

Small Group Leader Guide: Addiction, Bondage, and Deliverance

“You Asked for It” series | 30 minutes

Big idea: Jesus meets people in bondage with compassion and power, and He leads them toward freedom through faith, support, and ongoing steps of obedience.

Key Scriptures: Mark 5:1–20; John 8:31–36; Romans 8:1

Leader note: This conversation may touch personal pain. Don’t ask anyone to disclose private struggles, and don’t promise confidentiality beyond what your group can safely keep. Listen without judgment, avoid trying to diagnose or “fix” someone, and encourage professional or recovery support when appropriate. If someone shares that they are in immediate danger, help them connect with emergency or qualified support.

0–4 minutes | Welcome and opening prayer

Welcome everyone and remind the group that people are free to share, listen, or pass. Say:

“Tonight, we’re discussing addiction, bondage, and the hope of freedom in Christ. We’ll talk about the Scripture and the message, not pressure anyone to share personal details. We want this to be a place of grace, honesty, and practical support.”

Open in prayer, asking God for compassion, wisdom, and hope.

4–9 minutes | Read the Scripture

Read Mark 5:1–20, or focus on verses 15 and 18–20 if time is limited. Then read Romans 8:1. Briefly set the scene: Jesus meets a man isolated and tormented, restores him, and gives him a purpose. Mark describes him afterward as “sitting and clothed and in his right mind.”

9–23 minutes | Discussion

Choose questions that fit your group and leave room for people to respond.

- What stands out to you about the way Jesus responds to the man in Mark 5?
- Mark says the man was sitting, clothed, and in his right mind. What do those details suggest about the restoration Jesus brought?
- How can shame or isolation make it harder for someone to seek help?
- What does Romans 8:1 offer to someone who is struggling and wants to turn toward Christ?
- What can a church community do to offer support without judging, enabling harmful behavior, or pressuring someone to share more than they want?
- What is one practical step—spiritual, relational, or professional—that can help someone move toward freedom?

Leader emphasis: A person's struggle should not be reduced to a label. Christians can pray and seek God's help while also pursuing counseling, medical care, treatment, recovery groups, and accountability. A setback is a reason to seek support and take the next step—not a reason for shame or isolation.

23–27 minutes | Personal reflection and response

Invite everyone to reflect quietly: "Where might God be inviting me to take a step toward freedom, or to become a safer, more supportive person for someone else?" Allow a brief silence. People may share generally, but no one needs to disclose personal details.

27–30 minutes | Prayer

Pray for those affected by addiction and bondage, for families and friends, and for courage to seek help. Ask God to guide people toward wise support and to help the church respond with truth, compassion, and patience.

Closing prayer:

"Jesus, thank You for meeting people with compassion and power. Bring hope to those who feel trapped, courage to those who need help, and wisdom to those walking beside them. Teach us to support one another without shame and to take faithful steps toward freedom. Amen."