promise to cleanse you, and bring you to God?
- How desperate are you for Jesus in your life? Are you inclined to laugh in disbelief (v40) or press on in faith (v28)?
- What are the various aspects / fruit of true faith found in this passage? Which do you need to grow in?

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?

What is the situation of the author and of the readers?

Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?

Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.