



# Jesus Heals the Man of the Tombs

FAMILIES IN TRUTH

Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20



After calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus, along with His disciples, came ashore on the other side. Here, they met with a man who had a BIG problem. The power and peace of Jesus was the only solution for this man.

## Day #1: Opposites

Let's play the opposites game. What is the opposite of **big**? What is the opposite of **dark**? What is the opposite of **smile**? What is the opposite of **God**? Well, this is a trick question! God has NO opposite! God is in His own category.

In order to have an opposite, you must have something in common. For example, big and small are opposites - both are describing size. Heavy and light are opposites - both are describing weight. God has no opposite, because there is no other being that is like God at all!

Many books and movies portray the devil as the opposite of God, but this is incorrect. God is the ONLY God. He was never created; He has always existed. God is ALL-powerful. The devil is a created being. He was once an angel. His power is limited. He is NOT equal to God. He is no match for God. And when we trust in and abide in Jesus, the devil is no match for us!

People who have put their trust in Jesus - those who have accepted Jesus' free gift of forgiveness and new life - have God's Holy Spirit living inside of them (John 7:39, Ephesians 1:13). And an evil spirit CANNOT live where the Holy Spirit lives! So, when we read this week's story that tells about evil spirits, we shouldn't focus on the power that they have and become scared. We should focus on the **much greater** power that Jesus has, and rejoice!

**\*** The Bible tells believers, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7). The devil will run away from **you** in fear! When you see a commercial for a scary movie or TV show that shows the devil as powerful, shout out this promise from God, "God will soon crush the devil!"

**+** *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.* - Romans 16:20a NIV

## Day #2: Wild Man

When Jesus and the disciples came ashore, they were near a graveyard. A man came to meet them. This man had evil spirits living in him. Listen to Mark's description of him:

**+** *The man lived in the tombs. No one could keep him tied up anymore. Not even a chain could hold him. His hands and feet had often been chained. But he tore the chains apart. And he broke the iron cuffs on his ankles. No one was strong enough to control him. Night and day he screamed among the tombs and in the hills. He cut himself with stones.* - Mark 5:3-5

This man was completely wild. He was helpless to control his own body. He lived in torment; there was no peace for him, day or night.

But then, the man met with Jesus, and everything changed! Jesus spoke to the evil spirits and they HAD to obey Him. Jesus ordered them to leave the man and enter a heard of pigs near by. The pigs quickly ran into the lake and drown.

With just a few words from Jesus, the evil fled. Instantly, the man was calm. For the first time in years, this man was at perfect peace. The evil had been more powerful than the man, but **it was FAR LESS powerful than Jesus!**

Sin does to our lives what the evil spirits did to this man. Sin causes chaos and trouble. And just like the man in the graveyard, we are helpless to control the effects of sin in our lives. But Jesus has complete power over sin! When we come to Jesus, He will cast the sin out of our lives. Only Jesus has power over sin (Romans 8:2).

**\*** Come to Jesus. Ask Him to conquer the sin in your life. Abide in Him; remain with Him everyday so you can stay far from sin (John 15:6).

## Day #3: Alone No More

Describe the best relationships in your life. Who do you like to spend time with? What do you talk about? How do these people encourage you?

There is another thing we can see about the man of the tombs before the beautiful day that He met Jesus. He was living alone in an old graveyard. He could no longer live with other people. The evil in his life had caused him to lose his relationships. This may have been the saddest part of his life.

### Day #3 continued:

God did not create us to be alone. He created us to be in relationships. When God created Adam, the first human, God said:



*The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."* - Genesis 2:18

It was God's perfect plan for people to be in relationships each other. And more importantly, God wants us to be in a relationship with Him (Jeremiah 31:33-34). But sin spoils everything. It spoils our relationships. Sin often separates us from others, and far worse, it separates us from God. It is the devil's terrible goal for people to be separated from God.

*But your sins have separated you from your God. They have caused Him to turn His face away from you. So He won't listen to you.* - Isaiah 59:2

This separation is not what God wants! God sent His Son, Jesus, to destroy the devil's work, and reunite us with God (1 John 3:8, Romans 6:23).



Pray a prayer of thanksgiving for the relationships in your life. Thank God, most of all, for sending Jesus to conquer sin and make the way for you to have a relationship with Him.

## Day #4: New Creation

Get a metal lid for a pot. Now, take a metal spoon and clang it inside the lid, making as much noise as you can. After a few seconds, place the lid against your chest. Did you hear how the awful noise turned to quiet? The man's life was like that chaotic noise until Jesus brought peace.

The townspeople heard what happened. It was too amazing to believe, so they ran out to see for themselves.



*Then they came to Jesus. They saw the man who had been controlled by many demons. He was sitting there. He was now dressed and thinking clearly. All this made the people afraid.* - Mark 5:15

What a transformation! The people who knew him could not believe their eyes. This wild man was now controlled - not by chains or armed guards - but he was self-controlled! The Bible says that God's Spirit brings self-control! (Galatians 5:22-23) This man was living proof that *"Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come!"* (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Before he met Jesus, this man was destructive and dangerous. Nothing could contain him. But then he **met with Jesus, and Jesus brought peace**. One name for Jesus is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). He came to earth to bring peace between God and man by paying for our sin. The Bible says that when we put our trust in Jesus, "we have **peace with God** because of what

### Day #4 continued:

Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us." (Romans 5:1 NLT)

And, even after we have peace with God, we still live in a world that has many problems. So when things seem out of control in your life, take them to Jesus. He can give you peace in any situation.



Jesus told His followers, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you." (John 14:27) Is there a situation in your life in which you need peace? Pray and ask Jesus to fill you with His peace (Philippians 4:7). Set the metal lid in your room as a reminder that Jesus brings peace.

## Day #5: Telling Others

When the townspeople saw the incredible change in this once-wild man, they became afraid. They realized that Jesus was incredibly powerful - more powerful than the evil that once trapped the man. The people begged Jesus to leave immediately. Perhaps they were afraid of the changes that Jesus would bring in their own lives.

The man wanted to travel with Jesus and His disciples. But Jesus had a better plan. Jesus told the man to go back to his hometown and tell everyone what God had done for him.



*"Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.* - Mark 5:19b-20

This man did not have a college degree in Bible knowledge. He simply told what Jesus did for him. And the people were amazed.

Throughout the New Testament, we see two reactions to Jesus. Some people send Jesus away because they don't want Jesus to change their lives. These people mistakenly believe they can run their lives better than the Creator, who set the galaxies in place and keeps them running perfectly (Job 38, Psalm 8:3). But other people, like the man, are overjoyed to give up the chaos of sin and live in the peace that Jesus brings. These people cling to Jesus, and they love to tell others what Jesus has done for them.



Our stories are powerful. If you are a believer, telling someone what Jesus has done for you could change his or her life. Think about your story. What words would you use to tell someone what Jesus has done for you? What was your life like before you met Jesus? When did you put your trust in Him? What is your life like now? Practice telling your story, so you will be ready to tell it whenever you have the opportunity. (Parents: Make sure you have told your story to your children!)