

done for you. Let them see Jesus in your actions and attitudes. Tell them how you repented and trusted Christ, and urge them to do the same.

3. Tell Your Friends of the Lord's Compassion on You

a. The Lord had had compassion on him.

- 1) Jesus had mercy on Gady. With empathy, He reached out and helped him. He delivered him from his miserable bondage. That is compassion!
- 2) Our friends need to hear that Jesus can do this for them as well. Many people long for peace, but do not know where to find it. Others wish for forgiveness, but do not realise that God alone can forgive them. (Matthew 11:28) **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."**

b. He obediently published what Jesus had done.

- 1) Gady obeyed the Lord (v.20). Jesus told him to tell what the **Lord** had done for him. He departed from the boat and began to publish in Decapolis (the entire province) what **Jesus** had done for him. **Lord** and **Jesus** are used interchangeably because they are both God.
- 2) All who heard his testimony marvelled. I wonder how many will be in heaven because of Gady's testimony?

Conclusion: God recorded this event in the Bible for each of us. You may be like the wild man we called "Gady". Oh, you may not be wild, dangerous and controlled by demons, but you know you are a sinner in need of God's forgiveness. You may lack peace and joy. You may be miserable down inside. If you will humbly come to Jesus, repent of your sin, and trust Him to save your soul from eternal judgment, He will transform your life. Do not be afraid. Trust Jesus today.

On the other hand, you may have already received Jesus as your Saviour. If so, like Gady, you must go home to your friends, tell them how great things the Lord has done for you and that He has had compassion on you. You have nothing for which to be ashamed, and they have everything to gain. Family members and friends will not curse you on Judgement Day for telling them about Jesus, but they may curse you if you do **NOT** tell them. Let your light shine!

Song: Let Jesus Come Into Your Heart – 244, Go Tell the Untold Millions - 421

Go Home to Your Friends

12 March 2023 AM – Mark 5:1-20 – Friend Day – Scott Childs

Introduction: Read Mark 5:1-20. [Use Map] The main character of this story was a demon-possessed man who lived near Gadara on the southeast corner of the Sea of Galilee. Mostly Gentiles lived in the Gadara region. **For the sake of ease**, I am going to call the man **Gady**, since he lived near Gadara.

Sometime in Gady's past, demons took possession of his body. Perhaps his family had dabbled in witchcraft, we do not know. Sadly, the demons had completely changed his life. Because of his violence, he was no longer welcome at home. He now lived in the tombs. Evidently, he had harmed many people and men often tried to bind him with chains on his hands and fetters on his feet, but the mighty demons broke them in pieces. He was an untameable wild man.

Always, both day and night, he ran through the mountains and in the tombs crying out and cutting himself with stones. His naked body, ragged hair and scarred limbs were a hideous sight. He terrified the local people.

Jesus, knowing all things, chose to visit that area. When Gady ran toward Jesus and his disciples, I wonder what the disciples thought? However, the demons in Gady knew Jesus and fearfully worshipped Him. **Read v.7.** They knew Jesus was God and begged him not to torture them. Matthew 8:29 adds the phrase **"before the time."** They knew that God would one day send them to eternal torment.

Jesus commanded that the demons come out of the man, but then He asked him his name. He said **Legion, for we are many** (v.9). The demons were fully submitted to Jesus and begged not to be sent out of the country, but instead to be sent into a herd of pigs. When Jesus gave them permission, they entered the pigs and the 2,000 pigs ran down the steep hill into the sea and drowned. Jesus was not just a good prophet. He was God and had complete authority over the mighty demons.

The pig herders fled when they saw what happened and told the events in the city and country. People then flocked to the site to see for themselves. Gady, now free from the demons and at peace with God, **sat, clothed and in his right mind** near Jesus (v.15). I believe that day Jesus not only set him free from demons, but also saved his soul. All

who knew him were **afraid** or struck with fearful amazement. Sadly, instead of rejoicing, the local people begged Jesus to leave their area.

Transition: As Jesus was leaving, Gady begged Jesus to let him go with Him. However, instead, Jesus gave him three duties toward his friends. These duties apply to us today as well.

1. Go Home to Your Friends

a. His life was to be a testimony at home.

- 1) Though months or years had passed since Gady had been home, he did have a home. His parents may have still lived. He likely had siblings. He may have even been married with children. We know very little about him, but we do know that he had a home.
- 2) Jesus wanted Gady's changed life to be a testimony first at home. If Jesus Christ has saved your soul and given you a new life, those in your home ought to see that change.

b. He had friends who needed to hear about Jesus.

- 1) This word "**friends**" literally refers to your own. They are the ones dear to you.
- 2) Each of us has friends. They need to hear about Jesus. On this special "Friend Day" at our church, we have invited friends to hear about Jesus. If a friend invited you today, we are delighted that you came. Jesus offers to you the same transforming change that He made in Gady's life.
- 3) It is true that Gady was demon possessed. Yet, Jesus on another occasion said that even religious people are children of the devil. In the Garden of Eden, the devil deceived Adam and Eve into disobeying God. They lost the innocence in which God had created them. They passed on the sin nature to all their offspring. Each of us was born a sinner. Not only did we inherit sin, but we have often chosen to sin. God must judge our sin.
(Hebrews 9:27) "**And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:**" God cannot allow sinners into heaven. That is bad news!
- 4) The good news is that Jesus, God in human flesh, died on a Roman cross to pay for the sins of the entire human race. He then rose to life again to provide eternal life.

(Romans 4:25) "**[Christ] was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.**" He will save all who repent of their sins and trust him.

2. Tell Your Friends How Great Things the Lord has done for You.

a. He was to tell his friends

- 1) Often our pride makes it so that the most difficult people to tell about Jesus are our family and friends.
- 2) Yet our family and friends are those who are dear to us and for whom we ought to be greatly burdened.
- 3) When Jesus said, "**tell them**", He was saying, announce to them, report to them, rehearse to them, or make known to them. Gady was to do this with his changed life and with his lips.
- 4) This week, I read the story of a godly old man who just passed away. When he was a young man, he was an unbeliever and a drunk. His wife and children attended a Baptist church. The church people prayed for him and often befriended him. One day, while at the pub, God convicted him of the worthless way he was living. He went onto the toilet, bowed down, repented of his sin, and trusted Christ. He paid for his drink, left and never drank again. God transformed his life and he was a vibrant testimony to his family and friends for the rest of his life.

b. The Lord HAD done great things for Gady.

- 1) Gady had a message to tell his friends. For years, they had feared him as the dangerous wild man who lived in the tombs and screamed in the night.
- 2) He was now a calm, peaceful, transformed man whose life had been transformed by Jesus.
- 3) Jesus told him to tell **how great things the Lord had done for him**. Here was a man who for years could not escape the grip of the devil. He lived like a wild animal. His life was miserable. Now he was at peace. Your friends need that same forgiveness, cleansing and peace.
- 4) You do not need to be a Bible scholar to tell your family and friends about the many great things the Lord has