**What is my next step?**

*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 had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled* – **Mark 5:14-20**.

**Here was a man in serious bondage**. This man was possessed by an unclean spirit and a host of evil spirits. The people from the city had done all they could to keep him away from their community by placing physical restraints on him. These efforts to restrain him were futile because the unclean spirits gave him extraordinary strength and he broke free. All that to say that he was desperately tormented by these unclean, evil spirits that occupied his space. To say the least, he was helpless. He could do nothing to free himself and no one else was able to help him either.

**Here was a man who experienced the power of God to set him free from bondage**. Only the power of Christ gave this man his freedom. Nothing else was helpful. In fact, all the human efforts just complicated his torment and were very unsuccessful. I am not convinced that just because Jesus performed a miracle for someone that they automatically became a disciple. That being said, the response of this man to the power of Jesus to rescue him from his tormented state led to a deep passion to follow Jesus. There would appear that he was not only grateful but passionate about being with the one who saved him. Some element of faith appears to be there.

**Here was a man who wanted to take his next step with Jesus.** This man *begged* Jesus to allow him to be with him. It made perfect sense after the massive transformation Jesus brought about in his life. It would appear that even the demon possessed man was compelled to take the next step. While his intention was admirable the next step was not the one Jesus wanted him to make.

**Jesus gave this man his next step.** Instead of going with Jesus, he told this man to go to his family and friends and tell them how much the Lord had done for him. This was his next step. For the sake of argument, here is a new follower of Jesus, saved out of a demonic life, and the next step is simply to tell others the good things the Lord had done for him.

Regardless of our situation, if someone is a new believer or we are talking about a well-established church, knowing the “next step” the Lord wants us to take stimulates spiritual momentum and keeps us from sliding into a status quo mentality. If someone has truly been touched by the power of Jesus and they understand any level of freedom from their spiritual bondage, the result is a *next step toward Jesus*. That is the nature of Christianity, a never-ending process of next steps toward Jesus. The reality of our relationship with Christ is the opportunity to be constantly growing and pursuing him.

In His grace, Brad Little