



# Daily Reflections

## January 31, 2022

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### Scripture

#### **Mark 5:1-20**

Jesus and his disciples came to the other side of the sea,  
to the territory of the Gerasenes.

When he got out of the boat,

at once a man from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him.

The man had been dwelling among the tombs,

and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain.

In fact, he had frequently been bound with shackles and chains,

but the chains had been pulled apart by him and the shackles smashed,

and no one was strong enough to subdue him.

Night and day among the tombs and on the hillsides

he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones.

Catching sight of Jesus from a distance,

he ran up and prostrated himself before him,

crying out in a loud voice,

“What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?

I adjure you by God, do not torment me!”

(He had been saying to him, “Unclean spirit, come out of the man!”)

He asked him, “What is your name?”

He replied, “Legion is my name. There are many of us.”

And he pleaded earnestly with him

not to drive them away from that territory.

Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside.

And they pleaded with him,

“Send us into the swine. Let us enter them.”

And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine.

The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned.  
The swineherds ran away and reported the incident in the town and throughout the countryside.  
And people came out to see what had happened.  
As they approached Jesus, they caught sight of the man who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there clothed and in his right mind.  
And they were seized with fear.  
Those who witnessed the incident explained to them what had happened to the possessed man and to the swine.  
Then they began to beg him to leave their district.  
As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him.  
But Jesus would not permit him but told him instead, "Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you."  
Then the man went off and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed.

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## Our Scripture Reflection

What a horribly miserable existence the demoniac had endured for many years; that is, until Jesus encountered him. Even an entire legion of demons are no match for Jesus who dispatches them into a herd of swine and onto their demise. Once freed, the man is so grateful that He immediately witnesses to Jesus. What a wonderful thought: If I am grateful to Jesus, how can I not witness to Him?

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## Food for your Journey

Throughout [the Confessions], which is written in the form of a prayer, Augustine freely admits his willful disobedience to God. Augustine's intent is to reveal the perversity of the human heart, but specifically that of his own. But Augustine was not intent on just confessing his sinfulness: This book is also the confession of his faith in Christ as well. Augustine, as he is moved from a state of carnality to one of redemption, marvels at the goodness of God.

One of the most telling incidents in the Confessions is Augustine's recollection of a decisive event in his youth. He and an assortment of friends knew of a pear tree not far from his house. Even though the pears on the tree didn't appeal to Augustine, he and his friends were intent on stealing the pears simply for the thrill of it. They had no need of the pears, and in fact ended up throwing them to some pigs. Augustine's account of this thievery reveals a penetrating insight into our dilemma as human beings. Whereas today many want to blame their parents or their environment for their problems, Augustine admits that his sole motive was a love of wickedness: He enjoyed his disobedience.

This reflects one of Augustine's major contributions to Christian theology: his emphasis on the perversity of the human will. We would all do well to read Augustine's Confessions if only to remind us that evil isn't simply a sickness but a condition of the heart that only Jesus Christ can heal.

—Tim Garrett, "St. Augustine," Probe Ministries Web Site, [probe.org](http://probe.org). Retrieved January 10,

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## **A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear God, Thank You for sending Your Son Jesus to free me from what had me held bound. As Your freed son or daughter, may I never miss an opportunity to witness to Him. Amen