



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

August 25 - 31

Mark 5:1-20

Things to Know

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

*Reminder: Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.*

Sermon Recap

1. Jesus Confronts Our Bondage – Like the man among the tombs, sin and evil isolate, dehumanize, and enslave us (vv. 1–5). But no chain is too strong for Christ to break.
2. Jesus Commands with Authority – Even a legion of demons must bow to Jesus (vv. 6–13). His authority over darkness reminds us that He alone is Lord of all.

3. Jesus Commissions Us to Bear Witness – The healed man was sent home to proclaim God's mercy (vv. 18–20). True transformation leads us to testify of what Christ has done.

Discussion Questions

1. Bondage of Sin (Mark 5:3–5):
What do these verses reveal about the destructive and isolating nature of sin and evil? How do we see similar forms of bondage in our world today?
2. Authority of Jesus (Mark 5:6–8):
Why do you think the demons immediately recognized and submitted to Jesus' authority? What does this teach us about His power over spiritual forces?
3. The Cost of Deliverance (Mark 5:14–16):
Why were the townspeople afraid when they saw the man healed and the pigs destroyed? What does their reaction teach us about the challenge of truly welcoming Jesus into our lives?
4. Transformation of Grace (Mark 5:15):
How does the man's transformation—"clothed and in his right mind"—illustrate what Jesus does in the life of a believer? Where have you seen this kind of change in your own life or in others?
5. Call to Witness (Mark 5:19–20):
Why did Jesus send the man back to his home instead of letting him travel with Him? How does this shape our understanding of sharing our testimony where God has placed us?

Read

Read Mark 5:1-20 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
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Mark 5:1-20

Jesus Heals a Man with a Demon

5 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. **2** And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. **3** He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, **4** for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. **5** Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. **6** And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. **7** And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "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 was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" **9** And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." **10** And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. **11** Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, **12** and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." **13** So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

14 The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. **15** And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. **16** And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. **17** And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. **18** As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. **19** And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." **20** And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

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Mark 5:1-20

Living on Mission In Community

When Jesus steps into our lives, He brings freedom where there was bondage, peace where there was chaos, and purpose where there was shame. Like the man who was once bound in chains, our testimony is not about what we have done, but about what Christ has done for us. The most powerful witness you have is your story of God's mercy and grace. Jesus doesn't just call us to follow Him privately; He sends us to proclaim

publicly what He has done. This week, who needs to hear your story of how Jesus has changed your life?

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*

Leader Resources - August 25-31

Small Group Curriculum - Jesus' Power to Deliver -

Text: Mark 5:1-20

1. Session Overview

This passage tells the story of Jesus healing a man possessed by a legion of demons in the region of the Gerasenes. It demonstrates the authority of Christ over evil, the transforming power of His grace, and the call to bear witness to His work in our lives.

Main Idea: Jesus has ultimate authority over sin, evil, and death, and He transforms the lives of those who encounter Him.

2. Opening (Prayer/Icebreaker)

- Icebreaker Question: “What’s the most dramatic before-and-after transformation you’ve ever witnessed—in a person, a place, or a situation?”
- Prayer Prompt: Invite the group to pray for open hearts and courage to share areas where they need Christ’s transforming power.

3. Scripture Reading

Read Mark 5:1–20 aloud as a group. Encourage one person to read verses 1–13 and another to read verses 14–20.

4. Teaching Points

A. The Reality of Evil (vv. 1–5)

- The man lived in the tombs, cut off from community, enslaved by forces he could not control.
- Evil dehumanizes, isolates, and destroys—this is a vivid picture of sin’s bondage.

B. The Authority of Jesus (vv. 6–13)

- The demons immediately recognized Jesus’ authority.
- A “legion” (a Roman military term for 6,000 soldiers) shows the overwhelming spiritual oppression, yet even this army of evil must submit to Christ.
- The drowning of the pigs demonstrates both the destructive nature of evil and the decisive victory of Jesus.

C. The Transformation of Grace (vv. 14–17)

- The man is found “clothed and in his right mind.” This is a clear picture of restoration and redemption.
- Instead of rejoicing, the townspeople fear Jesus and beg Him to leave. Grace often exposes our misplaced comfort with the status quo.

D. The Call to Witness (vv. 18–20)

- The man wants to follow Jesus physically, but instead Jesus sends him home to tell what the Lord has done.
- The first Gentile missionary is a man once bound in chains, now proclaiming the mercy of God.

5. Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you about the description of the demon-possessed man before he met Jesus (vv. 1–5)?
2. Why do you think the demons immediately recognized Jesus’ authority while the townspeople responded with fear?

3. How does this story show us both the power of evil and the greater power of Christ?
4. Why is it significant that Jesus told the man to “go home” and share his story instead of traveling with Him?
5. What would it look like for you to boldly share how Jesus has worked in your life, like the healed man in verse 20?

6. Application Points

- Identify Areas of Bondage: Reflect on any “chains” (sin patterns, fears, lies) where you need Christ’s freeing power.
- Trust Christ’s Authority: Remember that nothing—no sin, no evil—is beyond the authority of Jesus.
- Bear Witness: Share your story of God’s mercy with someone this week. Your testimony is one of the most powerful tools for evangelism.

7. Closing Reflection and Prayer

- Reflection Prompt: “Where have I seen Christ’s transforming power in my life, and how can I share it with others?”
- Prayer: Break into pairs or groups of three. Pray for one another specifically in areas where freedom and courage are needed.

8. Memory Verse

Mark 5:19 — “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”

9. Leader’s Notes

- Help the group see the vivid imagery of bondage vs. freedom.
- Guide them to connect this story to their personal testimonies—Jesus still delivers and restores today.

Encourage vulnerability in sharing areas where participants long for freedom. Lead by example.

