

2026-08-16 Small Group Guide

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Based on Sermon: "Legion" (Mark 4:35 - 5:20)

Overview

This sermon explores two back-to-back encounters with Jesus in the Gospel of Mark: his calming of the storm and his confrontation with a man possessed by a legion of demons. Together, these stories reveal the full scope of Christ's authority over the natural world and the spiritual world, and they challenge us to move beyond comfortable, controlled versions of faith into honest awareness of both God's power and the reality of spiritual opposition.

Key Takeaways

Jesus has complete authority over nature, over human circumstances, and over demonic forces. Nothing is outside his control.

Faith is not the absence of fear. It is the choice to trust Christ's authority even when circumstances are terrifying.

The demons recognized Jesus immediately and feared him. We are called to know him even more deeply than his enemies do.

Spiritual awareness is not about fear or obsession with the demonic. It is about honest inventory of what controls us and what keeps us from full devotion to God.

When Christ sets someone free, the natural response is to go and tell others what he has done.

Jesus was not sent primarily to heal or to feed, though he did both. His stated priority was to teach. The Word of God is the foundation for everything else.

We are not saved to be comfortable. We are saved to be changed and to help others encounter the same freedom.

Discussion Questions

Opening (Getting the Conversation Started)

When you hear the words "spiritual warfare" or "demonic activity," what is your honest gut reaction? Skepticism, fear, curiosity, discomfort? Where do

you think that reaction comes from?

The pastor described two extremes people often fall into: believing there is a demon behind everything, or believing the spiritual world has no real influence at all. Which extreme do you think is more common in your experience of church culture? Which do you personally lean toward?

Going Deeper (Into the Text)

In Mark 4:38, the disciples cry out to Jesus, asking if he even cares that they are about to drown. Have you ever felt that God was asleep during one of your storms? What did that season look like, and what did you learn from it?

After Jesus calmed the storm, the disciples were terrified of him in a new way and asked, "Who is this?" (Mark 4:41). Why do you think an encounter with God's power sometimes produces fear rather than immediate peace? What does that reveal about our understanding of who Jesus really is?

The man in Mark 5 was uncontrollable, isolated, and self-destructive. Yet he ran toward Jesus the moment he saw him. What do you think that tells us about what even the most broken person is truly searching for?

The demons begged Jesus not to send them out of the region and asked to enter the pigs instead (Mark 5:10-12). Jesus gave them permission. Why do you think Jesus engaged with their request rather than simply commanding them into silence? What does this tell us about how Jesus operates?

The townspeople, after seeing the man completely restored, asked Jesus to leave (Mark 5:17). Why do you think restoration and change made them more afraid than the raving, uncontrollable man had? Have you ever seen a similar reaction in real life?

Jesus told the restored man not to follow him but to go home and tell his family what God had done (Mark 5:19). Why do you think Jesus sent him back rather than bringing him along? What does that say about where our primary mission field often is?

Personal Reflection

The pastor asked the group to consider: "Is there anything in my life that I cannot say no to, that always masters me?" Take a moment to sit with that question honestly. You do not have to share specifics, but are there patterns, habits, or strongholds in your life that feel beyond your control?

He also said, "If we do whatever we do, loving somebody, acts of service, feeding, helping, it still needs to be under the teaching of Christ." How well does your personal faith life keep the Word of God as the foundation, rather than good deeds or spiritual experiences alone?

The sermon closed with the challenge that God does not save us to be comfortable. In what area of your life has comfort become a substitute for genuine faith and obedience?

Practical Applications

This Week, Choose One or More of the Following:

Read Mark 4:35 through Mark 5:20 on your own. Read it slowly and look for details you may have missed. Ask God to show you something in the text that is personally relevant to your life right now.

Do an honest inventory. Set aside 15 to 20 minutes in a quiet place and ask God: "What in my life is out of control? What masters me that I have not surrendered to you?" Write down what comes to mind and pray specifically over each thing.

Read Job 38 as a companion passage. The pastor referenced it as a parallel to Jesus calming the storm. Notice how God describes his authority over creation and reflect on what that means for the storms in your own life.

Tell someone what God has done for you. The restored man was sent home to tell his family. Think of one person in your life, a family member, a

neighbor, a coworker, who does not know your story of what Christ has done for you. Pray for an opportunity to share it this week.

Pray for discernment. If the topic of spiritual awareness felt unfamiliar or uncomfortable, simply ask God to give you his perspective. Pray: "Lord, open my eyes to what is spiritually true around me and in me, and give me wisdom to respond in a way that honors you."

Consider the well. The pastor mentioned a missionary in Africa working to provide clean water to villages in desperate need. If this stirred something in you, pray and ask God what, if anything, he would have you do. Then act on what you hear.

Closing Prayer Points

As you close your group time, pray together over the following:

That God would give each group member a balanced, honest awareness of both his authority and the reality of spiritual opposition

That any area of bondage or control in a group member's life would be brought to the light and surrendered to Christ

That your group would grow in its willingness to be changed rather than simply comfortable

For the people in your lives who need to hear what God has done for you

For those without clean water, and for wisdom in how your group and church can respond

A Note for Group Leaders

This is a sermon that covers territory many believers rarely discuss openly. Some group members may be skeptical, some may be fearful, and some may have personal experiences with spiritual oppression that they have never talked about in a church setting. Create space for honest questions without pressure to arrive at neat conclusions. The goal is not to produce experts in spiritual warfare. The goal is to help people take Jesus seriously in every area of his teaching, and to leave the group with a deeper trust in his authority over all things.