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Devotion for March 11th, 2022

*"The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid...And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region."
- [Mark 5:14-15, 17](#)*

We've yet to experience it, but it's coming, I fear. A time when people are so distanced from God that they can't begin to recognize Him when He is acting on their behalf. While there are lots of people in the world around us who know little about God, they at least can remember the stories that their grandparents told them. Stories about people like Father Abraham, Joseph with his technicolor coat, Moses, David and Goliath, and Jesus, too.

At the rate that we are going, though, very few from this generation will remember those stories or the people who really lived them and then, those of us who are left will be in it. By it, I mean that time when people are so distanced from God that they act like the Gerasenes in our Gospel for today.

You should pause here and read the entire passage, [Mark 5:1-20](#), but here's a quick recap. Jesus arrives in that Gentile region on the Southeast side of the Sea of Galilee known as the Decapolis. He's not actually in the town but in the wilderness region outside of it, the place where only the homeless or herdsmen tending their flocks were to be found. A demon-possessed man accosts Him and Jesus casts the demons out of the man into a herd of pigs. Crazy by what had happened to them, the herd rushes down a steep bank and drowns in the sea.

Everyone is stunned. The herdsmen run back to the city and tell the people who come out to see Jesus, who is with the man who now appears well dressed and in his right mind. Rather than being amazed and thankful for what God had done, the people beg Jesus to leave.

Remember this as you are out and about talking to others. Sometimes the status quo, the familiar has such a strong hold on them that the thought of being changed by God is more than they can handle. In fact, recognize it in yourself that you may well have a pet sin or sins that you often will entertain even though you know better. It's very hard to leave what is familiar behind to follow Jesus, even when the familiar is harmful.

And yet the life that Jesus offers by His death and resurrection is a far greater life if only you would allow your eyes to be opened to see it through regularly hearing His Word preached and receiving the Sacrament. The season of Lent that we are in is about getting back to that, not occasionally, but regularly and then some through all of the additional services and events offered here at Grace. Praise be the Holy Name of Jesus for these opportunities to be strengthened by His word and meal. Amen.

*God's blessings,
Rev. Kevin Loughran, Senior Pastor
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