

Mark 5

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon highlights the power of Jesus over creation and demons, and the importance of true faith in receiving the Lord's answer to our needs.

Scripture: Mark 5:1

Topics: "Faith", "Divine Power"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the Lord's power over creation and demons as demonstrated in Mark 5, where Jesus calms the storm and casts out a legion of demons. He reflects on the world's rejection of Jesus, illustrating that the quiet influence of Satan is more destructive than his overt power, leading to the tragic reality that humanity often prefers the familiar presence of evil over the discomfort of divine presence. The sermon highlights the importance of personal faith, as seen in the woman who touches Jesus' garment and is healed, contrasting her sincere faith with the crowd's superficial interest. Darby concludes by affirming that while Israel appears spiritually dead, Jesus has the power to resurrect and restore, emphasizing the necessity of true faith in experiencing God's grace and healing.

Transcript

If calming the winds and the sea shews the Lord's power over creation, that which follows shews it over demons; He casts out a Legion by His word. But now we find the effect of the manifestation of His power upon the world, even where it worked for the deliverance of men. They beseech Jesus to depart, and He goes away. Poor world! the quiet influence of Satan upon the heart is more disastrous than His outward and visible power; this is sad enough, but the power of the Lord is quite sufficient to drive it away: whereas, on the other hand, the quiet influence of Satan in the heart drives away Jesus Himself. And remark that, when the presence of God is felt, it is more terrible than that of Satan; man would wish to free himself from the latter, but cannot; but the presence of God is insupportable when it makes itself felt: and indeed man has driven God (in the person of Christ) out of this world. Jesus gave Himself for us, it is true; but, as regards man's responsibility, he has driven out the Lord. I do not doubt that all this scene is the representation of the end of the Lord's history; and that the swine present to us the end of the Jews, who were hurried into perdition as possessed of the devil at the end of their history. The world did not wish to have Jesus; the Jews are cast down into hopeless ruin.

The man who is cured is quiet; he wishes to be with Jesus who is going away, but this is not allowed him. He must go and announce to others what God has done for him. Here is the position of the disciples and

of all Christians after the Lord's departure from this world. They desire to go and be with Him, but are sent again into the world to declare the blessed work that the Lord has done in their own persons; they can by their own experience say what is the grace and the power of Jesus. But how deplorable is the state of the world and of man! The presence of the devil is more tolerable for him than that of God. He would wish to check the violent manifestations of the power of Satan, but cannot - the bands are burst asunder, and the man is as bad as ever. God is not a tyrant like Satan; He is good, full of grace, and frees men in Christ from Satan's power; but, this being the proof of the presence and power of God, man shews that His presence is insupportable to him, even when God manifests Himself as the deliverer from all the evils which sin and Satan's power have introduced.

254 The history which follows reveals the true relationships between Jesus and Israel. Jesus came to heal Israel; but Israel was in fact dead, speaking spiritually; when Jesus arrived, it was necessary to raise him, if it were God's will that he should live; the Lord could do it, and will do it for this nation in the last days. But then being in the way with the people, the crowd of Israel surrounded Him; and, if individual faith touched Him, the person was healed, and this is what happened to the poor afflicted woman.

Let us notice some of the details of the story: - the Lord distinguishes between true faith and the eagerness of the crowd which was attracted by His miracles and by the benefits it had received. Sincerity was not wanting in the crowd, the people saw the miracles and enjoyed their effects, but they had not faith in the person of Jesus. But there was good in the woman, by grace, that which is always found in faith, a felt need and the perception of the excellence of His person, and of the divine power that was in Jesus, accompanied with true humility with regard to herself. The poor woman is sure that, if she touch only the hem of His garment, she shall be healed; and in fact it is this that takes place. As soon as the woman is healed, Jesus perceives that the power which is in Him, and which has gone out from Him to the woman, has worked with efficacy. And it is always thus: many can hear the gospel and delight to listen to it, but faith is another thing; and faith always receives the Lord's answer to the need which it presents to Him. He may make one wait, if He finds it good to exercise the faith, but He always answers in love: the woman is perfectly healed. Faith makes the believer humble about his wretchedness; the woman wished to remain hidden, but the Lord encourages the believer, saying in this instance, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." However timid and fearful the soul may be in the Lord's presence in spiritual things, and however much it may feel its wretchedness, when the call is true, it opens out and confesses His grace, not the misery which had rendered this grace needful. It is then that the Lord encourages and speaks peace to the heart. Personal faith is here plainly distinguished from the eagerness of the crowd which followed Him, whether for curiosity, or for the benefits which Jesus conferred upon it. But the power of resurrection was found in Him and through Him. Israel, though dead, was only sleeping: the Lord's voice will call him into life in His time.

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