

# The Jesus Affect- The Demoniac

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you have your Bibles, turn them with me this morning, turn in them with me to Mark chapter five, and we're going to look at 20 verses, verses one through 20. I'm not gonna read them all at once.

I'm gonna read them all before the message is over, but we're going to just do an exposition of these verses as we go this morning. I wanna begin a series today that I have entitled The Jesus Effect, A-F-F-E-C-T, the impact that Jesus has on people.

How many of you have ever met somebody in your life that after that encounter, you were just never, ever the same? And I'm not talking about Jesus, the Holy Spirit here, but can you think of a person in your life?

There may or may not be for you, but a lot of folk I meet have told me from time to time, they ran into somebody or they had perhaps a planned meeting, and that meeting absolutely changed the course of their life.

Some people are just like that, and it seems that everyone Jesus ever met, man, they went away different. He had a tremendous impact on their life, and so for about 10 Sundays, we're gonna be looking at the Jesus Effect, how he impacts people's lives.

[ 1 : 13 ] This morning, we're looking at the guy who I think is the scariest guy you'll ever meet in your life, and you've met some scary folk, right?

In fact, look around the room right now. I'm sure all of us have, at one time or another, we've been somewhere where we just kind of wanted to draw our spouse and our kids a little closer to us because somebody's acting a little bit, as a buddy of mine says, cray-cray.

You know what I mean? I mean, they're just out there. They're just a little bit different. They've got a look about them. There's something about them physically that you just look at, and it kind of frightens you, intimidates you, maybe a real huge person, muscle-bound person, maybe how they're dressed.

Most often, it's how they're acting, right? I mean, I remember when I was still working at Brushy Creek, I would go to the hospital over at Memorial, and almost always, you could count on this one guy I'd pass going down academy, and he would be talking to himself, and this was before there were cell phones, you know, before they had those little buds in their ears, and he'd be having the grandest conversation, but there wouldn't be anybody there but him, right?

And so, you know the kind of guy I'm talking about. Well, that's the kind of guy we see here in Scripture, so if you have your Bible, open it, and let's just read these verses together, beginning in Mark chapter five and verse one and two.

[ 2 : 37 ] Then they came, speaking of the disciples, to the other side of the sea. This is the Sea of Galilee. If you draw an oblong circle down on the lower right end, the southeast side, that's where they're headed to the area known as the Gerizines.

So the Scripture says, then they came to the other side of the sea, to the region of the Gerizines. As soon as he, speaking of Jesus, got out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit came out of the tombs and met him.

Now, the only two things we know at this point about this man we're referring to today is the scariest man you've ever met is that he has an unclean spirit, which means he's demon-possessed.

There are evil spirits living in him, not just one, but as you'll see, many, many evil spirits, and he's coming to meet Jesus, apparently spots Jesus.

They beach the boat on the shore, and as they do, Jesus steps out of the boat. He sees Jesus. You're going to see in just a moment. Knows who Jesus is and goes running straight for Jesus.

[ 3 : 50 ] He's coming, though, out of the tombs. Now, you've got to ask yourself, why would anybody be coming out of the tombs? Had he just buried a loved one?

Was he there for a funeral? Why would he be coming out of the tombs? And when you think of the tombs, let me just give you a clear picture in your mind. If you're picturing something like Hillcrest Cemetery just down the road from you guys, think again.

I mean, there's no green grass. There's no markers there. It's not beautiful. There are no artificial flowers or real flowers or anything like that.

This is not a well-kept place. These are caves there adjacent to the Sea of Galilee. This is where people have been buried.

They have been wrapped, many of them in cloth and placed in there. Animals have roamed the countryside. Some of them, no doubt, have come in and devoured the corpses.

[ 4 : 51 ] You wouldn't be the least bit surprised. You would, in fact, anticipate and expect that when you walk in those caves, you're going to see an elbow, you're going to see an arm or a leg, or you might encounter a skull or bones.

It's a pretty gross setting, right? And so this man with the unclean spirit runs out of the tombs and he runs up to Jesus. Now you've got to be asking, as I said earlier, why is he there?

Well, the next verse tells us, verse three, he lived in the tombs. Now just stop for a moment and let that sink in.

He lived in the tombs. Can anyone in this room rightfully say you can imagine ever making your home in the tombs? I talked to a guy a number of years ago, a friend of mine, and he lived right next door to a cemetery.

And so I asked him, in fact, his house backed up to it, I said, does it ever bother you that you live so close to a cemetery? He says, no, actually I get along well with all my neighbors. You know, they don't give me any trouble. But the truth of the matter is, to live in an environment like I was talking about a minute ago, man, there's got to be something wrong in your life.

[ 6 : 05 ] To live in a place like this, you've got to ask, why does he do that? Why does he choose to live there? Does he choose to live there? Well, as you'll see in a moment, he doesn't. Look at the remainder of the verse.

He lived in the tombs. No one was able to restrain him anymore, even with chains, because he often had been bound with shackles and chains, but had, and look at this word, graphic word, snapped off the chains and smashed the shackles.

No one was strong enough to subdue him. He lives there because that's where the public demands he lives.

In just a moment, you're going to see why they do that. In fact, probably already you're getting a good idea of why they do that. They're scared to death of this guy. I mean, this is not the kind of guy you want to encounter your preschool or elementary age kids.

It's not the kind of guy you want your teenagers to be around. It's not the kind of guy you want to be near, as you're going to see in just a moment. He's filled with these demonic spirits, and because of that, he is completely out of control.

[ 7 : 23 ] He has, because of these evil spirits within him, supernatural strength. They can no longer chain him in these caves, in these tombs, but it's not because they haven't tried.

They've sent out committees of men before who have bound him to the ground and have held him down and shackled him, but as soon as they would, apparently, he would snap the chains in two. Now, when you think about chains, you don't think about just snapping them in two, right? I've got a pair of bolt cutters, and occasionally, they'll come in handy, but boy, you have to exert some pressure even using bolt cutters, right?

We think about cutting chains into, we don't think about snapping chains. We think about snapping a cord, something like, but this man snapped these chains, he smashed the shackles to pieces, they tried again and again, but now they can no longer even do that, and the reason is because they're not strong enough, he seems to have gained strength, and they're not even able any longer to bind him with the chains, even momentarily.

Look at verse five, and always, now always is an absolute term, right? Always means always, all the time, there's no break in it.

[ 8 : 43 ] Always, night and day, he was crying out among the tombs, and in the mountains, and cutting himself with stones.

You know, the only way I know to describe this man's existence, he was tormented, wasn't he? I mean, why else would you scream out all the time?

Why would you be heard screaming up in the mountains, or screaming there in the tombs, and to do that day and night, he is absolutely beside himself, and the further evidence of that is this, he's cutting himself with stones.

Now, why would you do that? You know what I guess? I think this man just hates his life. I mean, he hates everything about his existence, and I can understand, he is just literally beside himself.

There may have been a moment in your life for a moment or two, or five minutes, or an hour, or a day, or a week, where you were just tormented. I mean, thoughts just overwhelm you.

[ 9 : 48 ] If you've ever experienced a great traumatic event in your life, you may know what that's like for just a moment or two, or minutes, or even hours, or even days, but this is this man's way of life all the time.

Every day when he awakens, it begins. It ends when he finally collapses from exhaustion in the evening. He's running to and fro, he's out of his mind, he's crazed, and he doesn't want to be bound.

Now imagine this. Every one of us in this room are to some degree claustrophobic. Did you know that? That's yes and no and no.

Do you know that? Some of you are badly claustrophobic. I won't ask you to raise your hand, but you know who you are. All of us, though, to some degree in the right circumstance would find ourselves claustrophobic.

We put you in a tiny, tiny cell and there's no movement. Let me tell you something. You get claustrophobic pretty quick. We shackle you and bind you and fashion you to the ground or to a wall where you can't move.

[ 11 : 01 ] You'd get claustrophobic in a hurry. Have you ever seen the movies, the old pictures, especially in the insane asylums? They would come into the room. There would be two or three orderlies.

Here's the guy over here who they're going to put him in a straitjacket. How do those scenes play out? You've seen them, right? You ever seen in a movie, they come in and say, we've got to put you in this and he says, okay, you want to put my left arm in or how you want to do it?

No. Man, they would go screaming and kicking and fighting because none of us want something to bind us and then to put our arms in that. In fact, some of you are breaking out in sweat right now to hear me tell about this, right?

I mean, the thought of that is just horrific and that's what they did. They bind this man and try to chain him and subdue him so he cannot harm anyone else.

Now, one other thing to keep in mind. Do you think they plan to come daily and give him water and food in this cave? Really? No.

[ 12 : 04 ] No. You know what the plan, I don't even know if they thought it all the way through. He's going to die in that cave. If he doesn't break those shackles, if he doesn't break out of those chains, he's going to die there.

They don't care. They don't want to just put him to death, but they're okay with him not being a part of their lives. One other thing, we go to the next verse, but Luke chapter 8, you know what it inserts here that Mark omits?

It says that when he ran through these caves in the mountainside, he did so completely naked. He tore away his clothes.

Now, I'm no psychiatrist, but I've done a lot of counseling through the years, and you know what my guess is on this? He couldn't even stand the sense of being bound by his clothes.

He just wanted to be free. He thought about being chained and being subdued, and those clothes were just another form of that, and so the man ran naked. He was completely crazed and out of his mind.

[ 13 : 11 ] Now, let's just pause for about 30 seconds. Let me ask you something. Can you imagine living the life that this man lived? Can you imagine what it was like? He's cut off from his family.

He had family at one time. He's cut off from his family. He, in all likelihood, I can just imagine, had friends at one time. He's cut off from his friends. He lives in isolation.

Remember what isolation did to some of you in this room during COVID? Pretty tough, isn't it, being in the house by yourself? We have phones. We talk to people. We have computers. We

communicate, but even then, it wasn't enough for a lot of us.

Imagine there's never anyone that you have conversation with. There's no one to tell how you feel. Are you beginning to get a picture of how horrible this man's life was?

I've got to be honest, I can't imagine a life any worse than this man was living. If he wasn't crazy when the ordeal began, he would have been crazy by the time it was over.

[14:12] Well, look at verses six to ten. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and knelt down before him, and he cried out with a loud voice, What do you have to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?

I beg you before God, don't torment me. For he had told him, Come out of the man, this is Jesus, you unclean spirit. What is your name, he asked.

My name is Legion, he answered him, because we are many. And he kept begging him not to send them out of the region.

Now, this demon, first thing I want you to notice, he recognizes, as I said at the outset of the sermon, who Jesus is.

You know what's astounding about that? All the people who had apparently been looking for Jesus to come, the Messiah, the Pharisees, and all those, they never recognize him. But in Mark's gospel, all the demons who have conversation with Jesus as they possess individuals, every one of them recognize you're the Son of God.

[15:24] And they're all fearful of him that he has come to harm them. They know that judgment one day awaits them. And so Jesus asked this man, what is your name?

He runs up to Jesus, what is your name? Now that's not a hard question, right? What is your name?

The man responds, and it could have been the demons, or it could have been the man, we don't have any way of knowing.

The person responds, Legion. His parents had not named him Legion, you know that. When he said Legion, he says Legion, I think for two reasons, one, because it's indicative of what's going on inside of him.

A Legion was a Roman group of soldiers that numbered between three and seven thousand in number. Is he trying to say there are three to seven thousand demons in me?

I doubt that. But what he was saying is this, I am filled with an army of demons. There could have been a hundred, there could have been a thousand, there could have been two thousand, I don't know how many, but here's the important thing, these demons have taken possession of this man's life.

[16:38] He doesn't have a life anymore. They're in complete, utter control. I think if he does know who he is and he says Legion, he says so because he's lost all self-identity.

He doesn't think of himself as a human being the way you and I do any longer. He thinks of himself as this man who is utterly bound and controlled not by the shackles but by the demons within him. Now I know what a lot of you here got to be wondering at this point, preacher, can that still happen? Are people demon-possessed today? I've got to say to you that I believe there are a number of people who are.

In fact, I don't think every horrific event is the result of demon possession that occurs in our lives but I think there are a number of horrific events that have happened in human history that we can look and say perhaps that person was under the influence of demons.

Some of you may be wondering, can a believer be demon-possessed? And they cannot because the Spirit of God owns us. We've been bought with the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ where he is and a demon cannot possess us.

[17:52] But I want to warn you, demons can oppress us. Demons can speak to us and that's why we need to guard our minds and hearts.

We need to be careful about what we see and what we listen to, the kind of things we read, the kind of experiences we have in life because I believe Satan is on the prowl and he can, while not possessing us, he can oppress us.

He can put satanic thoughts in our minds and I think oftentimes that goes hand in hand with people who sometimes have mental illness, emotional illness. Does it mean they're one and the same?

No, of course not. But sometimes that can run hand in hand. Look at verse 11, if you will. Now a large herd of pigs were there, was there, feeding on the hillside.

The demons begged him, send us to the pigs so that we may enter them. The demons now speak out to Jesus. Jesus, there's a large group of pigs over there, in fact 2,000 in number we'll see in just a moment.

[ 18 : 56 ] And they asked for permission to be sent into this herd of swine. Verse 13, and he gave them permission. I want you to know this, Jesus didn't order that, Jesus permits that.

Then the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs and the herd of about 2,000 rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned there. Now, I don't know if you're here this morning and that causes you a problem or not.

I've heard it said once or twice, why in the world did Jesus kill the 2,000 pigs? First of all, I've got to say to you, he didn't do that, he didn't order it, he permitted it.

The demons asked for permission and Jesus allowed it. If you say, well that's just semantics, then I've still got to come back and tell you this, he did that in order to save a human being's life.

And I've just got to be honest with you, I'll let you see a part of my personality this morning. If that troubles you, that Jesus would save a human being's life at the expense of 2,000 swine, then you and I are just going to have to agree to disagree.

[ 20 : 05 ] Do you understand? Because I think the value of a human life is far above that of an animal or a plant or anything else that's a living organism. So, they run into the pigs, they run over the cliff and are drowned.

Look at verse 14. The men who tended them ran off and reported it in the town. And the countryside and the people went to see what had happened.

Now, don't just read that quickly and pass to the next verse. I want you to consider that, what that would look like for a moment. How many of you think a man could live in Pickens County who lived the way this man lived and you would know about it?

What do you think? If a man lived in Pickens County and was as crazy as this man was, ran naked, screamed night and day, the townsfolk had gotten together, the police had gotten together, shackled him, he broke free of the shackles, he's tormented, he's running up and down your streets, you're scared to death of him, you'd know about it, wouldn't you?

You couldn't be a resident of Pickens and not know about it. So these men who are tending the swine, when they see the swine drown, a sizable amount of money has been lost by the owner of these pigs.

[ 21 : 24 ] They rush back to tell him but in telling him, they begin to spread word everywhere and this is probably what, hey, you know that demoniac, the one we call the demoniac of Gadara?

Yeah? You won't believe what we just saw. What'd you just see? We were there tending the pigs and this guy named Jesus, they pull up in this boat, they beach the boat and they get out, he comes running out of the tombs and Jesus actually has a conversation with him.

Jesus wasn't afraid of him. Well, what happened? Well, he told these demons to leave the man and they went into the swine and the swine suddenly acted crazy, did something we've never seen him do in the past.

They run over a cliff and 2,000 of them died. Wow. You gotta go out and see that thing. Yeah, maybe. Well, wait a minute, let me tell you something else that happened.

What else happened? You know the crazy guy? Yeah? Well, he's different. What do you mean he's different? Well, he's not acting crazy anymore.

[ 22 : 30 ] He's what? He's not acting crazy. He acts civilized. You won't believe it. What would you do? All the townspeople come out to see what has happened.

Well, read the next verse. This is my second favorite verse in this passage. Not my favorite, but my second favorite verse. Verse 15. They came to Jesus and saw the man who had been demon possessed by the legion.

Now, read all this very carefully. Sitting there, dressed, and in his right mind. Is that astounding or what?

Sitting there, dressed, in his right mind. They would never have guessed any of those things.

They've always seen him naked. They've always seen him running to and fro.

Have you ever known somebody who had ants in their pants and they just couldn't sit still? They just couldn't be still if their life depended on it? That's this guy to the hundredth power, right? I mean, he's just crazed out of his mind.

[ 23 : 37 ] These spirits torment him so badly. He just can't stand his own flesh. He cuts his flesh. He yells. He screams. He doesn't wear clothes. But now, take a look at it. There he is and he's seated just like I am sitting there on the bank and he's still and he's not screaming and when they say something to him, he gives a sensible answer.

He's just like any of you in this room. He looks so normal. He's just that. You wouldn't think if you walked into a room and saw somebody seated and his clothes and in his right mind, you just keep walking, right?

No big deal. But this guy, we've never seen him like that. How is it he's like that? Jesus has cast these demons out and here's the part I like.

You ready? Look at the end of verse 15. And they were afraid. That's funny, isn't it? I mean, I don't care who you are. That's funny.

They were afraid. They're more scared of him sane than they were when he was insane. At least insane he was predictable. Now, they don't know what's going on with this guy. And so, it scares them literally to death.

[ 24 : 58 ] Well, they do. Well, look at verse 16 and 17. The eyewitnesses described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and told about the pigs. Then they began to beg him to leave their region.

Now, that's pretty ironic, isn't it? Jesus comes, solves their problem. This guy has tormented them for years and years on end in all likelihood.

Jesus cast the demons out and he's seated, clothed in his right mind and the change is so radical they're afraid of him.

You know, I gotta be honest with you. You shouldn't surprise us too much. I have seen before in my life people who Jesus touched who the change was so radical their old friends were a little bit afraid of him.

They just actually wondered what's going on with this guy and what's happened he's had an encounter with Christ. Well, look at verse 18. This is my favorite verse.

[ 26 : 07 ] As he was getting in the boat the man who had been demon-possessed kept begging him, read that phrase kept begging him to be with him. I said before the preceding verse was my second favorite verse.

This is my favorite verse. Let me show you why. You gotta picture this scene. Imagine that we're on the shore and that blue carpet or purple carpet is the Sea of Galilee.

Those boats weren't John boats. They weren't aluminum boats. No Starcraft, right? These are heavy, heavy wooden boats. So you know what they did? They beached that boat.

They would have just rowed until it was up on the shore. When it got a little bit of it up on the shore they would have gotten out and those guys in the boat the disciples would have grabbed it and they would have pulled it up further on the shore so that it doesn't wash away.

Well, they asked Jesus to leave. Jesus apparently without argument he acquiesces to their wishes. They go and they wouldn't have just piled in the boat again if you've ever launched a boat from a beach.

[ 27 : 15 ] They push it out to the edge of the water, right? And then they begin getting in the boat. The disciples get in the boat. Jesus gets in the boat. Probably one or two stayed on the outside and they push it out a little bit further and now they're all getting in the boat and they're taking their oars and they're going to push it back and then they're going to begin rowing it back, right?

Well, here's this demoniac and he sees them pushing the boat and I can see him sitting there and he stands up and he walks over to the water edge and he says to Jesus, Jesus, take me with you. Take me with you. And he wonders if Jesus hears him or not and so he goes down to the water's edge. Jesus, don't leave me here.

Can you understand why you would do that? All these town people have hated him. He's been public enemy number one. They chained him and left him for dead.

They've ridiculed him, ostracized him. He's cut off from family and friends and everybody. He has no life here in his mind and so they're pushing this boat out into the water and I can see him do this and I don't think this is an exaggeration at all.

[ 28 : 29 ] I cannot imagine in fact this story happened any other way. I can see him put his hands up on the bow of that boat and look up at Jesus in the boat and say, Jesus, please take me with you.

And he's ankle deep and knee deep and on out until the water's up to his waist. Jesus, he's still begging. He kept begging, kept begging. So he's asked repeatedly, Jesus, would you take me with you?

Would you take me with you? Jesus' response in one way, just to be honest, is a little bit surprising, isn't it? Because you know what he says. He says, no, you can't come.

And finally, when the water may be chest high, the man realizes, he's not going to let me come. And he turns and walks away. I want you to look at that response of Jesus. Look back to the scripture for a moment.

Look at what it says. Verse 19 and 20. But he would not let him. Instead, he told him, go back home to your own people and report to them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you.

[ 29 : 35 ] And boy, God had had mercy on him, hadn't he? So he went out and began to proclaim in the Decapolis, that's the 10 city region, how much Jesus had done for him.

And they were all amazed. Jesus wasn't being mean to him. I think he'd have loved to have had him go with him. But he knew this man had a mission in life.

God had changed his life and could use this man more than he could ever have used him before.

And so he says, you know what? There are people here in this region, in these 10 cities about this region, they know you.

They know your reputation. I want you to go to them and I want you to show them the mercy that God has done in your life, the mercy God has shown you, the work he has accomplished in your life.

I want you to be used of God to speak to these people when they see how God has worked in your life. It'll change their lives. And so that's what the man does. He begins going city to city to city telling them the story about what God has done in his life.

[ 30 : 40 ] Three things I want you to see today and I close. You ready? Here's the first. Jesus loves those who others despise and fear and flee from.

He is the friend of hardened sinners. Jesus loves those who others despise, fear, and flee from.

In fact, if we're honest about it, Jesus loves those that many of us in the church, many of us in the church are exactly like those townspeople, the people of the region of Gadara.

People like this guy, if we're honest about it, they scare us. We don't want them hanging around our preschool. We don't want them hanging around our youth.

We're uncomfortable if they show up in a couples class because, I mean, look at us and look at them. They're just a lot different from us. But I want to tell you something.

[ 31 : 43 ] When I read the New Testament, when I read the Gospels, if you said, Pastor, I want you to tell me one word about Jesus, one sentence about Jesus you take from reading the Gospels.

Do you know what that sentence would be? Jesus loves sinners. Wouldn't you agree with that? In fact, every time, almost, he's in conflict with the Pharisees, it's over his love of sinners.

Why do you hang out with drunks? Why do you hang out with prostitutes? Why do you hang out?

Can't you see this man is crazy? He's demon possessed. Why do you keep hanging out with people like this?

And the answer is pretty obvious. Jesus has compassion and loves hardened sinners. Second thing I want you to take away from this passage this morning is this.

Jesus can change anybody. Now, I want to tell you, I don't know what you've done. I don't know how deep in sin you are, how immoral you've been, what's happened in your life, the events of your life.

[ 32 : 48 ] There may be some tragedy, there may be some heartache, there may be some immorality, but I want to tell you something. I'm guessing there's nobody here whose life was as ever messed up as this guy's life was messed up.

And yet, look at him now and he's seated and he's in his right mind and he's clothed and God's going to use him in a miraculous way in those ten cities.

And I want to tell you something here. In fact, I have prayed for you before I even came today that God would bring somebody here today in this room who could in some small measure identify with this demoniac because your life is a mess.

And in your mind and heart, you've come to the place you just think, there's just not much hope for me. I mean, I just keep making one foolish decision after another.

I've made so many mistakes. I've disappointed my family. I've disappointed my friends. I've disappointed I'm just a mess. And there's just no hope for me. I want to tell you something, friend. [ 33 : 58 ] You couldn't be further from the truth. This message is exactly for you because I want to tell you something. Jesus can change anybody.

Amen? I know that because he changed me. I know who I was and who I am. And I'm no prize. I'm not what I should be. But I'll tell you this. I'm not who I used to be. And that's not because of anything Ralph Carter did. That's because of the Spirit of God working in my life. And if he can change me and he can change that demoniac, he can change you, whoever you are. Maybe your first time, ever walking in the doors, First Baptist Pickens. He can change you. You're not without hope. Here's the last and final thing and I'll leave you with this. It is far more comfortable to be huddled up with Jesus and fellow believers. But he has put us on a mission in the world. The world is a scary, scary place, isn't it?

[ 34 : 59 ] I've got to be honest with you. I pray about it all the time because I've got a little 15-year-old granddaughter and a 3-year-old grandson. And I've got to be honest, I don't like the direction our country is taking and it scares me for them because the world has changed radically from the world that I was born in and raised in.

It's a scary, scary place. But I've got to tell you today, that's where he wants us. That's where he wants us.

He doesn't want us huddled up in our little beautiful churches, holding each other's hands, looking for folk who are more like us to come and join us. How here so-and-so moved to town and they're a believer, we'll rush out and get them.

While there are tons of lost people who've been here forever and we just don't bother with them because they're just not church-type people, you know? I'm telling you, it's comfortable when you huddle up with the sheep and it's dangerous out in the world.

But that's where God wants us. That's where he wants us. He wants us sharing what God's done with us to other people in whom he needs to do a great work.

[ 36 : 11 ] And I'll tell you, you don't have to drive far from this church until you see lots of people in whom he needs to do a great work. Amen? Let's pray. Lord, thank you for your word.

Thank you for the story you've given us today. Let us see ourselves. Let us see people who are like the demoniac. Give us compassion for them. Lord, I pray if there's one here today who they in some small measure can identify that demoniac, their life's not nearly as out of order, but they just know that they're not heading the direction they need to go and they need help and they just have resisted that because they don't think there is anything that can help.

They've tried this and they've tried that. God, would you today open their eyes to what you could do in their life? You could do a miracle in their life that you can cause them to be born again, that your spirit will come into them and regenerate them and save them.

Please, oh God, do that today. If there's just one person in this room who needs it, I pray you'd speak to their heart. For we make this prayer in Jesus' name and for his sake we pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.