Jesus and "Other" Deviants

A narrative labelling study of "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20

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Dedication

For my dad

Ian David Corlett

30.7.1945 - 3.4.2009

and my children

Jesse, Mikaylah and Sophie

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Synopsis

This thesis explores "aloneness" in within the gospel of Mark in connection to both the Gerasene person in Mark 5:1-20 and Jesus. Whilst "aloneness" is a modern sociological construct, this thesis argues that it can also be recognised within the first century setting within the gospel. The identification of "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20 is investigated through the methodology I have termed "narrative labelling", which has its foundations in reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory. Narrative labelling utilises the rhetoric of labelling and deviance within a narrative context to highlight "aloneness" within a first century text. Central to the exploration of "aloneness" is the discussion of deviance. Deviance is defined in both positive and negative ways. "Aloneness" is seen by the deviation from the social norms of this first century society, that is, through being "other" in some way.

The thesis argues that the narrator is the chief labeller within the narrative labelling framework. It is this figure that employs the rhetoric of labelling by which the reader is to view characters in terms of deviance, "otherness" and "aloneness". Within the pericope of Mark 5:1-20, there are four groups of characters; Jesus and the person with unclean spirits are the central characters, whilst the minor characters are the disciples and the Gerasene people. The narrative is filled with "otherness". From the outset, in an act of deviance, Jesus and the disciples travel to the "other" side of the sea. Immediately after disembarking, Jesus, deviant and alone, encounters the likewise deviant and alone unnamed person who has unclean spirits. Through the narrative descriptions of interaction, labels of deviance are seen, and characters isolated. For Jesus, his identity as God's son, the "in-breaker" of God's rule, is a label that both excludes him, but serves to make him prominent also. He has no equal. For the person with unclean spirits, his "otherness" remains, even when restored, and he is elevated to a place of prominence in spreading the message of Jesus' mercy to the Decapolis.

The exploration of "aloneness" within the thesis serves to remind contemporary readers that Jesus, like others, experienced "aloneness" in the gospel. This "aloneness" need not be seen as negative deviance, but in a positive light. "Aloneness", as seen in the Markan Jesus, gives hope for the

“in-breaking” of God’s kingdom. Just as the message of hope prevails in the gospel of the first century, so it continues for those who experience “aloneness” in contemporary society.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Nina Corlett-McDonald

June 2017

Acknowledgements

Several years ago when I was undergoing my Masters course, I was required to exegete Mark's Gethsemane story. In putting that essay together, it occurred to me that if the disciples misunderstood Jesus, then that must have been a terribly isolating thing for Jesus. Just as I have felt alone, so Jesus might have. As I considered this on a personal level I found myself challenged to explore the theme of "aloneness" further. This thesis is the result. I could not have completed this labour of love (and enormous amount of stress!) without the following people.

Firstly, to my husband Eric for his endless support and encouragement, without which, this thesis would never have seen the light of day. I pray that God will continue to light your way and our life together. To our children, Jesse, Mikaylah and Sophie, who do not know what it is to have a Mama who does not study. May you always love learning, and allow the God of life and Jesus, the good man, guide you always. You are beautiful young people.

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in the room with “Margaret and David” and always felt you wanted the best for me. Thank you to all of you for allowing me to be part of your lives, and letting me cry and laugh with you. Words are not enough to say thanks.

With a grateful heart,

Nina

June 2017

Reflections on an Ancient Text in a Modern World

The Word

A pen appeared, and the god said:
'Write what it is to be
man.' And my hand hovered
long over the bare page,

until there, like footprints
of the lost traveler, letters
took shape on the page's
blankness, and I spelled out

the word 'lonely'. And my hand moved
to erase it; but the voices
of all those waiting at life's
window cried out loud: 'It is true.'

R. S. Thomas[1]

When I reflect on my journey thus far, I am one of the many human persons I know who has found themselves alone and lonely. One need not be alone in order to be lonely. I have found myself lonely in a crowd of people. And I have relished being alone in my own company to read, relax and be refreshed. But loneliness can be an isolating and debilitating way of being. It can seem so grey, friendless and fear-filled, like a dark and empty void of nothingness, that one may feel consumed by its weight. For some it is a temporary place to be in, and for others it may be a life long space in which they exist. My own journey

[1] R. S. Thomas, *Laboratories of the Spirit* (London: Macmillan, 1975), 3. The words of R. S. Thomas came to me via a former lecturer and supervisor, Alan Cadwallader. We were discussing my thesis topic and the passion I have for "aloneness" and Mark's gospel.

with “aloneness” has at times resulted from feeling like I am on the outside of what others would term acceptable behaviour. Because I live according to gospel values of community, compassion and grace, this puts me at odds with broader first-world ideals of individualism, greed and materialism. In a sense, I am deviant in standing outside these expectations. This thesis, *Jesus and “other” deviants: a narrative labelling study of “aloneness” in Mark 5:1-20*, explores the issues of deviance, “otherness” and “aloneness” in order to help me make sense of this experience.

My parents were in ministry in the inner city suburbs of Melbourne, Australia in the 1970s and 1980s. Throughout my childhood, we had an “open house” policy. This meant that there would people in the house at all hours: country teenagers looking for a temporary bed whilst they looked for a more permanent place to live as they studied; alcoholics who were trying to get sober; indigenous people who would arrive a week after they said they would; beaten pregnant women who needed a friend; drug addicts looking to find their place in the world…all would find a place of welcome in our family home. In fact, I do not recall many meals where we were just the immediate family. There was always at least one other person in the home at meal times. These people always arrived as “other”, sometimes “deviant” and often as people who knew “aloneness”. They experienced community and table fellowship, and left to live their lives as “other” again in a way not too dissimilar to the person with unclean spirits in Mark 5:1-20, as we shall see.

Following dinner, Dad would pull out the Bible, regardless of who was there, and we would read a passage of scripture that was followed by a discussion of what the passage meant in its first century context, and then what it might mean for us from a contemporary perspective. We started our reading with the Gospel of Mark. We visited Genesis and Exodus, Luke, Acts and even Revelation amongst our family Bible study times. Mark was also the first gospel I read from beginning to end. It was my dad’s favourite because of its “earthiness”, as he called it. It was not written with the polished Greek of the other gospels and that appealed to Dad. He worked with people who were rough around the edges, and was a bit that way himself.

Eryl Davies is correct when he asserts

> Those who read the Bible cannot but be influenced by the community that taught them how to read it, and they will be conditioned to look at a text from a particular angle, informed by the interpretative disposition of the community of which they are part…the text will be viewed with eyes already informed by the aims, beliefs and presuppositions of the interpretative community…[2]

Since childhood and through my adolescence, Mark's narrative stayed with me too. Perhaps it was Dad's influence, but it was the gospel that spoke to me most powerfully. When my first marriage ended and I was alone in a world that judged and misunderstood me (after all, Christian marriages are supposed to "work, aren't they), it was the Markan Jesus and the flawed characters in this gospel story that again spoke to me about God's grace and forgiveness. This eventually led me to take up theological studies, with the encouragement of my new husband, in an effort to understand myself, as well as issues of faith, better. I discovered more questions than answers, I must say, but still Mark's gospel beckoned. During my Masters completion, as I journeyed with the Markan Passion narrative, it occurred to me that the Markan portrayal of Jesus is as one who is completely abandoned and alone at his death. Astoundingly, the author concludes the narrative with the silence of the women. I found this to be a striking notion as it hit a raw nerve in not only my own life story, but in the stories of many other people I knew, both personally and in my roles as chaplain/pastoral care worker and counsellor[3]:

> Debbie is in her late fifties, but she looks older. The lines etched into her face could tell a million stories of a life lived with abuse. She experienced domestic abuse growing up in her family unit, a parent's addiction to alcohol, all leading to a life Debbie describes as dysfunctional. Debbie, herself, fell into the same trap of alcoholism, of lying and "choosing the wrong bloke". She has two boys, born eight

[2] Eryl W. Davies, *Biblical Criticism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 27.
[3] The following stories are real stories. I have altered the names to protect the identity of the person's concerned.

years apart. Their fathers are also alcoholics. Debbie recalls being aggressive and chose a path to destruction and complete aloneness, landing herself in jail for ten months. It was in this time that she discovered Jesus in an intimate way. She'd gone to Sunday school growing up and heard the stories, but it was at this point of being rock bottom and alone that she "found" herself. Debbie joined Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and has recently celebrated her eighth "birthday" of being sober. She is a mentor to at least three other women who are on the sobriety journey in AA. Debbie also works alongside people with Kairos Ministries, supporting women who have been "inside" or have loved ones "inside" the prison system. Debbie is still in the process of restoring relationships with her sons, now 22 and 30. She has just completed a Vocational Education and Training course that will enable her to care pastorally for others in a more formal way. Debbie knows what it means to be "other", "deviant" and "alone". But she also knows what it means to be restored and made whole.

Ruth is in her mid-forties. Twelve months ago, her children were in prestigious schools. She and her husband had been successful business people. He husband survived major surgery a decade ago, but things had not been the same for him, or their relationship. Still they muddled through. 10 months ago, her husband vanished, only to be found several days later. He had taken his own life. People around her, who didn't understand and knew nothing about her, taunted and vilified her suggesting his suicide "must have been her fault". She talks about discovering who her true friends were. It was only in the months that followed her husband's death, and the ensuing investigation, that she learned of her husband's deception. He had embezzled a significant amount of their money, had been charged with a criminal offence and before he was to appear in court, he died. This has been a significant blow for Ruth. She feels angry and betrayed. She also talks of feeling sorry for her husband, who felt he needed to go to such lengths behind her back, then to cover his tracks. Ruth knows what it is to be "alone" and "other". But Ruth is resilient. She is courageous and strong. Ruth

gets up each day, and faces her children and her world bravely. She has lost a great deal: her fortune, her home, her husband, many friends. But she has a sense of humour, a faith in God and a dogged determination to move forward… to start again and be the example of hope for her children.

Simon is an educator in his early fifties. He is married with two adult children. He is a very contained man. By his own admission, Simon is resistant to change. He is a man of few words and buries his emotions and true feelings, keeping them to himself. He is, however, happy to discuss work and loves a social drink on a Friday afternoon with colleagues. He has a sense of humour and his students love being in his class, enjoying his irreverence and wit. Some years ago, I noticed Simon pacing the corridor outside my office. He suddenly appeared in my office, burst into tears and declared he needed to talk. He didn't know whom else to talk to but felt he could trust me with what he had to say. This was a man in pain, embarrassed and feeling very much "alone". He and his wife were experiencing some relationship difficulties. Simon knew they were drifting apart, and he didn't feel ready for the change. His wife had suggested ending the marriage. We chatted for some time and eventually Simon went home having been "heard", but still feeling "alone" in his issues. When I broached the subject again a few days later, Simon did not want to talk. Instead he re-built the protective wall around himself and avoided the issue. Fast-forward about 5 years, and Simon is ever aware that the issues he and his wife have struggled with are yet to be discussed or resolved. He wants to keep her happy at one level, to keep the status quo, but he is dissatisfied with their relationship. Whilst unhappy, he doesn't want to be "alone". Simon struggles with being vulnerable and open and is worried about what other people will think about him if the marriage fails. He is afraid to talk to (or cry in front of) his wife, lest he be seen as weak or not in control. And there are the bigger questions about finances and loneliness that are inevitable. Simon does not make any claim to faith. He feels acutely "alone" and "other".

These are just three very real examples of people in my own small world who have experienced the discomfort of “aloneness” and “otherness”. Whilst individual, their stories are not unique. Many people know what it is to experience “aloneness” and know what it is to be “other”. It is my assumption that many people in the early Christian church also felt this way. The gospel writers speak into this vulnerability and sense of “aloneness” and “otherness” with the message of hope found in Jesus. I argue that the Markan Jesus is portrayed as “alone” and “other”, even “deviant” but as such offers hope to a world of people in pain and despair, those who, themselves, feel “deviant”, “alone” and “other”.

Mark 5:1-20 (New Revised Standard Version)

5 *They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.* [2] *And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.* [3] *He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain;* [4] *for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him.* [5] *Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones.*

[6] *When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him;* [7] *and he shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."* [8] *For he had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"* [9] *Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many."* [10] *He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country.*

[11] *Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding;* [12] *and the unclean spirits begged him, "Send us into the swine; let us enter them."* [13] *So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea.*

[14] *The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened.* [15] *They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid.* [16] *Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine reported it.* [17] *Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood.*

[18] *As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him.* [19] *But Jesus refused, and said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you."* [20] *And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.*

Part I: Introduction

Chapter 1

The Question of "Aloneness"

1.1 Introduction

Terms such as "aloneness", "otherness" and "deviance" might seem out of place in the study of the gospels, yet in my years of journeying with people in various contexts within Melbourne and Adelaide, I have become aware of these themes in people's lives. Questions are raised in my own mind about the place of Jesus (and God) in the context of a person's journey with what it means to be alone and "other". I wondered if it were possible to feel and be "alone" and "other" and have a Jesus I could relate to. Some questions came to mind:

- Can Jesus, or God, speak into the lives of those struggling with feelings or experiences of "aloneness" and "otherness"?
- Did Jesus ever feel alone?
- Can Jesus be found to identify with "aloneness" or "otherness" in the gospels?
- What might it mean for the contemporary hearer/reader of the gospels to see a "deviant" Jesus who is "alone" and "other"?

Whilst these are hermeneutical questions, I looked to scripture in search of the answers. The Markan Jesus stood out to me as one who might be able to offer meaning and hope in times of "aloneness" and "otherness". The purpose of this thesis, then, is to move toward how an understanding of "aloneness" and "otherness" might be seen in the Gospel of Mark. I will do this via a method called "narrative labelling".

I argue that narrative labelling highlights the theme of "aloneness" and can be seen in a deviant Jesus in Mark 5:1-20. The exploration of Jesus as "deviant" or "other" is identified in both negative and positive (prominent), explicit and implicit ways via the use of labels.

It is hoped that these questions will be addressed throughout the thesis with the use of the Gospel of Mark. It is also hoped that in answering the questions, that a deeper understanding of "aloneness" and "otherness" in this gospel might eventually be applied in praxis.

1.2 Research methods

This thesis was born out of practical concerns around human "aloneness" and a particular understanding of the Markan Jesus by the current author; however, its focus is in biblical studies. Central to the thesis is the empowerment of those who find themselves in a state of "aloneness" or "otherness", and to view the Markan Jesus as the provider of hope.

As such, the thesis utilises a multidisciplinary approach and methodology I have called *narrative labelling*. Narrative labelling borrows elements from reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory, most specifically. From time to time, it is important to make general remarks about the historical aspects of the Gospel of Mark, but this thesis makes no claims to historical-critical approaches that are thorough and detailed in their discussions of history. I refer to aspects of modern social and psychological understandings in my understandings of "aloneness", "otherness" and "deviance". I lay no claim to this thesis being a psychological treatise, however.

I do believe that academic study and theological reflection overlap, an intended outcome of this present thesis. It is written in the hope of a deeper engagement with praxis for those "alone" and "other" in contemporary Western society. Ultimately, however, the thesis is a literary exploration that aims at offering a fresh perspective in which to engage with the Gospel of Mark.

1.3 Thesis structure

The thesis unfolds in four sections. Part I: Introduction is presented here and explores the background to the thesis. This section outlines the thesis topic, provides a broad overview of Mark's gospel and aspects of honour and purity in the first century. Key themes in Mark are summarised, and the terms of "aloneness", "otherness" and "deviance" are defined as they relate to this thesis. I conclude this section with the text of Mark 5:1-20. All English scripture is taken from the *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible, whilst

the Greek is from Aland and Aland (eds.) *Greek New Testament*, fourth edition.[4]

Part II *Background to Narrative Labelling* focuses on the three major influences to narrative labelling. In chapter 2, I explore reader-response analysis, and how this speaks into the perspective of "aloneness".[5] Chapters 3 and 4 consider narrative analysis and labelling theory as methodologies in terms of their usefulness in the study of "aloneness". These methodologies have connections with each other, and also influence narrative labelling.

Narrative Labelling as methodology is defined and expounded upon in Part III (Chapters 5 and 6). In this section, I will utilise narrative labelling to determine "aloneness" as a theme in Mark 5:1-20 (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 provides a broader sweep of further examples of narrative labelling in Mark 5:24-34, Mark 7: 24-30 and Mark 14:3-9. The final section, Part IV, *Implication for Narrative Labelling and a Reading of "Aloneness"*, the thesis offers ways forward, and explores implications for a reading of Mark utilising narrative labelling.

1.3.1 Declaration of bias

As a responsible reader, it is essential that I declare my own personal bias and context.[6] The lens through which I read the Markan text is that of a middle class, white, Australian woman. Most significantly, however, the current theme of "aloneness" is indeed a reflection of this person's experience. Whilst my own life experience has been significant in forming this hypothesis of "aloneness" as a theme in the Markan text, I use narrative labelling as a frame of reference for this first century text. The significance of "aloneness" in the society in which I live cannot be undervalued. The aim is to add my voice and continue the conversation on this ancient text of the Gospel of Mark, being

[4] Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger, eds., *The Greek New Testament*, Fourth edition ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1998).
[5] I use the term "analysis" rather than "criticism" when referring to reader-response and narrative critiques of scripture.
[6] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "The Reader in New Testament Interpretation," in *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*, ed. Joel B. Green (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2010), 263.

aware of its history, but not bound to it.[7] It is my hope that this thesis will provide a theological framework for a praxis of hope amidst this "aloneness".

1.4 Situating the thesis

The Gospel of Mark is "located at the intersection of historical, literary, and theological trajectories."[8] It is an historical document in the sense that it is from a given period of time, and reflects thoughts about Jesus and his mission and ministry in an historical space. It is also a written document, most likely read or performed to an audience.[9] As a written narrative it has a form and structure of its own.[10] There are many literary devices employed by the author. The Greek is unpolished and rhetoric is used to convince the audience that Jesus is God's beloved son (Mark 1:11, 9:7). But theologically, the Gospel of Mark offers the hearer/reader insights into the character of Jesus and the nature of God.

Much has been said about the Gospel of Mark regarding authorship and date, setting and audience, and literary themes. It is not my purpose to discuss all aspects of the background to the gospel here, but I will briefly summarise key aspects of authorship, date, setting, audience and key themes. This serves to highlight the importance of a study of "aloneness" as enhancing contemporary understandings of Mark's gospel.

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[7] Robert M. Fowler, "Reader-Response Criticism: Figuring Mark's Reader," in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical studies.*, ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992): 50-83, 54-55.

[8] Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 24.

[9] Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 15-17; Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark's Audience: The Literary and Social Setting of Mark 4:11-12*, vol. 33, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 42. See also Joel Marcus, *Mark: 1-8* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 68-69 and Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 1. Within the thesis, I use the terms hearer or reader, or a combination of these when referring to the audience.

[10] Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas, Texas: Word, 1989), ix-xii. See also Philip Carrington, *According To Mark* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 4, and Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 4-5 as examples of broader Markan structure. This thesis does not concern itself greatly with this aspect of Mark.

1.4.1 Authorship, date, setting

It is difficult to know with any certainty who the author of the gospel was.[11] The early church assumed the author to be "John Mark" an associate of Paul.[12] Mark, as a name, was popular in the Roman Empire.[13] Vincent Taylor suggests that Mark was an interpreter of Peter, and was probably the John Mark of Acts and a companion of Paul. This is the only Mark known to us via scripture by name. [14] But there is little known about this Mark, and little evidence to suggest he is the gospel writer. For scholars such as Mary Ann Beavis and Joel Marcus, questions concerning the negativity around, and failure of, Peter in the gospel narrative are raised.[15] If John Mark was an interpreter of Peter, and the author of the gospel, why would he cast Peter in such problematic and often negative terms? Ultimately there is great uncertainty about the actual identity of the author of the gospel. The author we identify as "Mark" was not an eyewitness to Jesus' life and ministry, and did not get information from eyewitnesses. The author did not know any other gospels, but this gospel was written using living Christian traditions.[16] Throughout this thesis I will be referring to the author as "Mark" as handed down by tradition.

As with authorship, there is uncertainty over how early the narrative of Mark was known. However, it pre-dates Mark's gospel, written somewhere between 65-75CE, probably around 70CE.[17] In terms of setting or place of writing, there

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[11] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, xxvi-xxix; Ernest Best, *Mark: The Gospel As Story* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1983), 21-25; Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 10-11; Hugh Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976), 31; Robert H. Stein, *Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 1-8; Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel According To St Mark* (Massachsetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 5-7; Best, *Mark*, 21-25.

[12] Beavis, *Mark*, 9; Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 18-24; Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, xxvi.

[13] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 17. See also Carrington, *According To Mark*, 28.

[14] Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1952), 7-8, 26-30; Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 18.

[15] Beavis, *Mark*, 9. See also Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 24.

[16] Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 9-13.

[17] Beavis, *Mark*, 9. Beavis suggests that the dating of the gospel is somewhere between 49 CE, when Emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from the city, and 70 CE when the Romans defeated Jerusalem following the Jewish Rebellion between 66-70 CE. C. Clifton Black, *Mark*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011), 31, suggests 70 CE as the date of the gospel. See also Stein, *Mark*, 12; Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 39, suggests a writing of the gospel between 69-74 CE; For as dating between 65-70 CE see Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, xxxi; Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 25, and William C. Placher, *Mark* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 2; Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 7-8, 32, suggests a 65-67 CE dating, following the death of Peter; Hooker, *The Gospel According To St Mark*, 8, suggests Mark's gospel was written after the events of 70 CE.

are three main possibilities, according to scholarship: Rome, which most scholars tend to argue for, Syria and Galilee.[18] The argument for authorship in Rome has a traditional connection of Peter and Rome by the early church fathers.[19] Peter was martyred in 64CE by Nero further suggesting a Roman context for the gospel. Joel Marcus, however, argues for a greater mention of Nero, which is absent in the gospel itself if Rome is to be taken seriously as the place of authorship.[20] This is a strong point but given the persecution of Christians at this time, might be an argument from silence. From the gospel writer's perspective, there would be no need to be specific about who is doing the persecuting, as that would have been well known, but instead to tell the "good news" of Jesus is what was important.

The argument for a Syrian writing of Mark's gospel connects the events of the Jewish Revolt against the Romans in 66-73CE. For Marcus, the gospel contains more opposition to Jews than Romans. Despite a lack of evidence for persecution of Christians in Palestine at this time, persecutions were known to spread from Palestine into Syria.[21] Eugene Boring suggests that Syria is probable because the Gospel of Matthew was written there. His argument continues that Matthew relied on Mark and thus would have been close by in order to know Mark.[22] Just as there is no real evidence to prove Boring's theory, I also find no evidence to agree with Marcus' assertion that the gospel writer is opposed to the Jews. In the Markan gospel, Jesus' disciples are Jewish

[18] As with date and authorship, scholars disagree on the actual setting of Mark's community, and the place where the gospel was composed. For Rome as setting, see Beavis, *Mark*, 10; William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1974), 21-25; Martin Hengel, *Studies In The Gospel of Mark*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1985), 28; John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, Sacra Pagina. (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2002), 38-46; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Peabody: Massachussetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 11-12; Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 7-8, 32; Best, *Mark*, 18-19, 35; Stein, *Mark*, 12; In favour of a Syrian setting are Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 28, 30-36; Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 17-19; Howard Clark Kee, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 100-105; For a Galilee setting, see Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*, trans. James Boyce (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), 151-206; Carrington, *According To Mark*, 28; Undecided as to the setting of Mark are Black, *Mark*, 27-30, 36; Hooker, *The Gospel According To St Mark*, 8; Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 54-55.
[19] Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 17-19.
[20] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 30-33.
[21] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 33-36.
[22] Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 19.

(Mark 3:13-19) and his main mission field is in Galilee. There is evidence, however, that the Jewish leaders and Jesus are in conflict (Mark 2:15-17; 3:1-6, 20-30; 8:11-3 as examples). One of the key arguments against a Galilean setting are the numerous geographical errors the author of the gospel makes concerning the region. Our pericope of Mark 5:1-20 is a case in point.

The geographical setting and location of Gerasa within the Gospel of Mark is fraught with textual difficulty. Scholars (see note 23 below) have discussed and debated whether the exorcism could possibly have occurred in "the country of Gerasa" (τὴν χώραν τῶν Γερασηνῶν). The use of Γερασηνῶν by Mark is textually the most difficult issue within this story.[23] Even so, as Gerasa is the earliest and most difficult reading of place, it is more likely the most authentic reading.[24] The main reason for the uncertainty of Gerasa as the place of the exorcism is its location. Gerasa is not situated near cliffs or the sea as the narrator suggests. It is modern day Jerash, 48 kilometres (30 miles) south-east of the Sea of Galilee or two days journey from the sea. Gadara is nearly 10 kilometres (6 miles) south-east of the Sea of Galilee but has no cliffs or embankments. The other possibility, Gergesa, is actually situated by the sea.[25] However, the author of the gospel of Mark clearly writes that the exorcism

[23] It is given a [C] rating in Metzger's Greek New Testament, as there is dispute about the appropriateness of Gerasa as the place for this exorcism to occur. The reference to Gerasa, as place, is found in manuscripts Sinaiticus and Vaticanus from the fourth century, and the Bezae Cantabrigiensis from the fifth century. In contrast to this Matthew 8:28 has the same incident in "Gadara" (Γαδαρηνῶν), which is in manuscripts Alexandrinus and Ephraemi Rescriptus from the fifth century. One should also note the use of "Gergesenes" (Γεργεσηνῶν) from a later edition of Sinaiticus, Paris manuscript (eighth century), St Gall and Tbilisi manuscripts (ninth century). Aland, Aland, Karavidopoulos, Martini, and Metzger, *The Greek New Testament*, 10, 135. See also R. Alan Culpepper, *Mark*, Smyth & Helwys Bible commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2007), 165. See also Moloney, *Gospel of Mark*, 102. Some scholars defer to these later translations of place. Philip Carrington, for example, when writing about Mark's narrative, immediately defers to Matthew's use of Gadara without any explanation. See Carrington, *According To Mark*, 118. Similarly, Alan Cole initially uses "Gadarene" demoniac, and then goes on to use the term "Gerasene" three times. His excuse is that there are variants by which the town is known. No other scholar I have read suggests this! R. Alan Cole, *Mark*, Tyndale (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 97, 99-100. Robert Gundry refers to the place of this exorcism as Gergesenes, albeit hesitantly. R.H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1993), 248, 255-256.

[24] Richard T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2002), 226. See also Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 263-264 and Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 342.

[25] Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2001), 180; Douglas R. A. Hare, *Mark* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 64.

took place in Gerasa.[26] Perhaps the evangelist has little or no knowledge of the geographical area. Significantly, the meaning of the word "Gerasa" is "to banish" and thus, it may be used quite intentionally.[27] The unclean spirits are banished from the region, just as the pigs and Jesus will be. The geographical tension matches the tension within the story. It is a place of ritual impurity.[28] The implication here is that Gerasa is a place of "otherness", thus "aloneness".

The original setting for the composition of the gospel, be it in Rome, Syria or Galilee, is not central for the purpose of this thesis and information on the gospel's setting can be found elsewhere as noted. More certain is that, wherever the setting, the audience is a struggling community in crisis.[29]

1.4.2 Audience in context

As can be shown thus far, there is much uncertainty surrounding the origins of Mark's gospel. This thesis does not make any claims to be historical in its focus, that is, it is not an exercise in historical criticism; however, I believe that a basic understanding of the first century world is helpful for a reading of "aloneness" in the Markan narrative, especially of the concepts of honour and purity.

Much has been written about the well-organised and structured first century Mediterranean society.[30] But this is not to say that social groupings had the same understandings of order, as there were "various cultures" within this

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[26] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 278. See also Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 275-277; Black, *Mark*, 135; Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 148.

[27] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 342 and Collins, *Mark*, 267. See also Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 278; Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 275-277; Black, *Mark*, 135; Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 148. Two alternatives, Gadara, which Matthew uses (Matthew 8:28-9:1) is 9.6 kilometres from the sea, whilst Gergesa, which is actually by the sea. See Carrington, *According To Mark*, 118; Cole, *Mark*, 97, 99-100; Gundry, *Mark*, 248, 255-256; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*, 180; Hare, *Mark*, 64.

[28] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 277. See also Ched Myers, *Binding The Strong Man. A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988), 190-191.

[29] Black, *Mark*, 36; Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 54-55; Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 17. See also Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 28, 30 and Best, *Mark*, 18-19.

[30] Philip F. Esler, "The Mediterranean context of early Christianity," in *The Early Christian World*, ed. Philip F. Esler (Milton Park, Oxon: Routledge, 2000): 3-25, and also Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2001), which discuss first century Mediterranean societies in detail. See also F. Gerald Downing, *Order and (Dis)Order in the First Christian Century: A General Survey of Attitudes*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 1.

society.[31] Smaller groups like Pharisees and Christians had different nuances to the way they perceived order.[32] Order, however, was valued highly as a general rule, as was unity.[33] Order took the shape of rules and expectations, a framework in which people knew their place within society. These frameworks are known as boundaries or social norms.[34] Maintaining order meant that everything had a place. And just as order was significant, it also had an opposite, disorder. Within the first century, there was a broad understanding of this concept of opposites, known as dualism.[35] Mark's gospel contains many examples of this dualism and paradox, where literary binary oppositions abound.[36] Mark 5:1-5 demonstrates some of this dualism in its presentation of order and disorder, dead and alive, bound and free.[37] In addition to these, there was a strong understanding of good versus evil. Goodness brought about honour and was pure. Evil was deviant and brought dishonour, meaning things were "out of place" and polluted.[38] "Illness, impurity, sin and being shamed" caused dishonour.[39] These things undermined one's social status and meant exclusion.[40] The first century worldview was defined by purity codes, honour and personal identity. Each of these is interrelated and interconnected, and understanding these elements of first century society helps us comprehend the concept of "aloneness" in the Markan narrative.

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[31] David A. deSilva, *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenaince in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Atlanta, Geogia: Scholars Press, 1995), 36-37.
[32] Downing, *Order and (Dis)Order*, 2.
[33] Downing, *Order and (Dis)Order*, 14, 35.
[34] For a more detailed discussion on the establishment of boundaries and norms see Mary Douglas, *Man in Society; Patterns of Human Organization* (London: Macdonald, 1964), and Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár, "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences," *Annual Review of Sociology* 28(2002): 167-195. Lamont and Molnár discuss boundaries and the formation of identity in this article. There is a discussion of symbolic and social boundaries in particular. See also Francesca Polletta and James M. Jasper, "Collective Identity and Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 27(2001): 283-305 for a discussion on collective identity and the formation of social movements and their boundaries.
[35] Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names. The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* (Sonoma, California: Polebridge Press, 1988), 10, 18-19.
[36] See France, *Gospel of Mark*, 20; Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 37-38; David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel.*, Third ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2012), 45.
[37] Michael Willett Newheart, *My Name is Legion: The Story and Soul of the Gerasene Demoniac* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), 74.
[38] I borrow this term "out of place" from Malina and Neyrey. Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 222-223; Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 9-11.
[39] Rick F. Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power: Rhetoric, Ritual and Metaphor in Ancient Mediterranean Culture* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2010), 51.
[40] Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 51; Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 210-211.

Honour and maintaining one's honour was one of the important values in the first century world.[41] Honour was highly valued by both individuals and social groups. It was "a claim to worth" bound up with one's gender and social status.[42] "Ascribed" honour was that which one received because of who one was and not for any particular action performed. "Acquired" honour, however, was earned via various social interactions "in which persons hassle each other according to socially defined rules in order to gain the honor of another."[43] Honour, and the social standing that went with it, was determined by a person's birth. Upholding honour brought with it responsibilities to maintain one's honour and that of one's family. At all times, honour was to be protected, as it was considered limited, and, where possible, was to be enhanced.[44] Any interaction that occurred outside of the family or closest friends was seen as a contest to one's honour. It was therefore important to consider the implications of any action and how it impacted upon one's honour. Relationships were considered mutual alliances that assisted in maintaining or improving one's social standing, reputation and honour.[45] People in first century society knew their place and their role in life.[46] Because the purity classifications meant

[41] I note here that there are several disputes about how important honour is. For Malina it is central, whilst Downing, Levasheff, Chance and Kressel think it just one of several aspects to first century life. Malina, *The New Testament World*; F. Gerald Downing, "'Honor' among Exegetes," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (1999): 53-73; John K. Chance, "The Anthropology of Honor and Shame: Culture, Values and Practice," *Semeia* 68(1994): 139-151 and Gideon M. Kressel, "An Anthropologist's Response to the Use of Social Science Models in Biblical Studies," *Semeia* 68(1994): 153-161.

[42] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 30.

[43] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 33. Drake Levasheff, "Jesus of Nazareth, Paul of Tarsus, and the Early Christian Chllenge to Traditional Honor and Shame Values," (UCLA2013), 9. I note that Crook suggests the use of "attributed" and "distributed" instead of "ascribed" or "acquired" honour. See Zeba Crook, "Honor, Shame and Social Status Revisited," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 3 (2009): 591-611

[44] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 54, 96-97. See also Ritva H. Williams, "The Mother of Jesus at Cana: A social-science interpretation of John 2:1-12," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 59, no. 4 (1997): 679-692, 683; Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "Honor: Core Value in the Biblical World," in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris (London: Routledge, 2010): 109-125, 112; Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in its Greco-Roman Social Setting* (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2012), 40; Levasheff, "Jesus of Nazareth," 1, 2, 7.

[45] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 34-37 and Williams, "The mother of Jesus at Cana", Williams, 683.

[46] Sean Freyne, " Bandits in Galilee: A Contribution to the Study of Social Conditions in First Century Palestine," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Ernest S Frerichs Jacob Neusner, Peder Borgen, Richard Horsely (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988): 50-68, 62. This book deals with the banditry that was evident in society in during the Roman occupation of Palestine. According to Freyne, the south was more fanatical about their faith. Social tensions existed in Galilee, especially between rich and poor. This aspect of society, whilst interesting, is not particularly relevant for this essay. Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a*

everything had a place, one was considered deviant and "out of place" if one did not abide by the purity system.[47]

Purity rules, as defined in the Holiness code of Leviticus 17-26 provided guidelines for remaining pure in relationship with God and others, especially for Jews.[48] These were essential in all aspects of society and enabled a social coherence or wholeness.[49] "Purity was equivalent to wholeness, and anything or anyone who was not whole was perceived as impure, having the potential to pollute the entire community."[50] Purity rules provided the boundaries and norms by which these first century peoples lived and related. For the Jewish people, these regulations were important. There was a definite hierarchy in terms of purity for Israelites where the religious leaders were seen at the top, followed by the Israelites with Gentiles (non Jews) at the bottom.[51]

Distinctions can be made concerning ritual impurity and moral impurity.[52] Ritual impurity concerns being excluded from ritual activities. It can impact on one's status, and the status of someone around the ritually impure person. Ritual impurity is generally unavoidable and is usually non-permanent. Examples of ritual impurity are birth, death, sex. None of these is sinful, except if one does not follow correct purification rituals.[53] Moral impurity concerns

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Mediterranean Society? : Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), argues that the Jewish people lived counter-culturally because of their adherence to the Torah, even though they were occupied by Rome.

[47] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 10, 18.

[48] Cheryl S. Pero, *Liberation From Empire: Demonic Possession and Exorcism in the Gospel of Mark*, Studies in Biblical Literature (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2013), 156.

[49] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 169.

[50] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 156.

[51] For original discussion of purity scale see Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus (translated from the German by F.H. & C.H Cave)* (London: SCM Press, 1969), 272. Also Malina, *The New Testament World*, 174, 176. It should be noted that relations between Jews and Gentiles had periods of peace and synchronicity. Even so, Jews, whilst accepted in many large Greek cities, were unable to participate in public events and ceremonies. By the time of Jesus, relations were not always positive. See Stephen M. Wylen, *The Jews in the Time of Jesus: An Introduction* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 43. As such, I have used the hierarchical social structures outlines here as part of my own discussion and analysis.

[52] Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (London: Oxford University Press, 2000), 22. Klawans notes that the Bible does not distinguish between the types of purity in terms of language, but that there is a distinction to be made when translating these texts.

[53] Klawans, *Impurity*, 22-25; See also Jonathan Klawans, "Notions of Gentile Impurity in Ancient Judaism," *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 20, no. 2 (1995): 285-312, 288-290.

acts that are deemed immoral according to scripture.[54] It is these acts that lead to sin, and to social status being reduced. According to Jonathan Klawans, Gentiles were exempt from the ritual purity system and were not the source of ritual impurity. They were, however, morally impure due their practice of idolatry and food practices.[55] This is why they are excluded and seen in the lowest status possible according to Jewish customs. Gentiles knew where they stood in relation to Jewish custom.

The expectations of first century society dictated that people had boundaries they were to stay within in order to maintain ritual purity.[56] Moving out of these boundaries was frowned upon and could lead to dishonour of both the individual concerned, as well as their kin.[57] Jesus, too, was expected to abide by these rules (for example, Mark 1:21-28; 2:23-28; 3:1-6). The Markan Jesus, however, intentionally travels to the "other" side of the sea to the Gentile territories (Mark 4:35; 5:1). Rather than remain "pure" he is an example of the paradox, which exists in the Markan gospel, that Jesus is God's son, but allows himself to be defiled.[58] In purity terms, he places himself "outside". He is "out of place", "other". Likewise, the person with unclean spirits is also "outside" as he lives among the tombs and is afflicted cruelly by the unclean spirits (Mark 5:2-5). This person, too, is "other".

For the writer of the Markan gospel, crossing from one side of the sea to the other distinguishes between Jewish and Gentile missions.[59] There is movement between the "known" and the "unknown". The known consists of the purity codes that provided systemic classification of pure versus impure. The known

[54] Examples of these are sexual sin (Leviticus 18:24-30), idolatory (Leviticus 19:31; 20:1-3), murder (Numbers 35:33-34) as examples. See Klawans, *Impurity*, 26; Klawans, "Gentile Impurity", 288-290.
[55] Klawans, "Gentile Impurity", 290-298.
[56] See Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 9, 10-11. Also Ritva H. Williams, "Purity, Dirt, Anomalies, and Abominations," in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris (London: Routledge, 2010): 207-219, provides an overview of purity in the first century world.
[57] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 30ff. Also Talbott Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 44.
[58] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 155. I note Pero suggests Jesus did not become defiled but remains pure and spreads wholeness. I agree with the latter contention that Jesus brings wholeness, but I suggest that the paradox of Jesus being "other" and bringing wholeness is part of the Markan paradox.
[59] Werner H. Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus.* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 30-42.

dictated upholding the honour of one's self and one's kin. The unknown existed outside the common expectations of this culture and society.

1.4.2.1 Gender: honour and purity

There are various thoughts about gender in a first century context. It is clear that the society was patriarchal and hierarchical, but there are incidences of women who have honour bestowed on them.[60] Honour did look different for men and women in this context. The value of honour is "embodied by males and shame (here, in a positive sense, as concern for reputation) as embodied by females. Male honour is related to the struggle to preserve the shame of kinswomen."[61] Maintaining a system of honour and shame enabled the society to "enforce" values that were important. Attached to this is purity. Women also had to maintain purity. As such, they were considered ritually impure at times of birth and menstruation, but were restored to normal activity after the completion of purification rituals.[62] This could affect the status of those around them, and others were also to follow rituals in order to relate to the ritually impure woman.

Honour and purity are but two values of first century society. Notwithstanding the diversity within that society, these values were important. Upholding honour and purity meant that one was accepted. To stand in opposition to these values meant that one deviated from what was acceptable. In this they risk standing alone and being seen as "other". Certainly, as I argue in the thesis, the Markan narrator depicts a Jesus who is willing to go, and be, the "other". This thesis does not concern itself specifically with historical methods of analysis, but is interested in historical aspects in as far as it is useful in assisting with a narrative labelling exploration of "aloneness".

1.4.3 Literary features and key themes

Mark's use of Greek is very unpolished. He frequently uses 'and' (καὶ) as well as 'immediately' (εὐθὺς) in order to keep the narrative moving. The author

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[60] Crook, "Honor, Shame", 604-609. See also Amy-Jill Levine, "Gender, Judaism, and Literature: Unwelcome Guests in Household Configuarions," *Biblical Interpretation* 11, no. 2 (2003): 239-249

[61] Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion. The Power of the Hysterical Woman.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 28. See also Levasheff, "Jesus of Nazareth," 11-12.

[62] Klawans, *Impurity*, 22-23.

uses intercalation (often termed a 'Markan sandwich'). The story is told via an omniscient narrator who characterises people as either for or against Jesus.[63] It contains a passion narrative, parables, eschatological discourse, controversy stories, and miracles.[64] The overriding aspect of the narrative is that it is "good news" (Mark 1:1).[65] The gospel is also very pastoral, a point which I will come back to later in the thesis.[66]

The major themes in the Gospel of Mark concern Christology, discipleship, the kingdom of God, secrecy and eschatology. [67] Some have argued the gospel has military overtones.[68] More recently, exorcism as a theme in Mark has been discussed.[69] It is not the purpose of this thesis to comment on any of these in great detail as this is done elsewhere. I will, however, briefly outline each and comment on if and how they might relate to "aloneness" and "otherness".

1.4.3.1 Christology

Markan Christology concerns itself with more than the titles used of Jesus and can only be comprehended through the narrative of the gospel as a whole.[70] The titles of "Messiah", "Son of God" and "Son of Man" are important, but it is only in the course of the narrative that they can be fully understood.[71] The emphasis on titles is a later development within the Christian tradition. "[T]itles are simply a form of shorthand - a useful way of summarising beliefs - which became more important at a later stage as confessions of Christian

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[63] Beavis, *Mark*, 17-20. See also Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 60; Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, xxii-xxiii; Placher, *Mark*, 8.
[64] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 59; Beavis, *Mark's Audience: The Literary and Social Setting of Mark 4:11-12*, 33, 58-66. See also Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 78-88. Here Taylor suggests that the Markan material consists of pronouncement stories, miracle stories, stories about Jesus, Markan constructions, summary statements and sayings and parables.
[65] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, xxiv; Hooker, *The Gospel According To St Mark*, 19.
[66] Best, *Mark*, 51, and my Chapter 7. A
[67] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, xxxviii-xl. Also France, *Gospel of Mark*, 20-34.
[68] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, is a chief proponent of this method.
[69] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, presents exorcism as a lens in which to view Mark's narrative.
[70] France, *Gospel of Mark*, 23-25.
[71] Frank Matera, *New Testament Christology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 26; Robert C. Tannehill, *The Shape of the Gospel: New Testament Essays* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2007), 161-187; Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Mark's Jesus. Characterization as Narrative Christology* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2009), 5. Malbon's book explores Jesus in terms of narrative christological terms. See also Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 17 and Augustine Musopole, "The Word 'Beginning' in Mark's Prologue," *Asia Journal of Theology* 24, no. 1 (2010): 52-64.

faith."[72] But titles are a literary way for the author to influence (I argue label) the hearer's understanding of who the Markan narrator believes Jesus is.[73] In terms of the narrative, Jesus is portrayed as having authority (for example, Mark 1: 22, 27), and those around him seek to answer the question about who he is (Mark 2:7; 4:41; 6:2). The Markan author takes the hearer/reader on a journey using words, actions and titles to disclose (or label) who Jesus is. With regard to "aloneness" and "otherness" Christology is an important consideration. On the one hand, the titles point to a Markan Jesus as God's son, and yet, as I demonstrate, within the narrative the explicit and implicit titles and descriptions of Jesus are narrative labels used to align Jesus with the "other" both within the narrative story world and within contemporary society.

1.4.3.2 Discipleship

Following Jesus' baptism and time in the desert (Mark 1: 9-13), Jesus gathers a group of disciples around him (beginning in Mark 1:16). Discipleship is a significant theme within the gospel and means to follow "the way" (τὴν ὁδὸν, see Mark 1:3) of Jesus.[74] This call to follow and come after Jesus on "the way" means denying one's self and following the way of suffering.[75] In the Markan context, the Twelve are often seen as failures,[76] where others, like the women and other minor characters, are seen in more favourable terms with regard to discipleship.[77] It may seem strange to discuss discipleship when the incident at Gerasa does not overtly feature the disciples; however, there is still a point to be made here about discipleship. Often Mark uses the Twelve's failure as a

[72] Hooker, *The Gospel According To St Mark*, 19.
[73] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, xi. "Christology, as the word is used in the jargon of theologians, is about the positive assessments of Jesus of Nazareth in terms of the Jewish role and status of Messiah or Christ as presented in gospel and subsequent traditions." See also Paul Danove, "The Rhetoric of the Characterization of Jesus as the Son of Man and Christ in Mark," *Biblica* 84(2003): 16-34, 21.
[74] Ernest Best, *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel According to Mark* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 2, 5.
[75] Best, *Mark*, 85-86. See also Stein, *Mark*, 26-33.
[76] For example, Leif E. Vaage, "An Other Home: Discipleship in Mark as Domestic Asceticism," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (2009): 741-761, especially 751, 754, 761.
[77] Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Major Importance of the Minor Characters in Mark," in *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament*, ed. Edgar V. McKnight and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon (Forge Valley, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1994): 58-86; Mary Ann Beavis, "Women as Models of Faith in Mark," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 18(1988): 3-9 and Jane Kopas, "Outsiders in the Gospels: Marginality as a Source of Knowledge," *The Way* 33, no. 2 (1993): 117-126.

point of teaching about discipleship, rather than a story of failure.[78] They "are not flat foils to Jesus but active, though faltering, participants in the kingdom reality that Jesus both proclaims and enacts."[79] Being a disciple of Jesus and following him "on the way" necessarily means that one is "other" in terms of being counter-cultural.[80] This can lead to a sense of "aloneness" as I explore later in the thesis.

1.4.3.3 Kingdom of God, Secrecy and Eschatology

The themes of the kingdom of God, secrecy and eschatology are connected. The Markan narrative frequently discusses the "kingdom of God" (Mark 1:15; 4:11, 26, 30; 9:1, 47; 10:14, 15, 23, 24, 25; 12:34; 14:25). From the outset in Mark 1:15, it heralds what Jesus' ministry is actually about "here and now" in the Markan community.[81] God's reign has broken through, and is also presently "in-breaking" with Jesus ministry.[82] This "in-breaking" kingdom is seen in the Markan Jesus' action of preaching, teaching, exorcisms, healings and care for the least in his society. For the gospel writer, Jesus' engagement in these activities demonstrates the will of God.[83] Jesus is God's son (Mark 1:[1]) and this is echoed following Jesus' baptism (Mark 1:11) and at the transfiguration (Mark 9:7). Biblical scholars discuss aspects of "Son of God" (and "Son of Man" – both Christological titles) and the meaning the gospel writer places on them.[84]

According to some, Mark has a secret. The secret is that Jesus is the "Son of God", the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God. But not everyone can recognise

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[78] Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 128-129.

[79] Suzanne Watts Henderson, *Christology and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 13-14. In contrast to this view, Richard Horsley acknowledges the failure of the disciples, but disregards discipleship as a theme at all. For Horsley, the narrative set out by Mark continues regardless of the disciples' failure. See Richard A Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story. The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel.* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 79, 85, 94.

[80] I note that the Jesus followers were not the only group to be seen as counter-cultural (for example, the Essenes and Sadducees), but it is this early group of Christians that I am focusing on for this thesis.

[81] Werner H. Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark. A New Place and a New Time.* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974).

[82] Culpepper, *Mark*, 52. Also C. Drew Smith, "'This is my Beloved Son: Listen to Him': Theology and Christology in the Gospel of Mark " *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 24(2002): 53-86, 61.

[83] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 114-115.

[84] Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 31-38; Best, *Mark*, 81.

or comprehend the "in-breaking" of the kingdom of God (Mark 4:1-34). The kingdom of God is counter-cultural, and the Markan Jesus often silences those who want to speak freely about him and his work in bringing in the kingdom (Mark 1:43-44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26).[85] Harry Chronis contends that the humans who encounter Jesus are told to stay silent, whilst the demons seem to "know" who he is.[86] However, Chronis is not correct in his assertion that all humans who encounter Jesus are told to stay silent. As we will see, in the pericope of Mark 5:1-20 the unclean spirits in Mark 5:7 recognise Jesus, whilst the townsfolk do not (Mark 5:17). Jesus places an exception on the restored person and requests him *to* tell his story (Mark 5:19). This is an example of the Markan Jesus calling on the restored "other" to proclaim the action of the "Son of God". This example aside, it appears that the secrecy motif is a literary device to define the paradox of Jesus as Messiah, God's anointed one, who will suffer the shame of crucifixion but rise again.[87] Like the mustard seed, the kingdom of God will bloom in God's time.[88] The Markan Jesus challenges hearers/readers of the gospel to live as Jesus did, at the risk of losing their life, as he does.[89] This "in-breaking" reign of God's kingdom in the narrative story world of Mark's gospel is subversive and seen in Jesus' words and deeds as he cares for those who are outside the boundaries of first century social norms and expectations (that is, they are "deviant". See 1.5.3 below).[90]

Connected to the secret "kingdom of God" motif is eschatology as a theme in Mark's gospel. Eschatology is "all about the fulfillment within history of the

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[85] Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 16.

[86] "'The Son of Man' conceals 'the Son of God', to all eyes but the readers' until 15:39 [the centurion's remark at the crucifixion], under a surprising and paradoxical contradiction." Harry L. Chronis, "To Reveal and To Conceal: A Literary-Critical Perspective on 'the Son of Man' in Mark," *New Testament Studies* 51, no. 4 (2005): 459-481, 467. See also Sean Freyne, "The Galilean Jesus and a Contemporary Christology," *Theological Studies* 70, no. 2 (2009): 281-297, 286.

[87] Danove, "Rhetoric of Characterization", 28.

[88] France, *Gospel of Mark*, 31-32.

[89] Malbon, *Mark's Jesus*, 21, 55.

[90] Bruce J. Malina, *The Social Gospel of Jesus: The Kingdom of God in Mediterranean Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 37-69. It is worth noting that there exists a paradox in the Markan narrative where the Pharisees are the ones who might be seen as deviant in that they disobey the Torah to care for the marginalised. The twist in the narrative world is that Jesus is the one who follows this, but is considered on the outer in the Markan literary world.

promises of God."[91] This by no means signals the end, rather a new beginning of restoration under God.[92] Apocalyptic traditions of the first century held dualistic worldviews of good versus evil.[93] In fact, most of the conflict situations in the gospel are around good and evil. "Mark's story is one of conflict, and conflict is the major force that propels the story forward."[94] The Markan Jesus is the protagonist of good versus evil. Instances of conflict arise with various religious and political leaders, in particular, the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, chief priests, scribes and elders (Mark 2:6-11, 16-17; 3:1-6; 7:1-23; 8:11-13; 9:14-29; 10:2-9; 11:27-33; 12:13-27; 14:53-65; 15:1-5, 29-32). The religious authorities "believe they are the ones God has appointed to be the rulers and guardians of his chosen people Israel."[95] Conflict occurs at a cosmic level where Jesus and the forces of evil, that is, Satan and the unclean spirits, oppose each other (for example Mark 1:12-13; 3:20-30; 5:1-20). Craig Evans suggests "Jesus' exorcistic and healing power is such that his critics accused him of being in the league with Satan."[96] For some biblical scholars the story of the Gerasene person has parallels with that in Mark 3:20-30. In that passage, Jesus is associated with Beelzebul by the Scribes (Mark 3:22), but he questions how Satan can cast out Satan (Mark 3:23). In Mark 5:1-20, Jesus is in fact the strong man he refers to in 3:27 who can cast out Satan.[97] But conflict is not seen only with those who oppose Jesus at a religious or cosmic level. At times, Jesus' own family (Mark 3:21-34) and disciples are shown to be in conflict with him (Mark 4:40; Mark 9:33-37). "Otherness" is identifiable in conflict situations where one person or group is pitted against another person or group. Each side sees the opposing side as "other". Jesus, in the context of

[91] France, *Gospel of Mark*, 32. See also C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935); George R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1986), and Keith D. Dyer, *The Prophecy on the Mount: Mark 13 and the Gathering of the New Community* (Berne: European Academic Publishers, 1998), whose focus is on Mark 13.
[92] France, *Gospel of Mark*, 32.
[93] Howard Clark Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World: A Study in Sociohistorical Method* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 146-147. See also, Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 20.
[94] Jack Dean Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 63.
[95] Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel*, 65.
[96] Craig A. Evans, "Jesus and the Spirits: What Can We Learn from the New Testament World?," *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 27, no. 3 (2010), 148.
[97] Newheart, *My Name is Legion*, 43; Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 170.

Markan eschatology, stands apart from the forces of evil. He butts up against the religious leaders in the narrative world, and is therefore "other". Standing against leadership isolates Jesus from the religious community in the Markan narrative.

1.4.3.4 Military perspectives

For some scholars, Mark's gospel lends itself to being socio-political in its outlook. This suggests strong military tones within the narrative.[98] Mark 5:1-20 is particularly interesting in light of this perspective, and centres on the naming of "Legion" (Mark 5:9). After being named "Son of the Most High God" (Mark 5:7 – a Christological title), to which Jesus does not respond, the Markan Jesus instead turns the tables and dares to ask the name of the unclean spirit (Mark 5:9). At this point the hearer/reader is alerted to the reality that the unclean spirit is not in control.[99] This is the only time in the gospel where Jesus asks someone for a name.[100] The apparent immediacy of the narrative has slowed temporarily as the narrator allows the audience to overhear part of the conversation that occurs.[101] The response of the unclean spirits to Jesus' question about name is most extraordinary and the name given, "Legion" (Λεγιὼν ὄνομά μοι), is a name that is politically charged (Mark 5:9-10).[102] He represents the "military agent of the Roman Empire, which is the agent of Satan" in Mark's context.[103]

The most significant body of Markan scholarship concerning the Gerasene person with unclean spirits is that from a military perspective. In a highly political climate, the narrative of the Gerasene person finds itself embedded.[104]

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[98] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*; Joshua Garroway, "The Invasion of a Mustard Seed: A Reading of Mark 5.1-20," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32, no. 1 (2009): 57-75; Richard Dormandy, "The Expulsion of Legion A Political Reading of Mark 5:1-20," *The Expository Times* 111, no. 10 (2000): 335-337.

[99] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 280.

[100] John Craghan, "The Gerasene Demoniac," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (1968): 522-536525.

[101] This is similar to what will occur later in Chapter 6 where Jesus engages in conversation with the haemorrhaging woman (5:25-34) and listens to her whole story (5:33).

[102] See Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 190-194. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 10, 90-91, 147; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*; Dormandy, "Expulsion of Legion"; Garroway, "Invasion of the Mustard Seed", 57-75.

[103] Seong Hee Kim, *Mark, Women and Empire: A Korean Postcolonial Perspective* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010), 64.

[104] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 190-194. This section speaks specifically about the Gerasene demoniac, but Myers' whole book views Mark's gospel from a political perspective. See also Jean Starobinski, "The Gerasene Demoniac: A Literary Analysis of Mark 5:1-20," in

Myers claims that the name the unclean spirit (Mark 5:9) gives is a hint from Mark about the meaning of the story.[105] "Legion" is a "Latinism" taken from the Roman language of the first century and is a military term.[106] It defines a group of nearly 5000 soldiers.[107] Rarely at capacity, the Roman legion was more likely about 3600 in number.[108] Legion may not represent an accurate mathematical number in the Markan story world, but may be used to describe "many", and refer to the character of the legion, as not one, but "an army of them", where the soldiers are agents of colonialism.[109] Further to this, the Roman legion stationed in Palestine had a boar as its emblem, not insignificant given the mention of the swine in Mark 5:1-20.[110]

The term used for "herd" (ἀγέλη, Mark 5:11) is not such that one usually identifies with the pigs, but rather with the military.[111] Myers suggests that this incident is a political comment about the Roman Empire and the Jewish people who are ruled by them, especially in light of the retaliatory attack by the Romans in Gerasa during the Jewish War (66-70CE). Rebellious Galileans drowned Herodian nobles. In an act of reprisal, Roman soldiers slew one

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Structural Analysis and Biblical Exegesis, ed. R. Barthes, et al. (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974)67; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 10, 90-91, 147; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*, 182-183. See also Michael Peppard, "The Eagle and the Dove: Roman Imperial Sonship and the Baptism of Jesus (Mark 1.9-11)," *New Testament Studies* 56, no. 4 (2010): 431-451, 450. Peppard discusses Roman notions of 'sonship' and connects this to the first century understanding of divine 'sonship'. Mark's Jesus is seen as a "counter-emperor…adopted heir to power…"

[105] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 191.

[106] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 281. Guelich acknowledges that "Legion" may also simply be a literal name, but is open to it being connected to military ideas. Alternatively, Robert Stein makes no mention of potential military overtones. His focus is Christological. Stein, *Mark*, 261. Philip Carrington provides the most contentious analysis of the demoniac's name. "No doubt his mania dated from some encounter with the Roman armies." Carrington, *According To Mark*, 118.

[107] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 344. See also Collins, *Mark*, 267. More specifically, "each legion consisted of ten cohorts of 480. Each cohort was divided into 6 centuries of 80 men, under the command of a veteran centurion, and each century was divided into units of eight soldiers who lived and ate together…a legion was supported by about 120 scouts and messengers." Culpepper, *Mark*, 168.

[108] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 344-345.

[109] France, *Gospel of Mark*, 229; Herman C. Waetjen, *A Reordering of Power:A Socio-Political Reading of Mark's Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 115-117. Dormandy argues that the vast number of unclean spirits might be understood as "an aggressive threat" where the legion of spirits attempt to control Jesus. Dormandy, "Expulsion of Legion", 335. See also Placher, *Mark*, 80; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 191; J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Contributions to the Study of the Gerasene Demoniac," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 2, no. 3 (1979): 2-17, 5-6.

[110] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 351; Evans, "Jesus and the Spirits", 148.

[111] Derrett, "Contributions", 6. See also Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 191.

thousand young men and razed the town.[112] Could it be that Mark is implying that Jesus will liberate the Jews from the Roman demons? For Myers it is about a reversal of power and the invasion of the kingdom of God through Jesus' peaceful means through healed person and their restoration into society via a "peaceful invasion".[113] This invasion is the "momentous pinnacle of the story in which the radically new and subversive nature of the kingdom of God is revealed."[114] One must ask, however, how peaceful the destruction of the pigs is! [115]

There are other perspectives about Mark's use of seemingly military rhetoric. Ben Witherington, for example, agrees that Mark uses military language, but he is not so certain that the language is overtly political and suggests it may be satirical. [116] Kevin McCruden warns against such military language, and suggests Mark's intention was to portray Jesus as a bringing peace.[117] At the other end of the spectrum, Tat-siong Benny Liew sees the Markan Jesus having "absolute authority" as God's son and heir.[118] For Liew, Jesus speaks of the annihilation of his opponents, very strong military language indeed.[119] In this way, Jesus is no different than those against whom he is trying to rebel.[120] Certainly the destruction of the pigs in such a violent manner may be viewed in this way. Liew comes from a colonial perspective and is ultimately scathing of the Jesus of Mark's narrative. He says that ultimately Jesus controls who is "in" and who is "out" but rather than this being a liberating thing, it is an oppressive reworking of the first century social expectations. When Jesus speaks of the annihilation of his opponents, he is no different from those who

[112] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 191.
[113] Garroway, "Invasion of the Mustard Seed", 60; Dormandy, "Expulsion of Legion", 335.
[114] Garroway, "Invasion of the Mustard Seed", 60.
[115] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 194.
[116] Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*, 183. Witherington suggests makes this suggestion for a couple of reasons. Firstly, Jesus is not in "the Holy Land" or "rescuing a Jew" thus he need not rid the land of anything. Secondly, he points to the use of the emblem of the boar for Romans stationed in Palestine. Ultimately, for Witherington, the story is about Jesus fighting demons on a larger supernatural/cosmic level.
[117] Kevin B. McCruden, "Mark's Countercultural Vision," *America* 196, no. 8 (2007): 18-21.
[118] Tat-siong Benny Liew, "Tyranny, Boundary and Might: Colonial Mimicry in Mark's Gospel," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 21, no. 73 (1999): 7-31, 13-16.
[119] Liew, "Tyranny, Boundary and Might", 23.
[120] Liew, "Tyranny, Boundary and Might", 26.

seek to annihilate him.[121] The Markan Jesus, who appears to us in Gerasa, certainly annihilates the pigs. If the pigs do represent the Roman powers, then Liew's perspective is correct. However, I offer another perspective.

The Markan Jesus is "out of place" in Gerasa, making a statement about accepting those who are on the "outside". The person with unclean spirits is totally isolated from society, separated from friends and family, and overpowered by unclean spirits. Jesus liberates and restores the person. In the narrative story world, Jesus does not set out to exclude the townsfolk or swine herders. They exclude him (Mark 5:17). The use of military language as a rhetorical literary device emphasises the author's inclusion of those who have been excluded and labelled by society, a helpful proposition when considering narrative labelling.

1.4.3.5 Exorcism

More recently, there has been a shift to discuss exorcism as a significant theme in the gospel.[122] In some ways, this has derived from discussions of miracles and their role within the Markan narrative. Miracles serve to highlight the significance of the healer. Public healings are political in nature.[123] In the case of the Markan story, Jesus is portrayed as God's agent of authority to heal, in line with ancient Jewish thought. According to Jewish scriptures, God performs miracles on behalf of God's people or to defeat the enemies, or agents of God perform them.[124] The discussion of the significance of exorcism takes place within an understanding of dualism. There are also apocalyptic understandings regarding exorcism within the first century CE. Exorcism is seen as part of the need for divine intervention, within the struggle between good and evil; that is, Satan and the unclean spirits versus the "Holy One"

[121] Liew, "Tyranny, Boundary and Might", 22-26. I find Tat-siong's ideas the most confronting. If he is indeed correct, then the Markan Jesus does not have a great deal to offer other than revenge and oppression. I do not find this to be true in my understanding of Mark's gospel.

[122] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*; Laurel K. Cobb, *Mark and Empire: Feminist Reflections* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2013); Kim, *Mark, Women and Empire*; Graham H. Twelftree, *In The Name Of Jesus: Exorcism Among Early Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); Evans, "Jesus and the Spirits", all discuss exorcism at length.

[123] John J. Pilch, "Jesus's Healing Activities: Political Acts?," in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris (London: Routledge, 2010): 147-155, 149-154.

[124] Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World*, 147. Some of these agents are Moses, Elijah and Elisha. 147-149. See also Howard Clark Kee, "The Terminology of Mark's Exorcism Stories," *New Testament Studies* 14(1968): 232-246, 239.

(Mark 1:24) or "Son of God" (Mark 3:11; 5:7) or "Son of the Most High God" (Mark 5:7).[125] Exorcism, then, "describes what happens when Satan is bound: reformation of the community and relationship to God."[126] Viewing the Markan text through the lens of exorcism sees Jesus as God's divine agent where even the unclean spirits recognise this.[127] Jesus is the one who will bind the strong man and bring an end to Satan's control (Mark 3:27).[128] This can be seen from the beginning of the gospel where Mark's first healing is that of the person with an unclean spirit in the synagogue. "There can be no mistaking Mark's intention: it is in the exorcisms that the authority of Jesus is supremely manifest, and it is through the exorcisms that the kingdom can be seen as having drawn near (Mark 1:15)."[129] Prior to exorcism, a person might be defined as "deviant" and "other". This could lead to "aloneness" as in the scenario of the Gerasene person in Mark 5:1-20. Restoration of the person ultimately opens the door back for an invitation into community.

I value the significance of these thematic contributions to Markan scholarship. Although none are specific in their discussion of "aloneness", it is hinted at in the exploration of themes such as discipleship and conflict, and in the use of rhetoric around military perspectives and exorcism. As such, it should be apparent that there is room for me to add to the scholarly debate on relevant ways to read Mark's gospel in contemporary society in my study of "aloneness" using narrative labelling.

1.5 Definition of terms

Within the thesis I refer to several terms, as I have noted already, most especially, "aloneness", "otherness" and "deviance". I use these terms with specific meaning in the context of this thesis.

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[125] Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, 115. See also Eric Sorensen, *Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 118-119 and James D. G. Dunn and Graham H. Twelftree, "Demon-Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament," *Churchman* 94(1980): 210-225.
[126] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 63.
[127] Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World*, 160-161. See also Smith, "Theology and Christology", 66.
[128] Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World*, 162; Sorensen, *Possession and Exorcism*, 140.
[129] Kee, "Terminology", 242.

1.5.1 "Aloneness"

"Aloneness" is a modern sociological and psychological construct. It implies being alone, solitary, isolated or lonely. In a contemporary context, it relates to individuals and how an individual may or may not relate to the broader society. The Oxford Dictionary defines "alone" as "having no one else present; on one's own…isolated and lonely".[130] Being alone is not necessarily a negative experience; in fact sometimes it is essential. My concern in this thesis, however, is for those who experience "aloneness" without choice, and instead have it thrust upon them, and for whom "aloneness" is a negative experience. "Aloneness" can be expressed in four ways: "aloneness" in terms of place, physical "aloneness", social "aloneness" and emotional "aloneness". In the context of this thesis, however, I explore the first three of these contexts for "aloneness" (place, physical and social – Part III).[131] "Aloneness", as I show in the thesis, can be identified in the gospel of Mark through the narrator's descriptions of place, and in the relationships and events created and depicted in the narrative story world, often through labelling.

1.5.2 "Otherness"

When people are seen not to belong, they can be excluded. In this way, they might be described as "other". "Otherness" is the "quality or fact of being different".[132] The Cambridge dictionary describes "otherness" as being or feeling different in appearance or character from what is familiar, expected, or generally accepted."[133] This is certainly the way I am using the term here. Those who are "other" are often seen as outsiders.[134] Like "aloneness" the concept of "otherness" is socially constructed but has implications for the way

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[130] Oxford Dictionary, "Aloneness," http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/alone?q=aloneness#alone__11. Also Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Aloneness," http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/alone. And Cambridge Dictionary, "Alone," http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/alone_1?q=alone.

[131] Emotional "aloneness" is not central to the discussion here, as it is difficult to ascertain emotions within a first century text, and I do not wish to presume to provide a psychological discussion about Jesus in Mark's gospel. I note Richard Hicks has attempted to a study on Jesus' emotions in his article on Jesus in Gethsemane. See Richard Hicks, "'Emotional' Temptation and Jesus' Spiritual Victory at Markan Gethsemane," *Journal of Biblical & Pneumatological Research* 5(2013): 29-48.

[132] Oxford Dictionary, "Otherness," http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/otherness. Also Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Otherness," http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/otherness.

[133] Cambridge Dictionary, "Otherness," http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/otherness.

[134] Kopas, "Outsiders in the Gospels", 117-126.

those who feel "other" live out their daily lives. "Otherness" can be identified in the context of this thesis as those who are outside the expectations of first century life, especially where purity and honour are concerned.

But being "other" might also refer to deliberately choosing to be counter-cultural, that is, living in an alternate way from mainstream social norms. Being "other" is not necessarily negative and does not always lead to "aloneness" or "deviance". In this thesis the use of "other" is about being "out of place" in the sense of being outside the social expectations of a society.[135] I argue that Jesus is labelled "other" in the Markan gospel. He is not the only one to wear this "label" and in Mark 5:1-20, the person with unclean spirits is also seen as "other", living outside social expectations within the narrative story world.

1.5.3 "Deviance"

Deviance, as a term, is also a sociological concept often used to describe "a person of behavior that is not usual and is generally considered to be unacceptable."[136] It is often used with regard to crime or underhand activity. In the context of this thesis, the label of deviance is used more broadly, in a similar vein to that of being "other", that is, being counter-cultural and standing against the "norms" of society. It is related to "otherness" and "aloneness" because of the suggestion that "deviant" people do not conform to the wider expectations of society, and as such, are often placed on the margins or excluded (thereby "other" and sometimes, but not always, "alone"). In this thesis, I argue that Jesus was deviant in that he stood against some of the expected ideals of his day in terms of ritual purity (4.2 above). I argue that deviance may be visible both positively *and* negatively. I explore deviance in both positive and negative, explicit and implicit terms. Whilst some scholars dispute the place for "positive" deviance,[137] I argue that it is useful in the

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[135] Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, 222-223; Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 9-11.

[136] Cambridge Dictionary, "Deviance," http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/deviant?q=deviance. See also, Oxford Dictionary, "Deviance," http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/deviance. Interestingly, the Oxford dictionary specifies that deviant behaviours are often social or sexual. This thesis is exploring labelling from a more social standpoint.

[137] Edward Sagarin, *Deviants and Deviance: An Introduction to the Study of Disvalued People and Behavior* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), regarding negative deviance; for

discerning of “aloneness”. I use the term “prominence” for positive deviance, as a name or label that honours a person.[138] Negative deviance labels attach stigma to a person. Deviance in the Markan narrative can be seen implicitly and explicitly within the story world of the text. I will show that “aloneness” can be identified in these models of deviance.

A word with regard to definitions: I have described here very contemporary meanings of “aloneness”, “otherness” and “deviance”. As such, I acknowledge from the outset that I am placing a spotlight on an ancient text from a modern perspective, indeed, through the lens of narrative labelling. An attempt to define “aloneness” within a first century Mediterranean context requires careful consideration to reflect on the social rules and expectations of those in that society. I do not intend to guess what the evangelist’s intention was in the Markan account of the Jesus story. That task would be impossible. We do not know what the author’s thoughts on “aloneness” were or even if such a concept existed. The author of the gospel was writing in the first century when social rules were tightly ordered and persons lived within dyadic relationship with each other, embedded into kinship groups. The individualism we know so well in contemporary first-world society was not acknowledged then. Instead, there were strict rules about honour, purity and personal identity (4.2 above).[139] I will refer to broad historical aspects of Markan society in the body of thesis, and as outlined about here however, as stated above, by no means do I mean this work to be a social science or historical-critical work.

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arguments about positive deviance see Edward Sagarin, "Positive Deviance: An Oxymoron," *Deviant Behavior* 6(1985): 169-181; Erich Goode, "Positive Deviance: A Viable Concept," *Deviant Behavior* 12(1991): 289-309.

[138] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 40, 95-97.

[139] Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris, eds., *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament* (London: Routledge, 2010); Philip F. Esler, *The First Christians in their Social Worlds: Social scientific approaches to New Testament interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1994), Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary*, Malina, *The New Testament World*, Gerd Theissen, *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in Synoptic Tradition*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), Chance, "Anthropology"; Kressel, "Anthropologist's Response"; Downing, ""Honor"", and F. Gerald Downing, "In Quest of First-Century C.E. Galilee," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 66, no. 1 (2004): 78-97, for examples, which all provide broad, and sometimes differing, expositions on social aspects of first century Mediterranean society. For a slightly different angle on how the Jewish people lived, see Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? : Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism*, Schwartz argues that the Jews were counter-cultural to mainstream aspects of Mediterranean society because they lived by the Torah.

1.6 Concluding remarks

This chapter has introduced the thesis as one that explores a narrative labelling perspective of "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20. In order to do this, I outlined a general overview of the gospel of Mark in terms of author, date and setting. I also briefly expounded upon the values of purity and honour within a first century understanding. I discussed the key themes of the Markan gospel in terms of Christology, discipleship, kingdom of God, secrecy and eschatology, as well as the military rhetoric and exorcism. I concluded the chapter by defining the key terms of deviance, "otherness" and aloneness" as they are used in the thesis. I now move to explore the background to narrative labelling in Part II of the thesis.

Part II:
Background to Narrative Labelling: Developing the Methodology

Chapter 2

Reader-Response Analysis: Developing a Connection with Narrative Labelling

2.1 Introduction

This section of the thesis provides general outlines to background methodologies of narrative labelling (Chapter 5). I explore several approaches to reading Mark 5:1-20 as background to my own model. Narrative labelling, as I have named my methodology, integrates elements of reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory. This overview is necessary in order to illuminate the gap in each of these methods with regard to "otherness" and "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20.

In the current chapter, I explore reader-response analysis as a tool for interpreting texts. I discuss key aspects of this perspective, and how it relates to interpretations for understanding of Mark 5:1-20. I also demonstrate here how reader-response analysis is useful in exploring "aloneness" as a theme in Mark's gospel.

2.2 Reader-response analysis

Reader-response analysis falls under the broad category of literary criticism. As a literary critique, reader-response analysis focuses on the reader and their response to a given text. It does not emphasise historical aspects of a text, although these might be taken into consideration when establishing meaning in a text.[140] The central focus is instead on the reader in terms of the reading experience and the meaning made from this experience. Robert Fowler provides a helpful summary of reader-response analysis. He acknowledges that reader-response methods cross many categories, feminist and liberationist perspectives of reading a text, for example, but the methods share

> (1) a preeminent concern for the reader and the reading experience and (2) a critical model of the reading experience, which itself has two major aspects: (a) an understanding of reading as a dynamic,

[140] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 54-55.

> concrete, temporal experience, instead of the abstract perception of a special form; and (b) an emphasis on meaning as event instead of meaning as context.[141]

Reader-response analysis provides readers with a framework for understanding the "process of reading" and the ways through which readers might construct literary meaning.[142]

2.2.1 Readers, texts and the creation of meaning

Understanding the reading experience as temporal and dynamic is essential to appreciating reader-response analysis. In this understanding, the text is not seen as having one meaning for all time. Instead the reader is acknowledged as having a significant role in making meaning.[143] For Paul Ricoeur, "Good readers view themselves in light of the text and thus come to understand themselves in a new way…It is by an understanding of the worlds, actual and possible, opened by language that we may arrive at a better understanding of ourselves."[144] In this sense, texts cannot be isolated from readers and readers are active participants in the reading process. The subject (reader) and object (text) are inextricably bound together in a dynamic relationship in any given time and place (see Figure 1).[145]

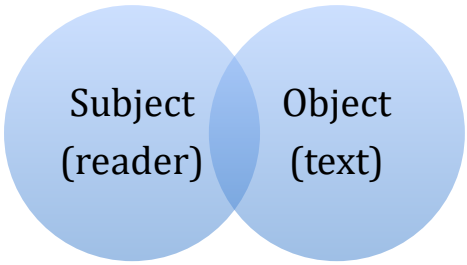

Figure 1: Reader-response: reader and text inextricably bound

[141] Robert M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark*, 2001 ed. (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1996), 25.
[142] Todd Davis, Kenneth Womack, and Julian Wolfreys, "Reader-Response Theory, the Theoretical Project and Identity Politics," in *Formalist Criticism and Reader-Response Theory* (Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 51.
[143] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 12-13.
[144] Paul Ricoeur, "Myth As The Bearer of Possible Worlds," in *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers*, ed. Richard Kearney (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 45.
[145] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 14; Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There A Meaning In This Text?* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 149.

Reader-response analysis challenges the centrality of the text, and places the reader at the centre instead (Figure 2).[146] It recognises that readers cannot be separated from texts, cultural contexts and history.[147] As such,

> [t]he claim to see texts as they are is illusory. Every reader sees what one can see from one's position in society, space, and time. Reading is a dialogue between the text and reader…Reading, then, is no exception to relativity theory. Like it or not, what we find in texts is a function of who, and where, we are…no texts contain a meaning that is independent of the way readers approach them.[148]

There is little doubt that a person's life experience colours the way they read texts, as I hinted at in my Prologue. Reader-response analysis as a literary perspective, from this author's perspective, is a useful tool in developing narrative labelling perspective in order to discern "aloneness" as a theme in Mark's gospel.

Within reader-response analysis, readers are active participants in the reading process and so determine "literary meaning and [are] creative contributors to the interpretative process."[149] It is in the act of reading that texts, in a sense, come to life and meaning is made. Engagement with the text is not passive, rather it is an active process that Stanley Fish likens to an event.[150] Instead of the reader asking, "What does the text say?" (a question with a text as central focus), the question instead is, "What does the text say to me?" and "What do I say to the text?" Here the reader is central, actively engaging and in dialogue with the text (Figure 2).[151]

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[146] H. R. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. T. Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 146-147.
[147] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 13.
[148] Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning?*, 151; see also David. J. A. Clines and J. Cheryl Exum, "The New Literary Criticism," in *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. J. Cheryl Exum and David J. A Clines (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993): 11-25, 19.
[149] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 13.
[150] Stanley E. Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature.* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1972), 387-388; Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 15.
[151] Jauss, *Aesthetic of Reception*, 146-147.

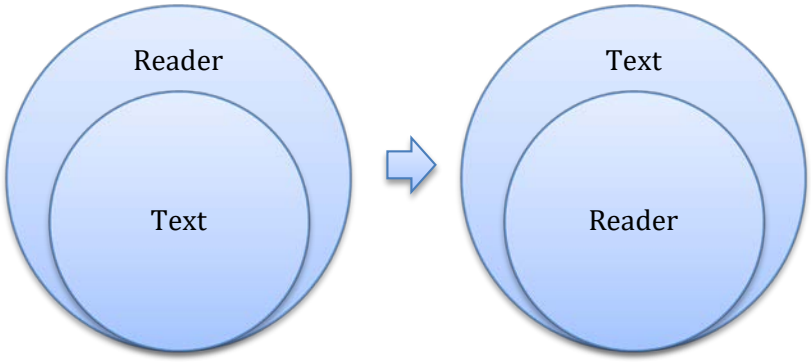

Figure 2: Reader-response moves from the text being central to the reader being central.

In a sense, texts are "communicative acts" where the reader seeks meaning by exploring "what the author has done in, with, and through the text."[152] The transmission of messages, that is, the communicative act of the text, is a "textual and cultural production of meaning through sign systems."[153] These sign systems are the means by which the authors, as communicative agents, speak. We know these systems as language. According to Kevin Vanhoozer, authors speak historically (that is, in a particular time and context in history), rhetorically (as literary strategists), as ethical agents and religious agents (pointing to God, in terms of sacred texts).[154] The gospel of Mark is an example of this. Yet whilst texts are created in a context, the reader/hearer also brings their own context to the text and create their own meaning.

As a postmodern construct, reader-response analysis is keen to deconstruct texts. A deconstructive perspective understands that stable meanings of texts are only possible because meaning is essentially unstable. That is,

> …since convention, institutions and consensus are stabilizations…this means that they are stabilizations of something essentially unstable and chaotic. Thus, it becomes necessary to stabilize precisely because stability is not natural: it is because there is chaos that there is a need for stability…If there were continual stability, there would be no need for politics, and it is to the extent that stability is not natural, essential or substantial, that politics exists and ethics is possible. Chaos is at once

[152] Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning?*, 218.
[153] Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning?*, 222.
[154] Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning?*, 232-237.

> a risk, and a chance, and it is here that the possible and the impossible cross each other.[155]

Put simply, as soon as one attempts to define meaning, this is seen as an attempt to stabilise meaning. Reader-response analysis recognises that there is more than one meaning possible in texts. Texts are perceived as having not only layers of meaning, but also a multiplicity of meanings.[156] Meaning then, is dependent upon the context and approach used by the reader.[157] "…[T]exts only became alive and meaningful when people became involved with them and responded to them".[158] Readers, in the action of reading, engage with the text in a profound way. Just as they read the text, there is a sense in which the text also "reads" the reader. Readers can view themselves in light of the text and come to a new understanding about themselves because of the relationship they have with the text. "It is an understanding of the worlds, actual and possible, opened by language that we may arrive at a better understanding of ourselves."[159] As hearers/readers we arrive at an interpretation of meaning. But my sense of meaning as a reader, is potentially one of many, due to my own context, time and space.

> [T]he construction of meaning ultimately resides in the auspices of readers, who approach literary texts from particularized vantage points – or perhaps more accurately, from their own subjectified perspectives.[160]

Two types of readers are identified as being central to reader-response analysis. The first is an "individual" reader whilst the second is the "critical" reader.[161] Both types read for meaning and have their reading experiences shaped by their own experiences, however, private reading is open to bias and personal opinion. "Critical" readers, however, read widely and invite criticism and

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[155] Jacques Derrida, "Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism," in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, ed. Chantal Mouffe (London Routledge, 1996): 79-90, 84.
[156] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 15. See also Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning?*, 140.
[157] Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning?*, 140, 151.
[158] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 14.
[159] Ricoeur, "Myth as Bearer," 45.
[160] Davis, Womack, and Wolfreys, "Reader-response theory," 67.
[161] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 52-54 and Robert M. Fowler, "Who is 'the Reader' in Reader-Response Criticism?," *Semeia* 31(1985): 5-23, 5-6.

discussion.[162] One of the major criticisms of reader-response theory, however, is that the power of the reader means that relativism is possible. If a reader is able to give meaning to a text, then many interpretations are possible. Theorists do not necessarily see the notion of a multiplicity of meanings as a negative idea, and indeed consider such a notion as evidence of the "text's richness and inexhaustibility".[163] Not all interpretations of texts, however, are helpful or appropriate. [164]

Robert Fowler places emphasis on the "critical" reader as being central to reader-response analysis suggesting an active engagement with the text that is open to, although not bound by, multiple meanings within that text. As such, the "critical" reader is potentially valued above the individual reader. My own concern here is that I do not necessarily hold that one type of reader is more important than the other. There are varying degrees to which sacred texts can be read. If, as Fowler, for example, suggests, clergy and academics are "critical" readers who "master" the text,[165] then where does that leave the individual reader, who might also engage rigorously with the text in a study group? I find this definition of a "critical" reader narrow and unhelpful. I do not, however, think that all readings of a text are "correct". To suggest that only certain groups of people might be considered "critical" readers diminishes the importance of meaning found by lay people or individuals who also wrestle with texts in their own contexts and cultures, and who are not clergy or academics. That said, I do agree that the discovery of meaning is best done in a community context were this wrestling can occur with others. This "interpretative community" (Figure 3) as Stanley Fish calls it, helps to provide a framework that guides *any* but not *all* interpretations.[166] The interpretative community safe guards, if you will, from arbitrary interpretations, and still allows for diversity. Reading takes place in a particular context and the

[162] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 52-54 and Fowler, "Who is 'the reader'?", 5-6.
[163] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 15.
[164] Some of the more obvious choices here concern sacred Scriptures where slavery, as an example, were embraced and, indeed, seen as the norm (Exodus 21:2, 21 and 1 Timothy 6:1). In my middle class Western social sphere, slavery is discouraged, and many of us send petitions to various international governments taking a stand against such practices. To continue to abide by a biblical expectation of slavery is abhorrent in my world and goes against the United Nations Human Rights Declarations.
[165] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 52.
[166] Fish, 1989, 70-71; Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 20.

"interpreter functions within the norms, standards and goals appropriate to that context".[167] A relocation of authority from the text/author to a community of readers to which the interpreter belongs helps to keep interpretation from becoming too relativistic.

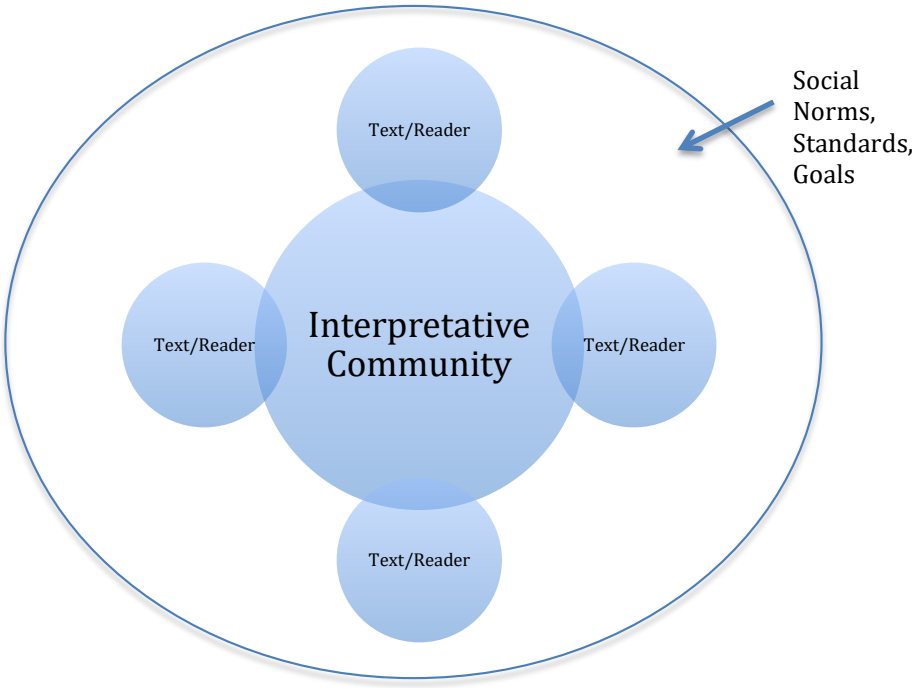

Figure 3: Relationship between Text/Reader and the Interpretative Community

Generally speaking, there are two main types of biblical interpretive communities to which individual and "expert" readers belong. The first context is within a church group and the other is academia. Within the confines of this interpretative community there is a shift from text/author to the community of readers who, in a sense, censor what is acceptable meaning and what is not.[168] It is this group that provides interpretation that is appropriate and relevant to a particular context and time, and protects from relativized interpretations of texts (Figure 3).

Wolfgang Iser described the need of a literary work to concern "not only the actual text but also, in equal measure, the actions involved in responding to that

[167] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 26-28; Davis, Womack, and Wolfreys, "Reader-response theory," 85-86; Exum, "New Literary Criticism," 19; Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 21.
[168] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 27-28; Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 29.

text."[169] This active role the reader takes in reading and engaging in a text, enables the reader to be viewed as a creative participant in the reading process. As such, they are invited to fill in the "gaps" within a text, that is, respond to the text, looking in front of the text (reader-response analysis) rather than behind it (narrative analysis).[170] These "gaps" are the unspoken or unwritten aspects of the text. The reader reads into the author's gaps and fills them by "following authorial instructions and textual indications."[171] Filling the gaps is about making sense of what is or is not there in the text.[172] It is in these spaces or silences that the reader is invited to find meaning. Meaning can be historical, theological or literary and is focused on the text. Each of these takes the text

> …as a window through which to look out on historical events, theological ideas or cultural attitudes, or as a house as mirrors, reflecting internally the grammar, syntax, plot, characters, and setting of the narrative.[173]

E.D Hirsch suggests that the author be seen as the "determiner of the text's meaning" and to dismiss this notion is to miss the author's original intent.[174] The single determinate meaning of the author, however, does not mean that significance cannot be found, according to the context of the reader (see Figure 4). For Hirsch, the unchangeable meaning of the author in the text, does not diminish the potential significance of the text for the reader. Significance may be changeable depending on the context of the reader.

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[169] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response.* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1978), 21.
[170] Wolfgang Iser, "Interaction Between Text and Reader," in *The Reader in the Text. Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, ed. S. R. Suleiman and I. Crosman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980): 106-119, 106-119. Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning?*, 153; Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 14.
[171] Vanhoozer, "Reader in New Testament," 264.
[172] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 61.
[173] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 51.
[174] E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967), 255.

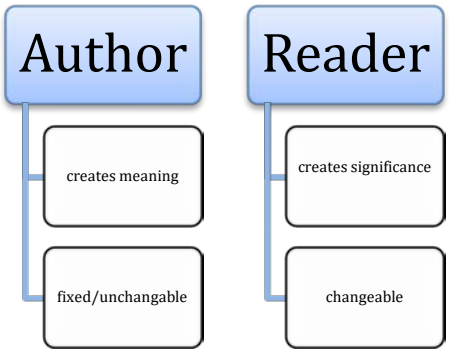

Figure 4: E.D Hirsch's idea of the relationship between author/text and reader.

Unfortunately, Hirsch's model (Figure 4) does not allow for layers of meaning. Meaning can change, yes, but layers of meaning are missing. Likewise, Hirsch's model does not allow for the difficulty in determining the original intent and meaning of the author.[175] How can a reader know what the original text meant if one didn't know the original author?[176] How can a reader be certain of who the real author of an ancient text is? And how can a reader know for certain the validity of an ancient text in terms of variations and scribal discrepancies?[177] As I suggested in the Chapter 1, there are several possibilities about where the Gospel of Mark was written, questions of the authorship and textual difficulties. Determining with absolute certainty the author's intent is impossible however, using various tools, such as narrative analysis and historical analysis, can assist in getting a "close" understanding. That said reader-response critics believe that meaning can only be given to a text within the context of the reader. It is the approach of a reader that gives meaning. In a sense, the reader is the "realisation of the literary work".[178] The reader is the only one able to perform this task of meaning making. This is an essential element for narrative labelling. The freedom for the reader to create meaning

[175] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 18-19.
[176] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 23. See also Zoltan Schwab, "Mind the Gap: The Impact of Wolfgang Iser's Reader-Response Criticism on Biblical Studies - A Critical Assessment," *Literature & Theology* 17, no. 2 (2003): 170-181.
[177] Edgar Battad Ebojo, "The Way I See It: P46 as a Paradigm for Reader-Response Criticism," *The Bible Translator* 60, no. 1 (2009): 22-36. In this article, Ebojo argues that a form of reader-response criticism has roots as far back as the mid-third century with scribes translating the ancient text known as P46. He argues that scribes would discuss texts and variations in them when translating or transcribing them, hence employing a reader-response type of strategy.
[178] Schwab, "Mind the Gap", 181.

allows narrative labelling to use labelling as a means to discern "aloneness" (Chapter 5).

2.2.2 Reader-response analysis and Mark 5:1-20

Thus far, I have discussed the significance of the relationship between the reader and the text in terms of reader-response analysis. It is through the act of reading that meaning is made or created.[179] In the reading of an ancient text, the reader continues participating in the conversation, aware of the history of the text, but not necessarily bound to it.[180] As applied to reading the Gospel of Mark, and most particularly Mark 5:1-20, readers are encouraged to actively engage with the text and to "fill in the gaps". This invites readers/hearers to find meaning through the narrative in terms of rhetorical devices such as repetition and themes, the use of irony, and looking back and looking forward (see Chapter 3).[181] Readers create a new world when they "come to the texts and are able to make sense because there is some correlation of textual factors in the reader's world."[182] The example given in this thesis is "aloneness". In Mark 5:1-20 this is seen in the "aloneness" of the person with unclean spirits. Some might relate to this because they have too have experienced "aloneness" in many ways.

As text, the Markan narrative

> …represents a communication event that involves an author (real and implied), a text (read or heard), an audience (implied and real, listening or reading), and various contexts (historical, literary, social, etc). All the characters internal to the narrative exist not for their own sakes but for the sake of the communication between author and audience external to the narrative, with the implied author and implied audience marking the boundary between.[183]

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[179] Vanhoozer, "Reader in New Testament," 263.
[180] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 54-55.
[181] Fowler, "Figuring Mark's Reader," 58, 61-75; Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 32.
[182] Edgar V. McKnight, *Post Modern Use of the Bible: The Emergence of Reader-Orientated Criticism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 176. See also the Forward by John W. Rogerson in John Vincent, *Mark Gospel of Action: Personal and Community Responses* (London: SPCK, 2006), vi.
[183] Malbon, "Major Importance," 61.

This is seen in narrative analysis (Chapter 3) where the Markan author uses a narrator to communicate with an audience the good news about Jesus.

> As readers, we are privy from the outset as to the true nature of Jesus, for the very first verse proclaims him to be the Son of God. To the characters in the subsequent narrative, however, his identity remains largely a mystery and as readers we can only wonder at the confusion and misunderstanding exhibited by those who came in contact with him.[184]

The true nature of Jesus is identified through the rhetoric employed by the Markan narrator. It is vital that the reader/hearer recognizes some of the context in which the text was written. Language of oral cultures, from which the gospel comes, is "inherently rhetorical or pragmatic in function."[185] As with narrative analysis (Chapter 3), rhetoric and the role of the narrator are important features in a reader-response analysis of Mark 5:1-20, and I explore these in Chapter 3. Rhetoric, as I use it here, refers to "the many ways in which narrative texts manipulate and attempt to persuade their readers…rather than formal principals of rhetorical speech as outlined in the ancient Greek and Roman rhetorical handbooks."[186] This understanding of rhetoric is important for reader-response analysis because it implies that when Jesus speaks to the "*narrative* audience (e.g. disciples, crowds, Pharisees)…the *authorial* audience infers a direct analogy to the reading process in which they are currently involved" (author's italics) in their own story.[187] The hearer/reader becomes part of the story by their very act of reading/hearing.

2.2.2.1 "Inner text" and "inter text"

There are two ways in which rhetoric is used to tell the story. The first stratagem used is "inner text" where the narrator is "one of us". In this sense, the audience

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[184] Davies, *Biblical Criticism*, 35.
[185] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 57.
[186] John A. Darr, "'Watch how you listen' (Luke 8:18): Jesus and the Rhetoric of Perception in Luke-Acts," in *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament*, ed. Edgar V. McKnight and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon (Forge Valley, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1994): 87-107, 87n1.
[187] Darr, "Watch how you listen," 88.

> is invited to become an *insider*, a fellow witness, not by virtue of having seen and heard divinely sanctioned events as they actually took place in the past, but rather through insightful reading and retelling of the ensuing narrative.[188]

The second is "inter text". In this stratagem, readers hear the "sacred story within sacred story", that is,

> direct and indirect allusions, citations, the narrators observations on various 'fulfillments' of prophecy…is not to be read in isolation from the broader horizon of salvation history.[189]

Applied to Mark 5:1-20, the narrator does invite the reader into the narrative world. As the narrator in Mark's gospel is omniscient, the audience finds that Jesus and the disciples travel by boat to the "other" side of the sea to Gerasa (Mark 5:1). The hearer/reader notes that Jesus is the only one to disembark (Mark 5:2). Fowler suggests that by doing this the narrator "has opened up the distance between Jesus and his disciples and inserted the reader into the space between them."[190] The filling of this "gap" allows the reader to be present with the narrator as the scene unfolds. This "insider" view allows the hearer/reader to gain some understanding of how desperate the demoniac is as the narrator spends time describing him (Mark 5: 3-5). In Mark 5:6-8 we find a disjointed and awkward moment in the flow of the narrative, where the reader/hearer is required to fill in the gaps. The demoniac runs to Jesus and bows to Jesus in seeming reverence, and calls him "Son of the Most High God". Is this a statement of faith by the unclean spirits or is it a touch of sarcasm? The reader must decide.[191] In this sense, the unclean spirits are trying to exert their power over Jesus. This struggle can be seen in terms of the cosmic struggle between good and evil (Chapter 1).

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[188] Darr, "Watch how you listen," 91.
[189] Darr, "Watch how you listen," 93.
[190] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 70. See also Bas M. F. van Iersal, *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary*, trans. W. H. Bisscheroux (London: T & T Clark International, 1998), 198.
[191] van Iersal, *Mark*, 199. Van Iersal thinks the demoniac's address is one of sarcasm and irony, in contrast to the voice from heaven in Mark 1:11.

At this point the reader discovers that Jesus has been asking the unclean spirit to exit the possessed person (Mark 5:8). This reads awkwardly and may be considered a rhetorical device to show the confusion of the situation.[192] What the reader is able to witness is the power and authority of Jesus as he casts out the unclean spirits (Mark 5:13). From here, the scene changes and the hearer/reader realises there have been witnesses to the exorcism (Mark 5:14). The herdsman run to tell the city and country people what had happened. When the people from the region appear, they demand Jesus leave them. Readers/hearers might be surprised at this reaction given that in previous healings people were amazed (see Mark 1:27-28; 2:12, for example).

Following this turn of events is another narrative twist where the healed person seeks to follow Jesus. In other scenarios (Mark 1:44; 5:43; 7:36 for example), Jesus requests silence from the healed ones, and in Mark 1:16-20 he does the "calling" of those who are to be with him. But it is the healed person in this pericope who seeks to follow Jesus, taking the initiative make following a reality. Whilst he is not permitted to follow Jesus, he is sent to tell his story (Mark 5:20) to his family/friends/household.

In terms of "inter text", the reader would understand the significance of the name of the unclean spirits. "Legion" (Mark 5:9) brings to mind military connections (Chapter 1) and possession of land. Possession is a key term here and also has connections for the ancient possession of peoples for centuries. That this incident occurs in lands where there are swine (for Jewish readers and for the Jewish Jesus) (Mark 5:11-13) would perhaps remind hearers/readers of the purity codes (Chapter 1). The naming of Jesus as "Lord" (ὁ κυριος) might be recognised by hearers/readers of the narrative where pious Jews were unable to use the unspeakable name of Adonai.[193] But in this context does it refer to God or Jesus who has done the work of God? The reader must decide. From a reader-response perspective, the story is interesting in that despite differences from other narratives of exorcism in Mark, the reader is invited to perceive

[192] van Iersal, *Mark*, 198-199.
[193] van Iersal, *Mark*, 201.

Jesus as "Lord" and the "Son of God". Unlike other narratives in the Jewish regions Jesus does not call for repentance or announce judgment.[194]

2.2.2.2 Explicit and implicit commentaries by the narrator

Associated with Darr's "inner text" and "inter text" strategies are the notions of explicit and implicit commentaries by the narrator. Explicit commentaries by the narrator include:

> …interpretation, judgment, generalization, and 'self-conscious' narration. Among explicit comments, the first three are upon the story. 'Interpretation' (in this special sense) is the open explanation if the gist, relevance, or significance of a story element. 'Judgment' expresses moral or other value opinions. 'Generalization' makes reference outward from the fictional to the real world, either to universal truths' or actual historical facts. 'Self-conscious' narration is a term recently coined to describe comments on the discourse rather than the story, whether serious or facetious.[195]

The explicit commentary in this pericope can be seem in the language, phrases and words, the Markan narrator uses. Fowler suggests some of these are parenthetical comments: "statements of cause or reason" in words like "for" (γὰρ) (Mark 5:7-8) and "because" (διὰ) (Mark 5:4),[196] and in the use of relative pronouns like "who", "what", "which", "that" (ὃς) (Mark 5:3-4).[197] Explicit commentary can also be seen through the narrator's perceptive insights into "what a character sees or hears".[198] An example of this perception exists in Mark 5:15 where the crowd "sees" the healed person "clothed and in his right mind". Further to this, Fowler suggests the narrator comments explicitly on emotions. The two emotions spoken of frequently in Mark are fear and amazement. [199] Both of these appear in our story – fear in Mark 5:15 (ἐφοβήθησαν) and amazement (ἐθαύμαζον) in Mark 5:20.

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[194] van Iersal, *Mark*, 202.

[195] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film.* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1978), 228.

[196] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 92-101.

[197] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 105.

[198] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 121.

[199] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 122.

Implicit commentaries by the narrator are the "covert" commentaries the narrator uses within the narrative. In Mark, according Fowler, these are seen via the "means of the statements of characters in the story, especially the narrator's protagonist, Jesus. The other is by means of the emplotment of the narrative, that is, how the story is organized and structured." [200] Implicit commentaries, then factor in narrative structure and proclamations of characters in the story. In Mark 5:7 the unclean spirits identify (either ironically or seriously) that Jesus is the Son of God. It is not Jesus who comments implicitly within the text. Indeed, as I mentioned, the unclean spirits have a role to play in the narrative. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon believes that minor characters play an important role in the Markan narrative. She defines a minor character as "one who lacks continuing or recurrent presence in the story narrated."[201] The presence they do have is significant, however

> …they extend the continuum of potential responses to Jesus [the main protagonist] in an open ended way, providing implicit narrative companions and contrasts with the continuing or recurrent characters and providing a bridge from the (internal) characters to the (borderline) implied audience.[202]

Significantly for this thesis, explicit and implicit understandings of the text are important for understanding "otherness" and provide a framework for viewing "aloneness". The language of implicit/explicit is utilised by narrative labelling which I return to in Chapter 5 below.

2.2.3 Summary remarks on reader-response analysis and Mark 5:1-20

Reader-response analysis is primarily concerned with the reader and the experience of reading. Reading is seen as active and participatory and where meaning is seen as an event. In reading, readers/hearers are able to see themselves in new ways and develop new understandings about themselves. Reader-response analysts appreciate that meanings can be many and varied. Texts can have layers of meaning as well as multiple meanings. As such, not all interpretations are helpful or appropriate. There is a role for an

[200] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 127.
[201] Malbon, "Major Importance," 60.
[202] Malbon, "Major Importance," 61.

interpretative community. This community allows for diversity, but simultaneously guides reader's/hearer's interpretations of texts according to social norms and standards within a given context. Within a reader-response perspective, the hearer/reader is invited to fill the "gap" the author/narrator often leaves. It is in this space that the reader can enter into the narrative.

I also explored the use of "inner text" and "inter text" strategies as well as the use of explicit and implicit commentaries by the narrator within the context of Mark 5:1-20. An "inner text" perspective allows for the reader/hearer to stand alongside the narrator in the story world of the text. An "inter text" perspective allows for readers/hearers of the gospel story to identify ways in which the sacred story they are hearing in the present relates to them now, in light salvation history. I also discussed labels in the context of reader-response analysis. These are the explicit and implicit commentaries by the narrator. By utilising these aspects of reading the text, the reader/hearer is able to explore "otherness" and "aloneness" within the Markan narrative. I return to this in Chapter 5 where I define narrative labelling.

2.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have outlined reader-response analysis as a perspective for reading Mark 5:1-20. Reader-response analysis is a reader-centred approach to responding to a text. In this approach, the reader reads the words of the author, but creates their own meaning. In this context I briefly outlined the importance of language, both explicit and implicit. From a narrative labelling perspective, this use of language is important. As such, I offer a fresh perspective of a reading of Mark's gospel in using "aloneness" as a theme. This can be found in the sense of determining meaning in the gaps and spaces the Markan narrator has left. The next chapter, however, continues exploring background to narrative labelling via narrative analysis.

Chapter 3

Narrative Analysis: Developing a Connection with Narrative Labelling

3.1 Introduction

In this methodological chapter I move from reader-response analysis to provide a broad outline of narrative analysis and its importance as a perspective of reading Mark 5:1-20. I explore the role of the narrator and the narrative elements of setting, characters, plot and rhetoric, as they apply to Mark 5:1-20. The most significant omission in narrative analysis is the absence of any reference to "aloneness" and this thesis addresses this gap via the use of narrative labelling.

John Updike once commented,

> A narrative is like a room on whose walls a number of false doors have been painted; while within the narrative, we have many apparent choices of exit, but when the author leads us to one particular door, we know it is the right one because it opens.[203]

A good narrative can captivate, transform and inspire its hearer or reader. Words are, indeed, powerful, be they spoken, heard or written and are open to multiple meanings depending on the context of the hearer/reader. The gospel of Mark takes the audience on a journey where Jesus is the central figure who offers a contrasting way of living, according to the author. Through this journey, the evangelist makes clear to the hearer/reader that there are choices to be made concerning participation in the "in-breaking" rule of God. As I outlined in Chapter 1, the Markan author indicates Jesus is God's beloved son (Mark 1:[1], 11; 9:7), who has power and authority over nature (for example, Mark 4:35-41), is a teacher (for example, Mark 4:1-34) and has the ability to heal (for example, Mark 5). The story here in Mark 5:1-20 about the person with unclean spirits is not just about a healing, but also about deviance, "otherness" and "aloneness" (Chapter 5).

[203] John Updike and Shannon Ravenel, *The Best American Short Stories 1984* (Houghton Mifflin, 1984), xvii.

It is through the narrative that the hearer/reader enters into the story world of the text in order to explore meaning. It is through narrative analysis that the broad concept of labelling theory can be explored. Labelling theory is deeply rooted in literary aspects of text where labels are made explicit or implicit by rhetorical devices and use of language, aspects central to reader-response analysis and narrative analysis. Individually, reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory are useful tools in providing a point of active engagement in the narrative story world. However, on their own they do not allow for the voice of "aloneness" to be heard within the context of Mark 5:1-20. When brought together as elements of narrative labelling, the audience is assisted in seeing "aloneness" as a valid lens through which to view Mark 5:1-20.

3.2 Narrative Analysis

As a literary methodological aspect of reading the Markan text, narrative analysis provides the hearer/reader with a framework by which to understand the narrative.[204] It is a means by which scholars interpret texts and falls under the broad umbrella of literary analysis.[205] Although a little dated, David Rhoad's summary of narrative analysis continues to be helpful:

> Narrative criticism has come to be understood as the analysis of the story-world of a narrative along with the analysis of its implied rhetorical impact on readers. First, the analysis of the story-world focuses on the world inside a narrative with its own times and places, its own characters, its past and future, its own set of values, and its series of events moving forward in some meaningful way. This story-world is neither the historical world depicted by the story nor the historical world of the situation in which the story was first told.

[204] R. Alan Culpepper, "Mark 6:17-29 in its Narrative Context: Kingdoms in Conflict," in *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011): 145-164, 145. Alan Culpepper suggests that narrative criticism's focus on the text still allows for other important issues and approaches to interpretation to be affirmed.

[205] David Rhoads, *Reading Mark, Engaging the Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 2. I note Mark Alan Powell's assertion that literary, narrative and reader-response analyses are so similar that he believes they should merge. See Mark Allan Powell, "Narrative Criticism: The Emergence of a Prominent Reading Strategy," in *Mark as Story:Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011): 19-44, 22.

> Rather, it is the imaginary world created by the narrative in its telling. Second, the analysis of a narrative's rhetoric focuses on the implied impact of a narrative both from the *story itself* as well as from the *way* it is told – with its distinctive style and point of view, set of literary techniques, and order of recounting.[206]

Narrative analysis views the narrative text as a whole, and examines its nuances. It emphasises "effects" of a narrative on the audience.[207] Narrative analysis asks, "how" does a text mean? It looks at *how* literary patterns assist in the communication of *meaning* to the audience, and considers connections made between character, setting and plot.[208] The two key aspects of narrative analysis are story and discourse, (Figure 5). "Story is the *what* of a narrative; discourse is the *how.*"[209] It is through the rhetoric of the narrative that the hearer/reader is moved or transformed. In Mark 5:1-20, the "what" is the exorcism in Gerasa. This includes the meeting of Jesus and the person with unclean spirits, and the responses of the Gerasenes. The "how" concerns itself with the literary way the narrative unfolds in exorcising the "legion" of demons from the person.

Figure 5: Key Aspects of Narrative Analysis

The story world of the text does not necessarily relate to actual events, but instead the author creates a story world within the text. In the case of the gospel of Mark, the author does not provide an historical account of Jesus. Instead, the Markan story world depicts Jesus as a central character who moves

[206] Rhoads, *Reading Mark*, 24.
[207] James L. Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 38-40.
[208] Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How does the story mean?," in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical studies.*, ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992): 23-49, 24. Also Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 18-19.
[209] Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 26-27.

throughout the narrative and behaves in such a way as to be seen as God's son, the "in-breaker" of God's reign. From the outset of the gospel, (Mark 1:[1], 11: 9:7) Mark's message about Jesus is made clear. Mark 5:1-20 is a further demonstration of this. The narrative story world, then, may be an implied one, and it may have historical elements within it. What is historically uncertain is the *actual* place of the exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 (Chapter 1). Narrative analysis, however, does not see the actual location as essential, but rather the meaning of the location is more important (Chapter 1). This is where rhetorical analysis, another element of literary analysis, comes into focus. The way the author constructs the narrative, the expressions and language used in order to emphasise certain aspects of the story world, are done by means of rhetoric. This is how the audience is drawn into the story.

The author develops the rhetorical and literary structure of the story world. Narrative analysis considers the overall structure of the narrative in a particular way. The structure of narrative analysis is a rather complex one (Figure 6). In this structure, there is a real author who creates a story world (implied author). It is through the narrative that the implied audience hears what the implied author, or narrator, wants them to hear. Then there is an actual audience who hears or reads the narrative.

Figure 6: General structure of Narrative Analysis

In the context of the Markan gospel, the real author who creates the narrative is an unknown person we call "Mark". This real author, "Mark", creates an implied author who presents the narrative for a narratee or implied audience within the text, by means of a narrator. In the Markan context, the implied author and narrator are one and the same, (to which I return in *2.1* below).[210] Within Mark's story world, other characters also narrate stories to other

[210] Rhoads, *Reading Mark*, 18; Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 28; Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 33. I prefer the term 'narrator' over 'implied author' and it is the former I will use here.

characters, (for Markan examples, see Mark 5:35; Mark 9:38).[211] This occurs in Mark 5:16. Within the small unit of narrative that tells of the exorcism in Gerasa, the witnesses tell others what they saw.

There are five major elements to narrative analysis (Figure 7) that I outline briefly here. Clarification of these elements assists in the audience understanding of the Markan story world and the rhetorical devices used. The *narrator* is the "voice" of the storyteller; *rhetoric* refers to the composition of the narrative and is the means by which the narrator tells the story and persuades the hearer; *setting* places events in a given context of time and space; *plot* concerns where events are placed within the narrative; and *characters* are the actors in the story.[212] Figure 7 demonstrates the significance of the narrator, and the narrator's use of rhetoric. These overarching factors then allow for the setting, plot and characters to be explored within their literary framework as determined by the narrator.

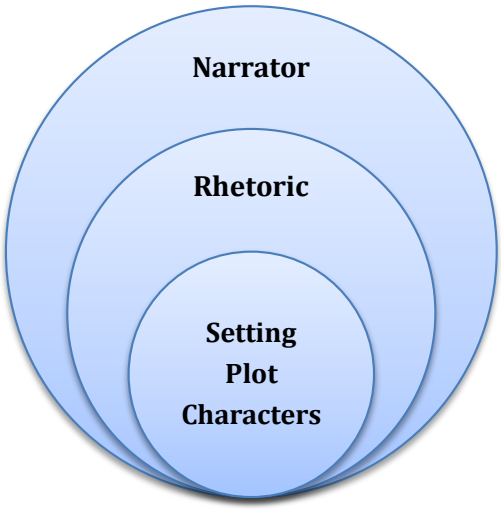

Figure 7: Five Key Elements of Narrative Analysis

3.2.1 Narrator

The narrator in Mark's gospel plays a significant role. As mentioned above, the narrator is not the author, but the "rhetorical device" that the author uses as storyteller.[213] In Mark's story, the narrator uses the third person, and has

[211] Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 27.
[212] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 6-8. Also Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 23-49.
[213] For more information on the role of narrator within texts, see Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 39-61.

unlimited omniscience. This means the narrator knows all things about each character, including feelings, thoughts and actions, including when people are alone.[214] In the broader Markan context, this can be seen through the crowd responses. Examples of crowd responses can be seen in Mark 1:27 and 12:17, where the crowd are "amazed" (ἐθαμβήθησαν/ἐξεθαύμαζον), "glorifying God" (δοξάζειν τὸν θεὸν) in Mark 2:12, and "frightened" (ἐφοβήθησαν) in Mark 5:15. Likewise, the Markan narrator portrays Jesus' own intuition about hardened hearts and lack of faith. In Mark 3:5 Jesus is said to be "angry" (ὀργῆς) and "wondered" at the disciples "disbelief" in Mark 6:6 (καὶ ἐθαύμαζεν διὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν).

Narrators have a specific role to play within the text. Because they are outside the story world, they have the ability to draw the audience into the story world. They are not bound by identity, location, time or space. Often omniscient, narrators have the ability to describe characters without limits because they have an intimate knowledge of the story world. An example of this is the telling of how the poor widow gives all she has (Mark 12:41-44). The narrator also has the ability to explain more fully details that they feel the audience might need more information about, as well as the ability to pass on privileged information about certain characters. Examples include the labelling of Jesus as son of God (Mark 1:[1], 11; 9:7) or Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus (Mark 3:19).[215] The use of narrator in this way creates the "illusion of invisibility. He roams at will through time and space, knowing all and seeing all, even to the extent of moving freely in and out of his characters, Jesus included."[216] The episode at Gethsemane is a case in point here (Mark 14:32-42) where Jesus' anguish (καὶ ἤρξατο ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν – Mark 14:33) is described to the audience.

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[214] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 39-40; see also Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 28; and Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 64-65; Thomas R. Shepherd, "Narrative Analysis as a Text Critical Tool: Mark 16 in Codex W as a Test Case," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32, no. 1 (2009): 77-89, 85.

[215] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 41-43. Interestingly, Fowler takes issues with the notion that the narrator be labelled as omniscient. He thinks the terms of 'unlimited' or 'unrestricted' are more appropriate. "This terminology is apt because, although the narrator seems to know all, he never has the option to tell all, nor can he actually take us to all times and all places in the course of telling the story. He is merely unlimited or unrestricted in what he can choose to show or tell." Having spelt this out, he then continues then to use omniscience! See Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 64-65.

[216] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 65.

Within Mark 5:1-20, the omniscience of the narrator is seen in the description of the person with unclean spirits. The narrator knows where the person dwells, his self-harming behaviour, the reality that he lives with a legion of unclean spirits, the conversation Jesus has with him, what occurred with the pigs, and the responses of the people in the region of Gerasa. All of this occurs as the narrator weaves the story for the audience in a meaningful way. It is no surprise, then, to find that the narrator of the Markan story is biased, with the narrator wanting to articulate his or her own viewpoint.[217] It is the narrator's view that Jesus, as God's son (Mark 1:[1],11; 9:7), is the person to follow. The narrator thereby provides a contrast between the way of God, that is being faithful, courageous, loving and compassionate, and the way of humanity as lived out in the Markan story world. This is expressed through the failure of the Twelve in their lack of faith, disregard for others, lack of compassion and love.[218]

Within our pericope, the Markan narrator declares the people in the region of Gerasa as lacking in faith. They send Jesus away because of their fear (Mark 5:17). They lord it over the person afflicted with unclean spirits, binding him and are unable to subdue him (Mark 5:4). Ultimately, they are loyal only to themselves (Mark 5:14-17). In contrast, the person with unclean spirits is the least among humans. He displays courage in approaching Jesus and seeking restoration (Mark 5:2). Once healed, the person demonstrates faithfulness in proclaiming what Jesus has done for him throughout the Decapolis (Mark 5:20). The evangelist portrays Jesus in God-like terms too. The Markan Jesus displays courage in his love for his neighbour and serving him. Jesus restores the person with unclean spirits and demonstrates what it means to live as loyal to God, according to the Markan story world.

The narrator's function is to engage the audience in such a way that they will respond to the message of Jesus and be a part of the "in-breaking" rule of God. This is done through language, rhetoric and scene setting. Using his omniscience, the Markan narrator takes the audience on a journey to persuade

[217] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 66. See also Robert C. Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role," in *The Shape of the Gospel, New Testament Essays* (Eugene, Oregan: Cascade Books, 2007): 135-160, 140.
[218] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 45.

them to follow the way of Jesus and to partake in the "in-breaking" kingdom of God.

3.2.2 Setting: "where" and "when"

Setting concerns the "where" and "when" of the narrative, of time and space. It allows a place for the characters to perform.[219] Settings create the story world of the narrative through "the cosmic depiction of space and time, the cultural ethos, and the political configurations of the story world, geographical locations, humanly constructed spaces, and so on."[220] Settings in the narrative also assist the audience in associating meaning to a place or time. That is, no setting within the story world is neutral.[221] Events occur at times and place for a purpose known only to the narrator.

In the Markan narrative, the "cosmic setting" is where the world is seen as created by God. Mountains, as setting, are close to God and are historically places of revelation for both the Israelites (Exodus 19-34) and for the Markan audience (Mark 9:2-13).[222] This world also acknowledges the reality of angels and demons (Mark 1:12-13). In Mark's story world, there are groups of people who are not living God-centred lives. From the outset (Mark 1:[1], 11), the Markan Jesus represents the "in-breaking" of God's rule.

Mark's narrative is also the setting of journey. The narrative continually moves. The journey goes from Galilee to Jerusalem and back to Galilee, features the Jordan River, Galilean surrounds, and Gentile territory. [223] Mark 5:1-20 is an example of this as Jesus moves to the "other" side of the sea to Gerasa, to return at the conclusion of the exorcism (Mark 5:1, 20).

The settings in Mark also hark back to Israelite history. The Jordan River has recollections of the Promised Land during the time of Moses; the desert is a

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[219] Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 30. Also Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 87-120.
[220] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 63.
[221] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 64. Also Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 31.
[222] I note Peter Rodgers' desire to add textual criticism to narrative critical study of the Christian Scriptures. This would allow the reader to consider other "narratives" that have influenced the story. For example, how the story of Moses and the Exodus potentially influences the Markan portrayal of Jesus. See Peter R. Rodgers, *Text and Story: Narrative Studies in New Testament Textual Criticism* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 3-4.
[223] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 64-69.

place of testing and encounter; the sea is a place of chaos and destruction, as well as divine power; and mountains are places of revelation.[224] Mark 5:1-20 has midrashic references from Isaiah 65:1-7 with regard to the tombs as the dwelling place for the person with unclean spirits.[225]

Settings in a narrative, then, also have power in terms of meaning making for the audience. Because space and time are significant in a narrative, the narrator mentions them in order to tell the audience something about the events taking place and the people involved. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, the actual place of Gerasa has textual difficulties. Whether or not Mark knew the actual geography of the region of Gerasa becomes irrelevant for the audience. The meaning of Gerasa ("to banish") and the exorcism that ensues indicate a deeper significance about Jesus and the "in-breaking" of God's reign.

3.2.3 Plot: "what" and "why"

Plot is the "what" and "why" of the story.[226] It concerns the organisation of events by the narrator. The "what" in Mark 5:1-20 is the exorcism of the person with unclean spirits in the Gerasene region. The "why" relates to the meaning that the narrator wishes to impart to the audience, namely, that Jesus is God's son who is to be followed, the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God. He is characterised as the example of what God's kingdom looks like. The main plot of the Markan narrative, then, is the "in-breaking" rule of God.

Conflict is central to the plot within the Markan story world (Chapter 1). [227] The Markan Jesus, as protagonist and central character, is involved in various situations of conflict. These conflicts can be categorized as three main groupings: cosmic forces like Satan and unclean spirits (for example, Mark 1:12-13), authority figures like the Scribes and Pharisees (for example, Mark 3:2; Mark 11:27-33) and with family (Mark 3:21-34) and the disciples (for example, Mark 4:40; Mark 9:33-37). All the conflict centres on power and

[224] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 69-70. See also Rodgers, *Text and Story*, 3-4.
[225] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 278. See also Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 163 and Gundry, *Mark*, 258
[226] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 73; Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 32; Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 197-240.
[227] Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel*, 63.

authority.[228] John Pilch suggests that power can be seen in both a private and public sense. The patriarch within family settings exercises private power. Public power is exercised in the political arena. [229] Jesus' power is demonstrated publicly, which is why conflict ensues. Within Mark 5:1-20, the conflict occurs firstly at a cosmic level. Cheryl Pero distinguishes this conflict as Jesus versus Satan. Whilst this is a challenge of good and evil, Pero believes that Satan is not necessarily evil in Mark, rather a "tester" of Jesus. Satan's followers in Mark are described as unclean spirits, not evil spirits.[230] Jesus and the unclean spirits oppose each other (Mark 5:6-13). The spirits insist that they want to remain in the region, imploring Jesus to allow them to stay (Mark 5:10). Jesus demonstrates his power and authority by sending them out of the region by way of the swine, and to their ultimate destruction (Mark 5:12-13). Further conflict follows when the people of the region of Gerasa fear Jesus and beg him to leave (Mark 5:17).

3.2.4 Character and characterisation: "who"

The characters are the "who" of the narrative, the actors. They are the ones the narrator uses to tell the story. They are known by what they say, do, how they think of others and by what others think of them.[231] There are four main groups of characters in the Markan story world: *Jesus* as protagonist is established as the central character from Mark 1:[1], 11. He is named as prominent "Son of God"; the *authorities* (Judean and Roman) who are branded in negative terms by the narrator. They work against Jesus (and thereby God) and called blind, deaf and hard hearted; faithful and fallible women and men *disciples*; and *other minor figures*, of which the person with unclean spirits is one, who are characterised by the narrator in either positive (for example, the woman who anoints Jesus, Mark 14:3-9) or negative ways (for example, the rich young man, Mark 10:17-22) depending on the circumstances.[232]

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[228] Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 33; Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 82-96.
[229] Pilch, "Jesus's Healing Activity," 149.
[230] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 53.
[231] Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 28-29; Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 100-104; Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 121-165.
[232] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 104-136. See also and Joel Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus. Minor Figures as Major Figures in Mark's Gospel.* (Sheffield: JSOT

Characters perform within a particular setting and are given a role in the plot. The setting and plot also assist in the characterisation of a person. Each of these elements intersects, and does so at the desire of the narrator and through the rhetoric the narrator employs. There are four characters in Mark 5:1-20. Jesus and the person with unclean spirits are the two central characters. There are also two groups of people who appear in the pericope. Firstly there are the disciples, who have travelled with Jesus to the "other" side, and secondly, there are the people of the Gerasene region. A narrative labelling perspective offers fresh insights into how the characters are utilised (Chapter 5).

3.2.5 Rhetoric[233]

As mentioned in Chapter 1, reader-response analysis refers to rhetoric authors use in the telling of their stories. Likewise, rhetorical devices are employed with the framework of narrative analysis. The narrator employs rhetoric as a powerful device of discourse to tell the story (Figure 8). Rhetoric is complex and persuasive. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza defines rhetoric as a "technique and literary convention" as well as "cultural-religious discourse and public political practice".[234] The technique of rhetoric moves the text forward by persuasion or argument of the author or narrator and imparts values and norms from within the text.[235] Rhetoric allows the hearer to question how knowledge is constructed, who the so-called "expert" is and investigates various modes of communication.[236] Rhetoric is communal in that its language or persuasive elements are coded for a particular group.[237] A military reading of Mark 5:1-20 (Chapter 1) is an example of this. For those reading Mark 5:1-20 from a

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Press, 1994), and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Fallible Followers: Women and Men in the Gospel of Mark," *Semeia* 28(1983): 29-48.

[233] I note here that there is a mode of literary analysis called Rhetorical Criticism. This type of analysis as a method is interested in arguments and proofs that authors use to persuade their audience. For a more detailed discussion on this see, Mark Allan Powell, *Introducing the New Testament: A historical, literary and theological survey* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2009), 57; Wayne C. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), and Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction.*, Second ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1983), for example. My use of the term rhetoric is as it stands as an element within both narrative and reader-response analyses.

[234]Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "The Rhetoric of Inquiry," in *Rhetoric in the New Millennium: Promise and Fulfillment*, ed. James D. Hester and J. David Hester (New York: T and T Clark, 2010): 23-48, 23.

[235] Fiorenza, "The Rhetoric of Inquiry," 34.

[236] Fiorenza, "The Rhetoric of Inquiry," 34-36.

[237] James D. Hester, "Rhetorics in and for the New Millennium," in *Rhetorics in the New MIllennium: Promise and Fulfillment*, ed. James D. Hester and J. David Hester (New York: T and T Clark, 2010): 1-20, 4.

military or socio-political perspective, rhetoric around the language of the militia, the use of the word "legion", for example, or the knowledge of the significance of the symbol of the boar as the emblem of the soldiers stationed in Gerasa, take on a rhetorical meaning for the hearer or listener. The meaning this audience finds might be different from a hearer or listener with no knowledge of the Roman military. The use of rhetorical devices, and understanding them can influence one's understanding of Mark's meaning of his story. The narrator in the Markan story world employs rhetoric to persuade the audience to take part in the "in-breaking" rule of God. This is done by means of repetition and juxtaposition, "placing scene over against scene in order to elicit comparison, contrast, insight."[238]

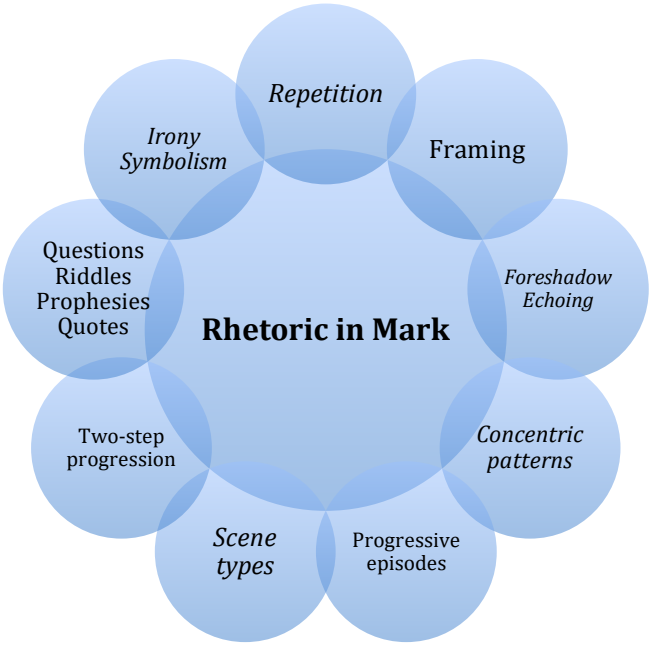

Figure 8: Rhetorical devices in Mark

Figure 8 demonstrates the various aspects of rhetoric utilised by the author of the Markan gospel. The use of *repetition* is essential to understanding the labelling process the narrator undertakes within the broader Markan story world. This is seen in *verbal threads* where key words or phrases are repeated, for example, "immediately" (εὐθὺς) (Mark 1:20, 42; 5:1, 30; 6:45) and "Son of God" (υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ) (Mark 1:11; 9:7). *Foreshadowing* anticipates coming

[238] Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 34; Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 41-78.

events, for example, the death of John the Baptist (Mark 6:14-29), foreshadows Jesus' own death at the end of the gospel. *Echoing* or *retrospection* looks back to previous events. This echoing and foreshadowing may be "intratextual (within the text) or intertextual (between texts)." *Two step progressions* are pairs of phrases or sentences Mark employs, for example, Mark 1:32 refers to "evening…when the sun set". Exorcisms are an example of *type-scenes* that have a similar literary format. *Framing episodes* concern a larger section of work when narratives bookend, in a sense, the section. An example of this is the narrative of the two blind men (Mark 8:22-26; 10:46-52). Within this there are *Sandwich episodes* (Mark 5:21-43) where a first narrative interrupted by second that resolves prior to returning to the first. The death predictions (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33) are examples of *progressive episodes in series of three*. *Concentric patterns* (A B C B' A') occur when episodes are paired together around a central episode (see Figure 9). Other literary devices used by the narrator are questions, riddles, quotes, prophecies, symbolism and irony.[239]

The rhetorical devices utilised in Mark 5:1-20 are identified in italics in Figure 8 above. This pericope is a scene type in that it takes the form of an exorcism story, with parallels to the one in Mark 1:21-28.[240] The exorcism in Gerasa takes place on Gentile soil and complements the earlier one in the Jewish synagogue. The rhetorical device of repetition is evident here too in Mark 5:3-4 with the triple use of the negative οὐ and the triple mention of the tombs as the dwelling place of the person with unclean spirits. Echoing and foreshadowing can be seen intratextually as the Markan narrator portrays Jesus as a figure that has authority over nature and the supernatural. Jesus is able to exorcise unclean spirits (Mark 5:13). This is also evident intertextually as the narrator depicts Jesus as one like Isaiah, a prophet of old (Mark 1:1), and Moses. Symbolism and irony can also be detected in Mark 5:1-20, especially in relation to the use of military terms and swine, and that the exorcism was performed in the place meaning "to banish". This narrative unit is contained within its own concentric

[239] For a detailed discussion on how rhetoric works in the gospel of Mark see Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 47-60; Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 34. Also Kathryn M. Olson and Clark S. Olson, "Beyond Strategy: A Reader-Centered Analysis of Irony's Dual Persuasive Uses," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 1 (2006): 24-52 for a perspective on the use of irony in texts.
[240] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 193.

pattern (Figure 9).[241] "A" represents Jesus arriving and leaving the Gerasene region, "B" is the interaction Jesus has with various characters within the story world, and "C" is the central activity of the exorcism.

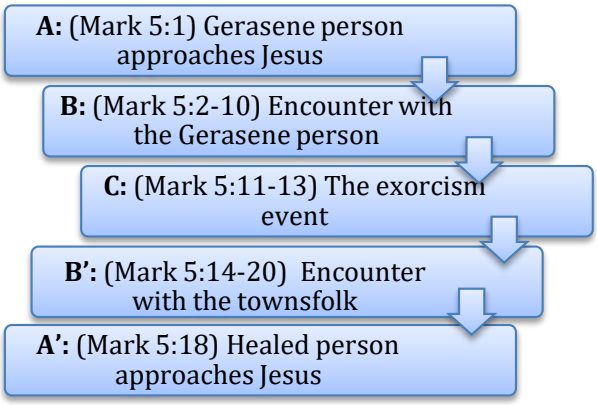

Figure 9: Concentric Pattern of Mark 5:1-20

Rhetorical devices are the glue the narrator uses to hold together setting, plot and characters. Through these rhetorical devices nuances of the text are identified; repetition noticed and ironies heard. The ultimate meaning of the narrative is given through the rhetoric of the narrator. Rhetoric is essential for narrative labelling as it is key to the identification of deviance, "otherness" and ultimately, "aloneness".

3.2.6 Summary remarks on narrative analysis, deviance and "aloneness"

Thus far, the overview of narrative analysis has been discussed as it relates to Mark 5:1-20. Narrative analysis is a useful tool in its focus on the text as a text. It considers the narrative within in its own story world, with characters, setting and plot, and can also be a useful tool for reader-response analysts. It highlights for the audience the setting of the region of Gerasa as important, not in terms of geographical place, but in the meaning of its name, "to banish". Narrative analysis is useful, too, in the connections it makes with events echoed in the Hebrew Scriptures, most particularly with Isaiah for Mark 5:1-20. With regard to plot, narrative analysis allows the audience to hear the conflict within the text, especially in relation to Jesus and the unclean spirits, and Jesus and the people of the Gerasene region. The Markan narrator has a

[241] Moloney, *Gospel of Mark*, 102, and Kelly Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark : 'Even the Dogs Under the Table Eat the Children's Crumbs'* (London: T & T Clark International, 2007), 25.

fundamental motivation to point out Jesus' authority, and to highlight people who lack the faith to see Jesus as Mark characterises him, as the "in-breaker" of God's kingdom.

The omniscient Markan narrator plays a key role in the story world of Mark 5:1-20 and knows all things. The narrator tells the story in a particular way, in order to persuade the audience to a particular point of view. The narrator knows all characters intimately and sets the action accordingly, so that the audience might see Jesus' authority and power over nature, as well as his mission to the Gentile peoples, beginning with the restored person. In the telling of the story, the narrator's role is to get the audience to see the difference between living according to a human perspective, caught up in Satan's testing, as distinct from being a person of God, participating in the "in-breaking" kingdom Jesus is bringing about.

As conflict is essential to understanding the plot of the Markan narrative, it is also essential to our understanding of labelling. Labelling takes place primarily due to conflict; that is, deviating from the social expectations within a given social context. Within a narrative context, the narrator has the ability to label, and create conflict within the narrative in order to highlight prominence or deviance using rhetoric. Rhetoric is important not only for narrative analysis, but also for labelling considerations (see also Chapter 2). It is through the narrator's use of rhetorical devices that we learn about how a particular character is viewed in the story world in which they reside. The labels used define a person in either negative or positive terms, as deviant or prominent. They can be implicit or explicit (Chapter 2).

3.3 Concluding remarks

Narrative analysis is a useful tool in bringing to life the text of Mark 5:1-20, it is not, however, specific about deviance and "aloneness". It hints at ways deviance and "aloneness" may be seen, for example through conflict, but does not make this obvious. As I demonstrate in Chapter 5, the rhetoric the Markan narrator uses can be recognised as important to the identification of deviance and "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20, through the process of labelling. It is labelling theory that we explore in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Labelling Theory: Developing a Connection with Narrative Labelling

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores aspects of labelling theory, especially as it relates to both positive and negative labels of deviancy. I explore the process of labelling within the pericope of Mark 5:1-20 in dialogue with Bruce Malina and Jerome Neyrey's model of labelling, and survey aspects of labelling within Mark 5:1-20. I conclude by providing remarks on the gaps these methodological approaches have in making connections with Mark 5:1-20, deviance and "aloneness". As with narrative analysis and reader-response analysis, any reference to "aloneness" is not explicit in labelling theory.

4.2 Labelling Theory

Labelling theorists, also known as interactionists and societal reactionists, are sociologists who are dedicated to the study of labels. Labelling, in this context, is a literary rhetorical device, which falls under the umbrella of the sociological concept of deviancy theory.[242] It is a means by which names are given to praise or injure another, or perhaps to clarify a condition. A label of praise may indicate honour. For example, in our world one may be labelled a hero for performing a good deed such as saving a life at an accident site. Alternatively, one may be labelled in a demeaning manner. An example of this may be name calling by a schoolyard bully to a child less resilient. One may also be labelled with a condition, such as mental health or physical disorders, in order to assist others in their dealings with the so labelled person in a particular setting. Labelling, then, performs a very important function within society today – but it also did so in the ancient world in terms of honour and shame (Chapter 1). It is significant in Mark's gospel, and especially Mark 5:1-20.

[242] Marshall B. Clinard and Robert F. Meier, *Sociology of Deviant Behavior*, 13th ed. (California: Thomson Wadsworth, 2008), and Sharyn L. Roach Anleu, *Deviance, Conformity and Control*, Australian sociology (Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia, 2006; repr., 4th edition), provide useful broad research into deviance and labelling from a sociological perspective.

4.2.1 The trouble with deviance

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me." This children's rhyme about name-calling has unknown origins, but its earliest written evidence can be found in 1872.[243] It provides taunted children, who are labelled by an insult, with a defence. Calling people names or labelling others has been a common practice since social groupings throughout history.[244] Labelling theory assists in the process of understanding these various social groupings by the labels used. Labelling helps define social order and social expectations, that is, rules and boundaries. Those who do not conform to these boundaries are labelled as "deviant".

Defining deviance is a difficult task because deviance "does not take place in a social vacuum since the concept of deviance is uniquely sociological."[245] In other words, for some people, certain behaviours are seen as deviant, whilst for others the same behaviour is seen in a more positive light.[246] To clearly comprehend the meaning of deviance, one must understand that there is an ambiguity between various social groups and their understandings of deviance.[247] Scholars themselves disagree on a clear notion of deviance and suggest that deviance reflects the common attitudes of a given time and place in history. That is, deviance is contextual. Contemporary deviance may list supposed deviant activities (Figure 10) to include

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[243] George Cupples, *Tappy's Chicks: and Other Links Between Nature and Human Nature* (Harvard University: Strachan and Co., 1872), 78. Also S. Gibbons, *Miss Linsey and Pa* (Longmans, Green and co., 1936), in the United States, and in England, G.F. Northall, *Folk-phrases of Four Counties* (Oxford: H. Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1894), 23. Both of these latter references are discussed in Gregory Y. Titelman, *Popular Proverbs and Sayings: An A-Z Dictionary of Over 1,500 Proverbs and Sayings, with 10,000 Illustrative Examples* (Random House Value Publishing, 1997), 308.

[244] For example, Genesis 37, especially verse 19, where Joseph is labelled a 'dreamer' by his brothers.

[245] Clinard and Meier, *Deviant Behavior*, 1. See also Joseph W. Rogers and M. D. Buffalo, "Fighting Back: Nine Models of Adaption to a Deviant Label," *Social Problems* 22(1974): 101-118, 101; Santiago Guijarro, "The Politics of Exorcism," in *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Wolfgang Stegemann, Bruce J. Malina, and Gerd Theissen (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002): 159-174, 163.

[246] A modern example of this might be the way societies view homosexuality. For some, homosexuality is unnatural and wrong, and yet to others it is seen as another lifestyle choice for people born different from them. Whatever a person's view, labelling takes place. Homosexuals, in this example, are set apart as a group of people from another larger group of people.

[247] Clinard and Meier, *Deviant Behavior*, 2.

> behavior (for example, smoking), physical conditions (for example, ugliness), and types of people (for example, bums [sic]). Examples cite both voluntary acts (for example, crime) and involuntary ones (for example, stuttering).[248]

Deviance in this sense is negative and stigmatises people. It is connected to the way society views or "disvalues" certain people and their conditions, for example mental health or physical disabilities, and their actions.

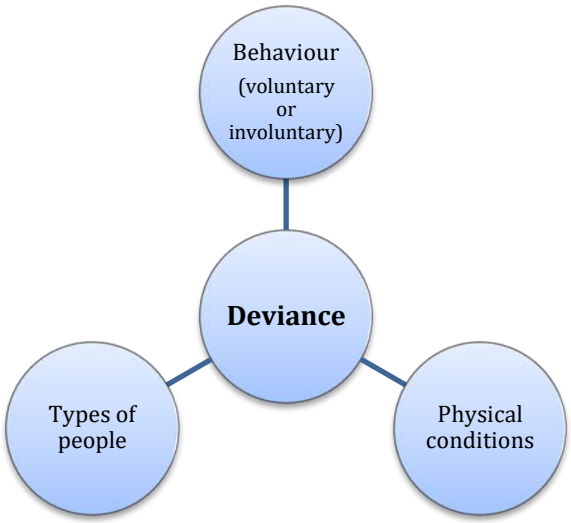

Figure 10: Deviant Activities

Deviant activities within a first century context are also seen through these categories; types of people, (for example, Romans and Gentiles in contrast to Jews, seen throughout Mark's gospel and often in conflict – see Chapter 1); behaviour, (for example, the self-harming of the person in Mark 5:5); and physical conditions, (like possession of unclean spirits). People "outside" the social expectations can be seen in the narrative story world of Mark's gospel. More broadly there are examples in the gospel where people deviate from a place of honour, or violate the purity codes and the expectations of first century society potentially allowing for shame on both the individual and their kin. An example of this is Mark 3:20-35 where Jesus' family attempt to restrain him (Mark 3:21). Jesus publicly disowns them (Mark 3:33-35) thus humiliating them. The Markan narrator makes a narrative statement about family/kin if one

[248] Clinard and Meier, *Deviant Behavior*, 3.

follows “on the way” of Jesus. He publicly violates the purity expectations by touching the diseased (Mark 1:40-42), questions the law about the Sabbath in favour of people (Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-5) and he shares meals with the outsiders (Mark 2:15; 14:3). Mark 5:1-20 is a further Markan example of deviance. Within the Markan story world Jesus is intentional in travelling to the “other” side of the sea, and then spending time with a person with unclean spirits among the tombs in close proximity to swine!

It is worth noting, at this point, that the majority of scholarship on deviance concerns law breaking and criminal activity.[249] There is good reason for this as deviance has often been seen in the light of criminology and not in Christian Scripture discussions. Few biblical scholars mention deviance.[250] Criminal behaviour sets those who commit crime apart from the majority of people who do not. It is often seen as negative for this reason. Deviance, however, is not just something that should be seen in a negative light. It is not just a criminal or lawbreaker who commits acts of deviance. Arguably, deviance may be seen in positive and negative terms via narrative labelling (Figure 11).

Proponents of negative deviance view crime and deviance on the same continuum (Figure 11), even though two are not identical.[251] In this view, although by its nature it is relative, deviance should always be seen in negative terms as those labelled as deviant are called so due to a group of powerbrokers and decision makers.[252] The powerbrokers and decision makers in this context are those who are seen as leaders within the community. They may also be those who have a higher status within the social construct of a society.

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[249] For a sample, see Clinard and Meier, *Deviant Behavior*; John Lofland, *Deviance and identity*, Prentice-Hall sociology series (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.,: Prentice-Hall, 1969); Edwin M. Lemert, "Issues in the Study of Deviance," *Sociological Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (1981): 285-305; Edwin M. Schur, *Interpreting Deviance : A Sociological Introduction* (New York Harper & Row, 1979), ; Walter R. Gove, *The labelling of deviance : evaluating a perspective* (New York: Sage Publications; distributed by Halsted Press, 1975); Howard S. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); Steven Box, *Deviance, Reality and Society* (London; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), and others.

[250] Exceptions are Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, and Paul W. Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities: A Socio-Historical Study," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 49, no. 4 (1981): 567-588. More recently, Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 37-66; Jr. John W. Daniels, "Gossip in the New Testament," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture* 42(2012): 204-213.

[251] Sagarin, *Deviants and Deviance*, 33.

[252] Sagarin, *Deviants and Deviance*, 54.

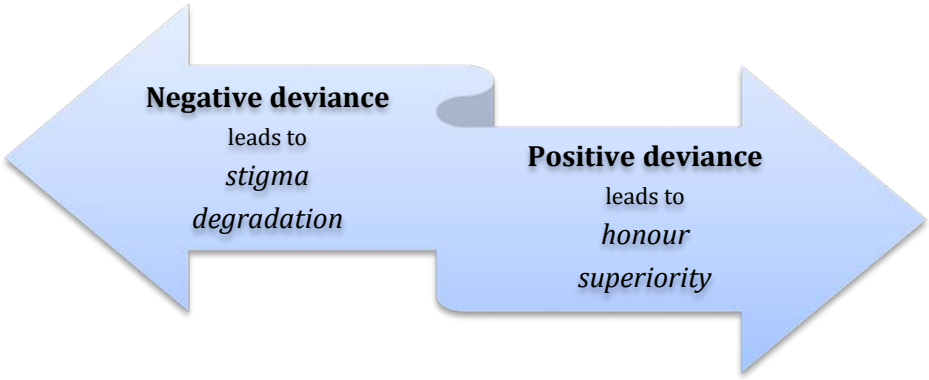

Figure 11: Negative and Positive Deviance

For those who are proponents of negative deviance, the notion of positive deviance is an oxymoron.[253] However, deviance has a function in society in that it assists groups to define acceptable behaviour. "Differentness" is in line with the concept of deviation, which is defined as "difference in any direction", whilst deviance, in this perspective, is defined as "difference in a negative direction".[254] Thus, there is no place for positive deviance. However, the term "positive labelling" is seen as a viable concept because it does not lead to stigma or degradation, like other aspects of deviance, hence the view of deviance being seen only in negative terms.[255] Jesus might be seen as an example of this. In Philippians 2:7-1, we read that Jesus

> *…emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

In a great paradox, Jesus dies the death of a criminal, deviant and disgraced (negative deviance), and yet he is raised and God gives him the honour being exalted and named as Lord (positive title).

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[253]See Sagarin, "Positive Deviance: An Oxymoron", 169-181; Goode, "Positive Deviance: A Viable Concept", 289-309.
[254] Sagarin, "Positive Deviance: An Oxymoron", 175-176. See also Goode, "Positive Deviance: A Viable Concept", 294.
[255] Goode, "Positive Deviance: A Viable Concept", 292, 306.

Conversely, others believe positive deviance is a valid concept, where acts and/or people surpass social norms.[256] Proponents of positive deviance call for an expansion of the definition to include a more equal emphasis on both the positive and negative aspects of deviance.[257]Any activities labelled as deviant simply point to acts that are different to that of social expectations. If actions are seen as negative they have violated these expectations. If the actions surpass expectations the various kinds of labels would be evaluated as positive. [258] Just as a negative deviant label suggests moral inferiority, a positive label could suggest superiority.[259] And just as negative deviants may be isolated, so might those labelled as positive deviants. As honoured members of society, they may be isolated due to their perceived superiority, whether real or imagined.[260] A person who is labelled as a negative deviant may, in time, come to be seen in positive terms.[261]

In the context of Mark's gospel, characters are portrayed in both positive and negative terms in relation to deviance. The religious leaders, as a group, are labelled in negative terms. For them, Jesus is deviant (for example, Mark 2:18-22, 23-28; 3:1-6). For others, especially those healed, Jesus is also portrayed as a positive deviant (for example, Mark 5:25-34; 14:3-9). The positive and negative deviance depicted in the Markan story world is explored further in the next chapter. This deviance is revealed by rhetorical devices the Markan narrator uses, and, especially with regard to characters, through labelling using names.

4.2.2 Calling people names

"The deviant is one to whom the label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label."[262] Such is the connection between

[256] David L. Dodge, "The Over-Negativized Conceptualization of Deviance: A Programmatic Exploration," *Deviant Behavior* 6(1985): 17-37, 17-18.
[257] Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "Positive and Negative Deviance: More Fuel for a Controversy," *Deviant Behavior* 11(1990): 221-243, 225.
[258] Dodge, "Over-Negativized Conceptualization", 22.
[259] Dodge, "Over-Negativized Conceptualization", 28. See also Druann Maria Heckert, "The Relativity of Positive Deviance: The Case of the French Impressionists," *Deviant Behavior* 10(1989): 131-144, 134.
[260] Dodge, "Over-Negativized Conceptualization", 30.
[261] Heckert, "Relativity of Positive Deviance", 136. Heckert then goes on to use the French Impressionists as a case in point on the relativity of positive deviance and the movement from seeing labelled as negative to positive, 138-142.
[262] Becker, *Outsiders*, 9.

deviancy theory and labelling. Labelling theory considers the repercussions of deviant behaviour within society. It is interested in the process by which one is labelled as deviant, as well as the way that society deals with deviance. Labelling theory considers how society reacts to the deviant behaviour of others. It is not the act that is considered, but rather, *social reactions to the act* of deviance, that is, sanctions imposed on the deviant. The focus of this theory is on how labelling impacts upon the one labelled as deviant.

Whilst most biblical scholarship does not discuss labelling and deviancy theory explicitly, exploration of labels is often implicit. In Chapter 1, I noted scholarly views on the fallible disciples (Discipleship) whilst Jesus was labelled "Son of God" (Christology). Labelling discussions centre on deviation from purity and honour codes without specifically referring to deviance or labelling theories. There are, however, smatterings a few scholars who concern themselves with deviancy and labelling.[263] Rick Talbott, for example, likens Jesus to a "rebellious son".[264] As such, he is deviant and is in conflict with his family. This challenge to family honour leads to status degradation, and impacts on family economy.[265] Rebellion and deviance meant the loss of economic support from family and caused shame.[266] Most particularly, for the purposes of this thesis, the discussion of deviance and labelling surrounds exorcism and demons. Paul Hollenbach, for example, asserts that labels of "madness and witchcraft can be used by social dominant classes as a means of social control."[267] More recently, Cheryl Pero says,

> The charge of demon possession was an extremely serious deviance label. Incidents of deviance labelling provided the community with an opportunity to scrutinise the deviant and the deviant behaviour and to explain its causality. Deviance labelling functioned as a social sanction by identifying and controlling inexplicable behaviour. The demon-possessed violated ritual community boundaries and did not live by the societal rules, placing the family/community at risk. When a person displayed deviant

[263] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*; Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities"; Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, and Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, all use explicit references to deviance and/or labelling.
[264] Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 37-66.
[265] Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 43, 47-49.
[266] Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 51.
[267] Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities", 577.

> behaviour patterns, the community imposed sanctions, often declaring the person unclean and isolating that person outside the dyadic kinship community.[268]

For Hollenbach and Pero, labels of demon possession are negative indeed. The focus of their studies is not on labels, however. They are more concerned with the politics of exorcism within first century contexts. Rick Talbott's "rebellious son" is in conflict with his family and community thus he leaves and establishes a new community (that is, fictive kin) around him in Galilee of poor and other marginalised people.[269] Whilst Talbott acknowledges alienation as a result of the deviance label, he is more concerned with deviance than "aloneness".

Within biblical scholarship Bruce Malina and Jerome Neyrey have successfully pointed out in their study of labels in Matthew's Gospel, that labels, like deviance, can be interpreted in both positive and negative terms. Negative labels indicate conflict and are seen in name-calling and suggest "outsider". Stigma is normally attached to negative labels. Positive labels are those names given which honour a person and are kept for "insiders". Titles and acclaim are usually associated with positive labels. Simply put, labelling may be seen as "name-calling and name-giving".[270] Labelling occurs, then, as a result of deviance where one has gone outside the norms. Labelling is, in a sense, a challenge to one's honour and/or a form of retaliation.[271]

If labelling theory does not concern itself with the labels or titles given to a person, it is concerned about the labellers themselves, that is, those who give the labels or titles. There are four groups the labelling process is interested in as in Figure 12 below.

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[268] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 226.
[269] Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 37, 39-40.
[270] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 35.
[271] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 37. See also Rogers and Buffalo, "Fighting Back", 102.

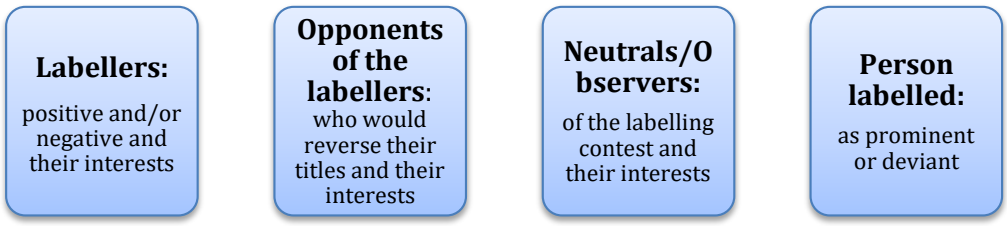

Figure 12: Groups of labellers[272]

Within the context of Mark 5:1-20, the labellers are the narrator, unclean spirits, herders and townsfolk. The unclean spirits label Jesus "Son of the Most High" (Mark 5:7), a positive label, but they do this to serve the purpose of being spared leaving the region of the Gerasenes. Those from the region are terrified of Jesus and are negative about him and implore him to leave when they see the restored person (Mark 5:17). The opponent of the labellers is the person with the unclean spirits, who seeks to go with Jesus (Mark 5:18, 20). Initially, the herders are neutral observers until they witness the exorcism and its aftermath. The disciples, too, who remain on the boat (Mark 5:2), may also be classed in this category. Jesus, the person and the unclean spirits are labelled too. The unclean spirits and bystanders label Jesus, the unclean spirits are labelled "Legion" (Mark 5:9) by the narrator, and the person who is healed is labelled as having "unclean spirits" (Mark 5:2).

People with some form of power and authority are in a position to label another. It is often those without power who are left to carry deviant labels, particularly negative labels.[273] The question of power and who has it is an essential one. With regard to labelling theory, those that have power are the ones who can label as they push to retain their interests. But this is not always straight forward as the opponents may also seek to reverse these labels. There was much conflict within the Matthean community between the Pharisees and Jesus movement in their struggle for recognition.[274] The same may be said for the Markan community; hence my use of the Malina and Neyrey model of "deviance-to-prominence" here.

[272] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 41.
[273] Clinard and Meier, *Deviant Behavior*, 88. See also Peter Aggleton, *Deviance* (London: Routledge, 1987), 9 and Lewis A. Coser, "Some Functions of Deviant Behavior and Normative Flexibility," *The American Journal of Sociology* 68(1962): 172-181, 172.
[274] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 56-65.

Malina and Neyrey utilise different language when speaking of the deviance continuum (see Figure 11). They view deviance as a negative label and use the term "prominence" for positive deviance. Negative deviance is understood in a first century context with particular regard to the conflict between the Jesus movement and Pharisees. To label a person as deviant means that the person is viewed as "out of place to such an extent or in such a way as to be redefined in a new, negative place…"[275] Traditionally labels have been given using a three-step process. In the first instance, a social group, with some power or social standing, has determined the actions of a person to be deviant. Secondly, this group has successfully labelled the person as deviant. In the third phase, the group metes out sanctions to the deviant person to affirm they are outsiders.[276] Malina and Neyrey suggest a fourth step that interrupts the labelling process, which is helpful for our purposes here (Figure 13).

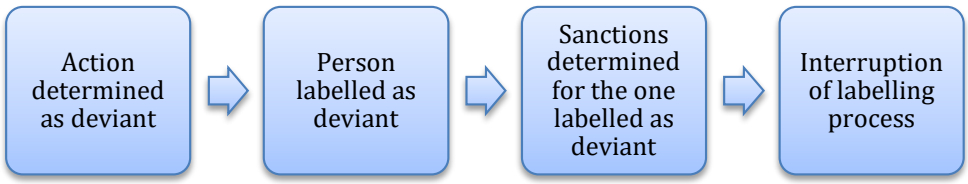

Figure 13: Process of Labelling (including Malina and Neyrey's fourth step)

The significance of the Malina and Neyrey "deviance-to-prominence" model is that it is able to assist in the discussion of labels from a narrative perspective. Through the rhetoric of the narrator, it becomes apparent who the labellers are and their reasons for labelling. Mark 5:1-20, as I point out above, is one example of conflict within the broader Markan context. This conflict is a power struggle about who were seen as "insiders" and who were "outsiders". As groups jostled for prominence and acceptance, each sought to make the other deviant. I explore this further in Chapter 5, but it is essential to outline the model in some detail here first (Figure 14).

[275] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 40.
[276] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 42.

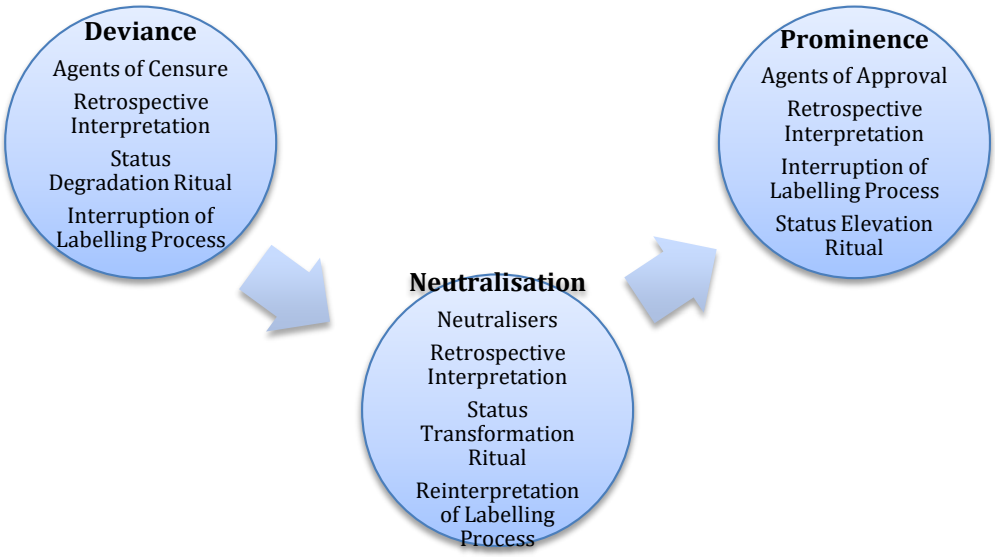

Figure 14: Malina and Neyrey's Model of Deviance to Prominence

Malina and Neyrey's model of deviance to prominence (Figure 14) has three overarching sections: deviance, neutralisation and prominence. Within each of these broader elements are four smaller units that have parallels with each other.

4.2.2.1 Malina and Neyrey's deviance model and Mark 5:1-20

The deviance model (Figure 15) contains four smaller elements that are useful in discussing the creation of the deviance label. The first is *agents of censure*. This element includes rule creators who act as creators and protectors of rules, rule enhancers who "convert" others to their rules and deviance processing agents who enforce the label using sanctions and rituals.[277] Within Mark 5:1-20, the people of the region of Gerasa are the rule creators and protectors. A person with unclean spirits is unwelcome and lives among the tombs. They enforce this rule by trying to restrain him (Mark 5:3-4). The second element of *retrospective interpretation* is where the one labelled as deviant is "made to *be*" deviant by taking responsibility for being deviant, acknowledging their

[277] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 43-48. Note the slight difference in Clinard and Meier who suggest there are three potential groups who have the power to label. The first are "official agents of social control" who hand out sanctions as necessary and according to laws established within communities. Secondly, there is the "society at large" who have set expectations and norms they expect to be fulfilled. Thirdly, there is the immediate community or family group to which one belongs who initially establish expectations about the role or function an individual has within society. Clinard and Meier, *Deviant Behavior*, 89.

harm of others by their deviance, having victims, being condemned by the wider social group and having authorities appealed to in order to confirm the deviant label.[278] The person with unclean spirits is made to bear the consequences of his actions by being excluded from the town and living among the tombs (Mark 5:2-5).

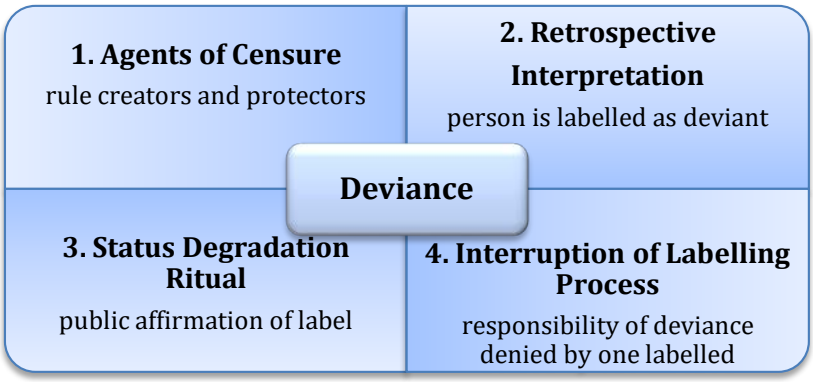

Figure 15: Deviance Process of Malina and Neyrey

The third element is that of *status degradation ritual* where a public renaming or affirmation of the label of deviance takes place.[279] The person with unclean spirits is an outcast. He is "other". The people of the region have attempted to restrain him, but failed. In a sense, the possessed person performs his own degradation ritual by continually engaging in self-harm (Mark 5:5). The fourth and final element in the deviance process is that of *interrupting the labelling process* where there is denial of responsibility by the person labelled (and their supporters), denial of injury by the person labelled, denial of victims by the person labelled, condemnation of the condemners by the person labelled and an appeal to higher loyalties to quash the label of deviance.[280] In the case of the person with unclean spirits, he looks to Jesus to rid him of the unclean spirits, so that the deviance label might be repelled (Mark 5:2, 6, 11-13).

The model of deviance presented here highlights the process of labelling, but suggests a way in which interrupting the labelling process may alter the deviant or negative label. It is no accident that this interruption, or neutralisation, as Malina and Neyrey call it, suggests a reaction against deviance – a

[278] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 48-51.
[279] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 51.
[280] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 52-53.

transforming model. In this step we see a mirror of the deviance model and is one that may easily apply to Mark 5:1-20.

4.2.2.2 Malina and Neyrey's neutralisation model and Mark 5:1-20

Like the deviance model, the neutralisation model (Figure 16) also has four related elements. The first involves *neutralisers*. These people want to turn the negative labels into positive ones using role ambiguity, role transformation and neutral processors. The neutraliser in Mark 5:1-20 is Jesus, who comes from the "other" side of the sea and transforms the person with unclean spirits through exorcism (Mark 5:11-14). The second element is *retrospective interpretation*, which provides a positive evaluation of the person with unclean spirits, who when healed is clothed and in sound mind (Mark 5:15). The third element is *status-transformation rituals* and is demonstrated by the freeing of the person from the unclean spirits. Finally, a *reinterpretation of the labelling process* is seen by Jesus' sending of the person to proclaim what God has done for him to the Decapolis (Mark 5:19).[281]

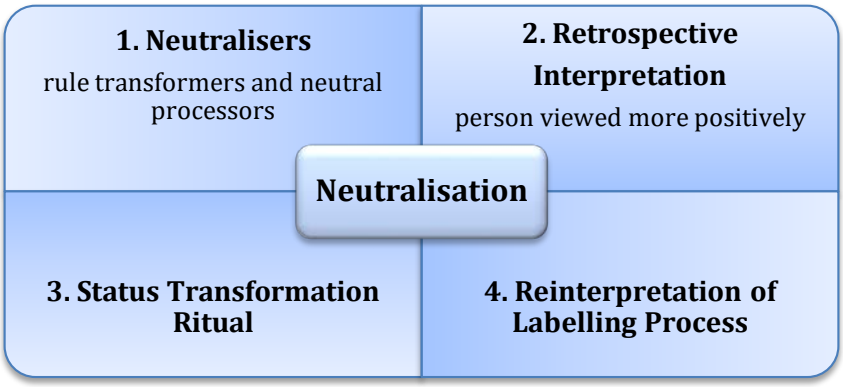

Figure 16: Neutralisation Process of Malina and Neyrey

The neutralising model provides the one labelled deviant with an opportunity to transform their label from a negative one to a positive one. Our example of the person with unclean spirits is a case in point. For this person, Jesus, one who is already labelled as prominent from the narrator's perspective (for example, Mark 1:1), expels the unclean spirits and restores the person to a "right mind". This action of Jesus is one of neutralising.

[281] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 54-56.

4.2.2.3 Malina and Neyrey's prominence model and Mark 5:1-20

Prominence is related to deviance, in that it refers to a person being "out of place". Unlike deviance, however, prominence "refers to a person 'out of place' to such an extent and in such a way as to be defined in a new, positive place".[282] The prominence model (Figure 17) mirrors the deviance model again with four key elements. The first is *agents of approval* with three main groups:

- Rule creators who are the interest group protecting group members,
- Rule enhancers who seek to "enhance" their position by having others support their prominence notions
- Prominence-processing agents who enforce the positive labels rituals.[283]

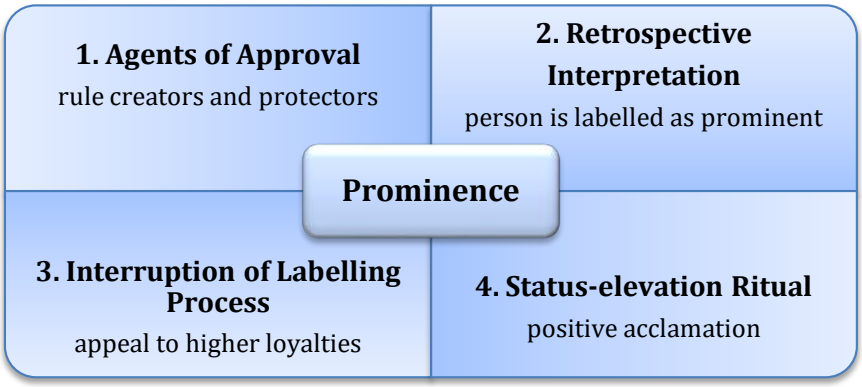

Figure 17: Prominence Process of Malina and Neyrey

In Mark 5:1-20, Jesus is the person of prominence, according to the Markan narrator, who acts as an agent of approval. Jesus' healing of the person with unclean spirits restores him to a more prominent place within his own social grouping (Mark 5:19-20).

Secondly, the prominence model presents a *retrospective interpretation*. Here there is a denial of aggrandizement (driven by something other than self), a claim of benefit (acting for others), an affirmation of beneficiary (that others are deserving or worthwhile), an acclamation of acclaimers (praising and acclamation of those who seek to make one prominent) and an appeal to higher

[282] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 96.
[283] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 98-99.

loyalties.[284] The "legion" of unclean spirits has acknowledged Jesus as a higher loyalty (Mark 5:7), and once healed, the person, himself, also appeals to Jesus as a higher loyalty so that he might "be with him" (Mark 5:18).

The third element is the *interruption of the labelling process* through denial of responsibility by the person labelled (and their supporters), denial of injury by person labelled, denial of victims by person labelled, condemnation of the condemners by the person labelled and appeal to higher loyalties. Finally there is the *status-elevation ritual* where there is moral elation (positive recognition) and an acclamation rite.[285] The ultimate recognition of the person's restored status is that Jesus entrusts him to proclaim what God has done, thus restoring him to his own family and community (Mark 5: 19-20).

The Malina and Neyrey model provides a clear framework to view the transformation of deviance to prominence by a process of neutralisation, and can be seen to work in Mark 5:1-20. However, the focus is on Jesus as the one who is initially labelled deviant and ultimately as prominent. It is complex and detailed. What it does not allow for is the possibility of labels for the person with unclean spirits. And whilst it demonstrates deviance, the Malina and Neyrey model does not articulate "aloneness". This falls to narrative labelling, which draws upon the idea of the model, in a simpler format, in order to more clearly discern "aloneness" (Chapter 5).

4.2.3 Summary remarks on labelling theory

A key aspect of labelling theory is as a rhetorical device, where it serves to assist the audience in the characterisation of persons and place by the narrator. Whilst it has a focus on the social reactions to an act of deviance, it is a challenge to apply it to a religious narrative, which exists within its own story world. The narrator tells the audience about the social reactions within the Markan narrative. In this way, the narrator is the labeller, a concept not explicit in contemporary biblical scholarship. The acts of deviance in Mark 5:1-20 is Jesus' travelling to the region of Gerasa, interacting with the person with unclean spirits and the exorcism of the unclean spirits. The social reaction within the text sees the people from the region of Gerasa send Jesus away as

[284] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 100-101.
[285] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 103-104.

they are fearful of what has occurred. What is not made clear is an alternate view of what this social reaction means in terms of deviance and "aloneness" for Jesus and the "other", which I turn in the next chapter.

The "deviance-to-prominence" model of Malina and Neyrey is a backdrop to labelling theory and the emphasis on social reactions to deviance. The model is also interested in social reactions in terms of who labels. It acknowledges the continuum of deviance in positive (prominence) and negative (deviance) although their language differs from mine. Unlike the traditional model of labelling, the model presented by Malina and Neyrey allows for a change from deviance to prominence. Whilst helpful in providing a clear model for an understanding of deviance (in both positive and negative terms) within a text, labelling theory as it has been utilised so far in contemporary biblical scholarship, lacks the explicit connections between deviance and "aloneness", let alone any pastoral ways forward for people experiencing "aloneness".

4.3 Concluding remarks

It is clear that there are connections between reader-response and narrative analyses and labelling theory perspectives of reading Mark's gospel. Reader-response analysis (Chapter 2) takes the narrative concepts in allowing for the reader/hearer to be mindful of, but not bound to, the ancient text. In this way, it can acknowledge the narrative aspects of the importance of narrator and value of understanding historical elements of the textual context. Not being bound to a particular meaning liberates the reader to determine meaning in their own context.

Narrative analysis (Chapter 3) invites the hearer and reader to discover "how" a text means. The narrator is a key element in this process, and the Markan narrator is omniscient and therefore able to inform the audience about the good news of Jesus as "in-breaker" of God's kingdom. Because the narrator has privileged information, the audience is led and persuaded in a particular understanding of Jesus. The narrator has the ability to label positively or negatively. Other aspects of narrative analysis are setting, plot and characterisation, all of which are significant in developing a contextual understanding of the text. The narrator uses these elements to guide the

understanding of the audience. This is achieved by the literary means of rhetoric, itself a persuasive literary device. Rhetoric is the means by which the narrator has the power to label. It has the potential to lay explicit the concept of "aloneness", which is, I believe, implicit within the Markan text, and the subject of the next chapter.

Deviancy theory (Chapter 4) is complex to define, and relative in nature. It is informed by the cultural expectations of a given society. This is true of the first century Mediterranean peoples as it is to contemporary audiences. If one deviated from the expectations of upholding honour and remaining pure, then they could be assured of being labelled in negative terms. Honourific labels or titles were often used for those who exceeded expectations positively. Examples of these abound for Jesus within Mark ("Son of God", "Messiah", "Son of the Most High God"). But labels could also be negative if one was perceived to have dishonoured themselves and their social grouping or kin. Jesus, in Mark, was accused of being Beelzebul and a hypocrite (Mark 3:20-30).[286]

People who have power over others give labels to those who have little or no power. These labels may be seen in terms of deviance or prominence. Malina and Neyrey provide a clear method by which this may occur. Labellers interpret an action as deviant and thus label the person as deviant, enforcing the deviance label through a degradation ritual. In their model, this deviance labelling may be interrupted and neutralised. During the neutralisation process, the deviance label is disputed, and other, more positive labels are put forward and new rituals suggested. The prominence model then comes into play where these positive labels are accepted and rituals to affirm this new status are performed.

Malina and Neyrey's model presented in this chapter provides a useful tool for considering the positive and negative aspects of labelling within the Christian Scriptures. The process of labelling itself is one that looks at the successful identification of a label: negatively as stigma, and positively as a title.[287]

[286] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 49 and also Talbott, *Jesus, Paul and Power*, 40.
[287] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 35-36.

Labels reinforce the notions of being “out of place” and “other” which is helpful when viewing the reality of labelling and its impact on people within the Markan story world and outside of it today. Malina and Neyrey are able to identify “out of place” in terms of difference, but discussion of the concept of “aloneness” is not explicit in their work. Whilst the Malina/Neyrey model is a helpful tool for labelling deviance and prominence, I develop a perspective where labels of positive and negative (prominent and deviant) can be identified in explicit and implicit ways in which the narrator uses them to determine “aloneness”.

Thus far I have established a connection between a useful purpose of reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory in as far as they provide a framework by which one can view the significance of the Markan narrator and the use of rhetoric in setting up a story world where positive and negative labels abound. The methodologies of reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory are helpful in discerning the narrative world of the text and the reader’s ability to find meaning in the text. It is through the narrator’s use of rhetoric that the audience is able to identify “aloneness” within this first century text. The next chapter will provide a discussion and application of this new methodological lens, narrative labelling, more appropriate for such a task, to Mark 5:1-20.

Part III:
Narrative Labelling in the Gospel of Mark

Chapter 5

Among the Tombs: Narrative Labelling and Mark 5:1-20

5.1 Introduction

Thus far, I have provided an overview of the narrative approaches to Mark 5:1-20 from the perspective of reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory. This has been important in order to ground the current methodology of narrative labelling, detailed here in this chapter. It is through narrative labelling that "aloneness" can be articulated. Narrative labelling, focuses on the narrative and story world in order to discern labels. Because of its emphasis on reading as dynamic and temporal, a reader-response framework enables the reader to find and create meaning of the labels in the text, but it does so with the assistance of techniques utilised in narrative analysis and labelling theory. Narrative analysis provides a means by which the audience can enter into the narrative story world in order to hear what the story means. By understanding the narrative context the hearer can comprehend how the narrator uses rhetorical devices to make the point about who Jesus is within the framework of the narrative story world. Labelling as a rhetorical device is a useful tool in exploring deviance in both positive (prominent) and negative (deviant) terms. When brought together in the form of narrative labelling, these methodologies create a wonderful tool by which one can explore "aloneness", the purpose of this present chapter.

5.2 Narrative Labelling

Narrative labelling (Figure 18) consists of key elements of reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and labelling theory as described in Part II. Narrative labelling utilises the narrator as labeller within the story world. It is the narrator who labels via rhetorical devices in the text in terms of inner-/inter-text, implicitly and explicitly via the use of positive and negative labels. As I demonstrate here, "aloneness" can be seen in Mark 5:1-20 (and I suggest more widely than this in Mark – see Chapter 6). "Aloneness", from a narrative labelling perspective, is understood in viewing the narrator as labeller, rhetoric as label and deviance as labelling (Figure 19). It is through these elements that "aloneness" is made clear and which I now discuss in detail.

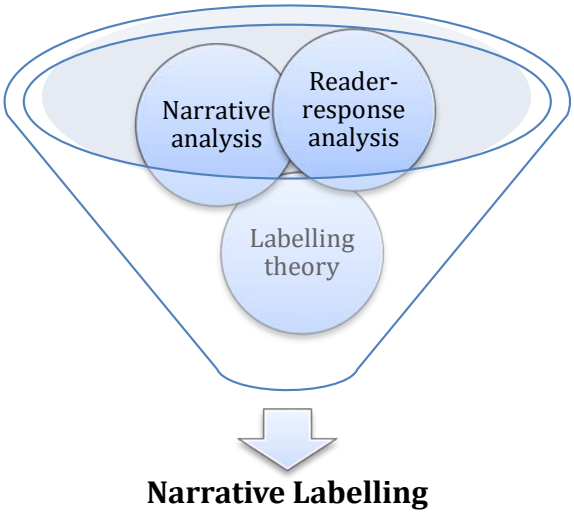

Figure 18: Narrative Labelling

5.2.1 Narrator as labeller

Throughout the gospel of Mark, the narrator uses labels. Some of these labels are positive and others negative, some explicit and others implicit. Some of the labels given to Jesus by the Markan narrator are: prophet (for example, Mark 1:1-3, 12-13; 9:4), teacher (Mark 1:14, 22, 24, as examples), rule breaker (Mark 1:31; 6:56; 7:2), exorcist (Mark 1:34, 39) and perceptive (Mark 2:8; 8:31; 9:31:10:33). Other characters within the gospel are also empowered by the narrator to label Jesus. Some of these include: unclean spirits (Mark 1:34; 3:11), Scribes (Mark 3:22, 30). On occasion, Jesus also labels. For example, he labels the Syrophoenician woman (Mark 7:27), the woman with a bleed (Mark 5:23), and the disciples (Mark 4:11, 40).

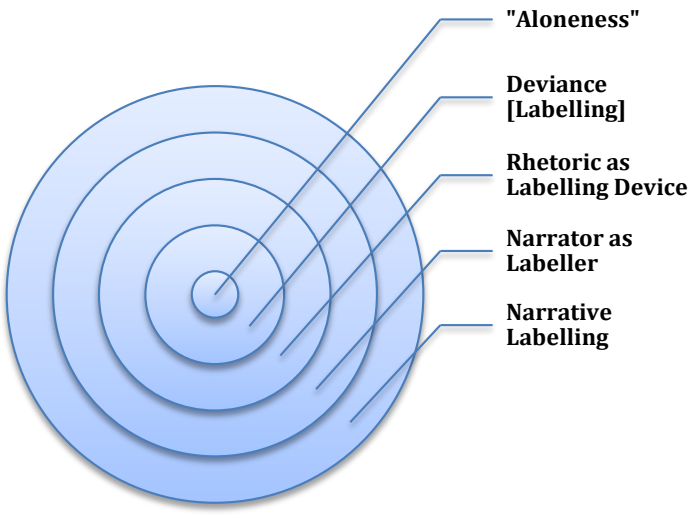

Figure 19: Narrative labelling and “aloneness” connection

Some labels are used for the purposes of identification, for example, James and John as sons of Zebedee (Mark 1:19) and Levi as son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14). These are explicit labels. Presumably the original Markan audience were aware of the characters mentioned. For the contemporary hearer/reader these labels are indicative of the importance of these characters in the narrative story world as well as the hearers. Some labels are indicative of character: in positive ways (the poor widow in Mark 12:43-44 and the unnamed anointing woman in Mark 14:3-9) or negative ways (Judas Iscariot in Mark 14:10-11, 43 and the religious leaders in Mark 7:6, 8-13; 12:15, 35-40). Some of these labels are implicit, others not so. Some labels indicate emotion: fear (φοβηθεῖσα - Mark 5:33), amazement (ἐθαμβήθησαν/ἐξίστασθαι - Mark 1:27; 2:12), and anger (ἀγανακτοῦντες - Mark 14:4-5). Again, some of these are explicit and others implicit. All labels are narrative devices used by the author as a rhetorical device in order to tell their story in a particular way and from a particular vantage point.

In many ways, the narrator is a rhetorical device used by the author as storyteller.[288] It is through the omniscient Markan narrator that we hear about the deviance (in both positive and negative terms) and prominence of Jesus, the central character in the gospel narrative. It is through the narrator that we are given insights into various characters, plots, events and places.[289] The Markan narrator has power to dictate the events of the gospel as he sees fit: the prime purpose being to demonstrate Jesus as the "in-breaker" of God's kingdom as God's son(Chapter 1). As such the Markan narrator acts as the primary labeller. It is the Markan narrator who labels characters within the story and provides characters within the story world that also label. Through these labels, the Markan narrator describes who is "deviant" and who is "alone" within the story world of the gospel narrative.

There are four groups of characters that are labelled by the Markan narrator within this pericope: Jesus, the person with unclean spirits, the Gerasene people, and the disciples. I explore each of these groups in turn with regard to

[288] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 39-61.
[289] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 39-40; see also Malbon, "How does the story mean?," 28; and Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 64-65. Also Shepherd, "Narrative Analysis as a Text Critical Tool: Mark 16 in Codex W as a Test Case", 85.

labelling. Some labels are explicit, for example, where Jesus is identified as "Son of the Most High God" (Mark 5:7). Others are implicit, as in the label of exorcist and healer for Jesus, but which are demonstrated throughout Jesus' actions within the story world (Mark 5:13) Implicit labels are designated in italics in the dot points below.

5.2.1.1 Jesus as labelled

There are four labels given to Jesus by the Markan narrator in Mark 5:1-20. The Markan Jesus is labelled as:

- *God's son/"in-breaker" of God's reign* (Mark 5:1-20)
- *"Other"* (Mark 5:1-2, 17)
- "Son of the Most High God" (Mark 5:7)
- *Exorcist/healer* (Mark 5:13)

5.2.1.1a God's son/"in-breaker" of God's reign as label

Mark 5:18-20	*Mark 5:18-20*
[18]καὶ ἐμβαίνοντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον παρεκάλει αὐτὸν ὁ δαιμονισθεὶς ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾖ.[19]καὶ οὐκ ἀφῆκεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ λέγει αὐτῷ, Ὑπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σούς, καὶ ἀπάγγειλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοιπεποίηκεν καὶ ἠλέησέν σε.[20]καὶ ἀπῆλθεν καὶ ἤρξατο κηρύσσειν ἐν τῇ Δεκαπόλει ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ πάντες ἐθαύμαζον.	*[18] As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. [19] But Jesus refused, and said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you." [20] And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.*

From the outset, as mentioned in Parts I and II of the thesis, the Markan narrator labels Jesus as son of God (υἱοῦ θεοῦ), about whom the gospel is written, and declared by God at Jesus' baptism (Mark 1:[1], 11). This label is echoed at the transfiguration (Mark 9:7). The label of Jesus as God's son is one the Markan narrator implies throughout the gospel. The Markan Jesus exhibits power and authority over nature (in the calming of the storm, Mark 4:35-41) as well as the supernatural (in the exorcism of the unclean spirits here in Mark 5:1-20). The whole of the Markan gospel is intended to convince the audience that Jesus is God's son, and the one who demonstrates God's "in-breaking"

reign. This "in-breaking" rule of God is subversive and seen in Jesus' words and deeds as he cares for those who are "deviant" and outside the boundaries of social expectations.[290] As the central character of the narrative, the Markan Jesus carries the label of being God's son implicitly into the Mark 5:1-20 pericope. The outworking of this label is demonstrated in Mark 5:19, where he instructs the healed person to report what the Lord has done and that he had mercy. In this request, he invites the healed person also to participate in the "in-breaking" kingdom of God. The Markan narrator allows Jesus to speak and act on behalf of God, implicitly in this case, as God's declared beloved son.

The narrative response to Jesus being the God's son and "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God is implicitly demonstrated in the desire of the healed person that he might be with him (ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾖ, Mark 5:19), that is, to follow Jesus as a disciple. The phrase used here is the same as the one where the disciples are called to follow Jesus in Mark 3:14. Discipleship means to follow Jesus on "the way" (τὴν ὁδὸν, see Mark 1:3). Following "on the way" as it appears in the narrative world of the Markan narrator, is a rhetorical device (Chapter 1). It implies that the follower is a disciple of Jesus, and journeys with him.[291] The disciples begin this journey (Mark 5:1) but they do not follow Jesus into the region of "other".[292] In contrast, the healed person explicitly proclaims what Jesus has done in the Decapolis (Mark 5:18-20, as Jesus' offer to the healed person of reintegration into community from isolation). The implicit label of Jesus as God's son in Mark 5:1-20, the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God, invites the readers/hearers of the Markan narrative to follow Jesus and, likewise, be "in-breakers" of God's reign too either on the road and/or within their own communities.

[290] Malina, *The Social Gospel of Jesus*, 37-69.
[291] This theme of following "on the way" occurs 14 times in Mark. Mark 1:3; 2:23; 4:4, 15; 6:8; 8:3; 10:17, 46 all have the double meaning of journey or following on a path. Specific discipleship references of following "on the way" also occur in Mark 8:27; 9:33-34; 10:32, 52; 11:8; 12:14. The notion of following the way of the Lord (as in Mark 1:3) has its roots in Second Isaiah. See Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 61.
[292] van Iersal, *Mark*, 196, 198 and Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 70.

5.2.1.1b "Other" as label

Mark 5:1-2; 17	*Mark 5:1-2; 17*
[1]Καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης εἰς τὴν χ ώραν τῶν Γερασηνῶν. [2]καὶ ἐξελθόντος αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου εὐθὺς ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ,	*[1] They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. [2] And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.*
[17]καὶ ἤρξαντο παρακαλεῖν αὐτὸν ἀπελθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν.	*[17] Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood.*

In Mark 5:1-2, the Markan narrator comments on Jesus in terms of place. Jesus, son of God and "in-breaker" of God's rule, travels to the "other" (τὸ πέραν) side of the sea to the region of Gerasa, the place of banishment.[293] In spite of the textual and geographical difficulties with "Gerasa" (Chapter 1), it is the place where the events of Mark 5:1-20 are situated. The banishment of the swine, unclean spirits and, ultimately, Jesus' presence points to the region of Gerasa, the region of banishment, as being highly significant. The Markan narrator explicitly labels Gerasa as a place of the "other". It is a Gentile region, where swine reside, and a person with unclean spirits lives among the tombs. It is into this place of "otherness" that Jesus comes. Implicitly, then, the Markan narrator labels Jesus, like the place, also as "other".

Within the Markan story world, the disciples respond to this "otherness" by remaining on the boat. Whilst they travel with Jesus to the "other" side, they do not participate in his "otherness". Instead, they remain isolated from him. The narrative implication here is that Jesus is alone. Certainly, Mark 5:2, states "he", "came out of the boat" (ἐξελθόντος αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου).[294] In contrast, an unnamed "other" approaches Jesus from afar, out of the tombs (Mark 5:2).

[293] τὸ πέραν has the sense of crossing over, going beyond. Jesus crosses over the sea, hence going to the "other" side. See *The Analytical Greek Lexicon,* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd, 1971), 317.
[294] See also Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 70.

The Markan narrator, as labeller, emphasises the "other" from the outset of this narrative (Mark 5:1-5) and is also concerned with the social reactions to Jesus. I dare say the meaning of Jesus' journey to the "other" cannot be lost on the first hearers of the Markan story. Neither can it be lost on readers/hearers today. Within the story world, the implication is that God's son, the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God is subversive and "other". Jesus stands as an example of living counter-culturally.[295]

5.2.1.1c "Son of the Most High God" as label

Mark 5:7	*Mark 5:7*
[7]καὶ κράξας φωνῇ μεγάλῃ λέγει, Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; ὁρκίζω σε τὸν θεόν, μή με βασανίσῃς.	*[7] and he shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."*

A more explicit label given to Jesus by the Markan narrator appears at Mark 5:7 on the lips of the person with unclean spirits. Here Jesus is labelled "Son of the Most High God" (Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου. The title serves to summarise the narrator's understanding of who Jesus is.[296] It can be understood as both eschatological (Mark 14:25)[297] or as being present and "in-breaking" now. In the Markan story world, it is Jesus, himself, who establishes the kingdom or reign of God. Further to this, the Markan Jesus is characterised as the protagonist between God and Satan, good and evil.[298] The unclean spirits label the protagonist. Be it a reaction of fear or reverence, the use of this title serves a narrative purpose to label Jesus as "other". Not only is Jesus labelled as "other" but he also displays a willingness to engage with the "other" in the person with unclean spirits.

5.2.1.1d Exorcist/healer as label

Mark 5:13	*Mark 5:13*
[13]καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς. καὶ ἐξελθόντα τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀκάθαρτα εἰσῆλθονεἰς τοὺς	*[13] So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the*

[295] See also Kopas, "Outsiders in the Gospels", 118.
[296] Hooker, *The Gospel According To St Mark*, 19.
[297] Kee, *Community of the New Age*, 107-108.
[298] Malbon, *Mark's Jesus*, 45.

χοίρους, καὶ ὥρμησεν ἡ ἀγέλη κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, ὡς δισχίλιοι, καὶ ἐπνίγοντο ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ.	*swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea.*

The Markan narrator implicitly labels the Markan Jesus as an exorcist, a label defined by the narrative action in the story world in this pericope (Mark 5:8-13). Jesus enters into dialogue with the unclean spirits, who plead to stay in the region of Gerasa, but Jesus overwhelms them with his authority and exorcises them from both the person and the region in permitting them to leave the person (ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς, Mark 5:13). Exorcism was very common in the first century (Chapter 1), and Jesus was not the only person who performed such acts.[299] For the Markan narrator, Jesus, as God's son, is the only one with the authority of God to do so. Through exorcism, Satan and the forces of evil are bound, thus there is an opportunity to restore relationship with both God and other aspects of community.[300] Thus, the afflicted person is, potentially, able to be reinstated into community.

As God's agent of healing in line with the Jewish prophets of old[301] Jesus' place within the story world of the text is as the epitome of prominence, "the Holy One of God" (ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ, Mark 1:24) and "Son of God" (υἱοῦ θεοῦ, Mark 1:[1], 11; 9:7). In contrast, evil stands in the form of the unclean spirits. By exorcising the unclean spirits, Jesus, as God's authority or divine agent, ends the control of evil and participates in the "in-breaking" rule of God, according to the Markan narrator. That the narrator portrays this exorcist as unique should not surprise the hearer, particularly as Jesus is God's son. This exorcist has authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:10). The Markan Jesus, as exorcist, is one who is also devotes time to people (Mark 5:33). In Mark 5:15-17, whilst the herders leave to tell the other people in the region, Jesus spends time with the person he has just exorcised. This is in strong contrast to

[299] Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, 35-54. Also Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities", 569, 571-572.
[300] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 63.
[301] Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World*, 147. Some of these agents are Moses, Elijah and Elisha. 147-149. See also Kee, "Terminology", 239.

the Gerasene people who, rather than celebrate the restoration of the person, respond by wanting to send Jesus away. Their actions isolate Jesus.

The labels used of Jesus in Mark 5:1-20 as God's son and "in-breaker" of God's reign, "other", "Son of the Most High God", and exorcist, are examples of how the Markan narrator uses labels, both implicitly and explicitly, in order to persuade the audience about Jesus as "in-breaker" of God's reign. These labels serve a literary purpose that allows the Markan narrator to explore deviance and "aloneness" within the narrative story world and to which I return later in this chapter.

5.2.1.2 Person with unclean spirits as labelled

Jesus is not the only person labelled by the Markan narrator in Mark 5:1-20. The other central character in this narrative is the unnamed person with unclean spirits. This person is labelled from the start of the narrative by the detailed description of the place and his behaviour, and in the social reactions of others. Labels given by the Markan narrator are:

- *"Other"* (Mark 5:2-5, 15-16, 18-19)
- Unnamed/named (Mark 5:2/Mark 5:9)
- Restored (Mark 5:15)
- *(Would-be) Disciple* (Mark 5:18-20)

5.2.1.2a "Other" as label

Mark 5:2-5, 15-16, 18-19	*Mark 5:2-5, 15-16, 18-19*
[2]καὶ ἐξελθόντος αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου εὐθὺς ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ, [3]ὃς τὴν κατοίκησιν εἶχεν ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν, καὶ οὐδὲ ἁλύσει οὐκέτι οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο αὐτὸν δῆσαι, [4]διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν πολλάκις πέδαις καὶ ἁλύσεσιν δεδέσθαι καὶ διεσπάσθαι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τὰς ἁλύσεις καὶ τὰς πέδας συντετρῖφθαι, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι: [5]καὶ διὰ παντὸς νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσινἦν κράζων καὶ κατακόπτων ἑαυτὸν	*[2] And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. [3] He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain;[4] for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. [5] Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones.*

λίθοις. *[15]καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν,καὶ θεωροῦσιν τὸν δαιμονιζόμενον καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα, τὸν ἐσχηκότα τὸν λεγιῶνα, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν. [16]καὶ διηγήσαντο αὐτοῖς οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐγένετο τῷ δαιμονιζομένῳ καὶ περὶ τῶν χοίρων* *[18]καὶ ἐμβαίνοντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον παρεκάλ ειαὐτὸν ὁ δαιμονισθεὶς ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾖ.[19]καὶ ο ὐκ ἀφῆκεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ λέγει αὐτῷ,Υπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σούς, καὶ ἀπάγγειλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοιπεποίηκεν καὶ ἠλέησέν σε.*	*[15] They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. [16] Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine reported it.* *[18] As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. . [19] But Jesus refused, and said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you."*

The Markan narrator labels the person with unclean spirits as someone who is "other" (Mark 5:2-5). As we saw with Jesus, above, the Markan narrator informs the hearers that Jesus and the disciples are travelling to the "other" (τὸ πέραν) side of the sea (Mark 5:1). The first century view of paradox and dualism is present in the text.[302] Themes of order and disorder, death and life, and bound and free, are evident here.[303] There is a narrative distinction made within the Markan story world about what is acceptable (clean) and what is "other" (unclean, see Chapter 1). Jesus represents purity and goodness (after all, Jesus is God's son, the "in-breaker" of the kingdom), whilst the "other" is evil and impure. Gerasa, as we have seen, is in the latter category. Swine inhabit Gerasa (Mark 5:11) and a legion of unclean spirits (Mark 5:9). Particular words and phrases within the text are highlighted in italics: "a person with an unclean spirit… out of the tombs… among the tombs… no one… bind… chain… bound… shackles… chains… chains… shackles… no one… constantly night and day… among the tombs… crying out… beating himself" (Mark 5:2-5). Within the narrative these vivid references to "otherness" are

[302] See France, *Gospel of Mark*, 20; Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 37-38; Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 45.
[303] Newheart, *My Name is Legion*, 74.

rapidly occurring and serve to emphasise the predicament of the person. Five times within the pericope the narrator reminds the audience that the person has "unclean spirits" (πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ, Mark 5:2, 15, 16, 18). The description of possession in this story world is closely aligned to being "other". The distinction between person and spirit is initially unclear in the story world as the Markan narrator has the person call out to Jesus (Mark 5:6), but it becomes apparent that many unclean spirits possess the person (Λεγιὼν ὄνομά μοι, Mark 5:9).

The Markan narrator details the living conditions and behaviour of the person with unclean spirits (Mark 5:2-5) in order to create the implicit label of "aloneness" (in italics above). The audience is informed that the person lives "among the tombs" (three times, Mark 5:2, 3, 5), has been "bound" (mentioned twice, Mark 5:3-4), cries out all day and all night (Mark 5:5) and participates in self-harming behaviour (Mark 5:5). Whilst tombs were places of remembrance, they were also seen as places of exclusion and isolation.[304] The place of the dead is mirrored in the condition of the human person as they are inhabited by unclean spirits.

A possessed person living among the tombs, in the place of banishment, is considered "other" and isolated from community. In the Markan story world, it is in Gerasa that Jesus and the person with unclean spirits, both of whom are isolated, will encounter one another. In the encounter, they remain "other" albeit together, and then, within the pericope, they leave "alone"; Jesus to the misunderstanding disciples and the healed person to the faithless region of Gerasa.

5.2.1.2b Unnamed vs named as label

Mark 5:2; 9	*Mark 5:2; 9*
[2]καὶ ἐξελθόντος αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου εὐθὺς ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ,	*[2] And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.*

[304] Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 26, 278. See also Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 163 and Gundry, *Mark*, 258.

[9]καὶ ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν, Τί ὄνομά σοι; καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Λεγιὼν ὄνομά μοι, ὅτι πολλοί ἐσμεν.	*[9] Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many."*

As outlined in Chapter 1 names were important for identification of individuals and their connections to kin. There is power in naming.[305] Naming allows for the one naming to exert control over the one being named. Throughout the story, the human person remains unnamed. The Markan narrator, however, explicitly labels the unclean spirits, "Legion" (Λεγιὼν, Mark 5:9). The naming of Legion in the story world has connotations of Roman exploitation and dominance. The narrative is heavily laced with military language.[306] "Legion", as the name of the unclean spirits, has connotations of thousands of Roman soldiers, hence the understanding of there being many unclean spirits inhabiting the person. The Roman presence in the Decapolis and Israel was a cause of oppression and shame to both Gentiles and Jews alike.[307] The unnamed human person retains the label of possession, "the one being demon-possessed" (τὸν δαιμονιζόμενον) even when exorcised (Mark 5:15, 16, 18). Why the Markan narrator chooses to do this is unclear. Perhaps it is because the hearers of the story know this person, or it may be that the demon possession is what continues to define this person. The retention of the label of possession certainly continues to set the person apart from total inclusion. He still remains on the "outside" as "other".

5.2.1.2c Restored as label

Mark 5:15	*Mark 5:15*
[15]καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ θεωροῦσιν τὸν δαιμονιζόμενον καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα, τὸν ἐσχηκότα τὸν λεγιῶνα, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν.	*[15] They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid.*

[305] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 344.
[306] See my Chapter 1. Also Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 190-194. This section speaks specifically about the Gerasene demoniac, but Myers' whole book views Mark's gospel from a political perspective. See also Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 10, 90-91, 147; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*, 182-183.
[307] Dormandy, "Expulsion of Legion", 335.

Following the exorcism, the Markan narrator tells of the person "being clothed and in their right mind" (καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα, Mark 5:15). This is in total contrast to the nakedness and possession of Mark 5:2-5. Jesus has been successful in exorcising the unclean spirits, thereby healing the person and potentially restoring him to community (Mark 5:20). The label of demon possession, however, is left (Mark 5:15, 16, 18). Restoration to wholeness does not necessarily equate to community. Within the Markan story world, the unnamed person is still excluded and is met with hostility by the Gerasene people who are fearful (Mark 5:15). He is even rejected by Jesus in his request to follow and be with him. Still, in spite of continued label of possession, the healed person is entrusted by Jesus to proclaim the Lord's mercy to the Decapolis (Mark 5:18-20). In the Markan story world, this isolated one becomes the one who proclaims what Jesus has done for him. Although he doesn't follow on Jesus "on the way" to Jerusalem, he becomes a disciple of Jesus within the Markan story world. In this he becomes a follower of Jesus.

5.2.1.2d Disciple as label

Mark 5:18-20	*Mark 5:18-20*
18καὶ ἐμβαίνοντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον παρεκάλει αὐτὸν ὁ δαιμονισθεὶς ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾖ.19καὶ οὐκ ἀφῆκεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ λέγει αὐτῷ,Υπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σούς, καὶ ἀπάγγειλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοιπεποίηκεν καὶ ἠλέησέν σε.20καὶ ἀπῆλθεν καὶ ἤρξατο κηρύσσειν ἐν τῇ Δεκαπόλει ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ πάντες ἐθαύμαζον.	*18 As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. 19 But Jesus refused, and said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you." 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.*

Discipleship concerns the following of Jesus (Chapter 1). The Markan narrator uses the Twelve as fallible followers who remain on the boat for this story.[308] In contrast, the unnamed person begs to go with Jesus "that he might be with him" (ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾖ, Mark 5:19. Compare Mark 3:14). Jesus refuses

[308] Malbon, "Fallible Followers: Women and Men in the Gospel of Mark", 29-48.

permission but commissions him instead to proclaim the Lord's mercy. Unlike the disciples who do not obey Jesus, the restored person demonstrates discipleship. The implicit label then is that of disciple. Where the disciples are invited (Mark 4:35) to join in Jesus' mission to the "other", in the narrative story world, that is, from a literary perspective, it is unclear if they disembark (certainly they do not feature in the narrative) (Mark 5:1). The restored person, in spite of retaining the label of possession, is obedient to the call of Jesus. In this, he becomes an example of what it means to be a disciple.

Like Jesus, the Markan narrator labels the person with unclean spirits both explicitly and implicitly within the text. This person is labelled "other", through possession and isolation; as unnamed and named almost simultaneously; restored and in a "right mind" and, finally, as a follower of the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God. Not only are the main characters, Jesus and the person with unclean spirits, labelled but those on the edges of the story, the Gerasenes and the disciples, also are used in the labelling process.

5.2.1.3 Gerasene people as labelled

The people of Gerasa and the disciples are bystanders to the central action of Mark 5:1-20. However, the Markan narrator still uses them to assist in the labelling process of Jesus and the person with unclean spirits, and also to say something about "aloneness" as we will explore further below. The Markan narrator labels the people from the region of Gerasa as:

- *"Other"* (Mark 5:1, 11)
- *Agents of censure* (Mark 5:3-4, 15, 17)
- Afraid (Mark 5:15)

5.2.1.3a "Other" as label

Mark 5:1; 11	*Mark 5:1; 11*
[1]Καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης εἰς τὴν χ ώραν τῶν Γερασηνῶν.	*[1]They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.*
[11]ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ πρὸς τῷ ὄρει ἀγέλη χοίρων μεγάλη βοσκομένη:	*[11] Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding;*

The Gerasene people include the swine herders, city and country folk of the region (Mark 5:14). Again the label of "other" is relevant here. With the very mention in Mark 5:1 of travelling to the "other" side of the sea, the Markan narrator has announced that the place of Gerasa is different (Chapter 1). The people themselves are "other", although not in the same way the person with unclean spirits is. Whilst the person with unclean spirits is "other" in the sense of being isolated for being unclean and possessed, the Gerasenes are "other" in the sense of place. They live on the "other" side of the sea, in the place of banishment. They are also "other" in terms of the person with unclean spirits. They are not like him in terms of where they live, and neither do they completely accept him when he is healed. The people remain "other" from both Jesus and the restored person, as well as in terms of place.

5.2.1.3b Agents of censure as label

Mark 5:3-4; 15; 17	*Mark 5:3-4; 15; 17*
[3]ὃς τὴν κατοίκησιν εἶχεν ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν,καὶ ο ὐδὲ ἁλύσει οὐκέτι οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο αὐτὸν δῆσαι, [4]διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν πολλάκις πέδαις καὶ ἁλύσεσιν δεδέσθαι καὶ διεσπάσθαι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τὰς ἁλύσεις καὶ τὰς πέδας συντετρῖφθαι, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι:	*[3] He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain;[4] for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him.*
[15]καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ θεωροῦσιν τὸν δαιμονιζόμενον καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα, τὸν ἐσχηκότα τὸν λεγιῶνα, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν.	*[15] They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid.*
[17]καὶ ἤρξαντο παρακαλεῖν αὐτὸν ἀπελθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν.	*[17] Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood.*

The Gerasene people are implicitly cast in the role of agents of censure. Presumably they are the people who have attempted to bind the person with unclean spirits, but failed in restraining him (Mark 5:4). Their reasons for

doing so are unclear. Perhaps it is to keep the person from self-harming (in this they failed) or perhaps, more sinisterly, it is pathological and serves them well to have this person in the unfortunate position he is in. They maintain their power over the demoniac whilst he has the legion of unclean spirits. The Gerasene people are violent and brutal.[309] As agents of censure, the Markan narrator labels them as isolators. They have cast out the person with unclean spirits from their region just as they will do to Jesus at the end of the story (Mark 5:17). They are important in the experience of "aloneness" for both Jesus and the person with unclean spirits, which I return to below.

5.2.1.3c Afraid as label

Mark 5:15	*Mark 5:15*
[15]καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ θεωροῦσιν τὸν δαιμονιζόμενον καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα, τὸν ἐσχηκότα τὸν λεγιῶνα, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν.	*[15] They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid.*

The idea that the people of the region of Gerasa do not accept the "other" is not seen purely in their treatment of this person, but also in their response to Jesus (Mark 5:14, 15, 17). They witness the amazing deed that Jesus has done and yet, "they were afraid" (ἐφοβήθησαν) and lack faith. This explicit label of lacking in faith is a key to the theme of discipleship (Chapter 1). If one does not follow "on the way" then one cannot be disciples of the Markan Jesus. The reactions of people in the place of banishment, provides a contrast to the desire to follow Jesus by the healed person.

The Markan narrator labels the people in the region of Gerasa implicitly as "other" and as agents of censure and explicitly as afraid. However, they are not the only group labelled as seeming fearful of Jesus. Jesus' own disciples are labelled in this way too.

[309] Rene Girard, *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 169.

5.2.1.4 Disciples as labelled

The final group in our story are in fact one of the first groups of characters mentioned. The labels given to them by the Markan narrator are:

- disciples (Mark 5:1)
- *"other"* (Mark 5:1)
- *faithless* (Mark 5:1)

Mark 5:1	*Mark 5:1*
[1]Καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης εἰς τὴν χ ώραν τῶν Γερασηνῶν.	*[15] They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.*

5.2.1.4a Disciples as label

As I mention above in my discussion of Jesus being labelled, discipleship, as a thematic device concerns following Jesus. The Markan narrator explicitly labels these followers of Jesus as "disciples". The episode of entering Gerasa comes after Jesus has taught in parables (Mark 4:1-36) and allowed the disciples insights not available to all hearers of the parables. The disciples travel with Jesus to the "other" side of the sea (5:1). In this sense, they set out potentially prepared to be "other" with Jesus, in the narrative story world. The irony of the title "disciples" is that, within the context of the story world, they do not leave the boat with Jesus (Mark 5:2) and rather than follow him, they isolate him.

5.2.1.4b Faithless as label

Even though the twelve are known as disciples, the Markan narrator implicitly labels them as faithless. Immediately prior to the incident in Gerasa, they witness Jesus' power and authority over nature (Mark 4:37-41). In spite of this, the Markan narrator leaves them flawed as they abandon Jesus when he disembarks. Rather than following Jesus to continue in their own learning, they remain on the boat, and are left there by the Markan narrator. The resulting effect for the audience is one that suggests failure on the part of the disciples, and also abandonment of Jesus as he tends to the "other" human person on his own, alone.

The Markan narrator is labeller in both implicit and explicit ways. Mark 5:1-20 has four sets of characters that Mark labels in a variety of ways. Mostly, labelling is done through rhetorical means, and it is to this that I now turn.

5.2.2 Rhetoric as labelling device

As outlined in Part II of the thesis, rhetorical devices used by the narrator are as important to narrative labelling as they are to reader-response analysis, narrative analysis and deviance theory. Some of these narrative devices are used implicitly, and others explicitly. Labelling, itself, is a rhetorical device that the Markan narrator employs using plot, setting and character in order to say something about the significance and prominence of Jesus. Some of the rhetorical devices used in Mark 5:1-20 are:

- The use of repetition (the exorcism here is not dissimilar to the one in the synagogue in Mark 1:21-28; also the repetition of words/phrases as in Mark 5:3-4 with the triple mention of the tombs);
- Echoing and foreshadowing (where the Markan narrator shows Jesus as God's son who can control nature and the supernatural, and is like the prophets of old); and
- Symbolism and irony (in the use of military terms, the use of swine and the placing of the event at Gerasa, the place meaning "to banish").

The Markan narrator also uses characters such as the authority figures and sometimes the disciples to define deviance, and at times these characters are used to try and characterise and label Jesus as "deviant". Mark's use of some key minor characters serves to highlight Jesus as the pivotal person God uses for the "in-breaking" of God's rule (Chapter 1). They are also used to demonstrate positive deviance (prominence) too.

Labelling theory itself is primarily focussed on the reactions of those around the one being labelled. And yet, whilst the label itself is not the primary focus, it is still significant because it allows the audience to hear what the narrator means by the use of the labels in terms of inner-/inter-text and implicit/explicit labels. The Markan narrator/labeller provides the lens through which the reader sees and hears the responses of those who surround the person who is labelled. As such, the implied audience hears the responses of those around the one who

is labelled by the narrator. They are then able to make a choice about whom they will believe with regard to the label in either negative or positive terms. The Markan narrator points in a particular direction and provides an impression of Jesus for the audience. In particular, Mark wishes Jesus to be seen as the "in-breaker" of God's rule.

A narrative labelling perspective offers the following comments with regard to the narrator being the labeller who uses rhetorical devices within the narrative in order that the contemporary reader can identify "aloneness". Within Mark 5:1-20 there are several pointers to rhetorical aspects of the text directing the hearer to "aloneness". From the beginning of the story, the Markan narrator determines the place of the story world as "other" (Mark 5:1); Gerasa, meaning, "to banish". If one is banished in this story world, one is set apart, cast out "other", alone. The person labelled as having unclean spirits is an example of this banishment (Mark 5:2-5), just as Jesus will also be by the end of the story (Mark 5:17).

The Markan narrator provides a vivid picture to describe the person with unclean spirit's living conditions and behaviour (Mark 5:2-5). It is clear from the description that the person is desolate and abandoned, living a life of "aloneness". The use of repetition is central to this. Three times there is a mention of the tombs (Mark 5:2, 3, 5) and thrice the negative οὐ is used to highlight the devastating plight of the human person. Further to this, the Markan narrator provides descriptors of the self-harming behaviours the person with unclean spirits enacts (Mark 5:5). The hearer/reader cannot but notice the helpless and desolate state of this person. The rhetoric suggests "aloneness".

The question of naming (see Chapter 1) is important with regard to "aloneness". The Markan narrator has Jesus' title of "Son of the Most High" on the lips of the person with unclean spirits, the very one who declares the name of "Legion". There is a strong sense of irony here from a rhetorical perspective, especially with the military connotations and implications. Here the military might of the legion is outdone by the one who comes as "other", but who is secretly the "son" of God (see Chapter 1). The change in rhetoric with regard to "he" and "it", and from singular to plural is also a rhetorical device. At one

level, the “legion” is dehumanised, and yet it is shown to be of significant strength via the use of this rhetoric. It demonstrates the immense confusion of the person with unclean spirits. The picture of “aloneness” can be viewed in the language of confusion and chaos (Mark 5:9-10).

Other symbolic aspects of the story are the swine, animals that were considered unclean (Mark 5:11-13) and again hint at the “otherness” and isolation of Gerasa, the place of banishment. Again, the military overtones here are not lost on the hearers of this story. The retention of the label of having had unclean spirits is another indication that this person, whilst restored, has a history of possession, isolation and “aloneness”.

Echoing and foreshadowing, seen in the theme of discipleship and failure to follow, is highlighted in this pericope. Within the narrative story world, the disciples are hostages to fear and lack of faith, most significantly highlighted in the story prior to this one in Mark 4:37-41. The Markan Jesus has authority that even the winds and waves obey, and yet, these disciples do not have the capacity within the story world to exit the boat when it arrives on the “other” side. Likewise, in Mark 5:16-17, fear and lack of faith take priority over the Gerasene people’s request for Jesus to leave their region. In contrast, the healed person seeks “to be with” Jesus as the disciples are (Mark 3:14; 5:18-20). Jesus does not allow him and, instead, the healed person is sent to do what the disciples cannot or will not do in this place, at this time, that is, to proclaim Jesus as merciful Lord (Mark 5:20). In a sense, Jesus rejects the healed person too!

5.2.3 Deviance labelling

The labelling of deviance within Mark’s gospel is sometimes obvious and explicit whilst at other times implied and subtle. As I suggest in Chapter 4, Malina and Neyrey’s model of deviance to prominence is useful in helping to discern labels of deviance. What I offer here is an adaption of their model for the purposes of defining narrative labelling. I will discuss this model broadly at first and then apply it too Mark 5:1-20.

Figure 20 demonstrates the labelling process of moving through deviance to prominence. It begins with the notion of negative deviance that is neutralised and moved to positive deviance.

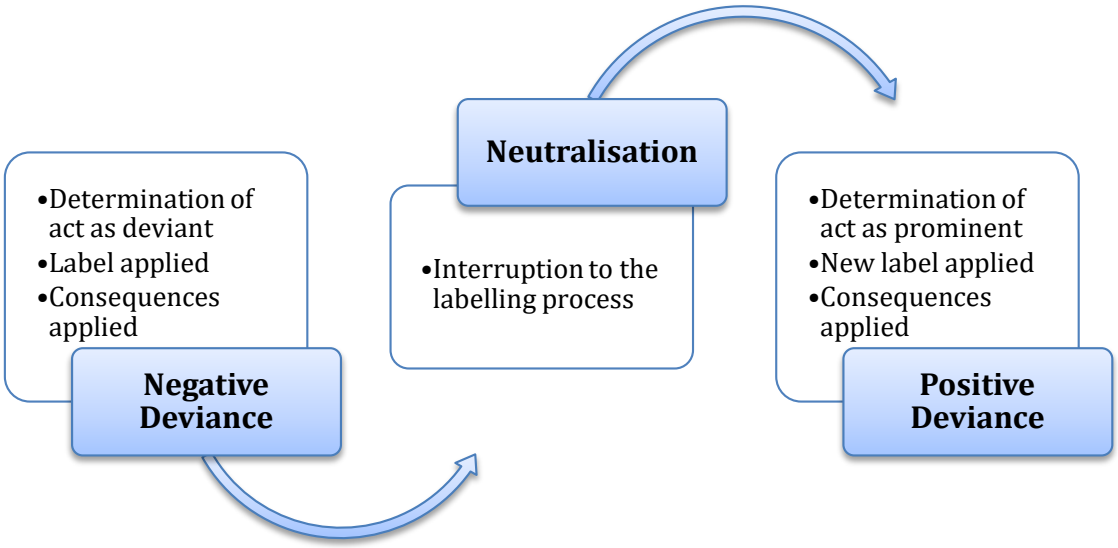

Figure 20: Labelling process from deviant to prominent

5.2.3.1 Narrative labelling explained

There are three major elements to the exploration of negative deviance:

- determination of act as deviant,
- label applied and
- consequences applied.

As I demonstrated in my discussion on labelling theory (Chapter 4), a social group makes a determination that an action or behaviour or attitude is deviant. In the context of the narrative world of Mark's gospel, any person who violated social expectations or brought dishonour to their families was determined "deviant" (examples include Jesus being aligned with Beelzebul in Mark 3:22, or the anointing woman in Mark 14:3-9). Labels such as "sinner" or "unclean" or having "unclean spirits" followed. Finally, there were actions of consequence that were meted out to enforce the deviant label.

The second aspect to this process is known as neutralisation. The neutralising process sees the negative deviant label loosened as it is interrupted. The one

labelled “deviant” is able to challenge the negative label given in order to have its stigma overturned. The third and final aspect of this process is that of determining positive deviance. In this process, supporters of the one labelled as deviant continue to mount their challenge to the negative label applied. The determination of actions and behaviours as positive deviance is undertaken, and a new label is given (the incident involving Jesus’ family, Mark 3, is a case in point here). The final phase is demonstrated in the application of positive or prominent sanctions or consequences. Indeed, through the labelling process, it becomes apparent to the hearer that there exists a paradox. On the one hand, the deviance labels ostracise the character within the narrative story world (both Jesus and the person with unclean spirits) and leave them on the outer edges of society. On the other hand, it is through the experience of “aloneness” and being labelled as such, that the Markan narrator determines prominence, as I demonstrate here.

In what follows, I apply the labelling process of Figure 20 to the pericope of Mark 5:1-20. In particular, this labelling process is focused on the two central characters, Jesus and the person with unclean spirits. The Gerasene people and the disciples are the bystanders in this narrative story world, who the narrator uses in order to provide social reactions to confirm the paradox of isolation and “aloneness” within the Markan text.

5.2.3.2 Jesus as deviant

As we saw above, the Markan narrator uses rhetoric to label Jesus in both negative and positive deviance terms. From the beginning of the gospel, Jesus is portrayed as son of God and the “in-breaker” of God’s kingdom. These labels are then assumed throughout the rest of the gospel. Utilising the rhetorical process of labelling, Jesus can be seen to be deviant, in both negative and prominent ways.

5.2.3.2a Negative deviance:
Determination of act as deviant:

In Mark 5:1-2 Jesus travels to the “other” side. Not only does Jesus travel into an alien region, but he also disembarks in this region, that of the Gerasenes; the place of banishment. According to the social norms of this narrative period (Chapter 1), this situates Jesus in an unclean place, a place that potentially

makes him unclean and brings his honour into disrepute.[310] The Markan narrator details the telling of place. In the narrative, even the disciples do not join him, as doing so, in a cultural and literary sense, would potentially make them unclean and dishonourable too. By their actions, the disciples isolate Jesus. They set him apart as "other" and, within the Markan story world, are not prepared to follow Jesus this far. The Markan narrator uses the disciples to censure Jesus' action, and by their inaction the disciples label Jesus as "deviant" in a negative sense, thus their apparent isolation of him.

Within the narrative story world there are others who label Jesus as deviant, namely the townsfolk and herders (Mark 5:14-17). These people also fail to recognise Jesus as God's son. Rather than embrace him and the miracle he has performed, they beg him to leave. The labelling of Jesus as deviant, as portrayed by the Markan narrator, casts Jesus as a solitary figure; misunderstood by those around him, and actively isolated by other characters in the story. The Markan narrator labels Jesus as deviant in the sense of being a boundary breaker; the one who is prepared to cast aside the values of honour and purity for the sake of "in-breaking" the kingdom of God.

Label applied:

The label of Jesus as deviant in the negative sense is derived through rhetorical means. Here in Mark 5:1-2, we see God's son intentionally going to the "other" side.[311] The Markan narrator allows Jesus to go where he will become "out of place". The audience knows this because of the Markan narrator's description of place and the person with whom Jesus comes into contact. The Markan narrator is the one who tells of Jesus disembarking from the boat and entering into the Gerasene region. Further, the Markan Jesus engages with the person with the unclean spirits (Mark 5:7-13). By describing this, the Markan narrator emphasises Jesus' negative deviance. Arguably, the Markan Jesus is set in the place of impurity and therefore brings dishonour to himself, and thereby his kin, (and perhaps the disciples), too. In a paradox, however, it is the Markan

[310] I note Cheryl Pero suggests that Jesus is above defilement. I suggest that this is part of the Markan paradox where the Markan Jesus, as "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God, has the potential to be defiled but does not allow this possibility to hinder his mission as such. Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 155.
[311] Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 20.

Jesus who will cleanse the person and the land of the unclean spirits; he spreads "purity, bringing wholeness to others".[312] Whilst appearing to allow himself to enter into the region of banishment and impurity, the Markan Jesus, as God's son, is shown to be both "other" and yet stands alone as purifier of evil.

Consequences applied:

When Jesus crosses to the "other side" the disciples do not disembark (Mark 5:2).[313] The Markan narrator leaves them on the boat. One of the consequences of Jesus travelling to the "other" side, then, is that Jesus disembarks alone. The disciples, by their act of isolating him, serve to censure Jesus within the story world. Jesus is on his own in the region of banishment known as Gerasa. The other consequence of Jesus' deviance is that he is drawn into the world and life of the person with unclean spirits. That is, he is drawn into further deviance as he goes to the place of banishment and enters into dialogue with the unclean spirits. But it is not just the disciples who display their disapproval of Jesus in this setting. In spite of healing the person with unclean spirits, and ridding the region of evil, he is rejected by the Gerasene people (Mark 5:17). Within the narrative story world, the Gerasenes fail to recognise Jesus' good deed in restoring the person with unclean spirits and plead with him to leave. Jesus is cast aside and alone in narrative terms and his degradation is apparent.

5.2.3.2b Neutralisation:
Interruption of negative deviant label:

The Markan narrator interrupts the deviant labelling process using the words of the person with unclean spirits to acknowledge Jesus as God's son (Mark 5:6-7). In the narrative story world, the unclean spirits recognise Jesus as God's chosen one, the "Son of God Most High" (Mark 5:7). God is the higher authority who is appealed to, not only for the Markan narrator, but is also the higher authority to whom other characters within the narrative defer to interrupt the labelling process. In this story it is the person with unclean spirits who interrupts the deviant labelling process for Jesus.

[312] Pero, *Liberation From Empire*, 155.
[313] van Iersal, *Mark*, 196, 198; Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 70.

Having declared Jesus as "Son of the Most High God", the Markan narrator portrays the person with unclean spirits as a character who is uncertain and threatened by Jesus. The Markan Jesus has power and authority over the unclean spirits, and even they recognise this (Mark 5:6, 7, 10, 12). Jesus, alone, has this power and authority, given by God because he is the son of God.

The narrator's deviant label of Jesus is neutralised by the exorcism of the unclean spirits from the person (Mark 5:13) who cannot be bound by the local people. The person who had unclean spirits is now restored to a place of purity and honour (Mark 5:15). It is this act that demonstrates that Jesus is God's son who has authority over nature. The label of negative deviant cannot possibly apply to one who heals a person of their affliction and restores them to family and honour. Indeed this is the paradox of labelling Jesus in negative terms within the Markan story world.

5.2.3.2c Positive deviance:
Determination of act as prominent:

The Markan narrator, as well as the person healed from unclean spirits label Jesus rhetorically as God's son. In the act of healing the afflicted person, Jesus is shown to have authority over nature and the supernatural. By restoring a human being to health, "clothed and in sound mind", Jesus is seen in a prominent fashion within the Markan story world (except to the Gerasene towns folk). The reader/hearer of the Markan narrative knows Jesus is the one to whom higher loyalty is given. Indeed, as we see in the negative deviance model, the unclean spirits themselves engage with Jesus and know he has the power to rid them from the possessed person. This is how the Markan narrator portrays Jesus. He is the authority figure by which God's "in-breaking" kingdom will be brought into being. Whilst Jesus is portrayed as prominent and the human person is restored, the local Gerasene people are viewed through the Markan narrator's eyes as weak (Mark 5:3-4 where they are unable to restrain the person with unclean spirits) and as failures in recognising Jesus as God's son (Mark 5:17). Jesus is cast aside and told to leave the area. He has further isolation imposed upon him. This is the paradox of deviance for Jesus, that

even though he is shown to be prominent by the Markan narrator, others within the story world of the gospel fail to recognise him as such, and thus isolate him.

New label applied:

By the act of exorcism, the Markan narrator again portrays Jesus as God's son, the one who has the ability to control the unclean spirits. It is the Markan narrator who provides the social reactions to Jesus as positive deviant, the "in-breaker" of God's reign. This view is given weight by the healed person who wants to follow Jesus and "be with him" (Mark 5:18).

Consequences applied:

The consequence given to Jesus for his healing is a mixed one according to the Markan narrator. On the one hand, the Gerasene people send Jesus away, and on the other the healed person wants to follow Jesus and "be with him". In spite of being labelled in positive deviant terms and isolated by the Gerasene people, the overwhelming result for the Markan narrator is that the good news about Jesus is proclaimed in the Decapolis. It is the healed "other" who recognises Jesus. The Markan narrator has the healed person seek to go with Jesus onto the boat. This is where the waiting disciples, who have isolated Jesus, are. This unnamed person wants to follow Jesus (Mark 5:18). Seemingly Jesus also rejects him. As always things are not as they seem as Jesus has been empowered by God to be the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God, so he now empowers the restored person to go and tell what God has done (Mark 5:19). As a result of the man's story, people are amazed (Mark 5:20), and presumably, some come to faith because of his proclamation (why would the Markan narrator include the story otherwise?). Jesus, however, returns to the boat to face the disciples who continue to misunderstand him. Whilst the disciples fail in going to the "other", the hearers of the gospel know that Jesus is prominent.

5.2.3.3 Person with unclean spirits as deviant

Jesus is not the only person we meet in this place who is labelled as "other". The person with unclean spirits is labelled thus also (Mark 5:2-5). The Markan

narrator describes in detail this unclean character using desolate and disturbing imagery. The implicit label of self-mutilator and the description of how this person is living are meant to shock the hearer, and indeed they do. Here is a person so consumed by unclean spirits that he is on his own among the tombs. The Markan narrator confronts the reader/hearer with the depiction of impurity and shame. By the very description given by the labelling narrator, this person is deviant within his first century context. Here the person with unclean spirits is living among the dead and isolated from community. He is alone.

5.2.3.3a Negative deviance:

Determination of act as deviant:

From the outset of this story, the person with unclean spirits is portrayed in negative deviant terms (Mark 5:2-5). He self-harms and is possessed by a "legion" of unclean spirits and is banished to the tombs, isolated and alone. Attempts to bind him have been unsuccessful. Negative deviance is emphasised by the description afforded to him by the Markan narrator. The person is separated from kin and community because of his apparent deviance, that is, being possessed by unclean spirits and behaving in an erratic and self-destructive manner. The isolation of the person with unclean spirits among the tombs, confirms the negative deviant label in the Markan story world.

Label applied:

From a narrative perspective, this person is labelled by the Markan narrator in the description of his place of residence as well as his behaviour, and the behaviour of those who have attempted to restrain him. The person is unnamed, whilst the Legion are named. The unclean spirits engage in conversation with Jesus in order to persuade him into allowing them to stay where they are (Mark 5:10, 12). Through the Markan narrator, the audience hear from the unclean spirits themselves, rather than the person they are dwelling within. The Markan narrator allows for the spirit voices to be heard, whilst the possessed person remains isolated from both the conversation and from his humanity. Jesus, within this narrative world, begins to diffuse the negative deviant label of the person with unclean spirits. The Markan Jesus seeks to liberate the person possessed (Mark 5:8) and retains his status as the

one with authority and in control of the situation. Even so, the fact remains that the person requires liberating. Jesus' negative deviance about being in this place is neutralised as the Markan narrator is suggesting that Jesus' actions are more important than the deviant space he has placed himself in. This is clear in the actions of Jesus in healing the person with unclean spirits, not only in this episode, but more broadly in the Markan context of healings and meals with those considered "other" (see Chapter 6).

Consequence applied:

The consequence of having unclean spirits is banishment to the tombs to live. Tombs are the place of the dead: not a place where the living resides. The implication here, by the Markan narrator, is that this person is figuratively "dead". The human person has been dislocated from community and his humanity, and the unclean spirits have taken over. The self-harming behaviours the person participates in demonstrate the desperation of one who has been excluded from the social aspects of society. This person is violated and is unworthy of respect and honour within his social setting. The consequence of deviance for this person is exclusion from community and family. Indeed, this one is alone.

Another example of social exclusion is the failed attempts at binding the person (Mark 5:3-4). The Gerasene people know this person is in the tombs and have endeavoured to keep him there with shackles and chains. They do not want him in the town. Such is the strength of the unclean spirits, however, that they do not abide by the rules of the social norms. They rule within the human person on their own terms. By publicly separating the one labelled as deviant, the Markan narrator labels the person as degraded and isolated. The consequence applied by the Markan narrator is that the person is exorcised from kin and community and thus he lives among the tombs with the dead.

5.2.3.3b Neutralisation:
Interruption of negative deviant label:

The neutralisation process begins when Jesus asks the unclean spirits their name (Mark 5:9). By acknowledging their name, they relinquish some of their

power. They are now identifiable and no longer a powerful mystery. Once known, the unclean spirits beg Jesus to let them stay in the region. The Markan narrator, however, has a purpose in this story to depict Jesus as the one who has power and authority over both nature and the supernatural. Jesus has more authority than the unclean spirits. Within the story world, the Markan Jesus interrupts the negative stigma associated with the person with unclean spirits through their exorcism (Mark 5:11-13). The exorcism has a dual purpose for the Markan narrator: the exorcism of the unclean spirits from both the person and the region. The healing of the person allows him to be restored to his family and community (Mark 5:19-20) and no longer be isolated and impure in the sense of being "dead".

5.2.3.3c Positive deviance:

Determination of act as prominent:

The person with unclean spirits in Gerasa is defiled by his place of residence and having been abused by others, as well as himself, he finds himself isolated and alone, excluded from the social interaction of community, according to the Markan narrator. From a rhetorical perspective, the Markan narrator labels the unnamed person as a negative deviant in terms of first century social ideals. The entry of Jesus into his world transforms him. Jesus exorcises the unclean spirits from his life, thereby diffusing the negative deviance. No longer do unclean spirits dwell within the person. The Markan narrator declares this person now "clothed and in his right mind" (Mark 5:15). The process of restoring the healed person in the narrative story world now begins.

New label applied:

The Markan narrator now casts the healed person in a new and positive light. Now "clothed and in his right mind" (Mark 5:15), this is in stark opposition to the condition of the person when the hearer first met him. No longer does he run naked through the tombs, crying out and abusing himself. Instead, the narrative declares him sane and clothed and seated. The audience is informed that this person wants to follow Jesus (Mark 5:18). This person wants to "be" with Jesus as the disciples were (see Mark 3:14). This is a positive label of discipleship that is implied, although, as noted above, the person continues to

have the label of having had unclean spirits attached to him within the story world (Mark 5:15, 16, 18). Unlike the disciples who accompany Jesus on his journey to the "other" side of the sea, but who abandon Jesus, this restored person goes to proclaim Jesus to the Decapolis (Mark 5:20), in spite of being rejected by Jesus.

Consequence applied:

The consequence of being exorcised is being restored, that is, "clothed and in a right mind". In a narrative twist, however, the people of Gerasa do not seem to appreciate this restoration. Their request of Jesus to leave their region means that the healed person is still isolated in a narrative sense. Perhaps he senses this, hence the request to follow Jesus and be a disciple of Jesus (Mark 5:18). Whilst Jesus tells him to remain in the region, this person, who remains unnamed, becomes a witness to the good news of Jesus in the Decapolis (Mark 5:20). Further to the initial rejection by Jesus to the man's request, Jesus now abandons him. He is left alone, restored and healed, in a hostile region. The person who had unclean spirits becomes deviant again, but this time, the Markan narrator paints him in prominent terms, that is, as the one given the task to speak of Jesus' actions of mercy and healing, something the Markan hearer/reader is already aware of.

5.2.4 Summary

The two central characters in the narrative of Mark 5:1-20, Jesus and the unnamed possessed person, can be shown by the process of narrative labelling to be labelled as deviant in both negative and positive ways. As deviants, they move outside the social rules of the day. In contrast, the Markan narrator defines the unclean spirits, who identify Jesus in terms of positive labels, in negative terms. Whilst there are characters within the Markan story world that label, it is primarily the Markan narrator who labels deviance in both positive and negative terms. It is through this labelling that "aloneness" in a first century context becomes apparent.

5.3 "Aloneness"

"Aloneness", as I discussed in Chapter 1, is a modern sociological and psychological construct, implying isolation, solitary, alone or lonely. It concerns the interactions, or lack thereof, of individuals. In the first century Markan community, order was central (for example, Mark 2:23-28). Everyone had a place within this social order and understood themselves as part of the "whole" group. The outworking of this easily identifiable social expectation was complex and multifaceted. In particular, maintaining one's honour, and that of the individual's wider family was important. This aspect of society assisted in the preservation of order. To deviate from the expected social order meant exclusion. In a contemporary sense, one was "alone".

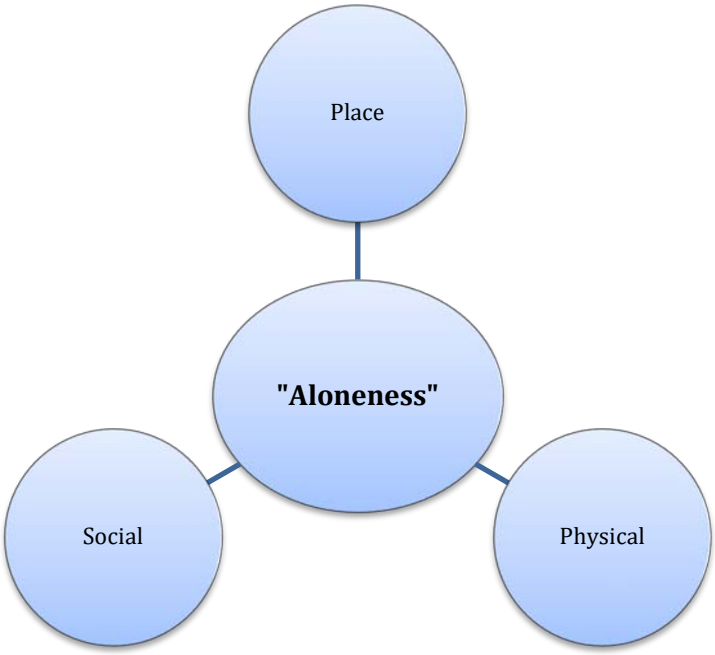

Figure 21: "Aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20.

As I suggested in Chapter 1, there are three aspects to "aloneness" I explore in the context of Mark's gospel, "aloneness" in terms of place, physical "aloneness" and social "aloneness" (Figure 21). I will explore "aloneness" with reference to both Jesus and the Gerasene person with the unclean spirits.

5.3.1 Jesus and "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20

5.3.1.1 "Aloneness" and place

From the beginning of this narrative, the hearers are told that Jesus travels to the "other" side of the sea. The "other" as demonstrated above, is a rhetorical device used by the Markan narrator to inform the audience that there is something different about this place. In travelling to the "other" side of the sea, Jesus defies the boundaries of place. In travelling to Gerasa, he travels to the place of banishment. As one banished, he is isolated from mainstream society and excluded from community and family. The narrative implication here, as demonstrated by means of the narrative labelling process, is that the Markan Jesus is set apart as deviant. The deviance is shown in the story world where Jesus intentionally sets out to the "other" side of the sea.

Not only does the Markan Jesus travel to Gerasa, on the "other" side of the sea, but he also enters the place of the tombs. Tombs are the place of the dead, and are therefore unclean. Purity codes dictate that spending time in this place makes one ritually unclean. In a narrative sense, being in the place of the dead defiles Jesus, making him ritually unclean. Because of his defilement, Jesus ought to be banished, for a time at least, and here he finds himself in the place of banishment.

5.3.1.2 Physical "aloneness"

In a sense, the Markan Jesus is shown to set himself apart as deviant in going outside the boundaries and social expectations of his day. From the outset of the gospel, the Markan narrator portrays Jesus as God's son, the "in-breaker" of God's reign. This very label sets Jesus apart and isolates him from the rest of his community. He has no equal.[314] He is alone. Likewise, within Mark 5:1-20 there are several allusions to Jesus and "aloneness". Broadly speaking, the overarching key to this "aloneness", as presented by the Markan narrator, is that of "other".

5.3.1.3 Social "aloneness"

The disciples are the first within the narrative to respond to Jesus disembarking on "other" soil. The Markan narrator leaves them on the boat rather than accompany Jesus. Only Jesus enters the "other" space leaving the audience to

[314] Starobinski, "The Gerasene Demoniac," 66.

question why Jesus is physically alone when he crossed the sea with his disciples. This is arguable a comment on discipleship and the disciples do not always fare well within the Markan story world. Having seen Jesus' power and authority over nature as he calmed the seas and wind, they abandon him when he ventures to the "other" side. From a narrative perspective, they fail to comprehend what following Jesus really means, which is, going to the "other". They also leave him to face the unclean spirits on his own.

Within the story world, the disciples are not the only ones who abandon the Markan Jesus. In his restoration of the person with unclean spirits, Jesus creates fear in the Gerasene people and is ultimately banished by them. Like the disciples, they fail to have faith in Jesus as God's son. Even the healed person does not want to remain with them. In banishing Jesus, the Gerasenes exclude Jesus and in this way he is alone and isolated.

5.3.2 Gerasene person and "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20

5.3.2.1 "Aloneness" and place

Like Jesus, the Markan narrator talks of the person with unclean spirits in terms of "other". It is through this sense of "otherness" that "aloneness" can be demonstrated. The Markan narrator, having established the region of Gerasa as "other" (Mark 5:1), moves quickly to describe in detail a person living among the tombs. From a narrative perspective, this emphasises the deviant nature of the person that they should live in this place. Only the dead live in the tombs! So deviant is this person, he is likened to the dead. This person is clearly alone.

5.3.2.2 Physical "aloneness"

The other significant information the audience is given by the Markan narrator is that this person has unclean spirits (Mark 5:2). This person is seen as deviant because of the unclean spirits that exist in him. In this sense, he is alone as a human person. The unclean spirits may have company, but he does not. In addition to this, the person participates in deviant and self-destructive behaviour, self-harming and crying out (Mark 5:5). Violating the body demonstrated dishonour.[315] Dishonour led to isolation, and it is in the tombs that the Markan narrator places this person, alone in the place of the dead.

[315] Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 10, 17-18.

5.3.2.3 Social "aloneness"

In an attempt to keep the person isolated, and perhaps to stop their potentially self-harming behaviour, the Gerasene people attempt to bind him. They have the power to do this, whilst the person with unclean spirits does not. The Markan narrator tells the hearer that the attempts to restrain him have failed. In the story world, this person is "alone". Ironically, there is "freedom" in being alone because social rules do not apply; the person breaks through the restraints.[316] However in the paradox of the narrative story world the human person is slave to the legion of unclean spirits that inhabit him. Unlike the human person who is alone, these unclean spirits have each other for company. Conversely the person is completely abandoned having been banished to the place of the dead. Even when healed, the person still retains the labels of possession in the narrative story world. Whilst commissioned to tell what has happened to him, the Markan narrator leaves him scarred and marked by his past label. He is also left alone to tell his story. This narrative link to being alone in the past remains.

5.4 Concluding remarks

5.4.1 Limitations of narrative labelling

The strengths of narrative labelling have been asserted thus far, regarding "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20. Like all methodologies there are limitations. I have argued that narrative labelling makes clear "aloneness" and "otherness" within the gospel. Indeed, I have suggested that the narrator labels Jesus as deviant, a concept some may find offensive. If pushed, narrative labelling may utilised as a further demonstration of relativism with a forced, artificial approach to, and reading of, the text. By this, I mean that narrative labelling might be used to benefit the current (or any current) reader of the biblical text in terms of meaning, rather than consideration for the narrative's author or by the text itself. This is, I would argue, a potential weakness of many contemporary methodologies, but also the reason for many and diverse methods in biblical studies. Like reader-response analytical methods, narrative labelling does well in utilising community.

[316] Starobinski, "The Gerasene Demoniac," 70.

A potential limitation of narrative labelling might be in confusing it as being historical in its approach to the text. Narrative labelling, however, makes no claims to be historical. Whilst not historical, per se, it is informed by historical contexts, as demonstrated in the discussion on narrative labelling in this chapter. In this, narrative labelling follows other literary methodologies such as narrative analysis and reader-response analysis. The method of narrative labelling is one that is unique and might be further developed beyond this thesis. In this setting, it is a useful tool to assist the contemporary reader in the exploration of "aloneness" as articulated in this chapter.

5.4.2 Summary remarks on narrative labelling in Mark 5:1-20

This chapter began with a definition and outline of narrative labelling in order to define "aloneness" within the context of Mark 5:1-20. The key aspects of narrative labelling as it relates to "aloneness" were explored. This methodology views the narrator as the chief labeller, rhetoric as label, and deviance labelling as key to the understanding of "aloneness".

Narrative labelling assumes the narrator is a key labeller. Some labels are explicit, and others are implicit. The narrator is a rhetorical device used by the author to assist in the telling of the story. The Markan narrator is omniscient and provides insight into characters, plots, events and places. Within this passage there are four groups labelled by the Markan narrator; Jesus, the person with unclean spirits, the Gerasene people and the disciples. Jesus is labelled implicitly as God's son, the "in-breaker" of God's reign, "other", and exorcist/healer. Explicitly the person with unclean spirits labels Jesus, "Son of the Most High God". The person with unclean spirits is labelled implicitly as "other" and disciple. Explicitly he is labelled as unnamed/named and restored. The Gerasene people are given the implicit labels of "other" and agents of censure, whilst more explicitly they are labelled as afraid. The disciples are explicitly called "disciples' but more implicitly, they are labelled as faithless.

The narrator as key labeller relies on a variety of rhetorical devices to tell the story. It is through the use of rhetoric that labels can be identified. In Mark 5:1-20 some rhetorical devices include repetition of words and phrases, echoing and foreshadowing, and symbolism and paradox. The latter is particularly

present. Rhetoric is extremely important for the identification of labels and how they can be viewed as "aloneness". Deviance can be deciphered from rhetorical and narrative means.

Deviance models of analysis assist the process of identifying labelling, and ultimately support the presence of "aloneness" within Mark 5:1-20. Deviance can be seen in both positive and negative contexts. The Markan narrator uses rhetoric to view the process of negative deviance to positive deviance (prominence). The model uses three phases: negative deviance, neutralisation and positive deviance. The negative and positive models mirror one another. The negative deviance element consists of three aspects; "*determination of an act as deviant*", "*label applied*" and "*consequences applied*". Neutralisation interrupts the labelling process. The positive labelling process "*determines the act to be prominent*", "*new label applied*" and "*consequences are applied*". I use this model to highlight the "aloneness" of the two major characters, Jesus and the person with unclean spirits.

Through narrative labelling, the Markan narrator can be seen as defining "aloneness" in a "deviant" Jesus within the narrative story world of Mark 5:1-20. In this narrative, Jesus is not only isolated by others, but, in a sense, he isolates himself. He separates himself and travels to the "other" side, the place of banishment. The disciples who, in the previous story, witnessed Jesus' authority over nature, do not disembark with Jesus. By their very action, they physically leave Jesus "alone". But more than this, the Markan narrator shows them as lacking in faith and unwilling to follow Jesus. In this sense, Jesus, God's son, leads the way of following God, but is alone – abandoned and misunderstood by his disciples. Then, following the exorcism, even the Gerasene folk send him away. Rather than celebrate the good deed done, they exile him.

That the Markan Jesus is portrayed as the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God, with no equal, necessarily means he is alone. He intentionally journeys to the "other" side to demonstrate God's inclusion of all. His willingness to stand in contrast, and sometimes opposition, to the social expectations of purity and honour show his willingness to be deviant. By being deviant, he isolates

himself from community. However, the Markan narrator affirms Jesus' deviance, and rather than viewing him negatively, Jesus is shown to be prominent, a positive deviant. It is Jesus, even though he is alone, who is depicted as the one who demonstrates what it means to follow God.

For the human person with unclean spirits, the fact that he is "other" defines him as alone. He lives in the place of the dead, having been unsuccessfully bound and he participates in deviant self-harming behaviours. Indeed, the Markan narrator paints a picture of desolation and abandonment. Even when healed, the narrator leaves the person unnamed and with the label of having had the unclean spirits. "Aloneness" is indeed present in the text of Mark 5:1-20 and the narrative labelling is an appropriate and helpful tool to explore the theme. But it is not just in Mark 5:1-20 that "aloneness" can be identified. In the next chapter, "aloneness" is explored from a broader Markan perspective.

Chapter 6

"Aloneness" in the Broader Markan Story World: Further Examples Using Narrative Labelling.

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter detailed narrative labelling as a methodology that utilises "aloneness" as a lens for a reading of the gospel of Mark. The story of the person with unclean spirits (Mark 5:1-20) was used as the test case in the exploration of narrative labelling. That narrative labelling has assisted in viewing "aloneness" in the first century Markan text suggests that there may be other characters within the story world that could also be seen as "alone." Some of these are examples of Markan characters labelled as "other" within the narrative story world that move from negative deviance to prominence, in spite of their "aloneness". The present chapter extends this work and uses several other Markan narratives to further investigate "aloneness" in the context of that gospel.

6.2 "Aloneness" in broader Markan context

The narrative labelling dynamic I have highlighted thus far can offer an interpretive approach to other narrative units within Mark's gospel. Whilst space prevents a detailed exploration here, it is worthwhile to exploring in an effort to demonstrate a broader Markan perspective of "aloneness". I have chosen three texts here for this purpose. For each pericope I outline the labels applied by the Markan narrator using the narrative labelling model (Figure 20, Chapter 5). Three narratives I briefly mention here demonstrate the theme of "aloneness":

1. The woman with haemorrhages: Mark 5:24-34
2. The Syrophoenician woman: Mark 7:24-30
3. The woman who anoints Jesus: Mark 14:3-9

6.2.1 The woman with haemorrhages: Mark 5:24-34

This pericope is set following the return of Jesus and the disciples from the region of Gerasa (Mark 5:21). Jesus is on his way to heal Jairus' daughter who

is so ill she is near death (Mark 5:23). In a narrative turn, the Markan narrator interrupts the story. Enter a woman who has been haemorrhaging for twelve years (Mark 5:25). Like the person with unclean spirits in Gerasa, this woman remains unnamed (Mark 5:25, 33). And like the person from Gerasa, she is, in the narrative world, alone, isolated from family and community due to her illness (Mark 5:25-26). Whilst she is not the only character labelled in the text, she is the one I focus on for this brief exploration of "aloneness".

Mark 5:24b-34	***Mark 5:24b-34***
[24b] καὶ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ ὄχλος πολὺς καὶ συνέθλιβον αὐτόν. [25]Καὶ γυνὴ οὖσα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος δώδεκα ἔτη [26]καὶ πολλὰ παθοῦσα ὑπὸ πολλῶν ἰατρῶν καὶ δαπανήσασα τὰ παρ' αὐτῆς πάντα καὶ μηδὲν ὠφεληθεῖσα ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εἰς τὸ χεῖρον ἐλθοῦσα, [27]ἀκούσασα περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλθοῦσα ἐν τῷ ὄχλῳ ὄπισθεν ἥψατο τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ· [28]ἔλεγεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἅψωμαι κἂν τῶν ἱματίων αὐτοῦ σωθήσομαι. [29]καὶ εὐθὺς ἐξηράνθη ἡ πηγὴ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτῆς καὶ ἔγνω τῷ σώματι ὅτι ἴαται ἀπὸ τῆς μάστιγος. [30]καὶ εὐθὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐπιγνοὺς ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ δύναμιν ἐξελθοῦσαν ἐπιστραφεὶς ἐν τῷ ὄχλῳ ἔλεγεν· τίς μου ἥψατο τῶν ἱματίων; [31]καὶ ἔλεγον αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· βλέπεις τὸν ὄχλον συνθλίβοντά σε καὶ λέγεις· τίς μου ἥψατο; [32]καὶ περιεβλέπετο ἰδεῖν τὴν τοῦτο ποιήσασαν. [33]ἡ δὲ γυνὴ φοβηθεῖσα καὶ τρέμουσα, εἰδυῖα ὃ γέγονεν αὐτῇ, ἦλθεν καὶ προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. [34]ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· θυγάτηρ, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε· ὕπαγε εἰς εἰρήνην καὶ ἴσθι ὑγιὴς ἀπὸ τῆς μάστιγός σου.	*[24b]And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. [25] Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years. [26] She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. [27] She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, [28] for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." [29] Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. [30]Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" [31] And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, "Who touched me?' " [32] He looked all around to see who had done it.[33] But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. [34] He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."*

Within the story world here there are five characters groupings: the crowd, physicians (although these are absent in the narrative, and will not be included in this discussion), an unnamed woman, Jesus and the disciples. The narrator labels each of these in explicit and implicit ways, as we have seen (Chapter 5). I will briefly outline each of these character labels in turn. Implicit labels are designated in italics in the dot points specifying the labels given by the narrator.

6.2.1.1a Jesus as labelled

There are several labels given to Jesus. For the hearer/reader, some of these have been heard before and will come as no surprise, but others add to the description of Jesus as "in-breaker" to the kingdom that the Markan narrator is building throughout the gospel.

- Well known (Mark 5:24b, 27, 31)
- *Charismatic* (Mark 5:24b, 27, 31)
- Healer (Mark 5:28-29, 34)
- Perceptive (Mark 5:30, 32)
- *Compassionate* (Mark 5:33-34)
- *Son of God* (esp. Mark 5:34)
- *Authority* (Mark 5:24b, 30-32, 34)

That the Markan narrator has Jesus being followed and pressed in upon suggests that the crowd is interested in him. We know from previous stories in the gospel that people gather in large groups to listen to Jesus (for example, Mark 3:7-12; 4:1-9; 6:30-44). In this, Jesus is well known. This would, implicitly, indicate that Jesus has some charisma and that people are curious to hear his message. He is becoming known, explicitly, as a healer in the narrative story world (Mark 1:29-34, 1:40-45; 2: 1-12; 3:1-6). Jesus is also perceptive. He has a self-awareness and sense of what is occurring around him. This incident is not the first instance where Jesus demonstrates his powers of perception (see Mark 2:8). Here, as elsewhere, Mark demonstrates Jesus as having compassion (see also Mark 3:5; 8:2). He takes the time to be with the woman and to hear her story (Mark 5:33). The overarching label for the

Markan narrator is to show Jesus as God's son, with the authority of God to heal and restore people to wholeness.

6.2.1.1b Woman as labelled

The woman is central to this narrative. She is labelled:

- Unnamed (Mark 5:25)
- *"Other"* (Mark 5:25-34)
- Suffering (Mark 5:25-26)
- Enduring (Mark 5:26)
- Desperate (Mark 5:26)
- *Assertive* (Mark 5:27-28)
- Healed (Mark 5:29)
- Fearful (Mark 5:33)
- Honest (Mark 5:33)
- "Daughter" (Mark 5:34)
- Faithful (Mark 5:34)
- Restored (Mark 5:34)

Like Jesus, the Markan narrator has labelled the woman in the pericope. She is unnamed, as many in the gospel.[317] In a sense, this makes her "other". Like the person with unclean spirits in Mark 5:1-20, she is unidentified as a person, but known by her condition. The narrator explicitly describes the woman as suffering. The unnamed woman has endured an extended time of blood loss, beyond the normal time for a flow of blood, for twelve years. She is desperate for healing hence she seeks out Jesus. In this she is assertive, bold, and I would add, courageous, in her singling Jesus out in the hope of being healed. She is rewarded instantly and is labelled as healed by the narrator. Jesus calls the woman's touch into question and she is labelled as fearful as he approaches him. She tells Jesus her whole story, demonstrated honesty. She is rewarded by being offered the opportunity of restoration into family and community. Most significantly, she is no longer nameless and "other", but is given the title of

[317] Winsome Munro, "Women Disciples in Mark?," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 44(1982): 225-241, 226. Of the thirteen women mentioned in the gospel, only five are named.

"daughter", thereby restoring her to a role within society. She is declared faithful, as perhaps the disciples need to be.

6.2.1.1c Disciples as labelled

Like the story of the person with unclean spirits in Mark 5:1-20, the disciples do not feature in a major role. In spite of this, the Markan narrator still casts them in a particular role. They are labelled:

- Present (Mark 5:31)
- Disciples (Mark 5:31)
- *Disbelieving* (Mark 5:31)

The disciples are presented as bystanders in this episode. They are said to be present, and are identified as disciples in the narrative. As in the incident at Gerasa, there is a sense in which they misunderstand Jesus. They see the obvious, that is the crowd closed in on Jesus, and fail to see Jesus as one with perception and authority.[318] In this way, they are disbelieving of Jesus and fail to understand him. This is typical of the Markan theme of discipleship as we have seen (Chapter 1).

6.2.1.1d Crowd as labelled

The crowd is the first mentioned in this narrative unit. They are labelled:

- Large (Mark 5:24b)
- Followers (Mark 5:24b)
- Close (Mark 5:24b, 31)
- *Curious* (Mark 5:24b)

The crowd is large and, as mentioned above (2.1.1a) this is a regular occurrence for Jesus and the disciples (Mark 3:7-12; 4:1-9; 6:30-44). The text is clear that the crowd is following Jesus and are closed in around him. This might be because they are curious. This pericope is an interlude into a larger story where Jesus is travelling to the house of Jairus to heal his daughter. The crowd is following, no doubt with interest, to see the outcome of the visit to this (Mark 5:28) important and named figure's house (Mark 5:21-24, 35-43).

[318] Moloney, *Gospel of Mark*, 108.

6.2.1.2 Deviance labelling of the unnamed woman

I do not wish to re-present Jesus as labelled as deviant as this has been done in Chapter 5. It is possible to do so, but would be a repetitive process. Instead, I wish to discuss the deviance of the unnamed woman to determine "aloneness". As such I will be using the narrative labelling process established in the previous chapter.

6.2.1.2a Negative deviance

Determination of act as deviant, label applied, consequence applied

From the beginning of the pericope, the audience is informed by the narrator that an unnamed woman has had a haemorrhage for twelve years. The identification of the woman as having a bleed for twelve years alerts the hearer to her lack of ritual uncleanness (see Chapter 1). There are rules around women who are menstruating. Whilst they do not violate purity laws, per se, they were bound by the rules concerning ritual purity. Jewish women who are menstruating are considered unclean for 7 days, and everything they touch, including people, are made ritually unclean (Leviticus 15:19-30).[319] Through this lens, the woman is ritually unclean, but not impure (Chapter 1).[320] This is not to suggest that menstruating women were ostracized in general, after all, this flow of blood occurs in a monthly cycle.[321] For this unnamed woman, however, she has endured a loss of blood for twelve years. She is beyond what is considered normal and is in a constant state of ritual impurity. The Markan narrator implies to the hearer that the woman's illness has caused social degradation, therefore isolation. This is evident in the description given in the text. The unnamed woman suffers (Mark 5:25) from her illness and she suffers from poverty, having spent all that she had on trying to get well (Mark 5:26).

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[319] Marla J. Selvidge, "Mark 5: 25-34 and Leviticus 15: 19-20: A Reaction to Restrictive Purity Regulations," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103, no. 4 (1984): 619-623; Charles E. Powell, "The 'Passivity' of Jesus in Mark 5:25-34," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 162(2005): 66-75, 71; France, *Gospel of Mark*, 236-237; Smith, "Theology and Christology", 73. Also Susan Haber, "A Woman's Touch: Feminist Encounters with the Hemorrhaging Woman in Mark 5.24-34," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26, no. 2 (2003): 171-192 who disagrees with these scholars that Jesus flaunts the purity laws. She argues instead that he is concerned with the woman's illness than her purity, see page 181.

[320] Marcus, *Mark: 1-8*, 357-358; Haber, "A Woman's Touch", 171 and Kopas, "Outsiders in the Gospels", 118.

[321] Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 209.

One might assume that had been a woman of some means initially.[322] The Markan narrator casts her in the role of negative deviant within the narrative world. She appears with no one else. Perhaps this is due to her uncleanness and ritual impurity. Her action is as a woman who violates modesty, and honour, by touching a strange man.[323] She moves beyond the boundaries of acceptable social behaviour within a first century context in touching a stranger (Jesus). This very action potentially isolates her further. In touching Jesus, she parallels the action of the person at Gerasa who approaches Jesus (Mark 5:2; Mark 5:28).

6.2.1.2b Neutralisation

Interruption of the negative deviant label

In spite of behaving in a deviant manner in the context of the Markan narrtive world, the (lone) woman reaches takes the initiative (action) to reach out to Jesus (who is passive in this instance) in the hope of healing and restoration.[324] Indeed, she breaks through the crowd and touches his clothes (Mark 5:28). Ironically, it is in this act of deviance, that the label of deviant is neutralised. It is this event that stops the blood flow (Mark 5:30), thereby allowing her negative deviance label to be altered. She is no longer ritually impure (even though she is still required to follow the social rules around menstruation in her world).

6.2.1.2c Positive deviance

Determination of act as prominent, new label applied, consequences applied

The Markan audience is aware of Jesus as God's son, the one is bringing in the kingdom of God. This is important, as it is the Markan Jesus who will bring a new label to the woman. In spite of the crowd, Jesus notices "power" had gone and wants to engage the person who has touched him. The disciples (in another Markan act of misunderstanding Jesus) attempt to reason with Jesus (Mark 5:31). The unnamed woman comes forward and tells Jesus the "whole" story.

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[322] Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 174, 180; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 201.

[323] Wendy Cotter, "Mark's Hero of the Twelfth-Year Miracles: The Healing of the Woman with the Hemorrhage and the Raising of Jairus's Daughter (Mark 5:21-43)," in *Feminist Companion to Mark*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001): 54-78, 59. Also van Iersal, *Mark*, 205-206.

[324] Powell, "Passivity", 72.

Literally the "woman…came in fear and trembling, fell down…told" (Mark 5:33). The Markan Jesus rewards her by honouring her and gives her a new title. He labels her "Daughter" and praises her for her faith (Mark 5:34). Whether or not the familial title given implies the woman goes back to her own family or not is unclear. At the very least, she has been included into the fictive kin of Jesus and declared a woman of faith.[325]

6.2.1.3 "Aloneness" of the unnamed woman

"Aloneness" in this narrative unit is seen in the use of rhetorical devices of the Markan narrator. The woman's "aloneness" can be identified in terms of place, as well as physically and socially (see Chapter 5). The fact that the unnamed woman is ritually unclean means that she unable to participate in some activities. Because she is unclean for so long, it might be assumed that she is excluded from many aspects of social life for women, including family. Whatever the case, she appears in the narrative story world as a solitary figure, in the crowd. The narrative takes place in a crowd. By it's very nature, "crowd" denotes many people. This is not a solitary place, in fact we are told that Jesus has people pressed against him. The crowd acts as a place where the woman should not be alone, and yet she appears, in the story world at least, alone.

The unnamed woman, like the person with unclean spirits in Mark 5:1-20, encounters Jesus and is transformed and restored. Like that healed person, she is invited back into community. She is given the title of "Daughter" and honoured for her faith (Mark 5:34). Unlike the restored man, however, she is not told to tell her story. Perhaps the many witnesses to her healing are enough. Whatever the case, the Markan Jesus restores her to a place of prominence. She is portrayed as a model of true faith for the Markan narrator (Mark 5:34).[326] Unlike the person at Gerasa, however, the Markan narrator seems to restore the woman's honour and rather than leave her "alone", includes her into his fictive family. In this, she exemplifies hope for those who find themselves alone.

[325] van Iersal, *Mark*, 212; Cotter, "Mark's Hero," 60.
[326] Haber, "A Woman's Touch", 184-186.

6.2.2 The Syrophoenician woman: Mark 7:24-30

In this pericope the Markan Jesus travels into the region of Tyre to escape the crowds and seek some time on his own (Mark 7:24). (This is an example of Jesus choosing to withdraw and be alone.). Enter a Gentile woman, alone, into a house where only Jesus is said to be, requesting that her daughter be healed from her unclean spirit (Mark 7:24-26). These are the only two explicit characters in this narrative. Externally, there is a little girl who is ill, and her unclean spirit. I will not be discussing these characters at this time.

Mark 7:24-30	***Mark 7:24-30***
24Ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὰ ὅρια Τύρου. Καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς οἰκίαν οὐδένα ἤθελεν γνῶναι, καὶ οὐκ ἠδυνήθη λαθεῖν· 25ἀλλ᾽ εὐθὺς ἀκούσασα γυνὴ περὶ αὐτοῦ, ἧς εἶχεν τὸ θυγάτριον αὐτῆς πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον, ἐλθοῦσα προσέπεσεν πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ· 26ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἦν Ἑλληνίς, Συροφοινίκισσα τῷ γένει· καὶ ἠρώτα αὐτὸν ἵνα τὸ δαιμόνιον ἐκβάλῃ ἐκ τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς. 27καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτῇ· ἄφες πρῶτον χορτασθῆναι τὰ τέκνα, οὐ γάρ ἐστιν καλὸν λαβεῖν τὸν ἄρτον τῶν τέκνων καὶ τοῖς κυναρίοις βαλεῖν. 28ἡ δὲ ἀπεκρίθη καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· κύριε· καὶ τὰ κυνάρια ὑποκάτω τῆς τραπέζης ἐσθίουσιν ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν παιδίων. 29καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· διὰ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ὕπαγε, ἐξελήλυθεν ἐκ τῆς θυγατρός σου τὸ δαιμόνιον. 30καὶ ἀπελθοῦσα εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτῆς εὗρεν τὸ παιδίον βεβλημένον ἐπὶ τὴν κλίνην καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον ἐξεληλυθός.	*24From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, 25 but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. 26 Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophoenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." 28 But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." 29 Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." 30 So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.*

6.2.2.1a Jesus labelled

As demonstrated throughout this thesis, the Markan narrator labels Jesus. In this narrative unit he is labelled:

- Traveller (Mark 7:24)
- Private/alone (Mark 7:24)
- Well known (Mark 7:24)
- *Antagonistic* (Mark 7:27)
- *Racist* (Mark 7:27)
- Healer (Mark 7:29)

Within the narrative world, the Markan Jesus makes a decision to withdraw and travels to the region of Tyre to spend time on his own. One could speculate his reasons for doing this. Within the narrative story world he has spent much time healing and travelling with his disciples. What is clear from the narrative is that he chooses to be alone for a period of time. He crosses boundaries (again) to do this.[327] But he is well known (see 2.1.1a above). The unnamed woman enters this private space and requests healing for her possessed daughter. In an interesting narrative twist, Jesus is portrayed as antagonist, and he replies to her request in quite a vicious way, aligning her with dogs (see below). The quick-witted response from the woman seems to alert him or remind him of his mission to be God's son for all people. He responds by healing the little girl of her possession from afar.

6.2.2.1b Syrophoenician woman as labelled

Like her haemorrhaging "sister" in Mark 5:24-24, this woman is unnamed. She is also labelled within the Markan story world.

- Unnamed (Mark 7:25)
- *"Other"* (Mark 7:26)
- Gentile (Mark 7:26)
- Syrophoenician (Mark 7:26)
- Mother (Mark 7:26)

[327] Holly J. Carey, "Jesus and the Syrophoenician Woman: A Case Study in Inclusiveness," *Leaven* 19, no. 1 (2011): 28-32, 32; van Iersal, *Mark*, 248; Jim Perkinson, "A Canaanite Word in the Logos of Christ or the Difference the Syro-Phoenician Woman Makes to Jesus," *Semeia* 75(1996): 61-85, 69.

- Dog (Mark 7:27-28)
- *Assertive* (Mark 7:28)

The explicit labelling this woman receives at the hand of the Markan narrator is quite astounding. The titles of Gentile and Syrophoenician designate her as "other" immediately within the narrative world of the text. But this woman has a greater motive than her nationality to be with Jesus, like Jairus (Mark 5: 21-24), she represents her family. She is a mother of a daughter afflicted with an unclean spirit. Jesus' response to her is unlike that to Jairus, however, and he likens her to a dog! The woman, however, perhaps because she is a mother, or perhaps because she refuses to let such an accusation have power over her, demonstrates assertiveness in her response to Jesus. Like the unnamed woman in Mark 5:24-34, her boldness and courage are rewarded by Jesus. In a sense this woman is also an exemplar of faith and hope. Unlike her counterpart in Mark 5:24-34, she is not told this directly.

6.2.2.2 Deviance labelling of the Syrophoenician woman

6.2.2.2a Negative deviance

Determination of act as deviant, label applied, consequence applied

In this narrative unit, Jesus enters a house of an unnamed person in the region of Tyre. Like Gerasa, Tyre is a Gentile region and is therefore "other" within the context of the narrative story world.[328] The Markan narrator clearly articulates that Jesus enters the house to be alone (Mark 7:24). Due to his prominence within the story world, he cannot escape notice and an unnamed woman enters to break his solitude with a request to heal her daughter who is possessed by an unclean spirit (Mark 7:25-26). Within the story world, she is alone. The Markan narrator labels her as being from the "region of Tyre… a woman… came… bowed down… a Gentile… Syrophoenician… begged" (Mark 7:24-26). Presumably the woman is a stranger in the house, as she enters unannounced within the Markan story world.[329] Like the Gerasene person and

[328] Judith Gundry-Volf, "Spirit, Mercy, and the Other," *Theology Today* 51, no. 4 (1995): 508-523; van Iersal, *Mark*, 248.

[329] Interestingly, she is seen by Judith Gundry-Volf she is wealthy, whilst for Alan Cadwallader she is a prostitute. See Gundry-Volf, "Spirit", 516. In contrast, Alan H. Cadwallader, *Beyond the Word of a Woman: Recovering the Bodies of the Syrophoenician Women* (Adelaide: ATF Press, 2008), and Alan Cadwallader, "When "Word" is Not Enough:

the haemorrhaging woman, the Markan narrator labels the Syrophoenician woman as "other".

Further to the label of "other", however, the Markan Jesus labels her a dog (Mark 7:27). The Markan Jesus cements her label as deviant in his initial dialogue with her, chastising her for being unfair in taking what is not hers, thus labelling her a dog (Mark 7:27). On the lips of Jesus, this seems a harsh saying. The language of "dog" might be a rhetorical device to remind the hearer/reader that this episode takes place in Gentile territory, not unlike the presence of the swine in Gerasa.[330] Indeed scholars are divided as to Jesus' meaning. For Bas van Iersal, Jesus is being playful.[331] William Loader considers Jesus' response as being about timing. Jesus wanted a break, so perhaps he was disconcerted by the woman's appearance.[332] For others, like Kelly Iverson and Rebekah Lui, Jesus is testing the woman.[333] This is identified by the use of "little dog" (τὰ κυνάρια), which supposedly "softens" Jesus' meaning. For Alan Cadwallader, however, this is a harsh term meant to degrade the woman and her daughter.[334] I find it difficult to see the Markan narrator including this story to demean the woman, or Gentiles. Perhaps it was included because Jesus was having a "bad day". More likely, it is included to demonstrate the inclusion of Gentiles into the "in-breaking" kingdom of God. The narrative feels uncomfortable and is indeed a label of deviance.

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the Syrophoenician Encounter With Jesus (Mark 7:24-30)," *FourthR* 25, no. 5 (2012): 3-9, 14, 6.

[330] van Iersal, *Mark*, 250.

[331] van Iersal, *Mark*, 249.

[332] William Loader, "Challenged At the Boundaries: a Conservative Jesus in Mark's Tradition," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 63(1996): 45-61, 50.

[333] Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 52; Rebekah Lui, "A Dog Under the Table at the Messianic Banquet: A Study of Mark 7:24-30," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 48, no. 2 (2010): 251-255, 253; also Gundry-Volf, "Spirit", 517; David Rhoads, "Jesus and the Syro-Phoenician Woman in Mark: A Narrative-Critical Study," *Journal of American Academic Research* 62(1994): 343-376, 356-357.

[334] Cadwallader, "When "Word" is Not Enough", 4. I also note Mark Nanos' discussion about the term "dog" for Gentile as being first placed on the lips of Jesus and therefore an early Christian tradition, but I fail to be convinced by his argument. See Mark D. Nanos, "Paul's Reversal of Jews Calling Gentiles 'Dogs' (Philippians 3:2): 1600 Years of an Ideological Tale Wagging an Exegetical Dog?," *Biblical Interpretation* 17(2009): 448-482.

6.2.2.2b Neutralisation

Interruption of the negative deviant label

Like the woman with the haemorrages, the Syrophoenician woman acts. She responds to Jesus with as much force as he speaks, narratively speaking, and in doing so neutralises her own label (Mark 7:27-28). In what appears to be a highly offensive comment by Jesus, the woman holds her ground. She challenges him rhetorically in an apparent attack on honour (Chapter 1) and wins. She accepts the metaphor (of being a dog) but defends it in suggesting that she too has a right to blessing.[335] Unlike the haemorraging woman, however, this woman speaks to Jesus in order to neutralise her label.

6.2.2.2c Positive deviance

Determination of act as prominent, new label applied, consequences applied

The Syrophoenician woman is rewarded in the Markan story world and it is Jesus who praises her because of her word rather than her faith (Mark 7:29).[336] However, it is through her words that she demonstrates her faith and is central to the narrative.[337] She demonstrates her ability to gain honour through the encounter. The Markan Jesus is the one who declares her action as one of prominence. She leaves alone, and remains unnamed, but her story, however embarrassing it may be for hearers/readers of the gospel, is repeated. The consequences of her actions are seen in the healing of her daughter.

6.2.2.3 "Aloneness" of the Syrophoenician woman

As with the previous encounters in Mark, this woman's "aloneness" can be identified in terms of place, as well as physical and social "aloneness". Within the narrative story world, the Syrophoenician woman enters the house alone, unaccompanied by another person, to encounter a Jesus who is alone. Potentially the woman is socially isolated because of her daughter's possession of unclean spirits, although the hearers/readers are not told this. The Markan Jesus challenges the woman and her honour, but she proves to be a worthy

[335] van Iersal, *Mark*, 251.
[336] Cadwallader, "When "Word" is Not Enough", 4; Matthew L. Skinner, "'She Departed to Her House': Another Dimension of the Syrophoenician Mother's Faith in Mark 7:24-30," *Word and World* 26, no. 1 (2006): 14-21, 17, 21; Perkinson, "Canaanite Word", 69.
[337] Sharon H. Ringe, "A Gentile Woman's Story, Revisited: Rereading Mark 7:24-31," in *A Feminist Companion to Mark*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001): 79-100, 82.

opponent. Regardless of her being labelled as deviant in terms of her race, and gender, the Markan Jesus rewards her honour and by so doing, allows her to be seen in prominent terms. Like the Gerasene person, and the woman with a haemorrhage, the Syrophoenician woman demonstrates hope, courage and faith. But she remains alone in the narrative story world. Following her encounter, she maintains her labels of gender and race, although these labels are now seen from a prominent perspective.

6.2.3 The woman who anoints Jesus: Mark 14:3-9

In this final example of "aloneness", the setting is in Bethany, at the house of Simon the Leper (Mark 14:3). Jesus and some other unnamed people are sharing a meal together and a woman comes to anoint Jesus with a very expensive ointment.

Mark 14:3-9	***Mark 14:3-9***
[3]Καὶ ὄντος αὐτοῦ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ Σίμωνος τοῦ λεπροῦ, κατακειμένου αὐτοῦ ἦλθεν γυνὴ ἔχουσα ἀλάβαστρον μύρου νάρδου πιστικῆς πολυτελοῦς, συντρίψασα τὴν ἀλάβαστρον κατέχεεν αὐτοῦ τῆς κεφαλῆς. [4]ἦσαν δέ τινες ἀγανακτοῦντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς· εἰς τί ἡ ἀπώλεια αὕτη τοῦ μύρου γέγονεν; [5]ἠδύνατο γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ μύρον πραθῆναι ἐπάνω δηναρίων τριακοσίων καὶ δοθῆναι τοῖς πτωχοῖς· καὶ ἐνεβριμῶντο αὐτῇ. [6]Ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· ἄφετε αὐτήν· τί αὐτῇ κόπους παρέχετε; καλὸν ἔργον ἠργάσατο ἐν ἐμοί. [7]πάντοτε γὰρ τοὺς πτωχοὺς ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν καὶ ὅταν θέλητε δύνασθε αὐτοῖς εὖ ποιῆσαι, ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε. [8]ὃ ἔσχεν ἐποίησεν· προέλαβεν μυρίσαι τὸ σῶμά μου εἰς τὸν ἐνταφιασμόν. [9]ἀμὴν δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅπου ἐὰν κηρυχθῇ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ὃ ἐποίησεν αὕτη λαληθήσεται εἰς μνημόσυνον αὐτῆς.	*[3] While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. [4] But some were there who said to one another in anger, "Why was the ointment wasted in this way? [5]For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they scolded her. [6] But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. [7] For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. [8] She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. [9] Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."*

There are four groups of characters in this narrative unit, Jesus, Simon, another unnamed woman, and "some" other people.

6.2.3.1a Jesus as labelled

Jesus appears in the house at Bethany. The Markan narrator again labels Jesus.

- *"Other"* (Mark 14:3)
- Compassionate (Mark 14:6)
- Perceptive (Mark 14:8)
- *God's son* (Mark 14:3, 6-9)

From the outset of this pericope, the Markan narrator declares Jesus as "other". He is dining in the house of one decreed "leper". He is not the only one present at this meal. Whilst he is there, a woman enters and anoints him. He shows compassion to her, coming to her defense when the others at the meal scold her. He is perceptive in his reply to them about the rationale for her actions, anointing a body for burial that is yet to suffer and die. Again, for the Markan narrator, Jesus is God's son, the good news for the world, and the woman's actions declare this.

6.2.3.1b Simon as labelled

- Leper (Mark 14:3)
- *Hospitable* (Mark 14:3)

Simon, like the person from Gerasa, retains a label within the gospel of Mark, namely that of a leper.[338] In the rhetorical sense, this label is one of "otherness" as lepers were considered unclean (Leviticus 13).[339] Like the incident at Gerasa, the Markan Jesus intentionally dines at Simon's house. Presumably, Simon, as a leper, was outcast and alone, and had been restored to community, hence having dinner guests. However, whilst Simon is named, it is the action that occurs in his home that is remembered.

[338] It is unclear if Simon was healed or not. See van Iersal, *Mark*, 416; Susan Miller, "The Woman who Anoints Jesus (Mk 14.3-9) : A Prophetic Sign of the New Creation," *Feminist Theology* 14, no. 2 (2006): 221-236, 229. Alternatively, France argues for his healing but retaining of label. France, *Gospel of Mark*, 551.

[339] Mary Ann Tolbert, "Mark," in *The Women's Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (London: SPCK, 1992), 270.

6.2.3.1c Anointing woman as labelled

Like the Gerasene person, the other protagonist in the narrative story world remains unnamed.

- Unnamed (Mark 14:3-9)
- *Assertive* (Mark 14:3)
- Silent (Mark 14:3-9)
- Prophetic (Mark 14:8-9)

As with the other women discussed in this chapter, this woman is unnamed. Presumably she was wealthy to have expensive ointment. She is assertive and bold in her actions. She enters into a domain where she is clearly unwelcome (Mark 14:4). Unlike the other women too, her boldness does not come with any spoken words in this narrative unit. The Markan narrator suppresses her voice but her actions cannot be silenced. Indeed they are proclaimed as prophetic.

6.2.3.1d "Some" as labelled

Those present at the meal are also labelled within the narrative.

- Unnamed (Mark 14:4)
- Disapproving (Mark 14:4-5)

Like the anointing woman, the others ("some" - τινες) present at the meal are unnamed and their identity is unclear.[340] But unlike the woman, they are loud and bold in their opinions of her. In contrast to the woman's silence their voices of disapproval of both the woman and her actions are heard clearly. In turn, Jesus moves to silence them.

6.2.3.2 Deviance labelling of the anointing woman

6.2.3.2a Negative deviance

Determination of act as deviant, label applied, consequence applied

From the outset of the story in Mark 14:3-9, the woman is an unwelcome presence (Mark 14:4), possibly entering a meal where men only are present.[341] She enters the house of Simon the Leper, presumably not her house, and anoints Jesus with expensive oil (Mark 14:3). No one accompanies her into the

[340] France assumes the "some" are made up of the disciples France, *Gospel of Mark*, 552-553, whilst Miller suggests the "some" are male. See Miller, "Woman who anoints", 222.
[341] Miller, "Woman who anoints", 222; Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 390.

house within the narrative story world. She is alone. By anointing Jesus, the woman is violating modesty expectations and therefore behaving dishonourably. The Markan narrator labels her in subversive terms.[342] The narrator is not the only one to label her in terms of negative deviance. The evangelist records the reactions of those present at the meal: "anger…wasted…money given to the poor…scolded" (Mark 14:4-5). This emotive language serves to isolate the woman and further declares her deviant.

6.2.3.2b Neutralisation
Interruption of the negative deviant label

As happened with the Gerasene person, it is Jesus' response that is the catalyst for the neutralising of the negative deviant label for this woman. She is unnamed and remains silent within the narrative story world. Yet, she still draws a response from Jesus. This is different than the stories of the other women in this present chapter who enable their own neutralisation through their actions. For this woman, Jesus responds to the deviant labels and accusations: "let her alone…good service…has done what she could" (Mark 14:6, 8). He reminds those present at the meal that he is will not always be with them (Mark 14:7). He responds positively to the woman's actions of service.

6.2.3.2c Positive deviance
Determination of act as prominent, new label applied, consequences applied

The Markan Jesus comes to the woman's defense acknowledging her gift gratefully. He emphasizes that her actions do not deserve to be labelled in strong negative terms. Within the Markan story world, Jesus declares the woman's action prominent. He suggests that the poor will always be around but Jesus will not (Mark 14:7). The unnamed woman has recognised this, and that he is God's son. She provides Jesus with a royal anointing.[343] In a prophetic sense she does all she can for Jesus while he is still alive (Mark 14:8). Her action is symbolic within the story world of the Markan gospel - it

[342] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 280.
[343] Moloney, *Gospel of Mark*, 281-282; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 217-218; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 359; Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 390; Santiago Guijarro and Ana Rodríguez, "The 'Messianic' Anointing of Jesus (Mark 14:3—9)," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 41, no. 3 (2011): 132-143 and Miller, "Woman who anoints", 223.

has demonstrated her understanding of Jesus as a God's son and "in-breaker" of God's kingdom, as well as preparing his body for burial. She has been a true disciple - serving Jesus, and he declares that her action be remembered. The Markan narrator declares this woman as honourable and prominent and the "good news" will travel throughout the whole world "in remembrance of her" (Mark 14:9). Her action is in contrast to that of Judas, who will go on to betray Jesus (14:10).[344]

6.2.3.3 "Aloneness" of the anointing woman

The audience is not told what happens to the woman at the end of this story, but just as happens for the other women discussed in this chapter, the anointing woman can be identified in terms of "aloneness" seen in the sense of place, as well as physically and socially. "Aloneness" of place occurs as the woman enters a space that is not her own, and where she is unwelcome. The place is labelled according to the person, as leper. The woman is ostracised by those present at the table (Mark 14:4-5). Within the Markan story world, she arrives at the meal alone. Potentially she remains alone in the Markan story world, as there is no record of where she goes when she leaves the house. In spite of the response of the dinner guests, Jesus alone sides with her and defends her actions. In this, he labels her as prominent and declares that her action is good news to be proclaimed in her memory. Her use of costly ointment may also serve to isolate her due to its apparent waste, but we do not know. Regardless of her "aloneness" the woman is labelled as prominent, unlike Simon, who is named and retains the "leper" label.

6.3 Concluding Remarks

The three examples I have provided here are broadly spoken about in terms of a narrative labelling study of "aloneness". If space permitted, then further analysis of "aloneness" concerning Jesus and other characters within these, and other, narrative units in Mark's gospel, would enhance this thematic study of "aloneness". What the present chapter does do is present narrative labelling as a tool able to discern "aloneness" within the Markan narrative story world. Each of the women discussed in this chapter is unnamed, and each has her own context of "aloneness" that the Markan Jesus speaks into. The narrator

[344] Malbon, "Fallible Followers: Women and Men in the Gospel of Mark", , 40.

characterises each woman, explicitly and/or implicitly, as deviant in negative and prominent terms. Each woman is assertive and courageous in spite of her "aloneness" and is presented as an example of discipleship in the narrative story world. Each woman recognises Jesus as God's son, just as the Gerasene person does.

Having demonstrated "aloneness" in a Markan context, what remains is to discuss possible implications of such a study, the discussion in the next chapter.

Part IV:
Implications for Narrative Labelling and a Reading of “Aloneness”

Chapter 7

Narrative Labelling: Implications for Future Research

7.1 Introduction

Having established "aloneness" as a theme by means of narrative labelling in Chapters 5 and 6, it is now appropriate to explore the implications of "aloneness" for future research and discussion. I begin by offering some thoughts on "aloneness" for the Markan Jesus in the Passion narrative. I use narrative labelling to do this. I then explore parallels between the pericope of Mark 5:1-20 and the Markan Passion narratives. I highlight these in the context of "aloneness". I offer other possibilities where this study of "aloneness" in Mark's gospel might be useful, particularly in terms of pastoral theology.

7.2 Narrative Labelling in the Passion Narratives (Mark 14: 32 - 16:8)

Within the Passion narrative, there are numerous characters: Jesus, the disciples, Judas Iscariot, Peter, Scribes, Chief Priests and Elders, Council members, guards, bystanders, Pilate, Barabbas, soldiers, the crowd, Simon of Cyrene, those crucified with Jesus, a centurion, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joseph of Arimathea, and a young man dressed in white. To detail the labels assigned to each of these characters, and to see how each might be considered "alone", is beyond the scope of this chapter, and indeed the thesis, but it is an area for future research. What I offer at this point, is a further analysis of the "aloneness" of Jesus in the Passion narratives via narrative labelling. I do this in order to highlight some parallels of the person in Gerasa with the unclean spirits and Jesus in the Passion narrative.

7.2.1 Jesus as labelled in the Passion narratives.

Jesus is labelled extensively, and often in negative terms. Some of these labels are as follows:

- Distressed (Mark 14:33)
- Agitated (Mark 14:33)
- Grieved (Mark 14:34)
- Pray-er (Mark 14:35-36, 39)

- *Reliant on God* (Mark 14:35, 15:34)
- *Obedient* (Mark 14:36)
- Betrayed (Mark 14:44)
- Rabbi (Mark 14:45)
- Abandoned (Mark 14:50)
- Judged (Mark 14: 53-65; 15:1-15)
- Denied (Mark 14:66-72)
- King of the Jews (Mark 15:2, 18, 25)
- Crucified (Mark 15:24-25)
- Messiah (Mark 15:32)
- King of Israel (Mark 15:32)
- Dead (Mark 15:39, 44)
- Buried (Mark 15: 46)
- Risen (Mark 16:6)

The list of labels here is by no means comprehensive, and not all are positive. They point to divergent opinions of Jesus within the Markan story world. Many point to the Markan Jesus as being "other", deviant and alone. From the scene in Gethsemane, the hearer/reader sees a Jesus who is "alone". In spite of having eleven of the twelve disciples with him, and most particularly, Peter, James and John close by (Mark 14:33), none can offer him support of friendship in his time of grief.[345] In this sense, Jesus is alone. Further, the Markan Jesus is betrayed, abandoned and denied, judged and ultimately crucified. These are obviously labels of "aloneness". Ironically, the titles of Son of God (Mark 15:39) and Messiah (Mark 15:32) are thrown at Jesus mockingly. In a great paradox, the hearers/readers of the Markan gospel know that Jesus is actually the Messiah and Son of God (Mark 1:[1], 11). What appear to be labels of deviance are actually prominent for those of faith.

[345] Hicks, "Emotional Temptation", 29-48.

7.2.2 Deviance labelling of Jesus in the Passion narratives

Just as Jesus was labelled as deviant in Mark 5:1-20, so he is again here in the Passion narratives.

7.2.2a Negative deviance

Determination of act as deviant, label applied, consequence applied

There is not a single action of Jesus that is determined as deviant in this pericope. Within the narrative story world, however, there have been a series of conflicts between Jesus and the religious leaders (Chapter 1). From very early on in Jesus ministry, these religious leaders have determined to get rid of Jesus (Mark 3:6; 11:18; 14:1). They have searched for ways to establish Jesus as deviant and they get their opportunity here in the Passion narrative of Mark's gospel, with the weight of the council and Roman authorities behind them in the form of a trial (Mark 14:55-65). The consequence of Jesus being found deviant is death by crucifixion but not before Jesus is humiliated and beaten (Mark 15:6-32).

7.2.2b Neutralisation

Interruption of the negative deviant label

The Markan narrator does not let the story end with Jesus' death. In the narrative story world, Jesus has been depicted as God's son and the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God. As such, it is God, in Mark's gospel, who intervenes now. Jesus dies the death of a criminal, but is raised again (Mark 16:6). When the women go to the tomb to anoint him, they are surprised to discover that Jesus is no longer there, no longer dead, but indeed risen and ready to meet them in Galilee.

7.2.2c Positive deviance

Determination of act as prominent, new label applied, consequences applied

In spite of Jesus dying as a criminal, the Markan narrator retains this label. But this is not all there is to Jesus. Jesus rises from the dead and retains the label as God's son in the Markan story world. Whilst the women remain silent (Mark 16:8) this is obviously not the end of the story. The fact that Mark writes his gospel indicates the Jesus story was known. More than that, the Jesus story is

one of hope and faith, of suffering, struggle, conflict, deviance, "otherness" and "aloneness".[346]

7.3 The mirror of "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20 and the Passion narratives

Similarities exist in Mark 5:1-20 and the Passion narratives in terms of place, physical concerns, social consideration and use of Hebrew Scriptures (Chapter 5, Figure 20). The Markan Passion narrative is told over several chapters of the gospel (Mark 14-16). Of most interest for viewing comparisons of the Gerasene story and the Passion of Jesus through the lens of "aloneness" is Mark 14:32-16:8. This section of Mark's gospel begins with Jesus and the disciples going to Gethsemane and concludes with the empty tomb.

7.3.1 "Aloneness" and place in Mark 5:1-20 and the Passion narratives

There are similarities in terms of place in Mark 5:1-20 and the Markan passion narrative (Figure 21). As we explored in an earlier chapter, the place of Gerasa and the tombs are seen as "other" in the Markan story world (Chapters 1, 4). It is in this context that characters are seen as conforming or deviating from the social expectations of world. Gerasa is on the "other" side of the sea, where Gentiles and swine live, and where Jesus encounters a person with unclean spirits who dwells among the tombs. This is truly a place of defilement and impurity for Jewish people (see Chapter 1).

Mark 5:1-20	Markan Passion Narrative
•Gerasa (Mark 5:1) •Tombs (Mark 5:2-5) •Roman presence (Mark 5: 9)	•Golgotha (Mark 15:22) •Tomb (Mark 15:46) •Roman presence (Mark 15)

Figure 21: "Aloneness" and Place: Comparison of Mark 5:1-20 and Markan Passion Narrative

In the story world of the Passion narrative, the Markan Jesus travels from Gethsemane (Γεθσημανί, Mark 14:32-42, literally "olive/oil press")[347] to the courtyard of the high priest (εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως, Mark 14:54), then to Pilate's place (ἀπήνεγκαν καὶπαρέδωκαν Πιλάτῳ, Mark 15:1). The Roman

[346] Hicks, "Emotional Temptation", 29-48 and Kopas, "Outsiders in the Gospels", 117-126.
[347] van Iersal, *Mark*, 432; Raymond Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 148.

soldiers torture Jesus in the praetorium (πραιτώριον) (Mark 15:16) before leading him to Golgotha, "the place of the skull" (τὸν Γολγοθᾶν τόπον, ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον ΚρανίουΤόπος. Mark 15:22). Finally Jesus' body is placed in a tomb (μνημείῳ) (Mark 15:46). What Gethsemane represented for the Markan narrator is unknown. The courtyard of the high priest (Mark 14:54), however, represents the height of purity. As honour and purity were important in this society (see Chapter 1), Jesus' presence would assume "otherness" in this narrative world. He has been brought before the chief priests as one who has deviated from the social expectations and is charged as such (Mark 14:55-65).

There are strong military connections and irony within Mark 5:1-20. The rhetorical references to the "legion" of unclean spirits matches the terminology used for units of Roman armies, and suggests the might and power of the Roman military.[348] In Mark 5:1-20, the Markan Jesus is the one who is set up to restore the land and purify it. Ironically, it is the Romans who will exert their power and authority as they torture and crucify Jesus (Mark 15:16-20; 24). That Jesus is sent to Pilate, the Roman governor (Mark 15:1), is further evidence of Jesus' "aloneness". In the Markan story world, Jesus is sent to the "other" because he is seen as "other". The Markan narrator has declared that the chief priests and the "whole" council wanted Jesus put to death (Mark 14:55). In a literary sense, they exclude him as he is seen to bring dishonour because of his care of the "other" and claims to be God's son and the "in-breaker" of God's rule (Mark 14:62).

At the climax of the Passion narrative, Jesus is taken to Golgotha, another place of "otherness" (ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον ΚρανίουΤόπος, "the place of the skull") (Mark 15:22). It was so called because topographically its appearance was similar to a skull; "a rounded knoll, rising from the surrounding site."[349] It is here where bandits are crucified in the Markan story world (Mark 15:27). By means of rhetoric, the narrator implies that Jesus is put

[348] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 190-94; Starobinski, "The Gerasene Demoniac," 67; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 10, 90-91, 147; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*, 182-183.
[349] Raymond Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 937; also Donahue and Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 441 and France, *Gospel of Mark*, 642.

to death as a criminal. Again the implication is one of "otherness" and deviance and dishonour.

There is a curious reversal in the plot of the person with unclean spirits here in the story of Jesus. The person with unclean spirits moved from being isolated and alone, to potentially being invited back into community on being restored. The Markan Passion narrative sees Jesus move from sharing Passover in sacred space with his disciples to a place of dishonour and the death of a criminal, and ultimately his burial. His role as "other" is complete; so too is his role as an example of one who is "alone". Where the possessed man's narrative begins in the tombs, Jesus final place is in a tomb (Mark 15:46).

7.3.2 Physical "Aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20 and the Passion narratives

Mark 5:1-20 excerpts	**Markan Passion narrative excerpts**
5:1 *They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.* [2] *And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.* [3] *He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain;* [4] *for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him.* ***5:15*** *They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid.*	***14:65*** *Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophesy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.* ***15:1*** *As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.* ***15:16****Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort.* [17] *And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him.* [18] *And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"* [19] *They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him.* [20] *After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they*

	led him out to crucify him. ***15:34*** *At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

Just as the person with unclean spirits is bound (unsuccessfully) (οὐδὲ ἁλύσει οὐκέτι οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο αὐτὸν δῆσαι, Mark 5:3-4), now Jesus is also bound (δήσαντες, Mark 15:1) (Figure 22). Where the Gerasene person is tortured by both the unclean spirits and himself (Mark 5:2-5), it is other characters within the Markan story world that torture Jesus. He is then taken by the Roman soldiers and ridiculed, clothed in purple (ἐνδιδύσκουσιν αὐτὸν πορφύραν) and given a thorny crown (ἀκάνθινον στέφανον, Mark 15:17). The soldiers mock and label him "King of the Judeans" (βασιλεῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, Mark 15:18), then they strike his head (ἔτυπτον αὐτοῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν) and spit on him (ἐνέπτυοναὐτῷ) in an act of total humiliation to Jesus (Mark 15:19). In all of this, the Markan narrator has Jesus remain silent and friendless. Jesus, the deviant, is alone.

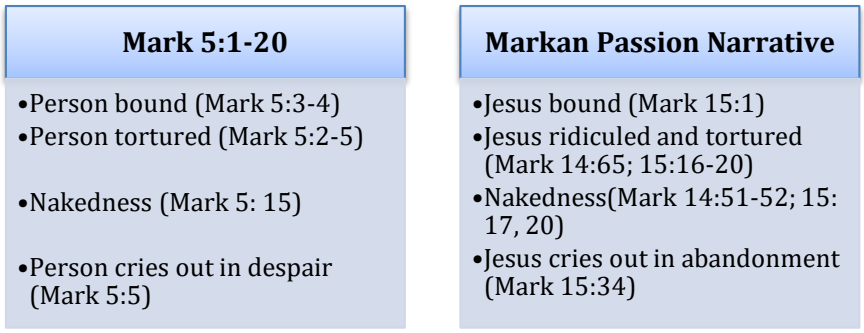

Figure 22: Physical "Aloneness": Comparison of Mark 3:1-20 and Markan Passion Narrative

In the course of the narrative, the hearer discovers that the person with unclean spirits is naked (Mark 5:15). At his restoration, the Markan narrator says he is clothed and in a sound mind (καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα, Mark 5:15). In contrast, as a sign of being deviant and shamed, Jesus is disrobed, placed in clothes in order to be mocked and beaten, restored to his own clothes (Mark 15: 17, 20) only to have them removed at his crucifixion. In a final act

of shame, his clothes are gambled for (Mark 15:24). Even at Jesus' arrest, a young man is disrobed and flees naked (Mark 14:51-52).

In the ultimate demonstration of "aloneness" the Markan narrator uses the crying out of the characters to signify total abandonment. Twice in Mark 5:1-20 there is a mention of the person with unclean spirits crying out (κράζων/ κράξας - Mark 5:5,6). In the first instance, the person cries out and self-harms night and day in the tombs. In the second instance he cried out to Jesus. Likewise, Jesus also cries out in sheer abandonment at his crucifixion (ἐβόησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Mark 15:34). Where God affirms Jesus at significant points in the Markan story world (Mark 1:11; 9:7), at both Gethsemane and in the crucifixion, God is silent.[350]

7.3.3 Social "Aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20 and the Passion narratives

Mark 5:1-20 excerpts	**Markan Passion narrative excerpts**
5:1 *They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.* ***2*** *And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.* ***3*** *He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain;* ***4*** *for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him.* ***5*** *Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones.* ***5:15*** *They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid*	***14:32*** *They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."* ***33*** *He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated.* ***34*** *And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake."* ***37*** *He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?* ***39*** *And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words.* ***40*** *And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him.* ***41*** *He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed*

[350] van Iersal, *Mark*, 475; Hicks, "Emotional Temptation", 36. Contrast this to Matthew A. Rich, "Between Text and Sermon: Mark 15:25-41," *Interpretation* 70, no. 2 (2016): 200-202, who argues that the temple curtain is God's statement. This action, however, is still silent.

5:17*Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood.*	*into the hands of sinners.* ***44*** *Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." [45] So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. [46] Then they laid hands on him and arrested him.* ***54*** *Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.* ***66*** *While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. [67] When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." [68] But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. [69] And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." [70] But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean." [71] But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about."*

Comparisons can also be made with Mark 5:1-20 and the Passion narratives in terms of social “aloneness” (Figure 23). The Gerasene person with unclean spirits is shown to be alone in the tombs. Those who have tried to bind him have failed, and thus he is alone within the Markan story world (Mark 5:2-5). In exorcising the unclean spirits, Jesus allows for restoration to community.

However, the reactions of the Gerasene people are of fear and thus they beg Jesus to leave their region (Mark 5:15, 17). Hence, the healed person is left alone in this hostile environment to proclaim what Jesus had done for him (Mark 5:20).

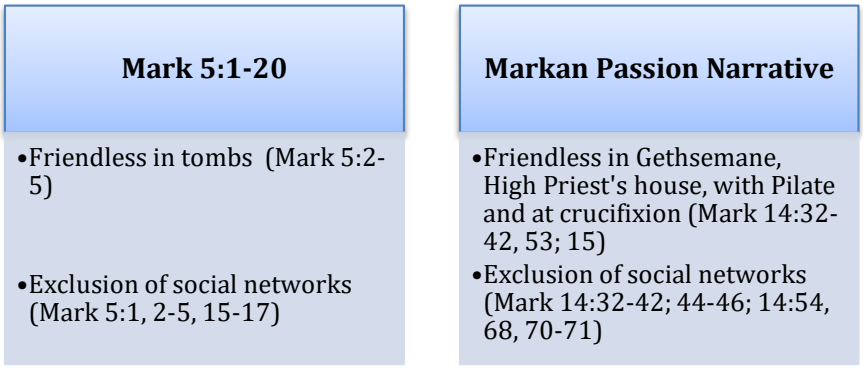

Figure 23: Social "Aloneness": Comparison of Mark 3:1-20 and Markan Passion Narrative

Likewise, Jesus in Mark 5:1-2 travelled with the disciples to the "other" side of the sea, but disembarks alone. The disciples do not go with him. During the Passion narratives, the disciples abandon Jesus completely.[351] From the beginning of the gospel, Mark tells us that Jesus is God's son (Mark 1:[1]). God actually confirms this at Jesus' baptism (Mark 1:11) and again at the Transfiguration (Mark 9:7). Peter, James and John witness the latter event. The disciples want to believe this, and indeed Peter makes his bold declaration that Jesus is the Christ (Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός, Mark 8:29). Even James and John want to believe, but they argue over who will sit on the right hand side of Jesus (Δὸς ἡμῖν ἵνα εἷς σου ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ εἷς ἐξ ἀριστερῶν, Mark 10:37). They go as far as stating that they can share in Jesus' "cup" of suffering (Mark 10:39). In spite of the grand statements and proclamations, the Markan narrator has the disciples as very fallible. They continually misunderstand Jesus in the gospel.

Just as they fail to go with him in Gerasa, so the disciples fail again in the Passion narratives. In the scene at Gethsemane, the Markan Jesus requests them to remain with him and keep awake (μείνατε ὧδε καὶγρηγορεῖτε Mark 14:34). Instead, they fall asleep. The narrator says they do this thrice, just as

[351] Hicks, "Emotional Temptation", 31, 36. Hicks suggests that the Gethsemane narrative is a time of testing for both the disciples and Jesus. For the disciples it is about staying alert (discipleship) and for Jesus it is a crisis of faith where he ultimately remains faithful to God.

they have failed to comprehend that Jesus would suffer (Mark 8:31-33; 9:31-33; 10:33-34). In a narrative sense, they fail to provide a grieving Jesus with community. In spite of declaring their unswerving commitment to Jesus (Mark 14:19, 29) at the Passover meal, they are unable or unwilling to remain awake with Jesus. He informs his disciples that he is deeply grieved, even to death (Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου ἕως θανάτου, Mark 14:34). But he also leaves them in order to pray alone (προελθὼν μικρὸν, Mark 14:35). Within the Markan story world, the disciples fail to realise that Jesus needs them to be faithful to him (Mark 14:37, 41). Jesus is alone in his grief (Mark 14:34). He is portrayed as the model disciple relying on God in his distress. By sleeping and not remaining awake, the disciples prove their unfaithfulness. [352] At Gethsemane there is a sense of the inevitable. In the narrative story world, Jesus knows he will die (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33). The disciples' failure to follow and obey Jesus' requests is complete. When handed over, all abandon Jesus (ἔφυγον πάντες, Mark 14:50). Jesus will have to face his trial, torture and death on his own. He is alone, in a crowd of angry opponents.

Jesus is now without supporters as he faces a "trial" by the high priest, chief priests, elders and scribes (Mark 14:53), all so vehemently opposed to Jesus that they want him dead, according to the Markan narrator (εἰς τὸθανατῶσαι αὐτόν, Mark 14:55). Within the Markan story world, the characters of the religious leaders label Jesus as negatively deviant. He behaves as "other" in the sense of first century social conventions and has offended them. More than that, the Markan narrator has him declare that he is the Christ (Ἐγώ εἰμι, Mark 14:62). The religious leaders interpret this as blasphemy (τῆς βλασφημίας, Mark 14:64). Jesus is bound and taken to the Roman governor, Pilate (15:1).

In the meantime, Peter has followed at a distance (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ, Mark 14:54) and in the ultimate act of shame, denies Jesus three times (Mark 14:68, 70-71). Having been betrayed by Judas, (Mark 14:44-46) it seems that Jesus is losing the disciples too. The Markan narrator portrays a scene of abandonment for Jesus. The climax of "aloneness" for the Markan

[352] Timothy J. Geddert, *Watchwords: Mark 13 in Markan Eschatology* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1989), 105.

Jesus is on the cross, where Jesus cries out in abandonment to God, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Ελωι ελωι λεμα σαβαχθανι; Ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με, Mark 15:34). His desolation and "aloneness" are complete.

7.3.4 Other aspects of "aloneness" in the Markan Passion narrative

The narrative of the Gerasene person with unclean spirits and the Passion narrative of Jesus have similarities with regard to "aloneness". In some ways, the story of the Gerasene person parallels Jesus' own experience of "aloneness" and total abandonment. Jesus' experience of "aloneness" differs too. He is betrayed by Judas and denied by Peter, both his disciples. There is irony in Judas' use of "Rabbi" (Ῥαββί, Mark 14:45) is that it is a label of respect. Here it becomes one of betrayal as Jesus is handed to the religious authorities as a criminal. Jesus is also labelled bandit and accused of deviance by the religious establishment. There are also descriptive allusions within the Markan narrative of Jesus' emotional state at Gethsemane and on the cross. In the ultimate sign of aloneness, Jesus is abandoned, even by God (Mark 15:34).

7.3.5 Summary remarks about Mark 5:1-20 and the Passion narratives

It is not the aim of this chapter to expand upon the connections between "aloneness" at Gerasa and in the Passion narratives in detail. It is, however, important to highlight key insights from Mark 5:1-20 in order to establish the link between the episode in Gerasa and the Passion narratives, and to see how useful such an analysis is for examining other important sections of Mark's gospel. As highlighted in Chapter 5, "aloneness" for the person with unclean spirits can be identified both explicitly and implicitly within the text. The Markan narrator labels him as "a person" (Mark 5:2) a singular figure. The person is then further labelled as having an unclean spirit (Mark 5:2). He is left unnamed. The label of place is given as "tombs" (Mark 5:2, 3, 5) where the action occurs but also as the residence of this person (Mark 5:3). This person has had unsuccessful attempts at being bound with chains and shackles. In fact, "no one" was strong enough to restrain him (Mark 5:4). In addition to these rhetorical labels of "aloneness", the evangelist says that this unnamed person with unclean spirits cries out and tortures himself (Mark 5:5). He sees Jesus from "afar", again indicating his separation from other people (Mark 5:6).

Even after Jesus exorcises the unclean spirits, Mark still uses the language of possession: twice in the sense that the person is still possessed (Mark 5:15, 16) and the final time in the past tense (Mark 5:18). For all this person has been through, the Markan narrator still retains his label of possession. In a final twist, the restored person is not allowed to travel with Jesus, but is instead sent in to the hostile ground of disbelief.[353] It is into this environment that the person who had unclean spirits tells of Jesus (Mark 5:20).

Jesus also experiences "aloneness" within the Markan gospel. As God's son, the "in-breaker" of God's reign (Mark 1:[1], 11) he has no equal or peer.[354] He is therefore "alone". Because he has no equal, Jesus is also "other" and intentionally goes to the "other" (Mark 5:1). He disembarks without the disciples (Mark 5:2). He is engaged in conflict with the unclean spirits, who are no match for him (Mark 5:6-13) as well as the Gerasene people (Mark 5:17). He is rejected by the Gerasenes, and misunderstood by the disciples. The Markan narrator shows him in the light of "aloneness".

The Markan narrator never tells the hearer about the circumstances of the Gerasene person's affliction, that is, how he came to be possessed by unclean spirits. However, the narrator is more forthcoming, rhetorically, about Jesus and "aloneness". There is a sense within the Markan story world that Jesus' "aloneness" is self-imposed. It is because of Jesus' relationship to God, as son, that he is isolated and alone. As the "in-breaker" of God's rule, it is almost, dare I say, necessary for him to be alone. He is the person who stands as the example of what the kingdom of God looks like. There is no one else. Because the kingdom of God includes the "other", and the Markan Jesus embraces this, again, Jesus is necessarily "alone", without an equal or peer. In addition to this, the Markan Jesus experiences rejection and misunderstanding. The Gerasene people, those who have witnessed his ability to exorcise their region of unclean spirits, reject him (Mark 5:14-17). The disciples, who have just witnessed him exorcise nature, misunderstand him and fail to join him in reaching out to the "other" (Mark 5:2). But the ultimate experience of "aloneness" for the Markan

[353] Starobinski, "The Gerasene Demoniac," , 66.
[354] Starobinski, "The Gerasene Demoniac," 66.

Jesus is at his crucifixion, which is mirrored here in the narrative of the Gerasene person.

7.4 Further implications of an understanding of "aloneness": Pastoral theology

A study of "aloneness" in biblical studies might serve to inform theological reflection and the practical workings of the wider church. An implication of the study of "aloneness" then, might be demonstrated in pastoral theology. All theology should be practical.[355] I agree with pastoral theologians in this. There is little to be gained from theory and academia if it is not coupled with practical pastoral outworking for those of us who profess to follow in the steps of Jesus. As such, pastoral theology has a strong emphasis on theological reflection that leads to practical ends. Theological reflection is

> …an activity that enables people of faith to give and account of the values and traditions that underpin their choices and convictions and deepens their understanding. Theological reflection enables the connections between human dilemmas and divine horizons to be explored, drawing on a wide range of academic disciplines including social sciences, psychotherapeutic and medical disciplines and the arts.[356]

Theological reflection, then, allows for an outward expression to biblical understandings in creativity and praxis.

There are, however, valid criticisms of pastoral theology. It is seen lacking in its use of "traditional Christian sources", is accused of being focused on "local contexts and socio-economic factors" rather than engaging with historical and doctrinal aspects of Christian beliefs as well as the Bible. Following this line of criticism, pastoral theology may be seen as being irrelevant to "theological

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[355] Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 15, 42-56. Browning suggests that there is room for various aspects of theology, that is descriptive theology, historical theology, systematics theology and strategic theology, to be practical, and not just academic; Elaine Graham, Heather Walton, and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflection: Methods* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 9; John S. Klaasen, "Practical Theology: A Critically Engaged Practical Reason Approach of Practice, Theory, Practice and Theory," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 70, no. 2 (2014): 1-6; Elaine Graham, *Pastoral and Practical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2009), 138.

[356] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 5-6.

formation".[357] In this sense, pastoral theology is at risk of relativism, as reader-response analysis is. Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Frances Ward suggest a way forward for pastoral theology. They propose several tasks for theological reflection. These tasks focus on enhancing or building up Christian community, nurturing and sustaining individuals and faith communities. There is a missiologial aspect to theological reflection that includes "communicating the faith to a wider culture."[358] It is this sociological aspect that provides a point of connection to the wider culture.

With regard to narrative labelling, pastoral theology might utilise "aloneness", as seen in Mark's gospel, to inform praxis, especially to those suffering, deviant, "other" and alone. Graham, Walton and Ward suggest seven methods of practical theology (Figure 24 below). As I outline each, I will discuss the implications of a narrative labelling perspective of "aloneness" for each.

Figure 24: Methods of Pastoral Theology and Care

[357] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 7-8.
[358] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 10-11.

7.4.1 Graham, Walton and Ward: Methods for pastoral theological reflection

7.4.1.1 "Theology by Heart": The Living Human Document.

In this method, the individual is encouraged to look inside himself or herself. One's "interior life" is the "primary space in which theological awareness is generated and nurtured".[359] This method encourages creative activities such as journal or letter writing as means of articulating this theological awareness. Graham, Walton and Ward describe these as "living human documents". These written or verbal accounts of theological awareness represent "authentic lived experience" and open themselves to reading and analysis.[360] As an approach to pastoral theology, the "living human document" method is immediately available, however, it does not does have an "inner" focus rather than an external one. The method does not "necessarily lead to action and change in the world".[361] This method is very post-modern and is open to the relativism pastoral theology has been criticised for but, it is a useful one for those who experience "otherness" and "aloneness". It is a way in which one might express themself at a given time and assist in the articulation of "otherness" and aloneness". But it is a tool that requires community, much like the interpretative community in reader-response analysis (Chapter 2).

7.4.1.2 "Speaking in Parables": Constructive Narrative Theology

Like the "living document" method, this method is creative, however it has a focus on scripture. Individuals tell their stories in order to "make clear the meaning of apparently puzzling events".[362] But these stories are told and heard alongside those of scripture. The scripture tradition is "woven" into current stories to "testify through diversity and particularly to a God who is known through the stories we tell, as individuals or communities, about experiences that have become revelatory for us."[363] The strength of this method is the

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[359] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 18.
[360] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 18. An example of such a reflection for Mark 5:1-20 can be seen in the work of Guth. Christine J. Guth, "An Insider's Look at the Gerasene Disciple (Mark 5:1-20)," *Journal of Religion, Disability and Health* 11, no. 4 (2008): 61-70 and most especially, Christine J. Guth, "Legion No More," *Journal of Religion, Disability and Health* 11, no. 4 (2008): 71-78.
[361] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 45.
[362] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 47.
[363] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 47. Again, Guth is an example here. Guth, "An Insider's Look", also Janet E. Schaller, "Resisting Stares and Stereotypes: Affirming Life," in

transformation of individuals and communities through the interaction of personal/communal stories and scripture. This creates "new narratives" to live by.[364] Constructive narrative theology, as a pastoral approach, has similarities with reader-response analysis, most especially with a call for community dialogue. It is pertinent to narrative labelling. Like the "living human document" method, caution is required to guard against relativism.[365] Too often we, as humans, want a resolution to our struggles and sufferings and thus we are impatient to sit with the discomfort, pain and instability.[366] This method might be used as a way to "solve" or "understand" or "give meaning" to the human struggle. Nevertheless, being aware of this can assist the user of falling into the trap of relativism.

7.4.1.3 "Telling God's Story": Canonical Narrative Theology

In this method of pastoral theology, the life, death and resurrection story of Jesus is central to interpreting human history. Jesus "determines" the way people should live. This is useful in so far as it provides strength to "Christian identity", especially in "situations of social fragmentation and cultural relativism".[367] Perhaps, this is particularly useful for minority groups that feel marginalized, as it gives them a base from which to draw. In some ways, the use of narrative analysis (Chapter 3) might fit here. It uses scripture and one its focus points is on the life and person of Jesus. A criticism of canonical narrative theology is that it does not encourage engagement with wider society, "contemporary culture or other religious traditions".[368] Ultimately, it can be narrow and insular (hence my multidisciplinary approach to narrative labelling).

7.4.1.4 "Writing the Body of Christ": Corporate Theological Reflection

This model of pastoral and practical theology sees its outworking in the creation of a community or corporate identity. Often we call this church, but it not always church, in the traditional sense. Corporate or community identity is forged via the creation of ritual and practices like "prayer, eating and working

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Pastoral Bearings : Lived Religion and Pastoral Theology, ed. Leonard Hummel, Esther E. Acolatse, and Eileen R. Campbell-Reed (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010).

[364] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 74-75.
[365] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 75.
[366] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 76.
[367] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 78.
[368] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 78.

together".[369] Corporate theological reflection allows a community of faith an opportunity to embrace their identity as believers but remain distinct from it surrounding culture.[370] This method, however, does have the potential for marginalizing those in the group who might be seen as "other". Clarity on whose voices are heard and whose are silent and silenced, as well as reasons why this might be so, are potential issues that communities embracing this method should be mindful of. For the purposes of the present study, I see value in community, especially one that embraces diversity. A sense of belonging and community can add value to a person's life, particularly if that community has people who have similar experiences of "otherness" and "aloneness". In an ideal community, a person finds acceptance in spite of their "otherness".

7.4.1.5 "Speaking of God in Public": Correlation

This method of pastoral theology places an emphasis on "engagement with contemporary culture, be that philosophical, aesthetics, political or scientific".[371] In my own setting, these debates and discussions centre around gay marriage, asylum seekers, mental health issues, euthanasia and Western culture versus Islam, as examples. These political and personal issues are debated in Christian communities as they are in a broader social context. To speak of God in the public arena is to welcome an "exchange of ideas…with different cultural disciplines, values, images and world-views."[372] To engage respectfully with other viewpoints in contemporary society is essential, however, the question remains about whose Christian viewpoint, tradition and experience is the one to be used as an authoritative voice in such debates?[373] A simple answer to this might be to look to "mainstream" or accepted voices of Christianity, but we also need voices on the margins, those who are "other", to inform and regulate what is mainstream (not unlike the Syrophoenician woman in Mark 7:24-20). I offer here a voice from an-"other" perspective, in the hope that it might add to the conversations of "otherness" and "aloneness" so that theology and praxis might enable some of those who are silenced or who are

[369] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 109.
[370] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 109.
[371] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 138.
[372] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 138.
[373] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 167.

unheard might be empowered to speak of a God of hope in the public arena too.

7.4.1.6 "Theology-in-Action": Praxis

This is an action-reflection method of pastoral theology.[374] In this method, theory is important, but it is important only as it informs praxis. Theologians have various opinions and models on how theory and praxis relate to each other, but all agree that any theory or theology ultimately informs practice.[375] Praxis is a "faithful performance…recognizes and respects diversity [and]…takes human experience seriously."[376] It understands that any "talk of God" (theory/theology) "cannot take place independent of a commitment to a struggle for human emancipation".[377] The provision of pastoral care is one that important and one in which I hope this thesis feeds. There is strength in being united in action and reflection. As mentioned above, the limitations in this model are around the lack of engagement with scholarship or theory. I hope this is not the case in this present thesis. It is the wish of this author that a narrative labelling understanding of "aloneness" impacts positively on those providing pastoral care to those considered "other" on the margins of their community.

7.4.1.7 "Theology in the Vernacular": Local Theologies

This final method of pastoral theology is one that sees the relevance of the gospel in contemporary society. That is, the gospel is "culturally, temporally and spatially located…taking on the characteristics of local and particular cultures in order to speak in the vernacular: utilizing the everyday language and symbols of ordinary people…" [378] Christine Guth provides a current example of this in her analysis of Mark 5:1-20 from the perspective of one

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[374] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 170. See also Graham, *Pastoral and Practical Theology*, 138; Browning, *Funadamental Practical Theology*, 36.
[375] Browning, *Funadamental Practical Theology*, also Don S. Browning, "Practical Theology and Political Theology," *Theology Today* 42, no. 1 (1985): 15-33 where Browning discusses a multidisciplinary model of theory, practice and theory. Critiquing this view is Klaasen who believes that the model should be a practice-theory-practise-theory model where practise comes first, and theory second. See Klaasen, "Practical Theology", 1-6.
[376] John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 4-5.
[377] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 170.
[378] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 200.

living with mental health issues.[379] In its favour, this perspective breaks away from the formal, and often unrecognisable, language of theology, and allows for the gospel message to be seen in simple and meaningful ways. Narrative labelling is useful in the exploration of "aloneness" in this perspective. Pushed too far, however, and the method can become relative rather than being seen in "universal" or accepted terms.[380]

Graham, Walton and Ward's outlines of pastoral theological methods explore the diversity of pastoral perspectives within the field of theology. Graham's model for pastoral theology emerges in three parts. Firstly there is narrative experience that is personal. This is followed by a critical examination of the text, (hermeneutics of suspicion) which, finally, transforms communities. In this sense, pastoral theology is "word made flesh". She goes on to suggest that "[s]uch transformative practice facilitates and encourages the exercise of the qualities of solidarity, wholeness and reconciliation…" [381] Praxis is an important part of the outworking of theology. All methods outlines here, indeed practical theology in general, have potential with regard to the study of "otherness" and "aloneness".

7.4.2 Connections with narrative labelling and "aloneness"

There is a role for pastoral theology alongside biblical studies, more particularly in an exploration of "aloneness". It fits well with a reader-response perspective of biblical studies. Reader-response analysis, as we explored earlier, discusses the "spaces" between the reader and the text, and invites the readers/hearers to fill these. It seems to me that there is a place for pastoral theology in the spaces within texts in order to find meaning. "The space between the text and reader…becomes the place where the affective experience of the reader can find a home."[382] This space is "constantly changing and evolving."[383] In this, there is a space for "otherness" and "aloneness" to be

[379] Guth, "An Insider's Look", 61-70. See also Schaller, "Resisting Stares," where Schaller discusses theology with women living with various disability.
[380] Graham, Walton, and Ward, *Methods*, 227.
[381] Graham, *Pastoral and Practical Theology*, 161.
[382] Jaco J. Hamman, "Revisiting Forgiveness as a Pastoral Theology 'Problem'," *Pastoral Psychology* 61(2012): 435-450, 447.
[383] Christopher Baker and John Reader, "Entering the New Space of the Blurred Encounter Between Faith, Politics and Community," in *Explorations in Practical, Pastoral and Empirical Theology : Entering the New Theological Space : Blurred Encounters of Faith, Politics and*

found, and meaning derived by a hearer/reader. John Reader and Christopher Baker explore this "space" as a "blurred encounter" that sits somewhere between faith, politics and community.[384] "Blurred encounters" describes the blurred boundaries between various aspects of society and the attempt to find meaning in these.

7.4.2.1 "Blurred encounters"

"Blurred encounters" recognise the shifting boundaries in contemporary society, "…the traditional and familiar boundaries between church and world, between faith and culture… are being crossed – and some might say integrities compromised – on an increasingly regular basis." [385] What was once considered traditional in the sense of "norms" and values of society is shifting. This is evident in the modern family, where a nuclear family is no longer the "norm". Instead, there are an ever increasing defacto families, single parent familes, couples chosing not to have children, and so on. As such, there are shifting attitudes to these families within our faith communities. For some, leadership in the church is based on a traditional set of values and lifestyle expectations which might exclude those who are gay or in defacto relationships. For other faith communities, this would not be an issue, provided the potential leader was a person of faith. Reader says,

> [b]lurring is to be expected once we can get a grip on the way that our culture has developed and understand that the familiar divide between reason and all those things that are sent into the camp of non-reason e.g. faith, needs to be challenged. However, that in itself cannot be enough, for there need to be criteria, or at least ways of judging where and when this blurring is in the service of the Christian tradition within which we stand.[386]

Reader argues that it is important for Christians to still have their own identity and to cling to the faith traditions of which they are a part. The community of

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Community, ed. John Reader, Christopher R. Baker, and Jeff Astley (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016): 1-14, 6.

[384] Baker and Reader, "Entering the New Space," also John Reader, *Blurred Encounters: A Reason Practice of Faith* (Cardiff: Aureus Publishing, 2005),

[385] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 2.

[386] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 2.

faith is defined by those who belong to a particular religious/faith tradition, are transformative, and "contribute to a sense of identity, offering care and support to those in need, exercising a prophetic ministry and providing essential local spaces and infrastructure." [387] Both individuals and communities are also involved in "blurred encounters" that are especially evident in social engagement around social issues. [388] In Reader's setting, these "blurred encounters" are often at the intersection of government and church encounters. To engage in a "blurred encounter" is to risk being subsumed by the "other".[389] In order to fully engage with another there is a sense in which this is true, however, it is also true that those who follow Jesus are called to love the "other". Reader's criteria, by his own admission, are incomplete, but are a beginning point to dialogue with.

The first criterion for discerning a blurred encounter from a Christian faith perspective is an acknowledgement of the universal versus the particular. Singular experiences might be private, but in order to be articulated, they need to enter into the realm of universal language.[390] I can't help but suggest an interpretative community might be useful here. The second criterion refers to the "messianic dimension" of values, to those of the here and now. Messianic values are those that advocate for future hope in spite of differing opinions now.[391] In some ways, this is eschatological. Are our encounters with others inclusive of the future, the environment, good relationships and strong communities, or they only concerned about individual personal satisfaction? The third criterion reflects our "human understanding of subjectivity that is pre-autonomous and post-autonomous".[392] Where autonomy is the ability to make rational decisions, pre-autonomy is the basic trust and emotion required to make that decision. Post-autonomy is the possibility of a new future in collaboration with others. [393] The fourth criterion takes into account the "essential indeterminacy of social and political life" versus "deterministic and

[387] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 6.
[388] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 17 and Baker and Reader, "Entering the New Space," 1-14. See 4.1.5 above for current examples.
[389] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 3.
[390] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 43-44, 131-132.
[391] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 42, 131-132.
[392] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 131.
[393] Baker and Reader, "Entering the New Space," 2.

static view of how things work."[394] All these criteria are situational and blurred themselves. They rely on perspective and place. "Blurred encounters" recognise the plurality of values and expectations in a post-modern Western society.

"Blurred encounters" are the real life encounters people of faith might find themselves in when they interact with the "other" in social settings. It is possible to argue that "blurred encounters" are evident within texts too. Reader-response analysis asks the hearer/reader to fill the spaces within the text. I believe that "blurred encounters" are one potential aspect of filling the textual space. It is possible that the episode in Gerasa is a "blurred encounter" where Jewish and Gentile values meet and labels given.

7.4.3 Pastoral theology and Mark 5:1-20

Whether praxis is informed by theology or theology informs praxis is still open for debate. It is more helpful for this thesis to work with both theology and praxis in partnership. The various methods discussed in this chapter point to the strengths and weaknesses of one aspect of pastoral theology on its own.

Taken from a contemporary pastoral perspective, Mark 5:1-20 is often seen in light of mental illness. Christine Guth discusses this text in relation to her own mental health issues.[395] She begins her discussion with twenty-one labels used for people who struggle with mental health issues.[396] She points out that in spite of the labels, people with mental health issues are still people who should not be defined by their illnesses.[397] In her pastoral study, she interviews five people who also struggle with mental health issues with regard to this text. Guth is quick to recommend that mental illness not be equated with demons and demon possession.[398] The main reason for this is because we now have an

[394] Reader, *Blurred Encounters*, 131-132.
[395] Guth, "An Insider's Look", 61-70.
[396] Guth, "An Insider's Look", 62. "Demented. Deranged. Unhinged. Crazy. Looney. Maniac. Malingerer. Weirdo. Psycho. Loco. Sicko. Wacko. Nut case. Crackpot. Screwball. Gone bananas. Off your rocker. Cracked in the head. Out of your gourd. Nutty as a fruitcake. Escaped from the funny farm."
[397] Guth, "An Insider's Look", 62.
[398] Guth, "An Insider's Look", 66.

understanding of mental illness as being biological and/or social.[399] We also know today that not all mental health issues are fixed quickly or temporary or can be healed. As such, Guth reflects on the text from a personal perspective.[400] In this creative writing exercise, arguably an exercise in "Theology by Heart: The Living Human Document", as per Graham, Walton and Ward above, Guth takes on the persona of the demoniac and extends the story to represent a contemporary person living with mental illness, who lives with the effects of the illness he has been healed from. From a pastoral perspective, this is useful for those who suffer from mental health issues that cannot be (always or completely) healed. It is one expression of hope for those struggling with mental health issues in contemporary society.

Whilst useful, Guth's discussion and analysis of Mark 5:1-20 is only one way of exploring the text from a pastoral perspective. Neil Pembroke, Jeff Astley and Leslie Francis explore the importance of hospitality in pastoral ministry.[401] This theme pronounces the offer to another of hospitality is to "create a space" in which the "other " feels "welcome".[402] Just as Jesus welcomes the stranger as the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God, extending, in a sense, God's hospitality, so pastorally, we are called to openness to the "other".[403] Whilst not specific to Mark 5:1-20, the call to hospitality might be argued here. It might be argued, that Jesus restores the person with unclean spirits and sends him back to his family. In returning to his home, he is called to hospitality. Jane Schaller does not write from a specifically Markan perspective either, but she writes about women with disability.[404] In her findings, the women live with their disabilities but often feel stigmatised by them. In spite of this, all the women find a sense of meaning in knowing a God who suffers. Like Guth's contributors, Schaller's women cannot be healed from their disabilities. But they have found hope and meaning in the stories and life of Jesus. That Jesus

[399] Guth, "An Insider's Look", 66. Also David. H. Barlow and V. Mark Durand, *Abnormal Psychology: An Integrative Approach* 7th ed. (Stamford CT: Cengage Learning, 2015), details various psychological disorders.
[400] Guth, "Legion No More", 71-78.
[401] Neil Pembroke, Jeff Astley, and Leslie J. Francis, *Explorations in Practical, Pastoral and Empirical Theology : Renewing Pastoral Practice : Trinitarian Perspectives on Pastoral Care and Counselling*, vol. Routledge (Abingdon, 2006), 31-42.
[402] Pembroke, Astley, and Francis, *Explorations*, Routledge, 31.
[403] Pembroke, Astley, and Francis, *Explorations*, Routledge, 31.
[404] Schaller, "Resisting Stares," 112-130.

heals the person with unclean spirits might be confronting for these people. Why are some healed, but not others? I hope to argue that, in spite of the healing, the label remains, and the person tells of God in spite of this. In some small way, this Markan narrative is still one of hope, via narrative labelling.

7.4.4 Summary remarks about pastoral theology and "aloneness"

Pastoral theology reflects on the praxis of pastoral care. It is theology in action. There are varying approaches to pastoral theology. Of these, several are useful tools for narrative labelling and this thesis. Most particularly, for this author, the living human document is useful as it enables creative exploration of the issue of "aloneness". But it is essential that relativism is recognised. This is where constructive narrative theology is helpful as it allows for stories of "aloneness" to be told and heard, and for an understanding of God and God's greater purpose for individuals in adding meaning to one's life. Pastoral care of individual's experiencing "aloneness" would enable persons feeling alone to be cared for in such a way that hope is offered. It is my own hope that this study of "aloneness" in Mark's gospel might assist in informing praxis.

7.5 Concluding remarks

There are other research implications for a study of narrative labelling and "aloneness" but space does not permit me to explore these in any detail. I do wish to list them here prior to my concluding remarks regarding this chapter. Stories, in their hearing and telling, have the capacity to transform lives in therapeutic settings.[405] This can be seen in psychology and narrative therapies, and I would argue acceptance and commitment therapy.[406] These therapeutic experiences potentially allow for an exchange between the narrative of "aloneness" seen through a narrative labelling analysis of Mark's gospel, and the person experiencing "otherness" or "aloneness". An understanding of "aloneness" through narrative labelling might also be useful for those experiencing loss and grief or conflict and testing.[407]

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[405] Davis, Womack, and Wolfreys, "Reader-response theory," 73.
[406] Davis, Womack, and Wolfreys, "Reader-response theory," 71-73.
[407] See Kari Syreeni, "In Memory of Jesus: Grief Work in the Gospels," *Biblical Interpretation* 12, no. 2 (2004): 175-197 for grief and loss perspectives, and for testing/conflict perspectives see Hicks, "Emotional Temptation", 29-48.

As it stands in this chapter however, I have outlined two implications for future research. The first was an exploration of Jesus in the Passion narratives using a narrative labelling perspective to examine “aloneness”. Through this Jesus could be seen as being alone in terms of place, as well as physically and socially throughout the Markan story world. I also suggested that further research might find a narrative labelling perspective of “aloneness” might inform praxis and dialogue with pastoral theology. The reason for this is not to transform and make outsiders insiders. It is not about domination or control. A narrative labelling understanding of “aloneness” of a Jesus who experiencd “aloneness” (as I have demonstrated in Mark’s gospel) offers hope to Christians. The Markan Jesus “invites outsiders in from the margins [and] focuses more on dialogue and listening and being made part of a larger whole.” [408] There is, indeed, opportunity for further research on this methodology.

[408] Kopas, "Outsiders in the Gospels", 125.

Chapter 8:

Concluding Remarks

8.1 Introduction

This thesis has utilised narrative labelling to highlight the theme of "aloneness" as seen in a deviant Jesus in Mark 5:1-20. The exploration of Jesus as "deviant" or "other" is identified in negative and positive (prominent), explicit and implicit ways via the use of labels. "Aloneness" in the context of the thesis has been identified in terms of place, physical and social "aloneness". Emotional "aloneness" was not the central focus of the thesis, as it is a more contemporary element of "aloneness" that is unable to be verified in a first century text. I have, however, suggested that "aloneness", as found in Mark in terms of place and physical and social "aloneness", has implications for emotional "aloneness" and the provision of pastoral care given to those who are "alone".

8.2 Summary: Background to narrative labelling

In the first chapter I briefly outlined the largely uncertain background to Mark's story of Jesus with regard to authorship, date and setting. This included a summary of general social expectations of life in a first century context. In particular, I outlined purity laws and honour. These are significant aspects of society when exploring deviance in a Markan narrative story world. Keys themes in Mark include Christology, discipleship, the kingdom of God, secrecy and eschatology. I also considered socio-political aspects of the gospel with regard to the military overtones in Markan rhetoric and the recent discussions of exorcism as theme in Mark. Each of these is important to the study of Mark, although none specifically explore "aloneness". As such, I use a multidisciplinary approach to develop my methodology of narrative labelling.

Part II of the thesis establishes the background to narrative labelling. I discuss reader-response analysis (Chapter 2) and narrative analysis (Chapter 3) and labelling theory (Chapter 4). The three approaches of this section of the thesis are essential aspects of narrative labelling.

Reader-response analysis (Chapter 2) puts the reader and the reader's understanding of the text into central focus. In this critique, the reader and text communicate with, and inform, each other. As a post-modern methodology, reader-response analysis understands texts as having many and multiple meanings, often found in the gaps of the text, that are dependent on the context and approach of the reader. Of particular interest, in terms of "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20, is that reader-response offers the opportunity for the reader to find meaning in the rhetoric used by the Markan narrator. Reader-response analysis allows the reader freedom to find "aloneness" as a theme in the gospel narrative via exploration of implicit and explicit labels.

Narrative analysis (Chapter 3) is literary approach to reading a text that allowed the hearer to analyse the story world (the "what" of the text) and its rhetoric (the "how" of the text). In short, it permitted the audience entry into the narrative story world of the text so that its meaning might be explored. In this task, the role of the narrator and narrative elements of setting, characters, plot and rhetoric, as they apply to Mark 5:1-20 were discussed. The Markan narrator was presented as omniscient, and as such, determined the events and told of them in such a way that convinced the audience about a Jesus who was God's son, the "in-breaker" of the kingdom of God. It was the Markan narrator who was able to label characters in both positive and negative ways. This was done through the persuasive rhetoric employed by the narrator and shown through the labelling of deviance.

Labelling theory (Chapter 4) is a literary aspect that used rhetoric and language to determine explicit and implicit labels within a narrative text. It was closely associated with deviancy theory. Deviancy theory, itself, is difficult to define as often seen in relative terms. It is informed by cultural expectations of a given society. If a person deviated from the expected social norms of society, then labelling would occur. If purity and honour, in a first century context (Chapter 1) were not observed then negative labelling resulted. Alternatively, those who exceeded social expectations could expect positive or prominent labelling.

As with labelling, there is power in naming. Those who have power label those with little power by use of labels of prominence and deviance. I discussed Malina and Neyrey's process of labelling. Labellers were those who determined an act deviant (in a negative sense) and thus labelled a person as such. This was usually enforced by a degrading consequence or ritual. A label, however, could be interrupted and a neutralisation process used to dispute the negative deviant label. In turn, a positive or prominent label might be adopted, and new rituals employed to affirm the new status.

The Malina and Neyrey model of deviance to prominence was useful in providing a tool where both negative and positive aspects of labelling within the context of Christian Scriptures might be explored. Consideration of labels as positive or negative allowed the hearer of the story to reconsider purity and honour and role they have in identifying "aloneness" in Mark 5:1-20. Labels reinforced the notion that if one is "out of place" they were deviant. Whilst Malina and Neyrey identified "out of place" in terms of difference, they did not explicitly discuss "aloneness" in the pericope. I modified their model for narrative labelling to identify "aloneness" in a first century context.

8.3 Summary: narrative labelling

Chapter 5 concentrated on the application of narrative labelling by examination of key criterion: narrator as labeller, rhetoric as label, and deviance as a way to viewing "aloneness" within a first century context.

The omniscient Markan narrator is identified as the chief labeller who provided insight into characters, plot, events and place within the story world. The narrator is a rhetorical device used by the author to highlight implicit and explicit labels. In the pericope of Mark 5:1-20, there were four groups of people labelled: Jesus, the person with unclean spirits, the Gerasene people and the disciples. Jesus was implicitly labelled as God's son, the "in-breaker" of God's kingdom, as God's son, the "in-breaker" of God's reign, "other", and exorcist/healer.

Within the Markan story-world, it is the person with unclean spirits who explicitly labelled Jesus, "Son of the Most High God". The narrator likewise, explicitly labelled the person with unclean spirits as both unnamed and named,

and restored. Implicitly, he is labelled as "other" and disciple. The Gerasene people are given the implicit labels of "other" and agents of censure, whilst more explicitly they are labelled as afraid. Finally, the Markan narrator explicitly labelled the disciples as "disciples" (Mark 4:34) but more implicitly, they can be labelled as faithless.

The narrator employed a variety of rhetorical devices in order to articulate labelling within the story. In the narrative world of Mark 5:1-20, some of the rhetorical devices used were repetition of words and phrases, echoing and foreshadowing, and symbolism and irony. By use of rhetoric, the Markan narrator portrayed a character, place or event as deviant. It was from this characterisation that "aloneness" was made evident.

Deviance models assisted in both negative and positive (prominent) aspects of labelling. The model used three phases: negative deviance, neutralisation, and positive deviance. The negative deviant and prominent deviant models mirrored one another. The negative deviant element consisted of three sections: "*determination of an act as deviant*", "*label applied*" and "*consequences applied*". The neutralisation element interrupted the labelling process and allowed the opportunity for positive labelling to take place. The positive labelling process "*determines the act to be prominent*", "*new label applied*" and "*consequences are applied*". The deviance model was used to determine the "aloneness" of the two main characters in the pericope, Jesus and the person with unclean spirits.

I demonstrated that "aloneness" could be identified through the Markan narrator's use of the rhetoric of deviance. Within the Markan story world, it was a deviant Jesus in Mark 5:1-20 who was not only isolated, but who also isolated himself. It was Jesus who separated himself from the crowd and travelled to the "other" side of the sea with the disciples. In the place of banishment it was the disciples who abandoned Jesus by leaving him to disembark alone. By their inaction, the Markan narrator showed them as lacking in faith. Jesus, then, as the "in-breaker" of God's kingdom, was portrayed as alone. He was isolated and misunderstood by the disciples. Likewise, Jesus was banished by the Gerasene people following the exorcism.

8.4 "Aloneness" and broader Mark

Further to the Gerasene person in Mark 5:1-20, I argued that a narrative labelling perspective of "aloneness" could be seen in the pericopae of the haemorrhaging woman (Mark 5:24b-34), the Syrophoenician woman (Mark 7:24-30) and the woman who anoints Jesus (Mark 14:3-9). These women were examples of deviance and "aloneness" within the Markan story world, and yet through their interactions with Jesus, their negative labels are neutralised and determined as positive. They each are role models of faith and discipleship in spite of their lack of a name, social standing and gender. They are active participants with Jesus in the "in-breaking" of the kingdom of God.

8.5 Implications for future research

Further than these incidences in Mark, I suggest that narrative labelling is evident in the Passion narratives. Jesus is found to be alone in terms of space, physically and socially, amongst a crowd of critics and enemies, as well as friends who abandon him. I have argued that this "aloneness" continues here in the Passion narratives as it has done in Mark's narrative in general. I suggest the "aloneness" here is mirrored in Mark 5:1-20. In addition, I have suggested that a narrative labelling perspective of "aloneness" could inform pastoral theology, and perhaps therapeutic practice also.

8.6 Concluding Remarks

This thesis has expounded upon the theme of "aloneness" as a relevant lens by which Mark's gospel can be read. Narrative labelling, and its reliance on rhetoric and understandings of deviance, is useful in exploring the theme. Through narrative labelling, "aloneness" can be identified and is seen in the places of "otherness". The person in Gerasa with unclean spirits is an example of "aloneness" and "otherness". Using rhetoric, the Markan narrator portrays a picture of complete desolation and isolation that encompasses the social and physical aspects of the person. And yet, in spite of the despair, the person clings to hope. In running to Jesus, he demonstrates a hope that someone might be able to be the agent of transformation for him. Jesus proves to be this.

It strikes me that the Markan story of Jesus is a powerfully earthy, human one. From a contemporary perspective, both the episode at Gerasa and the Passion narratives relate to people's "aloneness" on a variety of levels, including

isolation, suffering, struggle and death. The Markan Jesus demonstrates the normality of "aloneness" and struggle: there is a sense of solidarity with us in our humanity. As God's son, he has no equal, and is necessarily alone. He stands apart from the expectations of a first century society. In his ministry of inclusion he embraces the "other", inviting them into the "in-breaking" kingdom of God. For those in the first century, this had a cost. Social deviance was frowned upon and implied isolation and exclusion. In a contemporary setting, being a "Jesus follower" still serves to isolate one, even in Australia. As I suggested at the beginning of this thesis, to stand as an "in-breaker" of God's rule means standing against the first-world cultural expectations of individualism and materialism. It means standing for justice for those who have no voice, even if it is unpopular. This is a challenge and can be an isolating experience for those who participate in being counter-cultural for the sake of others who are voiceless.

The contemporary experience of "aloneness" in a first world context is broad and varied. It may be seen in the mother who grieves the loss of her adult son to suicide; in the husband who mourns the loss of his wife of 50 years; in the child abused by a parent; in the Iranian asylum seeker who is treated as a non-person due to our nation's foreign policy; in the woman diagnosed with breast cancer; in the family who lost a beloved parent suddenly; in the child bullied in the playground; in the person with a disability; in the elderly lady who lives on her own; in the man who suddenly finds himself his wife's carer; in the journey of dementia; in the family man just retrenched; in the young man with suicidal thoughts; and the woman with an eating disorder… Each of us, as human persons, travels through hills and valleys in our own lives. Isolation, struggle and suffering are not new. Death is a certainty. But in the episode at Gerasa and the Passion story, through the struggle of the person with unclean spirits and Jesus, respectively, there is a model of obedience and a willingness to fully follow the path of God, even in "aloneness". It is an enormous task to be open to God in the midst of being alone with struggle and suffering – especially in the face of death or isolation.

In Gerasa, God is present and active in the transforming and healing powers of Jesus. In contrast, at Gethsemane and on the cross, God is silent. Prior to this,

Mark has God acknowledge Jesus as ‘son’ at his baptism (Mark 1:11), and at the Transfiguration (Mark 9:7), but in this crucial moment for Jesus, is silent. Jesus is therefore totally alone. In the human experience, it can feel that God is a long way away – watching from a distance. God’s apparent silence can seem unending and is painful as one seeks to find meaning in a given situation, sometimes questioning what human existence means. Yet, the Markan Jesus models and challenges his followers to remain focused on, and being faithful to, God. In the intense pain and fear of our own lives when we wonder what the meaning of our lives is, the Markan Jesus calls us into a deeper relationship with God through prayer. Even if the path ahead seems most difficult, the Markan Jesus calls us out of ourselves to bear with the pain and to walk the way of obedience, which for the Markan Jesus is the way of suffering, and the way to the cross. This is often a private and solitary journey between God and the human person.

Despite his own “aloneness”, misunderstanding by the disciples and God’s silence, the Markan Jesus seems to find a sense of renewed energy and peace to go the next step through prayer, particularly at the conclusion of the Gethsemane passage. The Markan Jesus does not draw his strength from others, but through his deep and intimate relationship through God alone. This is seen not only at Gethsemane, but also in Mark 5:1-20, as Jesus is left to disembark alone. This is relevant for both the original Markan community and for contemporary hearers/readers of the gospel story today. Even when alone, having faith that God will give strength to carry on is what Jesus models. Faith is a challenge in the first world, post-modern age where people feel the need to dissect, analyse and have answers to life’s questions. The Markan Jesus challenges us to rely on God completely.

Henri Nouwen made some important contributions in discussions about solitude. For Nouwen,

> "Solitude is being with God and God alone…It's important because it's the place in which you can listen to the voice of the One who calls you beloved."[409]

At Gerasa, abandoned by the disciples, a solitary Jesus confronts the abandoned person with unclean spirits. Jesus remains true to the call of God to be beloved by loving the "other". Likewise, Jesus cast a solitary figure in Gethsemane. The disciples were altogether asleep and with God was the only place to be. This same God that called Jesus beloved is the God who calls us beloved. Sometimes God seems distant, but we should remember that if Jesus is both human and divine, that God was sorrowful and pained with Jesus. Sometimes there are no words to be said in our grief. So it may have been in Gethsemane. By spending time alone with God, we can allow ourselves space and silence to be reminded of our belovedness. It is also evident in the narrative of the person with unclean spirits in Gerasa. When restored, the person sits with Jesus, God's "son" and is, in a sense, reminded that he is beloved.

Both Jesus and the person with unclean spirits spend time among the tombs. Both characters are restored. Jesus, in his exorcism of the unclean spirits, resurrects the person's humanity, so that his life may be whole again. Likewise, God will resurrect Jesus at the conclusion of the gospel. In the silence and aloneness there is nothing but hope…of resurrection. There is ultimately hope in the restoration of the characters.

Certainly the aloneness that the Markan Jesus displays is human, but that is why Mark includes it. It is human to struggle and to feel alone. However, Mark uses Jesus as a model of what true discipleship is. In the midst of the temptation, solitude, despair, loneliness and death, Jesus faithfully commits himself to God. Discipleship is not easy and often one can feel alone and isolated. We may even lose our lives – all for our obedience to the service that God calls each of us to. Our comfort could be found in knowing that God

[409] Henri Nouwen. " Moving From Solitude to Community to Ministry." *Leadership* 16 (1995): 81.

allowed Jesus to be fully human as we are. As such, God has suffered before us, and with us. Gerasa and Gethsemane offer us hope in our “aloneness”.

Personal reflections on "Aloneness" in a Modern World

9.1 "Aloneness" in contemporary society

I began this thesis with my own personal journey with the experience of "aloneness". To conclude the thesis I wish to add to this personal reflection. I propose "aloneness" as a modern sociological construct, with four elements to it (Chapter 1): place, physical, social and emotional. In the thesis I have explored the first three of these. There are many ways people can find themselves experiencing "aloneness" in contemporary Australian society. The list that follows, by way of definition, is extensive, but by no means absolute.

9.1.1 Mental health issues

Within an Australian context, one in five people suffer from some kind of mental health issues annually.[410] Forty five per cent of Australians will experience mental illness at some time in their lives. One third of young people under 25 years of age will have an episode of mental illness.[411] A SANE Australia survey of 2012 found that 49% of those who experience mental health issues experience no close relationship (compared with 15% of the general population) and 13% of people had experienced no physical touch for 12 months.[412] These statistics indicate a very real sense of "aloneness".

There are many issues related to having mental illness: emotional behavior management, family relationships, eating behaviours or weight issues, self image,[413] study and educational issues, grief and loss, and suicide.[414] Australia

[410] SANE Australia, "Mental illness and social isolation," *SANE Research Bulletin*, no. 1 (August 2005), http://www.sane.org/images/stories/information/research/0510_INFO_RB1.pdf. SANE Australia, "Facts and figures about mental illness," in *http://www.sane.org/images/stories/information/factsheets/fs13_facts&figures.pdf* (2014), also has current statistics about mental health issues.

[411] SANE Australia, "Facts and figures about mental illness," 1.

[412] SANE Australia, "New SANE research: a life of loneliness the harsh reality for many people with mental illness," *SANE Media Release*(2009), http://www.sane.org/images/stories/0209mr_rb8_intimacy.pdf.

[413] Jackie Sinnerton, "Women in 50s at risk of anorexia," *The Advertiser*, Sunday June 5 2016, discusses the new wave of "older" women dissatisfied with their bodies and developing eating disorders.

[414] Kids Helpline, "Mental Health Issues," in *http://www.kidshelp.com.au/upload/22928.pdf* (2013), 5.

has a staggering rate of suicide[415] that signifies we are a society of people who struggle with a good many things, often alone. A most recent study of twenty-eight Australian electorates found that suicide rates are higher than the road toll numbers between 2009-2012.[416] I live on the border of the Boothby electorate where there were 64 suicides recorded in comparison to 13 road deaths. I have worked within that electorate for well over a decade. These statistics are, and should be, alarming. I do not claim that this thesis will resolve mental health issues, but I do hope that it helps speak into praxis for those of us working with those experiencing the depths of "aloneness" due to mental health issues. Mental health issues are only one area in which a lens of "aloneness" might be helpful. Other contemporary issues that contribute to a modern concept of "aloneness" are:

9.1.2 Trauma

Trauma takes place when one has been exposed to "actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence" through the experience of "a serious accident, a physical assault, war, a natural disaster, sexual assault or abuse", or "sudden death of a loved one".[417] A person may be directly involved or witness traumatic events. Trauma can lead to the mental health condition of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)[418] and can also lead to people feeling "alone" and "other". Examples of trauma include survivors of torture, or domestic violence, and asylum seekers detained in detention centres, in this country at least.

9.1.3 Physical/psychological abuse

The most recent Australian data says that almost half Australians (44.8%) have experienced violence at some stage in their lives.[419] For men, the violence is

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[415] Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Suicide in Australia," http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/8D157E15E9D912E7CA257A440014CE53?opendocument.

[416] Kathy McLeish, "Election 2016: Call for candidates to address nation's rising suicide rate," http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-05-24/election-candidates-urged-to-address-rising-suicide-rate/7439316. Also Lina Caneva, "Suicide Rates Across Federal Electorates Revealed," http://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2016/05/suicide-rates-across-federal-electorates-revealed/#.V0UFBHcJ41U.email.

[417] "What is Trauma?," http://phoenixaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Phoenix-What-is-Trauma.pdf.

[418] "What is Trauma?", 1.

[419] Australian Goverment: Department of Social Services, "Reducing violence against women and their children," (2015), 1.

usually physical and perpetrated by another male (48.1%) compared with 34.4% of women who experience physical abuse. One in five Australian women have experienced sexual abuse, in contrast to 1 in 20 men. Women also experience significantly higher rates of emotional abuse than men.[420] These statistics do not cover abuse of children. Child abuse rates in South Australia have increased significantly from 1815 reports in 2009/2010 to 2737 reports in 2013/2014.[421] The abuse includes neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Again, those who experience abuse can also experience mental health issues as well as physical and emotional issues. Experiences of abuse can serve to heighten feelings of "otherness" and "deviance", and especially "aloneness".

9.1.4 Disability

Disability is defined as "any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible." One in five people in Australia have a disability of some form.[422] People with disability sometimes struggle to be accepted and this can make them feel isolated, "other" and "alone".

9.1.5 Addiction/substance abuse

Alcohol is still the most widely used substance in Australia, with over 70% of people consuming alcohol at least once in a twelve-month period.[423] That said, only about 6% of Australians have a drink daily.[424] Alcohol, however, causes twice as many deaths as road deaths. The use of illicit substances of cannabis and meth/amphetamine follow behind alcohol use in Australia.[425] Abuse of these substances causes significant impacts on the health and wellbeing of

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[420] Australian Government: Department of Social Services, "Reducing Violence Report," 2.
[421] Australian Institute of Family Studies Australian Government, "Child abuse and neglect statistics," https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/child-abuse-and-neglect-statistics.
[422] Australian Network on Disability, "Stats and Facts," http://www.and.org.au/pages/disability-statistics.html.
[423] SA Health Government of South Australia, "Alcohol use statistics," http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/about+us/health+statistics/alcohol+and+drug+statistics/alcohol+use+statistics.
[424] National Health and Medical Research Council Australian Government, "Alcohol and health in Australia," https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-topics/alcohol-guidelines/alcohol-and-health-australia.
[425] Australian Drug Foundation, "Statistical trends," http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/topics/statistics-trends.

individuals and communities, physically, emotionally and financially. Substance abuse can lead to "aloneness", hence their use of substances to dull or numb these negative feelings.

9.1.6 Lack of belonging, community connectedness

Sociologist Hugh Mackay is well known for his research into Australian society. In his book, *The Art of Belonging*, he discusses the importance of community and the reality that we need to put effort into our communities to make them worthwhile places. The breakdown of the sense of belonging, Mackay suggests, is because we have created a culture of "Me-ism" and our (Australia's) desire to embrace "debt-fuelled consumerism" is at the cost of community.[426] Central to community is the notion of social inclusion.[427] Communities enable individuals to find a place and help shape identity. They can also be places where people can be identified as "other" and feel "aloneness".

Other reasons why people might experience "aloneness" might be due to:

- Breakdown of relationships (One third of marriages end in divorce)[428]
- Inequality (gender, race, status, etc.) (Australia's indigenous peoples would fit into this category. They are more likely to die younger and lack resources)[429]
- Lack of education
- Lack/loss of meaning/identity
- Lack of access to culture
- Poverty
- Lack of employment
- Lack of opportunity
- Violence, crime, deviance

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[426] Hugh Mackay, "Have we lost the art of belonging?," *The Sydney Morning Herald* 2014, and also Hugh Mackay, *The Art of Belonging: It's Not Where You Live, It's How You Live* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan Australia, 2014).

[427] Rob Garbutt, "Social Inclusion and Local Practices of Belonging," *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Journal* 1, no. 3 (2009): 84-108.

[428] Clare Madden, "Marriage and Weddings in Australia," http://mccrindle.com.au/the-mccrindle-blog/marriages-in-australia.

[429] Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, "Summary of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, 2015," http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-facts/summary.

This is indeed an extensive list of contemporary examples of why people might feel "alone", and provides the modern reader with a reason to explore a narrative labelling perspective of "aloneness" and its relevance today. [430] This list covers many aspects of contemporary Western society, and potentially many people are impacted by an experience of "aloneness" at some stage in their lives.

9.2 Questions and answers

At the beginning of this thesis (Chapter 1), I posed several questions around "aloneness" in a theological context. I wish to raise them again here and attempt to answer them in the context of Mark's gospel from a narrative labelling perspective.

9.2.1 Can Jesus, or God, speak into the lives of those struggling with feelings or experiences of "aloneness" and "otherness"?

Within the context of Mark's gospel, we see a Jesus who experiences "aloneness" at several stages throughout the story. In our pericope of Mark 5:1-20, the narrator tells of a man in desperate circumstances, outcast from society and yet Jesus (also as "other") restores the man to a "right mind", enabling the opportunity to be restored to society. Likewise, the three women (Mark 5:24b-34; 7:24-30; 14:3-9) also experience "aloneness" and are changed in their encounter with Jesus. Jesus, also, in the Markan story world, experiences "aloneness" that reaches a climax in the Passion narratives, most specifically at his death. It is for these reasons that I believe there a place for Jesus and God to speak into the lives of those experiencing "aloneness" and "otherness" in terms of providing hope.

9.2.2 Did Jesus ever feel alone?

We will never know how the historical Jesus actually felt. Within the Markan story world, however, there is evidence of Jesus feeling alone when we use

[430] I wish to note Johan Roux's work on a contemporary South African understanding of destitution, which is also helpful in an exploration of "aloneness". Roux suggests that issues of poverty and destitution have "inside-out" influences, as well as "outside-in" ones. "Both those issues that function internally from the "inside-out" (where factors operating inside an individual impact on her or his outside situation), as well as those issues that function externally, from the "outside-in" (where factors functioning from outside the person affect that person on the inside), work together dynamically in a system." Examples of "inside-out" problems are those that are physical, emotional and spiritual. "Outside-in" problems are cultural, institutional, global and micro-societal. See Gerrit Johannes Nieuwenhoudt Roux, "Empowering Destitute People Towards Shalom: A Contextual Missiological Study" (Univeristy of South Africa, 2007), 58-60.

narrative labelling as a methodology for biblical studies. The study of Mark 5:1-20 demonstrates Jesus as alone in a context where "otherness" abounds. Both explicitly and implicitly the narrator labels Jesus as alone, at Gerasa, at Gethsemane, and on the cross. "Aloneness" is expressed in betrayal and misunderstanding, and in terms of place.

9.2.3 Can Jesus be found to identify with "aloneness" or "otherness" in the gospels?

As Jesus can be identified as being alone, so others also in the Markan narrative world have been shown to be alone too (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). As I expressed in Chapter 7, there is a place for further research in this area but initial indications suggest that he can.

9.2.4 What might it mean for the contemporary hearer/reader of the gospels to see a "deviant" Jesus who is "alone" and "other"?

To comprehend a Jesus as "deviant" might be seen as controversial for many. As God's son, it might seem implausible to have Jesus simultaneously "deviant". As I have mentioned throughout the thesis, Jesus is deviant in the sense of being counter-cultural, and for standing against the norms of his day. His encounters with the Gerasene person with unclean spirits and the women mentioned in this thesis are case in point here. In my informal discussions with people (of varying ages and gender) about my thesis, they find a Jesus who is "deviant", alone and "other" encourages them. A narrative labelling perspective of "aloneness" demonstrates a Jesus who is both willing and able to cross the distances we create between ourselves, and those we set apart as different from ourselves, or who are uncontrollable, or don't meet social norms, or who are simply ill. A "deviant" Jesus offers hope to people who have felt rejected and a chance to restore wholeness (although not always healing), as well as a place in community. For people who are depressed, feeling alone or socially on the outer a Jesus who experiences "aloneness" offers hope that what appears to consume them does not have to be the way it always has to be or define who they are. That being different to others does not mean you are wrong or weak.

9.3 A personal response to Mark 5:1-20

The experience of "aloneness" is a deeply personal one, and yet it is a universal one. I have experienced it in times of conflict, in the breakdown of relationships, in times of misunderstanding, in times of transition and change, and in the depths of grief and loss.

As I singer/songwriter, I write about issues, themes and people who are close to me. I need to be inspired before I compose, so I write from the heart. A few years ago, during a period of mental blankness in thesis writing, my supervisors suggested I write a song about the person with unclean spirits. I remember almost laughing at the idea. How could I write when I didn't have an emotional attachment to the character? I remember sitting at a conference writing key words and draft ideas.[431] After a few days of journeying with text about the person with unclean spirits, I developed an affinity to the person with unclean spirits. I discovered I could actually relate to this person in the sense of feeling completely isolated, misunderstood and alone. Having reflected on Mark 5:1-20 through the lens of narrative labelling, I now know why. I recalled times in my own story when I felt that no one understood me and I did not even recognise myself. I also identified with the God who is ever present, if only I allow myself to be open enough to see. Like the person with unclean spirits, Jesus has transformed my life several times over, and challenged me to go beyond my fear to proclaim hope, love and mercy. I did compose the song. I include it here as a personal reflection (arguably as an act of "theology of the heart") that expresses "aloneness" and restoration, from the perspective of the healed person (CD is attached).

It is my great hope that this thesis will make a significant contribution to biblical scholarship as it offers both comfort and hope to the contemporary audience of the Markan gospel. I began this journey more than a decade ago when my passion for "aloneness" called from deep inside me. As one who has spent time in the pit of despair, with only darkness around, I felt "aloneness" as a long lost friend. In my darkness, I would call out to God, asking that God might hold onto me, especially as I feared I did not have the strength to hold on to God. When many others have let go of God, I did not. In spite of the sheer

[431] The trilogy of poems I have included in the Appendix.

terror and deafening silence of “aloneness”, still, I held firm. I do not wonder why. I know in my deepest being that Jesus, as truly human, knew what it was to live a fully human existence. From the heights of deepest friendship and love, to the depth of anguish, grief and betrayal, here was someone I could relate to. The person dwelling in the tombs, alone, misunderstood and tormented and who cries out to Jesus, as well as the Markan Gethsemane scene and the cry of abandonment on the cross, are pivotal moments for those of use who have felt “alone”. The Markan Jesus is an example of what it means to be God with skin on, part of the ever-present “in-breaking” reign of God.

Among the Tombs

Here
Among the tombs
On my own
But not alone
Here
Among the dead
No human touch
My soul is dead

Here
All by myself
Voices ring
Inside my head
Here
Tormenting me
Their screams so loud
Echoes around

Will someone help me
Hear me calling
Won’t someone help me
I need a friend
Someone to guide me
To walk beside me
Hear me calling
My God, to you

Here
Among the stones
Marks on my skin
My body bruised
Here
Among the tombs
I hear a voice
Of one who soothes

Someone to guide me
Hear me calling
Someone to help me
And be a friend
Someone to guide me
And walk beside me
Here me calling
My God, to you

Here
Among the tombs
You speak of love
You give me peace
Here
The voices leave me
My soul rejoices
I sing your praise

Someone to guide me
Hear me calling
Someone to help me
And be a friend
Someone to guide me
And walk beside me
Here me calling
My God, to you

Now I will follow
I hear you calling
You're someone to help me
And be a friend
Someone to guide me
And walk beside me
Yes I will follow
You till the end...

A trilogy of poems on the Gerasene Demoniac: Mark 5

1. Legion

I hear them calling to me
I hear them constantly
First come this way, then the other
Then I hear them abuse each other

I hear them scream inside my head
I hear them, filling me with dread
Confusing me at every turn
Til I feel as though I will burn

Chains, they do not bind me
No, I cannot be held
Legion overwhelms me
I am nothing without them

I hear the voices in these tombs
I hear them in the rocks and stones
Their company is mine alone
It is them and me alone

I hear them as they torment me
I feel the bruises upon my skin
Why must I live in anguish
Crying night and day?

2. Jesus, Son of God

What do you want with me?
What did I do to you?
Why do you call to me
Jesus, Son of God?

Why do you question me?
Why won't you let me be?
Why do you call to me
Jesus, Son of God?

I am one
And I am many
I am alone
And I have company

Leave us alone
Or let us live in peace
Do not torment us though
Jesus, Son of God

Oh let us be
Or send us together
So we can live again
Jesus, Son of God

I am one
And I am many
I live alone
And I have company

Into the swine
Is where we want to be
And run into the sea
Jesus, Son of God...

You Have Found Me

What is this peace I've found
This peace I have found?

There's been a change in me
A change in me...

Jesus, Son of God
You have found me
In this desolate place
With the dead and lifeless

Jesus, Son of God
You have sought me
Made me whole again
Restored my life to me

I want to follow you
Yes, I will follow you

Jesus, Son of God
In this place of death
There is a peace I've found
A change in my heart

Jesus, Son of God
I want to tell the world
Of God's mercy and grace
Found in this barren place

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