

## Unshackled

**Key Scriptures:** Mark 5:1-20 NET

So they came to the other side of the lake, to the region of the Gerasenes.

<sup>2</sup> Just as Jesus was getting out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit came from the tombs and met him. <sup>3</sup> He lived among the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. <sup>4</sup> For his hands and feet had often been bound with chains and shackles, but he had torn the chains apart and broken the shackles in pieces. No one was strong enough to subdue him. <sup>5</sup> Each night and every day among the tombs and in the mountains, he would cry out and cut himself with stones. <sup>6</sup> When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him. <sup>7</sup> Then he cried out with a loud voice, "Leave me alone, Jesus, Son of the Most High God! I implore you by God—do not torment me!" <sup>8</sup> (For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of that man, you unclean spirit!") <sup>9</sup> Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "My name is Legion, for we are many." <sup>10</sup> He begged Jesus repeatedly not to send them out of the region. <sup>11</sup> There on the hillside, a great herd of pigs was feeding. <sup>12</sup> And the demonic spirits begged him, "Send us into the pigs. Let us enter them." <sup>13</sup> Jesus gave them permission. So the unclean spirits came out and went into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake, and about two thousand were drowned in the lake. <sup>14</sup> Now the herdsmen ran off and spread the news in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. <sup>15</sup> They came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man sitting there, clothed and in his right mind—the one who had the "Legion"—and they were afraid. <sup>16</sup> Those who had seen what had happened to the demon-possessed man reported it, and they also told about the pigs. <sup>17</sup> Then they asked Jesus to leave their region. <sup>18</sup> As he was getting into the boat the man who had been demon-possessed asked if he could go with him. <sup>19</sup> But Jesus did not permit him to do so. Instead, he said to him, "Go to your home and to your people and tell them what the Lord has done for you, that he had mercy on you." <sup>20</sup> So he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him, and all were amazed.

**Key Point:** As God, Jesus has power over demons and evil.

## TALK IT OVER

**Start talking:** Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- Growing up, did you celebrate Halloween or not? How have your beliefs & practices changed since then?
- Last week you were challenged to schedule a time to strengthen yourself in this way, where you can be alone, undistracted (no phone or devices) and read God's word, pray, and meditate on it. Were you able to do that? How did it go?

**Steps of faith:** Reflect on your recent walk with Christ.

- Share with the group a step of faith you recently took, or someone else's step of faith that has been encouraging or inspiring to you.

**Reflect, Think, & Share:** Read through the key scriptures and share any observations or questions with the group.

- Growing up, what did you believe about demons and the supernatural? Have those beliefs changed as you understood more about God and Scripture?
- In your own words, how would you describe what this man's life was like?
- Why do you think the demons requested to enter the pigs?
- What do you think about the response of the townspeople in vv. 14-17? Does it surprise you?
- Jesus gave into the request of the demons, and the request of the crowd, but not the request of the man. Why?
- One of the observations from this text is that evil is gradual. How have you seen this in your own life, family, friends, or community?
- One of Mark's main points in his gospel is that Jesus is God. What things in this text highlight this truth?

**Start doing:** Jesus commanded the man to go home and tell people what the Lord has done for him and how He was merciful. Choose two people that you will talk with this week and tell them what the Lord has done in your life.

**Prayer Requests.** It may be helpful to pray the scriptures back to God.

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