

## MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ spread the word of Christ's story with others (Mark 16:15).

## SCRIPTURE

LUKE 8:26-39

## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Jesus had to endure a terrible storm (Luke 8:22-25) before arriving in the country of Gerasenes, a Gentile territory. It seems Christ's work began as soon as the boat docked, being met by demon-possessed man "when Jesus had stepped out on land" (v. 27). No time even to shake off the storm. Luke and Mark only mention one possessed man meeting Jesus, whereas Matthew mentions two (Matt. 8:28). Instead of seeing this as a contradiction, Luke and Mark likely write about the more outspoken man.

Check out the *Teacher Prep Video* for this lesson: <https://vimeo.com/1064814125>



## OPENING

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### GAME or ICE BREAKER

Based on your group's size, choose a **Game** from **Deep Discipleship Games** OR use the **Ice Breaker** prompt.

- **Game**—We recommend **Movies in Two Minutes** or choose another screen game from **Deep Discipleship Games**
- **Ice Breaker**— When have you been somewhere and couldn't see anything (too much rain on the windshield, too many people standing in front of you, etc.)?

### WORSHIP

Craft a time of worship with a live band or sing along to a playlist.

- Check out our curated Spotify list. We understand that every church has a different theological view of worship. These songs are suggestions, please pick what works best for your church.
- <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2xmeIKGUjkEE7bJYSCbRwe?si=d254ec715a4749e5>

#### MEDIA AS STUDENTS ARRIVE

1. Play background music (optional)
2. Display **SERIES TITLE Slide** and announcement slides in a loop or customize the provided **PowerPoint**.
3. Play a 5-minute Countdown Timer 5:00 minutes before you start.

#### DEEP DISCIPLESHIP GAMES

Find free games in **Deep Discipleship Games**. It's already included with your Deep Discipleship subscription. View the game in advance in case you need supplies or slides.

#### SLIDES (optional)

Use **SERIES Background & Blank Slides** or **PowerPoint** to create lyric slides.

## TRANSITION TO MESSAGE

Include a brief element that transitions students from worship to teaching time, like a prayer or video. This will keep students focused and prepared for the message while the band leaves the stage.

### VIDEO (optional)

Show **SERIES Promo Video** or **LESSON Intro Video** after the last worship song.

## MESSAGE

Use the following teaching points and suggested illustrations as a starting point to build your message.

### POINT 1: Evil distorts everything

Read or have someone in your group read Luke 8:26–30

“This is everything” is a phrase used to describe how one thing sums up an entire situation. It’s relevant here in how a few sentences reveal plenty about the man in this passage. He hadn’t just encountered evil but personally became possessed by multiple demons. Instead of wearing clothes, he roamed naked. Rather than dwelling in a house among the living, he lived outside among the dead. His own strength couldn’t free him. Instead, he was kept enslaved by demons through their supernatural strength.

Evil had completely distorted his entire life—everything.

*ILLUSTRATION:* Create an object lesson by showing your group something broken beyond usefulness. Have them guess what happened to break it, but don’t reveal if they’re right or wrong. Instead, have them brainstorm what the object is meant to do that it no longer can.

The enemy had broken everything in this man’s life to the point he could no longer live a “normal” life.

### SLIDES (optional)

Use the **SERIES PowerPoint** OR the **Background & Blank Slides** to create these slides to support your message:

- Luke 8:26–30
- Point 1

### POINT 2: Jesus defeats everything

Read or have someone in your group read Luke 8:31–33

Our God is so powerful that everything submits to his authority and command. With just his words, he speaks creation into existence, and it yields to his will. This is what we see happen when Christ commands the demons to leave the man, for he has authority over all things. His method of eliminating evil from our lives might look odd and dramatic, like in this passage, or it may be more personal and internal, like him eliminating your sin when you ask him to be your Savior.

*ILLUSTRATION:* School playgrounds are meant to be fun places, but sometimes, kids become bullies who use that space to intimidate and overpower others. That is, until someone in authority steps in and resets everything. Tell a personal story about a time you saw or experienced this.

Jesus has the ability and authority to step into our lives and set us free from sinful oppression.

### SLIDES (optional)

- Luke 8:31–33
- Point 2

### POINT 3: Transformation disrupts everything

Read or have someone in your group read Luke 8:34–37

The pig owners had a weird day, right? We’re unsure what they believed about God, but they did know no one could control the demon-possessed man. Then

### SLIDES (optional)

- Luke 8:34–37
- Point 3



Jesus came and was powerful enough to do that and more. It spooked them so much that they wanted to send Jesus away.

Seeing someone's life change will change the lives of others... but how it changes will differ. You'll either see God at work and accept it or become unsettled and push him away. People around you may likewise misunderstand how God has transformed you.

**POINT 4: Storytelling declares everything**

Read or have someone in your group read Luke 8:38-39

After the man gave his life to Christ, he knew it was time to join Jesus somehow. It began with him obediently telling people all over town how much Jesus had done for him. It's a radical example of what God can do in a moment.

Some of us have testimonies in which Jesus radically changed our entire lifestyles. Some of us may think our testimonies are "boring" because we grew up in church or were saved at an early age. But the truth is, every saving work of Jesus is a radical transformation of the heart because we all become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

**SLIDES (optional)**

- Luke 8:38-39
- Point 4

**CLOSING**

**MARK OF A DISCIPLE**

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**SLIDES (optional)**

- Mark of a Disciple

**FACILITATOR NOTE: DO YOU HAVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION RIGHT AWAY?**

- If YES, then **STOP HERE**, divide into groups, and provide Small Group Leaders with the **Small Group Breakout Questions** on the next page.
- If NO, then end your gathering with the **Reflect & Respond** questions and **Prayer** prompt below.

**REFLECT & RESPOND**

Give the students time to silently think through what they have heard and contemplate these questions:

- When have you seen a situation that felt so broken or evil that you felt intimidated by it?
- When have you seen God reset a situation or person in a way that only he can?

**SLIDES (optional)**

Use the **SERIES PowerPoint** OR the **Background & Blank Slides** to display the **Reflect & Respond** questions.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Don't rush this part. Give the students a few minutes to really consider the power of their story, whether they've known Jesus their whole life or have recently started following him.

**PRAYER**

Take time to pray that your students would become willing to share their story of knowing Jesus with a few others in their lives.



## SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT (OPTIONAL)

*Pick a few questions from each section to discuss. Close with prayer.*

### BREAKOUT QUESTIONS

#### Build Meaningful Relationships

- What about your spiritual journey are you most thankful for?  
Answers will vary. Come prepared to share your own thoughts to help start the conversation.
- What about your spiritual journey do you wish you could have changed?  
Answers will vary but may include: meeting Jesus sooner, embracing his forgiveness more fully, following Christ more faithfully, etc.

#### Share Personal Stories & Ask Intentional Questions

- If all we knew about Satan and demons was what we see in this passage, what would we know?  
Answers might vary but could include variations of his desire to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10).
- If all we knew about Jesus was what we see in this passage, what would we know?  
Again, answers might vary, but notice how we see that Jesus cares for the state this man is in (and possibly went to this non-Jewish area specifically to seek him out). We also see that Jesus brings healing and freedom in ways no one else can; he has authority over all creation; he is willing to help anyone, even those everyone else gave up on, etc.
- What do you imagine life was like for the man before and after he was set free by Jesus?  
We can't know for sure, but the man was human like us. He probably felt the same as we would—scared, hopeless, broken, unlovable, chaotic, a lost cause, etc. But after Jesus' intervention, he probably felt free, new, loved, redeemed, changed, peaceful, joyful, grateful, etc.
- If that man asked you what his next step should be, what advice would you give him?  
Answers will vary, but may include: obeying Jesus' direction, continuing to grow closer to God, sharing his story of salvation with others, etc. The next step for this man is the same steps we must continue to take.

#### Make Life Application & Hold Students Accountable

- When was a time you experienced Jesus working in your life?  
Answers will vary. Come prepared to share your own answer to help start the conversation.
- What would it take for you to become more willing to share about Jesus with others, even if it was just you being open about your own experiences with him or what he's teaching you?  
Answers will vary, but really invite them to be specific in their answer to take that next step.

### PRAYER

Take time to pray that your students would become willing to share their story of knowing Jesus with a few others in their lives.

*Use this space to keep track of any prayer requests.*

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