

Legion

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Preacher: Rev W.Macleod

[0 : 00] Gracious and ever-blessed God, we draw near unto thee to worship thee this morning, and we pray for the help of thy Holy Spirit. For without thee we can do nothing, and they that worship thee must worship thee in spirit and in truth. Grant unto us, O Lord, this Holy Spirit to enable us to sing thy praises from the heart and to pour out our petitions before thee in prayer, to read thy word with understanding and to preach it with unction. Grant, O Lord, thy blessing to be upon each one of us, here standing in thy presence today. Lots of different people from different situations and different backgrounds with different interests and different gifts. But all of us, we are all thy creatures. We are all created in thine image. We all have a soul which will never die, and we all need Christ. O grant unto us that thou wouldst draw near to us today and bless us according to our needs. Bless us individually. Bless us each one with the blessings of eternal life.

Show us, O Lord, the perfect way, the way of thy precepts divine. Lead us in thy paths, O Lord, and to open up before us the way of life. May we run in the way of thy commandments and delight ourselves in the ordinances of our God. We pray, O Lord, that thou wouldst forgive us for our sins. Thou knowest the many transgressions that we commit, how easy it is for us to go astray, and how we break thy commandments in thought and word and in deed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way. We are selfish, we are proud, we are rebellious, we are lustful, we are covetous, we are bad-tempered, we are idolatrous, we are blasphemous, we break every commandment. Lord, forgive us for our sins and wash us and cleanse us. We thank thee that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners. And that today is our only hope. Lord, we pray that thou wouldst give unto us repentance and a hatred for sin and a love for righteousness, that we might choose what is good and refuse what is evil. We pray for thy blessing to be upon those who are sick. We pray that thou restore to health and strength. Bless those who are going through difficult and troublous times, that thou, Lord, wouldst help them through their difficult experiences. Remember before thee those who mourn in today over the loss of loved ones, to thou comfort and encourage them. We thank Lord of our young people and our children and pray that thou would keep them from temptation and difficulty and harm.

We pray for thy blessing to be upon them in their exams and in their studies. Bless our students who are away from us and look after them, Lord. And we pray for thy blessing to be upon those who cannot be with us today for different reasons. Look after them where they are, involved in the works of necessity and mercy or we pray for them. We pray for them, Lord, for all the blessings that we do receive as a town and as an island. We thank thee for the beautiful scenery around us. We thank thee for the temperate climate that we enjoy. We thank thee for the friendship of people within the community. But we pray, Lord, particularly for the blessings of the Gospel, for salvation through Jesus Christ to reach to men and women. Grant, O Lord, that thou wouldst heal the brokenhearted. Grant that thou wouldst comfort those who are lonely and that thou wouldst help those who are despairing to find the way of peace and of hope and of salvation. We pray for thy blessing to be upon our government.

[4 : 44] We pray that thou wouldst lead and guide in the positions of power. We pray, Lord, that thou wouldst provide a wise leader for the Labour Party in the near future. We pray for thy blessing to be upon us as a nation, that there would be more seriousness in our government and more of an awareness of the brevity and uncertainty of life and more of an awareness too of God that we might fear the Lord as a nation. We pray for thy blessing to be upon those who are in prison, the criminals. We bring them before thee and pray that thou wouldst help them to find Christ and find salvation.

We think of those who are addicted to drugs and to drink and to gambling, to prostitution, that thou wouldst deliver those from that slavery, from that bondage of misery. We pray for thy blessing to be upon those whose lives are constantly being oppressed and who are passing through distress and

trouble because of the way that other people treat them.

O Lord, O God, there is so much sin and so much misery in the world, but we bless thee that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Bless now our worship today and bless us as we read thy word and as we study it together.

Open it up for us and help us to hear God speaking to us clearly today from the scriptures. Lord, thou thou bless us, although we don't disturb it. Bless us with the blessings of eternal life. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Amen. We shall now turn to the passage of scripture which we read in the Gospel of Mark chapter 5 and we shall read again verse 15. Mark chapter 5 and verse 15.

[6 : 59] And they come to Jesus and see him that was possessed with the devil and had the legion sitting and clothed and in his right mind when they were afraid.

Some people are obviously in a bad way because of Satan's destructive work in their lives.

Here we have an example of one who was in an awful condition, legion. We all know some people who through drink have destroyed their own lives, brought themselves to poverty, lost their job, their home perhaps, maybe their wife, their husband.

We all know some people who through drink. We all know some people who through addiction. We all know some people who through addiction to drink. We know of others, perhaps, or at least we have heard of them, addicted to drugs.

Recently, in our own high school, there has been a problem there with drugs. Thankfully, it's a very small problem here in Skye.

[8 : 39] But small problems can grow to greater problems. We were reading in our newspapers last week about the tennis star, superstar, Jennifer Capriati, a millionaire.

We see how drugs are destroying our lives. And then gambling. Gambling destroys many people's lives too and brings them to poverty and to misery.

Evil spirits. At one time, perhaps, some years ago, we would have thought that evil spirits was not a big problem.

We would have thought, perhaps, that it was no problem at all. It was just something that belonged to primitive, far-off days. But those who know about things tell us nowadays that there is a problem, particularly amongst New Age people.

A problem with those who have given themselves to evil spirits and to mediums and to witchcraft.

Again, it's slavery, it's bondage, it's destruction.

[9 : 58] Immorality is another thing. It's a problem. Leading to empty lives. Leading to lovelessness.

Leading to various illnesses. And worst of all, to AIDS. Crime destroys people's lives.

Then we were reading in the papers about this very evil man, Robert Black. How he murdered these little children.

How cruelly he dealt with them. His perversions, his lust and the evil of that man.

We're all appalled at it. And he has his ten life sentences for his crime. His own life destroyed.

[10 : 59] And other people's lives destroyed. We have plenty examples of lives that are in a mess. But friends, there's hope.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Do you know this? There's hope even for Robert Black.

So weak, so evil, so perverted, so destroyed. But there's hope even for him. Because Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

Yes, even the worst of sinners. And he is mighty to save, to save even unto the uttermost, those who come unto God by him.

Some people are very upright and good-living. And they attend church. And they keep the commandments.

[12 : 04] And they're highly thought of by their friends and their neighbors. They're very respectable. But they're just as lost as Robert Black. And worse, in one sense.

Worse in the sense that their privileges were greater. Worse in the sense that they knew about the way of life. And about the Lord Jesus Christ.

And yet, are outside of the kingdom. Because, friends, the only way of salvation is through having a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

So many people think, because I try my best and I'm good living, that everything will work out fine at the end of the day.

But it's a lie from Satan. The Bible says, Jesus is the way.

[13:11] He is the door. And apart from Jesus, it's lost. I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man, no woman, no boy or girl comes to the Father, but by me.

Jesus, he is the way. And isn't it awful to think that somebody like Robert Black could be converted and get to heaven.

And some of you end up in hell. Why? Because you don't think that you need Jesus.

And you don't put your trust in the Savior. There is only one Savior. There is no other name given under heaven amongst men through whom we must be saved, but the name of Jesus.

There is no other way. You and I must be saved. And there is no other name. There is no other Savior. There is no other passageway to God.

[14:30] Every other door is shut. There is just the one door. And today that door stands open. And Jesus says, look unto me and be saved.

And everyone who looks, everyone who comes, everyone who takes Christ is saved and enters heaven. And everyone who comes, everyone who comes, everyone who comes, no matter how good living, no matter how upright, no matter how respected.

it? And there's some of you, and we respect you greatly, and everyone respects you for your good, loving, kind, upright life. Isn't it awful to think that after such a good life, God would say, depart from me to a lost eternity. Jesus is the hope. We must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We must get to know him for ourselves. We must put our trust in Jesus. Otherwise, we stand condemned.

Turning to the passage in front of us, we see first the awkwardness of a lost state. Satan so often covers himself and hides himself and pretends he's not there, so that many people think that there is no such being as Satan. But here in this man's life, Satan was not hiding himself.

[16:26] Satan was obvious. The roaring lion, and what a mess he had made of this poor man's life. We see that he lived in the tombs. He preferred the company of the dead to the living. Satan is the prince of darkness.

Satan is the one who brought death into the world. Christ brings life. Satan brought and brings death.

This man couldn't be tamed. He couldn't be controlled. Why? Because Satan was in him, and Satan is the rebel. This man had supernatural strength. He could break chains and fetters and pieces. Why? Because the devil was helping him.

And the devil is supernatural and powerful. And the devil aids his own people in their wickedness. See how cults prosper. See how evil men get on. See how they are, as it were, protected so often, and how they are able to hide and to cover themselves.

Satan is helping them. That's why. And helps them until they fulfill his purposes. And then he destroys them. And this man, we're told, he was always in the mountains and in the tombs, crying.

[18:09] Crying. Day and night, crying. The misery of us, Satan dominated life. Those who go down with Satan to his pit. The pit of hell. Spend their eternity, weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth.

And we see him cutting himself with stones, destroying his own health and speaking to destroy his own life. Satan is the destroyer. Satan is the destroyer. The destroyer of body, of mind and of soul. Now none of you are in as bad a way as the Legion was. But is Satan working in your life?

Are you tending in that direction? What sort of films and videos do you watch?

What sort of books do you read? One's full of violence? And full of destruction?

[19:31] And full of what is satanic and evil? And you find a kick on these things? Are you a rebel?

And you get angry if anybody tries to tell you what to do? And tries to control your life? And says to you, you shouldn't do this, so you shouldn't go there. And you find within you a resentment building up.

And you say, why? I can do what I like. I can do my own thing. I can go my own way. I can look after myself. I know what I'm doing. It's up to me how I spend my life and where I go and what I do.

That's what he'll do with you. The rebel. Legion. Breaking the chains. He couldn't be tamed.

He couldn't be tamed. It's Satan helping you. Helping you in evil things. So that you're able to get on in your wicked ways and your wicked works.

[20 : 42] And you're amazed sometimes at your success. Satan does help people. Helps them for a while.

He helps them till he destroys them. Do you know what it is to cry? Do you know what it is to be miserable?

To feel emptiness in your life? And misery and darkness and gloominess and despair?

Meaninglessness and pointlessness and loneliness and everything so black and a big cloud over your head as it were.

Do you know something of the misery that Satan brings into people's lives? Jesus is the light.

[21 : 45] He gives joy and speakable and full of glory. He gives meaning and purpose to people's lives. God's yes. You be around that poi came in your church.

Give us a change of nothing to do. And trust them for a long time. But coexistence is a result of the creature. You don't want to know what it is to do. But that activism is the justice in your life. He teaches you. Those groups need to know what it is to act. Now you're destroying your own body. Destroying your body as Legion wars with a stone. You're destroying your body with strength. Amazing how bit by bit it takes over. It always starts small and nobody starts drinking intending to be an alcoholic, do they?

We all despise, we have a tendency to despise the alcoholics. We shouldn't really, of course we shouldn't.

But yet, we've made such a mess of our lives. They seem so foolish. Have you ever thought that you could be going in that same direction and that one day you would be there?

[23 : 11] Are you destroying your body with drugs? Are you destroying your body with promiscuity and immorality?

Destroying your health with tobacco? The awfulness of our lost state. Legion. What a mess he is in. And what a picture he gives us of what Satan does to people's lives.

Secondly, we have here a loving savior. Legion, the dreads of society, the dropout, the person who is despised.

The people amongst whom he lived valued their pigs far more than they valued Legion. When they saw Legion close and in his right mind sitting at the feet of Jesus, and then looked round for their pigs and realised that their pigs were drowned, they said, Jesus, go away. Go away, Jesus, we don't want you.

We've suffered a great loss because of you. We've lost 2,000 pigs. Just think of the value of 2,000 pigs. The fact that Legion was healed didn't mean very much to them.

[24 : 56] They valued their pigs and their money far more than Legion. But Jesus, Jesus was different. He valued people.

And he valued this man whose life was destroyed by Satan. He saw him as a man created in the image of God.

And he saw him as a human being with a soul. An everlasting soul. He saw him as somebody capable of eternal life.

And Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Are you today one of that class of people, the lost? Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. The Pharisees despised him.

[26 : 02] They called him a friend of publicans and sinners. Should we not be friends of publicans and sinners too?

Concerned for their salvation. Longing for their deliverance. Do you want to be saved?

I came across a very beautiful thought last week when I was reading about the revival last century in Tyree.

One of the ministers there when preaching, he said these words. A seeking Savior and a seeking sinner are sure to meet.

Isn't that beautiful? A seeking Savior and our Savior came from heaven to seek the lost sheep. A seeking Savior and a seeking sinner.

[27 : 15] A sinner seeking the Lord. A seeking Savior and a seeking sinner are sure to meet.

And if you're seeking the Lord, you'll find him. But if you're not seeking him, you won't find him.

A loving Savior. There's this man, naked. His body all covered with bruises and cuts.

Living in the tombs, wild, despised, hated, rejected. Jesus sees him and loves him. Has compassion on him. And longs for his soul's salvation.

Jesus talks to him. Jesus loves him. And Jesus saves him. That's the kind of Savior we have.

[28 : 17] And that's the good news. There is good news. Some people think of the church as all black and dismal and condemning.

And the church does condemn sin. But the message of the church is not primarily to condemn sin. The message of the church is to point to the Savior of sinners.

Yes, you are a sinner. And so am I. You do things you shouldn't do. And so do I. But there's good news. There's a gospel.

There's glad tidings of great joy. God's Son came into this world to seek and to save the lost. He came to save sinners.

That is hope. There's good news. God's Son. We point you today to a Savior. Look to that Savior. Pray to that Savior.

[29 : 26] Trust in that Savior. And your sins will be forgiven. And you will never perish. Finally, we have here a complete healing.

The unclean spirits didn't want to leave this man. The devil never likes to give up his people.

And he never does give them up without a struggle. And if you start seeking the Lord, be sure that there will be trials and troubles and struggles in the way.

The devil will make things as difficult for you as possible in order to discourage you from seeking the Lord. Because the devil wants to keep you as his own.

And the devil hates to think that one human being should be saved. The devil knows that he's going down to hell himself. That he's damned.

[30 : 35] And he wants every man and woman to be damned with him. But why should we let the devil have his way? And even although he puts so many obstacles in our path, let's not give in to Satan.

The devil is powerless before Christ. And so the devils, they know that they're going to be cast out of legion.

And they say to Christ, Please then, don't put us out of the country. Send us into the swine. And so Jesus gave them permission.

And they left the man. They entered into the swine. And there the devil showed their true nature. They destroyed 2,000 swines.

That's the devil. The destroyer. The one who brings death. And the one who brings hell. The keepers of the pigs fled into the city.

[31 : 49] And told the inhabitants of the city what had happened. And returned. And when they came back with a crowd of people from the city, they saw their legion sitting close and in his right mind at the feet of Jesus.

What a beautiful picture that is. The man whom chains couldn't bind. Setters couldn't hold him. No person could keep him captive.

And here he is. Seated. Clothed. And in his right mind. At the feet of Jesus. Jesus lives.

And Jesus saves. Jesus heals men and women. Eventually, body and soul, his people will be perfect with him in heaven.

This man wanted to follow Jesus. He loved Jesus now. Jesus had loved him.

[32 : 57] And we loved him because he first loved us. He wanted to follow Jesus. But Jesus refused.

And said to him, go home. Go back home to your own friends. And tell them what the Lord has done for you. Have you been converted? Jesus is saying to you, go home to your friends.

And tell them what I have done for you. We mustn't escape into our holy huddle. The church is not a monastery.

It's not a hiding place. It's not a trench into which we run and keep our heads down. It's not meant to be ingrowing.

Not outgoing. But outgoing. The church is meant to prepare us for the world. The church is coming to meet with Christ.

[34 : 07] To be saved by Christ. And then going out. Out with a message. The glad tidings. The good news. And telling what he did for my soul.

And making known the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Show forth the praises. Declare the wonders that he has done for us.

Let's not hide our candle under a bushel. Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did is not this the Christ.

We have this duty and responsibility of making known the gospel. Of telling forth the word of God in the world to a needy world.

Legion went home. Told his friends. Told his neighbors. Told his relatives. What Jesus had done for him.

[35 : 07] And everyone marveled. We have a new opportunity. To do that this week. To tell people what Christ did for us.

And we have a duty and responsibility. To try and encourage others. To come and to enjoy the blessings that we enjoy too. Let's be sure that we invite our friends.

Our relatives and our neighbors. To come along this coming week. To our Portree Bible Convention. To these meetings that we have organized. To these meetings that we have organized.

Specifically for this purpose. So that others. Our friends and our neighbors. Can be invited along. And share in the things of God with us.

And who knows. But they might meet with Christ. Over this coming week. Let's not hide our light. But let's make it known.

[36 : 08] And invite our friends. To church. And to the Christ. Of whom the church speaks. Let us pray. Gracious God. We pray that thou would help us.

To be better Christians. Better witnesses. Better evangelists. Help us to love the alcoholics. Help us to love the drug addicts.

Help us to love the immoral people. Help us to love the sinners. Who are round about us. Help us to love the Pharisees too. And help us to seek.

To bring them all to know Christ. And to know his saving power. In their lives. Oh Lord our God. We pray for thy blessing. To be upon our meetings.

This coming week. We pray that the Portree Bible Convention. Would be a means used by thee. For the conversion of sinners. For bringing people to know the Saviour.

[37 : 11] And for the edifying and building up of thy church. Bless Lord our meetings. Bless the publicity for our meetings. And bless us each one. By making us people who publicize these meetings.

And particularly the Saviour of whom these meetings will speak. May pray for thy blessing too. To be upon the general assemblies of our churches.

Meeting this coming week. Grant wisdom and guidance. In these deliberations that will take place. And grant oh Lord that our churches would be reformed.

Lord we long for a new reformation in our land. For reformation and for revival. Bless us for Jesus sake.

Amen.