

Loving The Unlovable Mark 5:1-20

Introduction:

1. In this text, we have one of the most dramatic conversions in the Bible. Look at how the Bible describes him (vs. 1-5). Read Luke 8:27.
2. So here we have a man full of Satan, homeless, running around in the mountains and graveyards naked, he is screaming and shrieking and cutting himself with stones. There is probably fresh blood mingled with dry blood all over his body. His hair was probably all matted, and his body wreaked of foul odors.
3. There was not a lot to love about this guy! Most people would say, “He’s just filthy and nasty.” He was indeed unlovable.
 - Imagine you’re the disciples getting out of the boat, and you see some wild, crazy, naked man with blood all over him, arms flailing, and screaming like a wild animal, running towards you. They probably took one step back into the boat.
 - But Jesus is the Creator of all things, and He made this man, and Jesus **loved** this man and had compassion on him.
4. How did the world respond to this man?
 - Some tried to tame him. vs. 4b
 - Reform him, change his habits, give him psychiatric counseling – it didn’t work.
 - Some tried to chain him. vs. 4a
 - Just put him away so they didn’t have to be bothered with him – it didn’t work.
 - Some simply avoided him. Matthew 8:28
 - Some concluded he was a hopeless case; therefore they gave up on him and decided to just stay away from him.
5. Unfortunately, this is how many in our world today would respond. It is easy to love people who love us and are lovable. But let’s face it, some people are unlovable. They are mean, hateful, and just plain nasty. Some people, by no choice of their own, have mental or physical disabilities. Some people are just down and out because of poor choices (self-inflicted wounds, like this man in text).
6. God’s desire is for us to reach out and love the unlovable. Why does God expect this of us?

First, because Jesus has ascended to heaven.

1. What a wonderful story. Jesus sails over to this area of the country called Gadara. Jesus meets this unlovable man, has mercy and compassion on him, and brings healing to his distraught and sin-sick soul. Look at verse 19. Jesus had **compassion** on him and did great things for him.
2. Jesus Christ loved this man that nobody else loved. But what about people today? Hold on and think about it. Jesus isn't on the earth anymore. He ascended to heaven in Acts 1:9. Right before this, His last words to His disciples were "*Ye shall be witnesses unto me...*"
 - He basically said, "I'm going away, and I'm leaving the job with you."
3. Look at 2 Corinthians 5:16, 20. Christ is no longer walking this earth in the flesh. We are His ambassadors and representatives.
4. We have to allow Christ's Spirit of love and compassion to work in us and through us to love people like this guy in Mark 5. God is calling us to love the unlovable.
5. This doesn't come naturally. It can only happen through a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. It is natural to love people who are lovable. It is a work of God in us to love the unlovable.
6. We like to stay in our comfort zone and love those we are familiar with, those who love us back, and those who appreciate our love. But God wants to do more through us!

Second, because Satan is operating on the earth.

1. It is very clear that this man was oppressed and possessed by Satan. vs. 2, 15, 16, 18
2. In fact, to show us the reality of Satan and his host, God even reveals to us a conversation that Jesus had with this demon (vs. 7-13). This is pretty graphic, isn't it? This is not the late, late show, or some horror movie or cartoon. This is the Word of God, and it's real!
3. There is a devil, and there is a great host of fallen angels (devils and demons). The Bible is clear that there is spiritual warfare taking place between good and evil. Right now, the Bible teaches that the earth is Satan's kingdom, and he is roaming about. 1 Peter 5:8
 - Through this event, we get a glimpse into the unseen world and the conflict and warfare that is going on. God gives us a peek.

4. Did you know that Satan preys on people like this man in our text? He preys on people who are down and out, who feel unloved and have nobody.
5. Satan invades their life under the false pretense of bringing peace, joy, and fulfillment. In reality, he is setting them up for the kill, reeling them in to take them into outer darkness, bringing total despair and bondage.
 - We don't know the whole story with this maniac. Maybe he had no parents, didn't feel loved, maybe tried to go to church once, but didn't feel like he fit in, people shunned him...
6. What is my point? We may not show an interest in the unlovable, but Satan sure will. He will give them plenty of attention. He'll take them in and make them feel welcome. But of course in the process, their lives will be destroyed.
7. Who will stand in Satan's way? Who can keep him from destroying lives? Only we can! Spirit-filled believers who decide to love the unlovable and show them true love.

Third, because Christ's love can revolutionize a person's life.

1. After Jesus shows this disturbed man love and compassion, notice what the Bible says in verse 15.
 - Sitting (as calm as can be) – this man's heart that was filled with unrest was now at peace.
 - Clothed – this man outwardly looked different.
 - In his right mind – this man had been tortured with evil and violent thoughts to the point of insanity, but he became completely rational.
2. That is what Christ's love will do for a person. It replaces hostility with peace, sadness with joy, hatred with love, guilt with forgiveness, and bondage with liberty and freedom.
3. Jesus saw beyond what this man was to what he could be. After this man experienced the love of Christ, he wanted to be close to Jesus (vs. 18-20). What a testimony this man had!
4. Christian, we must take the gospel of Christ to those who are unlovable, and we must allow Christ's love to show through us. We must attempt to reach them with the Good News of Jesus.
5. Christ can change anybody. Christ's love can revolutionize anybody's life, but His love must first be shared and then received.