



A Cry of Desperation

As the sun sank below the western horizon, Jesus said, "Let us go over to the other side" (Mark 4:35). Leaving the crowds behind, he entered a boat with his disciples to sail across the Sea of Galilee. Why did Jesus leave the crowd and go across the Sea? There can be only one answer. He had heard the desperate cry of a demoniac man, who had been driven from his home, tormented and violent. He was living among the tombs and the people of the villages were afraid of him. A desperate cry from one man will drown out the noise of a crowd of people if you are in tune with the heart of God.

During the night a fierce wind began to dash and batter the small boat until the disciples believed they were going to sink. Why the fierce storm? Surely, it was an attempt of the devil to prevent Jesus from going to the other side and encountering the demoniac man. If the disciples would have listened closely to the words of Jesus when He said, "Let us go over to the other side," they would not have been so concerned for their lives.

When the Lord told Paul he was going to witness in Rome, there was not any kind of situation, whether storm or circumstance, that could keep him from completing the trip. Paul survived the storm, starvation, ship wreck, snake bite, and the strenuous voyage. There is divine provision for the mission that God has assigned you, however it might not be "first class." One time Tena and I discussed what we might do differently if we suddenly received a million dollars. In the discussion it was clear that we would not change our life style, purchase a large home, or drive an expensive auto. Then after a pause, Tena suggested that it would be nice to do one thing different, "Fly first class!" Have you ever walked passed those spacious reclining seats in first or business class, knowing that you are going to be cramped for many hours in the economy section?

Even as Jesus heard the cry of desperation from the demoniac, so he has heard the desperate cry from many countries around the world. One continent that is horribly in the grip of despair, disease and war is Africa. The prediction by many reliable sources is that 40% of the population will die of AIDS alone in the next few short years. Just in Sudan alone, there are millions being displaced by famine and war, besides those that are dying because of disease. Many of the leaders throughout the 56 countries of Africa are controlled by greed, keeping donated food from their people and later selling it for profit, looting the people when ever possible, and they keep control through violence. However, in the midst of this dilemma, thousands of people are coming to the Lord and crying out for supernatural deliverance.

It is a shame that people would put their economy above the deliverance of a person, but the people of Gerasenes did just that. They urged and begged Jesus to leave. Even while they were imploring him to get in the boat and return to the other side, He must have heard another desperate cry from a dying woman. She had been sick 12 years, spending all of her money on physicians without any visible results, and now in the final stages of her illness, she heard that Jesus was passing by. Using her remaining strength, she pressed and pushed her way through the crowd until she could grab hold of the border of His garment. Remember, Jesus was hurriedly walking to the home of Jarius to pray for his

daughter. Somehow, the desperate woman made her way through the crowd, catching up with Him, and then with desperate determination she stretched her straining feeble hand outward until she made contact with His garment.

Why did she touch the hem of His garment? According to Numbers 15:38,39, it was required of the men to make special borders on the hem of their garments. They were to fasten four tassels on the border with a cord of blue. It was a reminder that if they kept the commandments of the Lord, none of the diseases of Egypt would come upon them. Ex. 15:16. The desperate woman took hold of the promise of God and the power of God healed her disease. This same promise is relevant to Africa, or any other country that would take hold of the promise of God to save and heal. We, as messengers proclaiming the promises of God, can insert a solution to the crisis in Africa, "Jehovah-raphah" God is my Healer. This good news will be welcomed by the hopeless and desperate people of the continent.

When the woman confessed to Jesus that she was the one who had been healed, Jesus replied, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction." While he was speaking another cry of desperation came from a tormented father. When he had left the house to search for Jesus, his daughter was at the point of death. Now news came to him that his daughter was dead. Can you imagine the despair of his heart and the cry of his soul. Jesus strongly urged this man to keep on believing.

Jesus, surveying the confusion of those in and around Jarius' home, asked the question, "Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep." Of course, they laughed scornfully at Him. I want you to notice the degree of difficulty that Jesus associates with death. He compared it to sleep, a normal phenomenon of every person. He was saying, "I will go in and speak to her or gently shake her and she will wake up." Praise God! He does not have a problem with death.

The cry of desperation from a hopeless demoniac, a dying woman and a frightened father caused Jesus to cross the sea of Galilee in the night, and without rest, return to the other side the next morning to heal the dying woman and raise a child from the dead.

Our God is a hearing God filled with compassion and is willing to meet our needs, mentally, physically and spiritually.

Leon Willis