
Defeating Legion (Stop Digging)

The Spiritual Connection

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Sermon: The Spiritual Connection: Defeating Legion (Stop Digging)

Lesson Text

Mark 5:6–9 (AV)⁶ But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, ⁷ And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. ⁸ For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit. ⁹ And he asked him, **What is thy name?** And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.

Matthew 12:43-45 (KJV) ⁴³When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. ⁴⁴Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished. ⁴⁵Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Romans 12:1–2 (AV)¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. ² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Introduction

Last week we began this Series, “The Spiritual Connection,” which is loosely based on my first relationship book “No More Drama Relationships.”

Today for the third time, we will look at this man struggling with his insanity as he deals with a Legion of demons. Two weeks ago, we looked at the “Name of Legion,” last week we looked the “Insanity of Legion,” and this week we will look at “Defeating Legion.”

We know that Legion can cause Temporary Insanity, Generational Insanity, and Environmental Insanity. And the process to overcome them is Perfecting, Changing, and Praising!

But how do we defeat a Legion of devils? It starts with understanding how we get to a Legion.

A Legion is a body of soldiers whose number consisted of 6826 men (6100 foot soldiers, and 726 horsemen). So, when this man said, “My name is Legion: for we are many”; we were saying I’m oppressed, possessed, depressed with nearly 7000 unclean Spirits.

Our lesson text, Matthew 12:43-45, teaches us how Legion occurs:

- First, he Conforms, allowing the unclean spirit to take up residence
- Next, he Reforms, kicking the unclean spirit out
- Finally, he Reverts, regressing to a worse state by allowing the unclean spirit to return

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Matthew 12: ⁴⁵Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

One unclean spirit comes back with 7; when they are kicked out, they come back with 49; 49 comes back 343; 343 comes becomes 2401; and eventually we have a Legion of unclean spirits.

Now imagine this process in marriage, friendships, workplaces, neighborhoods, and churches.

So how does one defeat a Legion, 6826 unclean spirits? One demon at a time!

Will Rogers is credited for the quote, “When you’re in a hole, stop digging.”

The reason we get to a Legion of unclean spirits is we keep digging; we keep conforming, reforming, and reverting. Doing the same thing over and over expecting different results.

Series and Sermon: The Spiritual Connection: Defeating Legion (Stop Digging)

“Stop Conforming, Stop Reforming, Stop Reverting”

I. Stop Conforming

Matthew 12: ⁴³When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, ...

How did the unclean spirit get there in the first place? By Conforming!

Romans 12: ² And be not conformed to this world:...

To conform means to comply with rules, standards, or laws. To behave according to socially acceptable conventions or standards.

It is our human nature to conform. We conform to our family, environment, peers, community, politics, and even our churches and religions; constantly giving in to peer pressure.

But the problem with conforming is when what we conform to is the ways of the world.

1 John 2: ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Mark 4: ¹⁹ **And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.**

James 1: ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

But conforming is how we got here, so stop digging!

The first step to defeating a Legion is to stop him before he forms. We must stop conforming and start presenting!

Romans 12: ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

To conform is to be a mirror, reflecting what's around you. To present is to become a light and present what's inside of you.

Leviticus 20: ⁷ Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I *am* the LORD your God.

We don't conform to the world; we present God to the world.

Matthew 5: ¹⁴ **Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid...** ¹⁶ **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

II. Stop Reforming

Matthew 12: ⁴³ **When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. ⁴⁴Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished.**

Why did the unclean spirit think he could return? Because the man only reformed himself, he never transformed himself.

To reform means to make changes for the purpose of improving. We reform all the time.

We reform our behavior; we stop cursing, drinking, smoking, getting angry, fornicating, ...

We reform our looks; we lose weight, change our hair, get new clothes, ...

We even reform our Christian living; we go to church more, join the choir, pray more, ...

The problem with reforming is that we can always revert back from the reformation. We lose weight, but revert and gain it back. We stop drinking & smoking, but start back. We stop getting angry, but then someone causes us to lose it. We go to church, but then we stop.

Reforming is a human process, and because we are not perfect, we can backslide and revert from that which we reformed.

Isaiah 64: ⁶ But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Reforming is why Legion keeps coming back, stop digging!

The next step to defeating a Legion is to stop just improving, and start changing. We must stop Reforming and start Transforming!

Romans 12: ² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

To transform means to make a thorough or dramatic change in the form, appearance, or character. This cannot happen naturally; it can only happen spiritually.

We can reform our heart, but only God can transform us by creating in us a new heart.

Psalms 51: ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

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We can reform who we are, but only God can transform us into who he's called us to be!

2 Corinthians 5: ¹⁷ Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

We can reform our happiness, but only God can transform us into his Joy.

Psalms 51: ¹² Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

III. Stop Reverting

Matthew 12: ⁴⁵ Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

To revert means to return to a previous state or practice. To turn back.

Luke 9: ⁶² And Jesus said unto him, **No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.**

But if returning to a previous state wasn't bad enough, reverting spiritually to a previous state is even worse; because the unclean spirit brings 7 more spirits even more wicked than himself!

The devil says if you reformed me that last time, I'm bringing backup the next time; 7 becomes 49, 49 becomes 343, 343 becomes 2401, and 2401 becomes a Legion.

But if we are going to defeat Legion, we must stop digging.

- Stop conforming, and start presenting your light
- Stop reforming, and start transforming your body
- Finally, stop reverting, and start renewing your mind.

Reverting is how Legion gets worse and worse, stop digging!

The final step to defeating a Legion is to stop him from coming back. We must stop Reverting and start Renewing!

Romans 12: ² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We must renew our mind: Philip 2: ⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

We must renew our will: Luke 22: ⁴² Saying, **Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.**

We must renew our thoughts: Philippians 4: ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

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Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: Defeating Legion (Stop Digging))

Lesson Text

- Mark 5:6–9, Matthew 12:43-45, Romans 12:1–2

Sermon Outline (Notes)

I. *Stop Conforming*

II. *Stop Reforming*

III. *Stop Reverting*

Questions (What was your main takeaway from Sunday's Sermon?)

I. Getting to Know "Me"

1. What qualities do you appreciate most in a friend?
2. What is one characteristic you received from your parents that you want to keep and one you wish to change?

II. Into the Bible

1. Read Romans 12:1-3.
 - a. What does Paul mean when he says that presenting our bodies to God is our reasonable service?
 - b. How does one renew their mind?
 - c. What is the correlation between transformation and mind renewal, (verse2), and not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, (verse 3)?

III. Life Application

1. According to the lesson, what steps should we take to experience a true and lasting change of a habitual behavior?
2. What are the differences between self-reformation and a transformation through a renewed mind?