I am Legion

I. Slide#1 Announce:
   A. Slide#2 Give Times of next weekend:
   B. Mention Holy Week Devotions: Handout.
   C. Slide#3 Not Today, the movie: Kelly & Paula just previewed. The movie was spearheaded by Yorba Linda Friends Church. It’s about the trafficking of kids in India, specifically the Dalit people (the lowest people in the caste system).
      1. It’s playing in select theaters….the closest to us being Anaheim, Brea, Irvine, San Marcos, and San Diego. Opening day is April 12th. http://nottodaythemovie.com
   D. Slide#4 For King & Country: April 14th. Here at CM. Gen. Admin. $15. Doors open at 6pm. [Vip is $20, includes early admission, reserved seating & Q&A w/band] (played on Leno; M.Huckabee)
      1. Tony in info booth sign ups for helpers & selling tickets?

II. Slide#5 Intro: I am Legion
   A. Intro: Jesus & his disciples just went through one storm on Galilee, & then they blew right into one more…in Gadara.
      1. As we read & study this story about a demon possessed man this morning, we will approach it this way:
         a) We will affirm the biblical reality of Satan & his host. But in doing so we will refrain from promoting an unhealthy fascination our enemy.
         b) Our goal is to reveal Satan’s purpose and then demonstrate Jesus’ power over evil forces & His ability to heal the harm which they have done.
   B. Legion – 3/6000 in a Roman legion. [this army of intruders, in 1 man] I am Legion.

III. Slide#6 THE DEMONIAC
   A. Slide#7 Decapolis (vs.20) – Gk. deka(10) + polis(city).
         a) Damascus, Syria (most Northern city). Amman, Jordan (most Southern). [also Jerash, Beth Shean]
      2. Slide#8 Picture of where they believe this took place.
      3. Now, they just survived a close drowning, I’m sure they just want to get on dry land!
         a) I bet they were scrambling to get off first...then came Legion running to meet them.
      4. No Jews in this boat would have been comfortable here, for at least 3 reasons: It was Gentile-ville, Pigs-ville, & deads-ville.
         a) Gentiles were unclean, Pigs were unclean, close contact with the dead would make you unclean.
B. Slide#9 This man lost everything!

1. His home, fellowship with family & friends, his decency, self-control, peace, purpose for living.
   a) I picture his eyes black, shifty, darting around like lightning; his face grimaced, distorted, framed w/a distressing look; his brow stuck in furrowed position; his hair unkempt, matted & mangled; his teeth brownish/orange from stains; breath that could melt a candlestick; body odor...not a stench to “high heaven”, but an aerosol from hell itself; his body naked with no dignity; nails over grown & curling like claws; arms bloody, scabbed, from self-mutilation; ankles adorning fetter anklets from previous botched attempts of chaining. His home...a cave w/a continuous smell of decomposing human corpses. No discipline, no authority, no restraint!

C. Slide#10 Possession

1. Steps/Stages: It would appear that an evil spirit seduces a man, & the man yields, & that repeatedly, until presently he becomes completely mastered by the evil spirit. In that sense he is possessed by it.
2. His thinking is under its mastery; His emotions responds to its impulses; & his will is dominated by the demon.
3. Everybody is going to be possessed by something or somebody.
   a) God didn’t design the human heart to be a vacuum but to be occupied by Jesus.

D. Slide#11 (5) Cutting himself – Self mutilation [Self-harm (SH) deliberate self-harm (DSH) self-injury (SI)]

1. Today - The most common way of self injury is cutting oneself, often repeatedly, with sharp objects like knives, razor blades, or sharp glass. It is estimated that 80% of self mutilators are women who are usually in their teens and early twenties.
2. Cutting is often done to cope w/whatever is causing stress [Temp relief, from neg feelings]
   a) You might deal with it by taking a run, bike ride, go to a movie something to take your mind off your cares.
3. Cutting is a serious issue, & can lead to a lifetime of shame & despair. It can’t be ignored. [parents eyes wide open]
4. Several types: Experimental Cutter (no reason, just experimenting). Show-off Cutter (self explanatory); Shock Cutter (for shock value). Rebellious Cutter (to make you cry, causing misery for someone else) [Starts getting more serious]
   Self-Punishment Cutter (deeper in the issues, demands counseling, recovery process, i.e. Needs help w/thinking patterns behind the actions of cutting).
   Distraction Cutter (hard to imagine pain so great that creating more pain would take the focus off the original pain). Coping Skill Cutter (have you ever been so mad you just wanted to punch something? Anger builds up, intensity increases, &
bam it happens. Cutting becomes their release of intensity! Mental Issues Cutter (mental problems are rooted in incorrect thinking patterns).¹

a) “Cuts on an arm uncover gashes on a soul.” (me)

b) Obviously in our story, the demonic takes cutting, if its not extreme enough, to a whole new level of extreme. [Elijah vs. 450 Baal prophets, So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, w/knives & lances, until the blood gushed out on them]

E. Slide#12 Here we have Jesus fulfilling, to the uttermost, His Purpose for coming…for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. :) ¹

IV. Slide#13 THE DELIVERER

A. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1Jn.3:8

B. Slide#14a Satan tried to destroy these men; but Jesus came to deliver them!

1. I've come to set the captives free. He came to bring new hope. Freedom.
2. Everyone’s life has been marred & spoiled by the Devil in some way.
   a) It’s our very desire for our Celebrate Recovery meeting on Thurs nights at 7pm. To help set free those who have gotten ensnared in life’s destructive Hurts, Habits, Hangups.

C. What does the fate of the pigs show, about what the demons were trying to do to the man?

1. What the demons did to the pigs is what they wants to do to all of God’s creation. His whole desire is to kill & destroy.
   a) Slide#14b The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy (then Jesus says) I have come that they may have life, & that they may have it more abundantly.Jn.10:10

D. Slide#14c Note: He calls him a man (8)

1. He didn’t look like a man; didn’t smell like a man; didn’t act like a man.
2. What dignity He gives to one we would probably call an animal, beast, or monster (if not worse!)
3. Sin made him anything but a man - But Jesus sees us not for what we are, but for what we can be by his power & grace! [He saw: Made in the Image of God stamped on him. He saw a set free soul. He saw an evangelist. He saw a man.]

V. Slide#15 THE DEMONS


1. Slide#16a What does this show you about the value Jesus places on the man?

2. Slide#16b I guess according to Jesus, **People matter more than Pigs!**
   a) It’s ok that approx 3.5 million hogs are slaughtered daily worldwide for a tasty meal of bacon or pork (1.3 billion a yr.); but **2000 to restore** a broken man?
3. This doesn’t mean Jesus had a lack of concern for animals **but** simply the greatness Slide#16c of His concern was for **people!** **Even this man!**
   a) Also, it is convincing evidence that he really had been **set free!**
   b) And, it was an indication of **Jesus’ power** to **destroy** all that is evil or unclean!
4. And as a side light, *The Gadarene Swine Law* says, **Merely because the group is in formation does not mean that the group is on the right course.**

B. Slide#17a **Imperfect tense** pictures graphically the disappearance of *pig after pig* into the sea. (13)
   1. Slide#17b Does that mean pigs would rather be **dead** then **demon possessed?**
   2. Slide#17c It is encouraging to note that the **demons did not know** what Jesus planned to do.
   3. Slide#17d Do you think demons just **camouflage** themselves better in our society today?

VI. Slide#18 **THE TOWN FOLK**
   A. When those who **slopped the hogs** went to tell the townsfolk. What do you think was the 1st thing they told them? **“Legion has been healed” or, “The pigs have drowned”**.
      1. Slide#19a What does this tell you about **their priorities**?
         a) **“The material loss out weighed the spiritual gain.”**
   B. The sad part of this whole story, are **the towns people** who didn’t even recognize they were Slide#19b being **controlled** by the same Devil, just in more **dignified** ways. :(
      1. See, this miracle was just **a little bit too expensive.**
         a) Jesus was **a little too dangerous** to have around.
         b) He’s interfering w/Property & Profit.
         c) Slide#19c They preferred...**Hogs** over the **Healer; Swine** over the **Savior**.
   C. Imagine asking Jesus to **leave** you?
      1. Poem:
         Rabbi, be gone! Thy **powers** bring loss to us & **ours.**
         Our ways are not as **Thine. Thou** lovest men, **we, swine.**
         Oh, get you **hence**, Omnipotence, & take this fool of Thine!
         His **soul**? What care we for his lost **soul**?
         What good to us that thou hast made him **whole**. Since we have lost our **swine**?
         And Christ went sadly. He had wrought for them a **sign**
         Of Love, & hope, & tenderness divine; They wanted - **swine!**
Christ stands w/o our door & gently knocks; But if our gold, or swine, the entrance blocks, He forces no man’s hold – He will depart, And leave us to the meanness of our heart.²

VII. Slide#20 THE MISSIONARY
A. Slide#21a Here we have the 1st Missionary to the Gentiles! (not Paul)
B. Salvation is a miracle. It changes lives. This man was sitting & clothed in his right mind.
   1. Maybe an important note for some, He saved him 1st before He did anything about his clothes. [so often we want the outside dealt with 1st]
      a) Clothed & in his right mind...The Lord changes our very nature! A completely new nature.
      b) Slide#21b Salvation is a heart experience. It is an inside job!³
      c) Slide#21c It changes lives. It also controls lives. He was now under he control of Jesus.
C. Slide#22 Prayer Requests: Interesting, Jesus answered the requests from the demons & the unbelievers…but not the new convert!
   1. Demons asked, Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.
   2. The Town folk, began to plead with Him to depart from their region.
   3. New Convert begged Him that he might be with Him. (& he was turned down!)
D. Slide#23 (19) Now that he’s Set Free! Can you imagine him walking into town? Up his street. Right up to his families door.
   1. (people crying) “Here comes Legion again!” & then…“Mother, I’m home!” (Ahhhhhhh!)
E. For the 1st time Jesus tells someone to go & tell others about His healing.
   1. Have you made your salvation public?
   2. All true testimony is testimony to Jesus Christ, as he stands on trial before the world. Not...A thinly disguised self-advertisement. [a testimony to what Jesus has done]
F. Slide#24 In the purpose of God, the whole treacherous trip across Galilee had been for this 1 man!
G. Jesus had to leave, but the man remained & bore faithful witness to the grace & power of Jesus Christ!
   1. He actually paved the way for Jesus to minister there later. Mark 7:31
H. Slide#25-27 Started with I am Legion...now he could say, I am Legend.

² Sidlow Baxter, Awake My Heart, pg.77.
³ Jerry Vines, Exploring the Gospels Mark, pg.89