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Sunday, May 5, 2019
Unlikely Heroes: Maniac to Missionary

TEXT: Mark 5:1-20, 1 Corinthians 1:27

Intro: Every hero has an origin story... we are going to look at the origin story of a missionary today. In Mark chapter 5, We find this unlikely hero in his not so secret-lair the CEMETARY TOMBS.

The Origin Story of the Unlikely Hero from Gadara! Mark 5:1-20

- ❖ After teaching all day in Capernaum (Luke 7:1, Matt 8:5) Jesus climbs in a boat with His disciples to cross over the Sea of Galilee. Arriving in the Gerasa territory, a demon possessed man, living in the graveyard, saw Jesus and fell on his knees before Him.
 - The man was more at home with the DEAD than with the LIVING
 - The demon possessed guy had supernatural strength. Mk 5:3-4
 - NLT translations says, *"Whenever he was put into chains and shackles—as he often was—he snapped the chains from his wrists and smashed the shackles."*
 - The guy is busting handcuffs & breaking chains.
 - He lived in constant torment. Mark 5:5
 - He was a scary guy & terrorized the locals. Matt 8:28
 - He was the last candidate you'd choose to be a missionary, but Jesus delivered him & sent him out as one. Lk 8:35, Mk 5:19
 - Jesus will take the least likely among us – even those with the most horrific pasts & transform them from being filled with spirits to being spirit-filled.

This demon possessed man was an Unlikely HERO where we learn:

- ❖ Jesus has power over the darkness & evil and so do you. Mark 16
 - The same guy that wrote about Jesus casting out the Legion recorded Jesus saying: *"These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in My name"*
 - Truly anyone can become a help & a hero through Christ.
- ❖ You can't receive freedom from a bondage you won't admit. Living in the truth, means getting honest about the lies you believe. Mark 5:6
 - We don't have to hide our faults from God, we can boldly come before His throne of Grace and find help for whatever we are going through. Hebrews 4:16
- ❖ He was determined to follow Christ. Jesus didn't have to invite the man to follow Him.

- Some would go to the ends of the earth, but will you travel across the parking lot to give someone a hand?
 - "The greatest moments happen when you simply make yourself available to serve someone else's vision or make the way for another's dream. God is never in a debt of honor! What you make happen for others God will make happen for you." – Rev. Jen Tringale
- ❖ Follow His simple instructions to you.
He was obedient & a self-starter; he did what Jesus said Mk 7:39-8:9
 - Powerful witness in Decapolis. He built faith & expectancy in people. He exposed gentiles to Jesus.
 - Jesus fed 4,000 – probable some gentiles there too Mk 8:1-9
 - Matthew 4:24-25 records many people coming from the cities of Decapolis to bring the sick & demonized to Jesus.
 - Decapolis was the center of Greco-Roman culture. A region of 10 primarily gentile cities, that existed in the midst of otherwise Semitic people.
- ❖ Every hero of faith has an origin story: Jesus, Moses, Paul, & you. What's your story? Have you shared it with others lately?
 - Paul told the Corinthians they were the only recommendation he needed. 2 Corinthians 3:2
 - 2 Cor 3:3 "You are a letter from Christ..." to the world
- ❖ Mark 5:19-20 NLT But Jesus said, *"No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful He has been."* (20) So the man started off to visit the Ten Towns of that region and began to proclaim the great things Jesus had done for him; and **everyone was amazed** at what he told them.
 - I wonder how long it had been since this man was home. "Go back to your family and describe what great things God has done for you."
 - Possibly the first gentile missionary...the maniac became a missionary, a witness of the goodness & grace of God.
- ❖ Mark 5:14 NOTE: There were by standers (hog-sloppers) that proclaimed the amazing & weird things going on. Their testimony prepared people to hear the testimony of the maniac turned missionary.

Thankfully we don't have to be demonized to become heroes for Christ. We can all do something to make people wonder. 1 Corinthians 1:27