

Lent Day 8
Thursday February 18, 2016

Reading: Mark 5.1-13

Reflection

Have you ever smoked? I have. I started smoking when I was 11 years old and I finally quit smoking when I was 27. In between those 16 years I spent times trying to quit. I remember the balancing point of my determination not to go have a cigarette and the moment of caving. When Mark talks about this young man with a demon who no one could chain I think of that — a power over my life I couldn't control or restrain.

Not all of us have had an addiction to cigarettes, but all of us struggle with the power of sin in our lives. Scripture describes sin as a power that has mastery over us and believers who are seeking to come out from under that power we know how masterful it is! We are like that young man forced to hurt ourselves over and over. Unable to gain the control we want — all we can do is cry out.

But, here's the beautiful picture. Jesus approaches and while we share in the fear ("In God's name don't torture me!") there is also the promise of release. Skip down to verse 15 - the young man after being addressed by Jesus is "sitting there, dressed and in his right mind." That is the promise of the one who has power over the powers who have power over us. He sets us free!

The first question is, do you want that freedom? Really want it? Then what is the name of the power that holds you in bondage? What is your sin? Once you and the Spirit have named that invite Jesus to set you free from it. Just like the demons went into the pigs and were drowned Jesus has the power to remove the thing which binds you. I quit smoking at 27 not because I finally willed myself to, but because I asked Jesus to take it from me and he did.

Prayer

Our Lord and Saviour, release us from the power of Sin which has a hold of us. Grant us the freedom which comes from Christ alone. Amen.