

COVID-19's Concealed Attack

It's difficult to read the beginning of the fifth chapter of Mark without feeling heartbreak for the man who lived in the tombs.

He lived his life in a continuous battle with demons. He could not be bound by chains or shackles. He made his home in tombs because he couldn't be around people. Someone with a to-do list would set a course to bind him. He cried out night after night in torture.

His only relief was to sharpen stones, razor-blade thin, so he could cut himself.

But when he saw Jesus coming from His boat, he knelt before Him. Jesus quickly commanded the demons to come out of the man.

The demons who possessed him knew Jesus and cried out, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" (v. 7b).

Bishop Joseph Walker spoke about this section of Scripture yesterday on the *Greenelines* podcast. He spoke of the man as an analogy for the battle many are experiencing in our daily warfare with the COVID-19 virus and social unrest. He said, "The Scripture says the man was sitting close to having his right mind, but we also see how the demonic encroached upon the man's life."

Walker shed light on an often-skipped verse: "What is your name?" (v. 9a).

"Jesus asked this question at the beginning of His ministry to the man," Walker said. "Nobody ever asked this boy his name. Ever."

The response to Jesus' question, Walker said, was "'We are

Legion'" (v. 9b).

Walker stressed the point that our issues are not simple or singular. Our problems are interlaced and interactive.

"People are struggling with a multitude of issues," he said. Unless we are willing to peel the onion back and go to the core of the root, we will soon see that we do not produce healthy fruit. Now more than ever, the church must address mental health in ways that help people navigate unhealthy terrain called COVID-19."

The bishop referenced Mark 9 as another example of the relationship between deliverance and mental health.

"The disciples are confronted with a father who has a son with a demon," Walker said. "The disciples are unable to cast-out the demon. Jesus tells them, 'this kind doesn't go out but by much prayer and fasting.' Jesus asked the boy's father, 'How long has he been like this?'"

"Of course, Jesus knew the answer before He ever asked the question. But Jesus is probing for all to hear—the root of the problem," Walker said. "The boy had the issue since he was a child. There is a root issue there. The revelation is your son cannot talk now because he cannot hear."

COVID-19 has brought us many challenges. The issues are deeper than what we feel and see on the surface. Seek the Lord for the root of any distress. Ask the Lord and your medical professionals to help you see what is hidden in the deep.

"Deep calls to deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; all Your waves and Your billows passed over me" (Ps. 42:7). {eoa}

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