

Discussion Questions

The Time Has Come: The Gospel of Mark

These questions are designed to invite reflection on today's Bible passage and life application of the themes introduced in today's sermon.

Week 6: Authority Over the Darkness

Mark 5:1-20

1. Can you think of someone you consider "evil" by nature, or an example of a "bad person"? What characteristics qualify them as "evil" or "bad"? Do you think of yourself as good or evil? In your opinion, what balance of badness and goodness makes a person "bad" or "good"?
2. What does the Bible say about which people are good and which are evil? Do you think this is a fair or accurate assessment?
3. What do we know about the "region of the Gerasenes"? What would Jesus' disciples conclude about the region and its inhabitants? How do you think they felt about traveling there?
4. In the Old Testament, what does God identify as the worst punishment? In the New Testament, what phrase does Jesus commonly use to describe eternal judgment? How might these terms apply both to the region of the Gerasenes, and the individual the disciples encounter there? How does Mark identify this individual?
5. According to the Bible, where did evil originate? How did evil infect the human race? What lies do the forces of evil use to entice humans into sin?
6. What descriptors or statements does Mark use to capture the outward appearance and inner state of the demoniac? How would you describe him? Is this someone who *needs* to be saved? Does he act like he *wants* to be saved?
7. Does the demoniac represent a phenomenon found only in biblical times? Can you think of ways the phenomenon of spiritual evil comes to expression in our world? In your own life?
8. The demoniac is *monstrous*. What are some ways we try to make ourselves "more than human", or greater than we are? Why do we do this?
9. The demoniac is *legion*. What are some ways we use greater numbers to empower ourselves? Can this "empowerment by numbers" have negative or destructive consequences?
10. When we abandon God's way and pursue substitute sources of significance and security, what is the end result (as illustrated in today's passage)?
11. How does Jesus respond to the darkness in the world? Why does Jesus "cross over" to the dark side of the lake? What greater "crossing over" does Jesus pursue?
12. What does Jesus do about the darkness in the demoniac? What does Jesus restore for the demoniac? What does this demonstrate about what Jesus came to do for all people?
13. After Jesus frees the man from darkness, what does Jesus tell him to do? What does this say about Jesus' mission for everyone Jesus saves?

Pray: Invite Jesus to identify the ways you have pursued darkness instead of light; ask Jesus to replace your substitute sources of security and significance with His light and love; embrace Jesus' call to serve as an agent of His light.