

Go Tell What Great Things God Has Done

by Brian Brodersen

Brian Brodersen's sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in God's promises amidst life's storms and challenges.

Duration: 59:30

Topics: "Faith Sharing", "Divine Healing"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by asking for prayers for a family whose father is in the hospital with terminal cancer. The speaker then turns to the passage in Mark 4:35 where Jesus is teaching in parables by the Sea of Galilee. Jesus gets into a boat to address the large crowd gathered around him. After teaching for several hours, Jesus goes back into the house and instructs his disciples about the parables. Later that evening, Jesus tells his disciples to cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The speaker emphasizes the importance of sharing the great things that the Lord has done for us, just as Jesus commanded the man who was healed to go and tell his friends.

Transcript

Alright, let's open our Bibles tonight to Mark chapter 4. We are picking up this evening in verse 35 of Mark chapter 4. And we just ask you to be in prayer for the Chaddock family. Tim Chaddock is one of our interns on staff and he plays with the other praise band on Monday night, Smithfield. And he's up in Northern California right now with his family.

And his father's in the hospital with terminal cancer. And they've gone ahead and taken him off of life support. So it's probably just a matter of hours.

And just remember them in prayer. His dad Mike is, of course, a Christian. And he's actually served the Lord for many years as a pastor of Calvary Chapel up in Napa.

But his time is approaching to enter into his glorious reward. And so if you could just keep the whole family in prayer during this time, that would be greatly appreciated. So Mark 4, 35.

Jesus has been teaching in parables. And this was all happening right there on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. And he was actually in a boat.

There were so many people that were gathered around. He had to sit down in one of the boats and just sort of be pushed out a bit from the shore. And it was from there that he was instructing the people.

Now, that occurred for quite a few hours on this particular day. And then at a given point, Jesus went back into the house where he was residing. And he taught the disciples more specifically about the parables.

He gave them an understanding of them. But as we come to verse 35 of chapter 4, we are still dealing with events that occurred on that particular day. And so it says, on the same day, when evening had come, he said to them, let us cross over to the other side.

So they're going to cross over now the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is about 13 miles long. And at its widest point, it's about eight miles wide.

But at the particular area where they would have crossed, it probably would be more about a five mile crossing. But it's evening time. And so they would have just set out on their journey.

And probably the sun would have been going down right about that time. But the Lord said to them, let's go over to the other side. Now, when they had left the multitude, they took him along in the boat as he was.

And other little boats were also with him. And a great windstorm arose. And the waves beat into the boat so that it was already filling.

But he was in the stern asleep on a pillow. And they awoke him and said to him, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? Then he arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, peace, be still. And the wind ceased.

And there was a great calm. But he said to them, why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith? And they feared exceedingly and said to one another, who can this be that even the wind and the sea obey him? What a fascinating story. And you can understand the response of these men at this point.

Nothing like it ever in the history of the world. Here a man stands up and speaks to the elements. He speaks to the wind.

He speaks to the sea. And he commands a calming. And they're calmed immediately.

And so they're terrified. They're wondering who could this be? Well, of course, we know who it was. They were just beginning to understand at this point.

It was just slowly being revealed to them. But we know, of course, this was the son of God or God in human flesh. And so he was able to speak just as he spoke the universe into existence.

He was able to speak to the wind and the sea and calm them. But as we go back over this story, there are a couple of things that I want you to notice. First of all, I want you to notice that Jesus was the one who initiated the journey to the other side.

He said, let us cross over to the other side. So it was his idea. It was his plan.

But it wasn't all that long into the journey that suddenly they were met by this great windstorm. This fierce storm came upon the sea. Now, it's interesting that.

Although the Sea of Galilee is more, you know, literally a lake. Yet it's amazing how that particular body of water has the capacity to become like something you would expect out of a raging ocean. When these

winds come blowing through these narrow canyons, they can whip up the sea.

And the height of the surf on this lake really can be elevated sometimes to about 10 feet. Amazingly, we were in Israel some years ago and a storm hit at that time in the area of Galilee. And they had 10 to 12 foot waves breaking on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Wiped out some hotels and some of the resort area was just completely devastated by the storm. But that's the type of storm that came down upon them as they were ready to make their journey across. Now, remember, these guys, this was their life.

This was their livelihood. They grew up on this lake. They traveled it regularly.

They fished on it daily, but they're petrified at this point. This was indeed an intense storm and the boat was in danger of being sunk. Now, Jesus initiated the journey, but they're about to go under, it seems, on the way across.

And, you know, there's a parallel here. For many times when the Lord will send us out on a journey of some sort, it's not long into the journey before we meet fierce opposition. Sometimes we're tempted to think because of the opposition that maybe the Lord isn't in the journey.

But as we see here from this story, he was. We cannot make our final determination on things based upon our circumstances. We have to really seek to get the mind of the Lord and then know that regardless of the circumstances, God is with us and he's going to see us through it.

And that's what happened here. He said, let's go across. But suddenly they were in the midst of the storm and they were filled with fear.

They thought they were going to die. And so they wanted Jesus to assure them. But notice where he was.

He was sleeping. He was completely at rest. He had total confidence, but they were in a panic.

So they wake him up and they say, teacher, don't you care that we are perishing? And there he brings that peace. But he said to them, why are you so fearful? And then he said, how is it that you have no faith? You see, Jesus said. Let's cross over.

He didn't say, let's go under. He wasn't leading them out into the sea in order for them to perish. He was taking them across.

And now he's gently rebuking them because of their lack of faith. You see, they should have trusted in his word. He said, let's go over to the other side.

They shouldn't have been afraid. They should have realized that he commanding them to go to the other side was perfectly capable of getting them to the other side. You see, when the Lord gives us instruction, we can be certain that even though difficulties might come upon us, even though we might encounter various forms of opposition, that if the Lord has commanded it, if the Lord has spoken, if the Lord has directed us, we can be sure that he's going to get us to where he wants us to be.

And we don't have to be afraid. We can have confidence, even if it looks like the boat is going to sink. That's what it looked like here for sure.

But faith would have said no. Jesus said, let's go over to the other side. He's going to get us there.

And so likewise, as we venture out into different things, as he calls us, as he speaks to us. And then we find that the circumstances aren't exactly what we were anticipating. And then we start to be filled with fear.

We need to remember that word from the Lord. We need to remember what he's called us to do. And by faith, we hold on to those promises.

We just say, okay, Lord, I know what you told me. I remember those scriptures you gave me. And I stepped out, Lord, believing you.

And I'm going to believe you right on through this storm, even though it looks like we might be going under. As I was reading over this passage today, I was finding some great just application for my own life. Because I've had experiences where the Lord has called me to do things.

And when the initial call comes, there's all the excitement of what the Lord's going to do. And then you embark on the journey. And you're partway, you think, to the goal.

And suddenly you find that the ship is sinking. You're going down. Wait a minute.

This isn't what I thought was going to happen. And you start to become fearful. You start to wonder what you're doing.

And, you know, all of these kinds of things happen. But then you have to go back to that initial call and remember that the Lord is going to get you through. And that's what was being spoken to me today in my own particular situation that I find myself wrestling with at times.

The Lord saying, look, I said, let's go to the other side. Let's go over, not under. And so we rest in that.

Now, as they go over to the other side, they arrive at the place of the Gadarenes. Another one of the Gospels records that they arrived at the place of the Gergarenes. And some people have tried to say that there's, you know, a dispute.

And then there's another gospel records, the Gerasenes. But actually, all of those cities were located right in the same area. So each gospel writer just happened to pick a particular city.

Mark picked actually the Gerasenes is a better translation of what Mark picked. And that's probably because Mark was writing to a predominantly non-Jewish audience. And Gerasenes was that Gentile city on the other side that they would have been familiar with.

And so they go over to the other side of the Galilee to the area of Gadara and Gesera. And when he had come out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit. So the moment they arrive on the shore, and it's probably well into the night at this time, it's perhaps dark, very dark maybe.

And there just so happens to be a demon-possessed man awaiting them there. His dwelling was 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 anyone tame him. And so here is a very tragic picture of a man who is being tormented by demons. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

You could imagine the disciples, you know, they're new at all of this stuff. I mean, all that's going on. They've just seen Jesus stand up and calm the sea.

And now, you know, immediately as they arrive on the other side, they're met by this vicious man who's living in and among the tombs. And he's so strong through this demonic control upon his life, they can't even bind him. He just bursts the chains asunder whenever they've tried to bind him.

And you could be sure that that would have been a frightening sight to see. And so when he saw Jesus from afar, this demon-possessed man, he ran and he worshipped him. And he cried out with a loud voice, and he said, What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore you that you do not torment me.

For Jesus had said to him, Come out of the man, unclean spirit. Then Jesus asked him, What is your name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion, for we are many. So here's this man, he says, under the control of the spirit, my name is Legion.

A Roman legion consisted of 6,000 soldiers. And so whether there were 6,000 demons that were possessing this man, or if that was just a way of expressing that he was possessed by many spirits, whatever the case, he was in a horrible situation. He was in a helpless situation.

He was in a place that was beyond any human ability to deal with. And so he was just consigned to this life of misery and torment and suffering there, living among the tombs. Can you imagine that kind of a thing? But yet, you know, there are people today in similar states.

There are people today who we might see occasionally. Maybe you see them on the street sometimes. Maybe they're in hospitals in some cases, but they're beyond the help of man.

There's nothing that anybody could do for him at this point. In some cases, their minds have been blown through drugs and different things. And in other cases, there's probably a lot more demon possession than we realize happening with people today.

But there are people around us still today that are beyond the help of man. Nothing can be done for them, humanly speaking. But here's the thing we've always got to remember.

That doesn't mean that they are hopeless. It doesn't mean that they are entirely beyond help because the Lord can help them. The Lord can deal with problems that no man can deal with.

Medically, there comes a time when doctors, as educated as they are these days, and as advanced as our technology is in that realm, there comes a point where the medical community can do nothing for a person. But at that point, it's still not a hopeless cause because the Lord can intervene. And there's nothing that's hard for the Lord.

And when you see a person who's deranged mentally through whatever sort of illness or whatever they've done to themselves that have caused these kinds of things or even through a situation where one might be demon possessed, what we need to know is there's hope. And that can be dealt with. And we can pray

for people like that.

And we can ask the Lord to help them and to work in their lives. Now, an interesting thing that I want to point out to you is when they were crossing over the sea and this great windstorm came up, when Jesus was awakened and dealt with the situation, it says something interesting in verse 39 that is tied into the whole story here. It says, Then he arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea.

The word rebuked is the exact same word that was used earlier in Mark when Jesus cast a demon out of another person. And what could possibly be being hinted at here is that this whole storm on the sea was something that was the result of satanic activity. You see, Satan has power.

The Bible refers to Satan as the God of this world. And what the Bible means when it refers to him as the God of this world is that he is the one who is presently controlling the world. He has dominion over the world.

And in that position of authority that he wields, he exercises power. And sometimes his power is demonstrated in natural disaster and catastrophic events and things like that. You know, we just heard this past week about all of this devastation in parts of our country through these winds, these tornadoes and things that have come through.

And, you know, what is the explanation for that? Well, the insurance companies will tell those people whose houses were blown away, Sorry, we don't cover acts of God. You're out of luck. It's interesting that they refer to these things as acts of God.

I don't know that that's really the best way to see it. I think a better way to see it would be acts of the devil. Because Satan, his whole job description really is to just destroy.

That is actually one of his names in Scripture, Apollyon, which means the destroyer. And he comes with destructive power and he makes life miserable for people through natural disaster and catastrophic events and oppressing people and possessing people. And then quite often people look on and blame it on God.

And that, of course, is part of the devil's strategy as well, to put the whole blame on God. It's God's fault. But it's interesting that this windstorm, this fierce windstorm, came upon them as they were crossing over to meet this man.

And it could very well be that Satan was seeking to avoid the loss of one of his captives. Knowing that Jesus is in this boat, knowing that there's going to be an encounter with this man that he's been binding and oppressing and controlling and tormenting. And he doesn't want to lose that death grip on him, so he's trying to sink the boat before they can get across.

But Jesus rebukes the wind, perhaps because of the satanic element in it. And now he comes face to face with this poor pitiful person. And so he begged, this man begged earnestly, that he would not send them out of the country.

Now, there's an interesting thing going here, because as you read it, first of all, the man is speaking, and he's speaking as himself, in a sense. What have I to do with you, Jesus? And so forth. It seems like there's sort of a back and forth thing going, where in one sense it's like the man himself is speaking, and then in another sense the demon is being the one who's expressing there, and there was just this radical control.

And these spirits, they were imploring Jesus not to send them out of the region, not to send them out of the country. Why it was that they were doing that? Well, we know that they were afraid of judgment themselves. They were actually requesting not to be sent into that final incarceration that they're headed toward.

That's what they were pleading for at the time. Now, a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. So all the demons begged him, saying, send us to the swine that we may enter them.

And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine. There were about 2,000, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and they drowned in the sea.

And so those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country, and they went out to see what it was that had happened. So a really bizarre story, you know. Here this man comes out, and then these demons start begging not to be sent off into torment, and they are then sent into this herd of swine.

The man is liberated. The swine are then taken control by the demons, and they run violently into the sea, and they are all drowned in the sea. Now, they went and told those in the city what had happened, and then they came to Jesus.

And now listen to this. They came to Jesus and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, so they would have known this person. They would have been familiar with him.

They probably all would have been very terrified of him. But they saw him sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And it says, and they were afraid.

Now, why would they have been afraid? It seems like they would have been thrilled. It seems like they would have been full of joy for this person who had been in such a horrible condition, and now he's sitting and clothed and in his right mind. But no, it says they were afraid.

And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed and about the swine. And now listen to this. Then they began to plead with him to depart from their region.

What kind of response is that? It just seems like the opposite response of what should have come. You would think that they would have seen this man who was in that condition, and now he's in his right mind, and they would have said, Oh, this is glorious. This is wonderful.

Oh, Jesus, come back with us to our city. But instead, they implored him to leave, to go away. It's amazing.

But you know, it is true that oftentimes people don't want to be unsettled in their sin. They want to stay in it. It's amazing to think that that's the case with people, but it really is.

And in many cases, that becomes the only plausible explanation for why people aren't delivered from their sin, for why people aren't saved. You know people. I know people who are tormented, who are miserable, whose lives are a wreck, who spend their life doing nothing but moaning and groaning and griping and complaining and making life miserable for everybody else.

And you tell them about Christ, and you tell them about what he can do for them and how he loves them and wants to save them. And they, I don't want to hear that. I don't want to have anything to do with that.

And it's amazing that people will choose a life of misery over a life of liberty and freedom. But it's because men love darkness rather than light, the scripture tells us. See, a lot of times we think of people in sin as sort of victims.

All these poor people, you know, they're just caught up in this sin and they don't have any control over it. Not so. They have control.

They choose to remain in that place. We live in an age of irresponsibility. People don't want to take responsibility for their actions.

Everybody's a victim. If you're a miserable wretch, it's because somebody else did it to you. And, you know, it's somebody else's fault.

People are very reluctant, even to this very day, to open up the door and let Jesus come in because they love what they're doing, even though they might say, I hate it, even though they say, oh, I want to be freed from this. Yet when you give them the remedy, they don't really want it. It's a strange thing, but it is part of the human condition, the sinful state.

And so they began to plead with him to depart from their region. And when he got into the boat, he had been demon possessed, begged him that he might be with him. Notice something before we move on.

Notice the transformation, the instantaneous transformation of this man. How many years he had spent in that condition, God only knows. It was probably a very long time.

But in an instant, he's clothed, he's sitting, he's in his right mind. And now he's saying, Jesus, I want to go with you. That is a demonstration of the power of the gospel, the power of God.

God can take a person from the most hopeless situation and in an instant transform them. And we've seen it happen hundreds and thousands of times over. And there aren't any cases that God is not able to work in.

It really comes down to a willingness on the part of people. Are we willing to let the Lord work in our lives? Now, this man comes and he begs that he might be with him. But Jesus, notice this, Jesus did not permit him.

That seems strange. Here's a guy who says, Lord, I want to go with you. I want to join the team.

I want to be part of this group of people that's just with you all the time. He was just volunteering himself for apostolic service. But Jesus, he said, no, he said, instead, go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you and how he's had compassion on you.

I think that's interesting. You know, sometimes we think of serving God in only one sort of a way. You know, we think I want to serve the Lord.

So I'm going to go sign up for Bible college and get my education in the Bible. And then I'm going to go down and fill out an application at the church to be a pastor. Or I'm going to get some training and I'm going to go off to the mission field.

I'm not putting that down at all. Going into the ministry or going up to the mission field. Those are great things.

But the big question is, what is the call of God? And for some people, for a lot of people, the call of God is go home to your friends and tell them what the Lord has done for you. And sometimes, actually, that's where everything starts. A lot of times people come and say, I want to be a missionary.

I want to be a pastor. I want to teach the Bible. And you say, well, what have you done thus far with your relationship with the Lord? Well, not much.

You know, haven't really done anything. They might have been Christians for some time, but they haven't really impacted their immediate sphere of life. And the Lord wants to use us in our immediate circle first.

That's where things start. It might eventually develop beyond that into other areas. But this is the place where it all starts.

And sometimes this is the place where God has people spend a lifetime with friends and with colleagues on the job and with neighbors in the community. And they're there just telling people about the great things the Lord has done for them. And how he's had compassion on them.

And God uses those people powerfully. I thank God every time I meet somebody and they tell me, you know, in the course of conversation about how they were maybe talking to their next door neighbor or they were sharing with somebody they work with or something like that. I get so excited for them and I get excited for the work of God.

And I'm thankful that I can be part of that by helping people to understand the word better so they can be more effective in their communication of it. But it's a glorious thing to tell others about Jesus. And that's what this man was commanded to do.

Go home and tell your friends what great things the Lord has done for you and how he has had compassion on you. You know, there's something hidden in here that's interesting to me. Tell them what great things the Lord has done for you.

Now, Jesus, of course, is making reference to himself. He's the one who did it right. This word Lord would have been understood in a Jewish context as the name of the God of Israel.

And that, of course, is legit because that's exactly who Jesus is. But what he's wanting him to go back and communicate is that I've I've been touched by God. God has met me.

God has done this. God has restored me. And just like he did for this hopeless man, as I mentioned a while ago, he's still doing that today and wants to keep on doing that.

And what a powerful testimony when somebody who others had sort of written off and just, you know, there wasn't any hope. And and we've tried everything with this person. And, you know, the psychiatrist said that they were beyond help.

And and yet Jesus comes along. And they're delivered. They're restored.

They're brought into a place of sanity. Notice this, too. The demon possession actually caused insanity in this person.

Insanity is an interesting thing. I think most of the human race has it to some degree or another. At least the more people I meet, the more I realize it's not all that uncommon, really.

Everybody's got a bit of it. But, you know, true insanity is a very tragic thing. Somebody who's really, truly lost their mind.

They are beyond the ability to reason. They can't think properly about anything. Demon possession can be a cause of insanity.

It's not always. Insanity can be caused by illness and different brain malfunctions and things like that. But I think it is important to note that that demon possession causes insanity as well.

It can. And I think it's important to note that because I do believe that there are a lot of people that have been labeled insane who really are demon possessed. That's the problem.

And if the demons were cast out, the insanity would disappear as it did in this case here. Boy, when you go into mental hospitals and places like that, you see all kinds of really bizarre things, as you can imagine that you would. But one of the things that always strikes me as very intriguing is so often the preoccupation that people have with spiritual things.

And not just spiritual things, but particularly with Jesus. With the God of the Bible and with sin and those kinds of things. You know, I've yet to go into a mental hospital and find somebody with radical mental hangups about Buddha.

Or, you know, any other religious leader for that matter. It's Jesus and all, you know. And that to me shows the activity of the devil.

And the reason I'm bringing this up again is because, you know, people in this state, we generally do, in our society anyway, tend to just dismiss them as a hopeless cause. But the Lord is able. I have a good friend who had a series of mental breakdowns for years and years, just repeatedly, one right after another.

You know, to the point where he barely would begin to recover and then he would break down again. He was, by his own admission, a rank sinner. He was involved in all kinds of vile and wicked things.

And one day, I mean, almost like the story we're reading here, he had an encounter with Jesus Christ. And the Lord met him powerfully and convicted him of his sinful life. Not even dealing with the insanity issue, but just his sinful life.

Even in that whole, you know, gloom and darkness that he was in of his mental confusion, he still knew of his sin. He was aware of it. And he became greatly burdened by it.

And he confessed and he asked Jesus to come into his life. And he did. And the very next day, for the first time in his whole life, he walked into a Christian bookstore.

And he happened to run into two of my friends. And they happened to be there telling the folks in the store about a new church that we were planting. And they told this guy about the new church.

And he came the next week. And that was seven years ago. And he's been there ever since.

And he's never had another breakdown. And God has done such a marvelous work in his life. And he's one of those guys that every time I see him, I just get so thrilled because I know his past.

I know the hopeless condition he was in. And when I see him and I see that smile on his face and I listen to him and he just tells me how much he loves the Lord and how thankful he is for what God did for him and how he's just about the business of telling as many people as he can. It's just a thrilling thing.

But you know, had he never had that encounter with the Lord, I'm sure he would have spent the rest of his life in a mental institution. Such is the power of our God. And he's doing it today.

He's doing it still. Don't give up hope on people. Don't write people off.

Don't look at somebody and say, oh, they're beyond help. We can't do anything for them. But know that through prayer and through the power of the word of God, and sometimes through the help of medical technology, God uses medication and things to keep people stabilized and things like that.

Those are those aren't bad things. Sometimes I think the impression is given by some Christian leaders that that's sinful to take any sort of medication to help you with depression or something like that. Not necessarily.

It all depends on what the cause of it is. Now, it is possible to be depressed because you don't trust God and taking medication isn't going to help that. You need to trust the Lord.

But it's also possible to have a depression that's rooted in some sort of biological disorder. And a medication at that point can be very helpful to bring some stability and some some balance to a person so they can start thinking straight and, you know, receiving what the scriptures say and so on. And so we thank God for those things.

But we recognize that apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, those things are not enough. They're not adequate. Now, there's one other thing that we want to address real quickly here.

And that's the concerns of the people for the ethical treatment of animals. You know, the group PETA. Well, they would be incensed over this account here because these poor pigs, I guarantee with that group, they would be mad that the guy got off the hook and the pigs got the short end of the stick.

They would, I'm sure, much rather have the guy still in torment than the poor pigs drown in the sea. But people have said, how could Jesus do such a thing? Well, you know, sometimes depending on the mood I'm in, I might try to give a nice answer to that. And other times I might say, you know what? Jesus created those pigs.

He could do anything he wanted with them. That's the reality. He's God.

He wants to send pigs to their death off of a cliff. Who's going to challenge him? But, you know, you have to realize the context of this story. Pigs were against the law in Israel.

They were deemed unclean by God way, way back when the nation was established. God gave the law to Moses. And he gave a listing of clean and unclean animals.

And pigs were right on the top of the list of the unclean animals. So the very fact that they were raising swine was a violation of the Mosaic covenant. And so the Lord is basically just evicting these unclean

animals off of his property, the land of Israel.

And he's also bringing an end to the prosperity that was coming to the people through illegal practices. You see, that's part of the reason why they were upset with Jesus is they lost some dough. Those pigs were valuable.

But you see, it was not a legitimate business in that land. It was against the law. And so Jesus is just exercising his divine right and authority as judge.

Now, people don't want to hear that today. I don't know that they ever have really. But, you know, you start talking about Jesus judging and Jesus having authority and that.

And people just get so uptight. But you know what? You can get as uptight as you want. But one day you're going to find out the truth of the matter.

Because you're going to stand right before him. And he's going to judge. And if you have persisted in your rebellion against him, then just like these pigs, you're going to go right off a sheer cliff into eternal damnation.

That is not politically correct language at this time. But it's biblically correct language. It's true.

It's a reality. And we can't soften that. It's something that we need to be communicating more and more these days, I believe.

Because it is going to happen. The Lord is the judge. And just as he judged these pigs and the owners and everything else, he's going to come and all of the illegalities and all of the criminal activity and all the sin in the world that's just going on ceaselessly.

Without people ever giving it a second thought. Oh, this is just what we do. This is business.

This is the way we operate. One day the Lord is going to clean house. And this is just a reminder, among other things, of the fact that that is going to happen.

And so it says in verse 20, and he departed and began to proclaim and to clap Decapolis. All that Jesus had done for him and all marveled. So he did what the Lord told him to do.

He went back to his family. He went back to his friends. He went to the area of Decapolis.

Now, on that side of the lake they had gone over to that was known part of that region was known as the Decapolis, meaning 10 cities. There were 10 cities there that were very, very populated. And they were very idolatrous cities.

If you go to Israel today, you can actually go now over to that area. And they've uncovered the ruins of many of the cities of the Decapolis. And it's amazing to walk through these things and to, you know, see the remains of these cities that were once there at the time of Jesus.

But the striking thing is to note the they were Roman cities and they were idolatrous cities. But this man went back into that world and he told the people. The great things that Jesus had done for him and they all marveled.

You know, I do think today that people still will marvel when they hear the truth about what the Lord has done. And one of the things that I think we need to realize today is that people, I don't really think people are so much turned off by Jesus. I think people are turned off by their, you know, sort of their perception of Jesus, which has been given to them by some organized religious system.

You know, people have grown up in various denominations and so forth. And so they think of Jesus and they think of that particular denomination that they might have grown up in. And to them, that was there was nothing to it.

There was nothing there. It wasn't it wasn't anything that held their interest or. And so they just immediately make that association.

But it's our job to show them that there is no association necessarily. Jesus is completely separate from that. And I think the more we're able to do that to get people to see that it's Jesus himself as revealed in the pages of Scripture, not the Jesus interpreted by this particular group over here that you need to really get to know.

And when we start telling people about what he did for us, Jesus. Not a church, not even Calvary Chapel, but what Jesus did for us. I think that there are a lot of people that will still marvel.

And be very interested. You see, the church itself doesn't have a real good track record historically, unfortunately. And if you want to start, you know, sort of.

Putting up the banner of the church. You're going to turn a lot of people off real quickly. Because the church has not been a good witness.

That's a sad, sad thing to say, but it's a true. Thing to say the church hasn't been a good witness. There have been times when people who were part of the church, they gained power in a society and they oppressed people and things like that.

And there's so much of that in history. People are turned off. And you hear a lot of times, don't you? You hear people say, I'm not interested in organized religion.

I'm not sure exactly what they mean if they're into disorganized religion or. No, I know what they mean. But you know what? I'm not into organized religion either.

I'm not into religion, period. Religion isn't what Jesus brought into the world. There was tons of religion in the world when Jesus came.

As a matter of fact, the predominant religion of the day put him to death. You see, Jesus didn't come to bring religion. He came to bring people to God.

He came to connect men and women individually with God. And that's when radical transformations take place. That's when lives are altered.

And that's when people marvel. So let's be careful. Let's be on our guard not to raise the banner of this church or that church.

But let's. Let's get Jesus out in front of people. Let's let people see who Jesus is and what he's done in our lives.

Let's tell them the story of what we were and what we've become because of him. And let them marvel at that and see if the Lord won't use that. I think he will use that.

You know, we really do. I think presently even. We have to be careful.

Because we. There's such a fine line. Where, you know, we sort of drift over into politics and patriotism and things of that nature.

And we sort of, you know, we just bunch it all together. And we tend to take, you know, a particular party. And we identify them as this is the Christian party.

And so everything that party does, we're in agreement with it. And we have to really watch ourselves when it comes to that sort of stuff. It's a very fine line that so often gets blurred.

Sometimes I listen to talk radio. And it's a tormenting thing to do. I don't know why I do it.

But, you know, I find myself at times when I'm listening to it. I find myself getting so mad. I just want to reach in and rip the radio out of the dashboard.

You know, I'm just. I want to strangle some of these people and their ideas. And, you know, I want to help the guys argue against them.

And, okay, we've got to come up with a better argument against that. And we've got to beat that. And, you know, and then I'll catch myself and think, what am I doing? And I see really the futility of all of that.

The futility of that approach to things. Because, you know, you can argue with people politically till you are blue in the face. And it doesn't matter if your political arguments are superior to theirs.

They still don't change their mind. But, you know, we have to get above and beyond that. I'm not saying there's no place for political debate.

You can do that. But we, as Christians, we have to remember, ultimately, at the end of the day, it's not about politics. It's not about government.

It's not about winning a political debate. It's not about whose particular worldview is better than the others. It's about the salvation of souls and people going to heaven.

You know, every kingdom that's ever existed on this earth has tried to usher in a reign of righteousness in some way or another. And every single one of them have failed miserably. Now, some, it was obvious they were destined to fail before they ever got started.

Because their whole philosophy was out to lunch. But, you know, there were others that had a good philosophy. But they still failed miserably.

And politics and government will always fail because of sin. And there's only one man who's fit to reign. And that's the man Christ Jesus.

And there's only one kingdom that'll last forever. And that's his kingdom. And that's the kingdom that we've got to be taken up with.

That's the one that we need to be primarily concerned with. And going back to my frustration with talk radio, as sometimes I'm in, you know, seething over this stuff, the Lord will check me and I'll stop and think, you know, I could never change that guy's political views, but that doesn't mean that they couldn't be saved. It doesn't mean that the Spirit of God couldn't break their hearts and they could realize they're sinners and they could come to know Christ.

And instead of alienating them or polarizing the situation because of the political debate, I've got to rise above it and remember, they're a soul that needs to be saved. Just like anybody else. But you see, my whole point is, again, it's about Jesus.

It's not about government politics. It's not about denominations. It's not about your church or the church doing that.

It's about the man, Christ Jesus, the God-man. It's about the one who touches lives and transforms them and who alone has the power, when all other means have failed, to still take a man bound in demonic insanity and in an instant release him and send him back home and say, go tell people what God has done for you. Let's remember that.

And as God gives us opportunity, let's seek to do the same thing this fellow did. Going home and telling our friends, those around us, those we work with, those that live in the area, telling them the great things the Lord has done and watching them marvel and seeing them come along in time. Lord, we thank you that you're the same today as you were back when this event occurred.

And Lord, you're still saving people from destruction. You're still delivering people from the power of the devil. You're still transforming lives so radically that the change is sometimes unbelievable.

Lord, how we thank you that you've done that for us. And Lord, we pray you'd do it often. We pray that you would use us in that process like this man, that we would be able, Lord, to tell others the great things that you, Jesus, have done for us and that they would marvel and that they too would come.

And Lord, even tonight, maybe there's someone here who's bound up and in chains to sin and it's taken its toll on their life, it's taken its toll on their mind. But Lord, you're here tonight and you're able to touch and deliver, restore. And so we pray that you would do that, Lord.

We pray that you would touch lives now. And as we just wait upon you here this evening for a few minutes, Lord, move by your spirit. Minister among us.

Lord, just as you crossed the sea to meet this man and to touch and heal him, you're here tonight, Lord, to touch and heal and minister. And so do that now, we pray. Amen.

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