

05 – HOW JESUS DEALT WITH DEMONS – Pt. 1

- ✓ We've discussed several things in this series. First, we talked about **seeing the devil accurately**. (Satan's a great "PR man". He'll try to paint himself as more powerful than he is, but the Bible refers to him as "empty, shattered and defeated" – Col. 2:15, J.B. Phillips.)
- ✓ Next, we talked about **keeping the "weird" out of spiritual warfare**. Jesus wasn't weird. The *apostles* weren't weird. Don't you be weird! A lot of very normal things are called "warfare" in the Bible: Like controlling your thoughts, controlling sin, soul winning, and even prayer. (Stick with the Word. Don't grab "stuff" out of the "ozone"!)
- ✓ Finally, we discussed **the armor of God**. The armor is not something you put on with a prayer, or a faith confession. These are character traits. When you have these traits in your life, they protect you like armor. (We've got one topic left in this series ... demons. For the next two weeks, we're going to watch Jesus deal with demons.)

Demons in the Gospel of Mark

- ✓ You don't get very far into Mark's Gospel before you see Jesus casting out devils. In chapter one, He gets baptized, chooses some disciples, goes into the synagogue to teach ... and a demon shows up – (just 23 verses into the Book!) And that's not an isolated incident! About 10% of Mark's gospel is dedicated to casting out devils. It was a significant part of Jesus' ministry. (Mark 1:39)
- ✓ Sometimes, people try to explain these "demon stories" away, saying, "These were primitive people! They had no understanding of microscopic organisms or mental illness. So, they explained these things the only way they *could* ... demons." (That would be a reasonable explanation – except for the fact that **JESUS believed in demons**. (He should know!))
- ✓ Demons are real. But here's the good news: Jesus has dominion over demons, (and so do *you*, through His name – Mark 16:17)!

Jesus wasn't afraid of demons. The *disciples* weren't afraid of demons. And *you* don't need to be afraid of demons. (1 John 4:4.)

What Are Demons Like?

Matt. 12:43-45 – "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then 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. 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."

Observations:

- ✓ Jesus described demons as having personality. They think, they speak, and they have a will. ("I will return...")
- ✓ They're intrusive. (This demon sees that man's body as his house.)
- ✓ Demons have varying degrees of wickedness. ("... more wicked ...")
- ✓ There are different *kinds* of demons.

The *Big* Question

- ✓ People often ask, "Can a Christian have a demon?" Let me answer it this way: **A Christian can't be possessed**. When a person is possessed, he's taken over spirit, soul, and body. That's not possible for a Christian. (The Holy Ghost dwells in a Christian's spirit, and God and the devil are not going to be roommates.) So no, a Christian can't be possessed.
- ✓ But can a Christian be influenced by a demon? Absolutely. (Peter was – Matt. 16:23.) Can a Christian be deceived? Depressed? Oppressed? Harassed? Can a demon attack a Christian physically? Yes, to *all* of those. (But a demon can't do any of those things if you refuse to cooperate with him.)

- ✓ One of the biggest keys to avoiding demonic influence is recognizing it and resisting it. (Not every thought that comes to your mind is your thought. *Resist* unscriptural thoughts.)
- ✓ Sometimes, the devil will try to influence you through a person. (A lot of times, when God wants to bless you, He sends you a person. In the same way, when the devil wants to hurt you, he sends you a person.) Demons can speak through the people in your life, just like Satan spoke through Peter. Don't follow *anyone* into darkness. Resist the devil. Refuse to cooperate with the enemy.

Case Study – The Madman of Gadara

Mark 5:1-2 – “And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,”

Observations:

- This fellow was actually “possessed” – (v. 15). He’s not just being “influenced”. He’s actually got demons in him. (This story is going to give us tremendous insight into demon activity.)
- Why would demons *want* to possess a person? They can do more when they have a body to operate through. (Think About It: If I’m a demon, and I’m on the outside ... I can whisper in your ear – but that’s about all I can do. But, if I can get *inside* a person, and use their body, I can do all *kinds* of things to you.)
- When a demon enters a man, the man becomes like the demon. (Whatever the demon is ... that’s what the person becomes.)

Luke 11:14 – “And He was casting out a demon, and it (the demon) was mute. After the mute demon had gone out, the man who had been mute spoke.”

- ✓ There was nothing wrong with the man until that mute demon got in. Then the *man* was mute. But when the demon *left*, he was fine.

The Account

Mark 5:1-4 – “Then they came over to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when He had come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could any man tame him.”

c.) A Spirit Can Affect a Person’s Physical Strength

- ✓ Here in Mark 5, it was an evil spirit that made the man strong. But can you think of anyone in the Bible that had the *Holy* Spirit, and had supernatural strength? Right! Samson.
- ✓ I remember reading “The Action Bible” to my kids. Like most children’s Bibles, they drew Samson like a body builder. The truth is, Samson was no bigger than anyone else! How do I know that? People kept asking him, “What’s the secret of your strength?” (Nobody ever says that to Arnold Schwarzenegger! With Arnold, the source of his strength is obvious. But with Samson, it wasn’t.) Let’s see what the Bible says about ...

Samson’s Strength

Judges 13:24-25 – “And the woman gave birth to a son and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in the camp of Dan ...”.

- ✓ His strength wasn’t in manifestation 24/7. It was only as the Spirit of God “moved” him.

Judges 14:5-6 – “As Samson and his parents were going to Timnath, a

young lion attacked Samson in the vineyards on the outskirts of town. The Spirit of the LORD came powerfully on him, and he tore the lion apart with his bare hands."

Judges 15:14 – "And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and Samson broke the ropes, as though they were pieces of burnt cloth."

Judges 16:20 – "Then (Delilah) cried out, 'Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!' When he woke up, he thought, 'I will do as before and shake myself free.' But he didn't realize the LORD had left him."

- ✓ Without the Lord, he was just like anyone else! Samson was only strong when the Spirit came upon him. And the same was true with the madman of Gadara. He was only strong when that demon manifested.
- ✓ Think About It: If the madman of Gadara was strong 24/7, how did they get him in chains? (They *couldn't* have!) It was when he wasn't strong, that they were able to chain him. But when that demon manifested, his strength returned, and he tore the chains off.

Luke 8:29 – "For many times it seized him (manifested), and he was kept bound with chains and fetters; but when it caught him (manifested) ... he broke the bands ..."

d.) There are degrees of demonic oppression / possession.

- ✓ A person can be "more" or "less" yielded to a demon, depending on the day. (That's true of you and the Holy Ghost, isn't it? You can be "more" or "less" yielded to God, can't you? The same is true of demons. People can look fine, until the demon manifests.)
- ✓ You see this sometimes in the music industry. AC/DC – "By the time we're halfway through the first number someone else is steering me. I'm just along for the ride. I become possessed when I get on stage."