

Let's Go Group Studies Leader's Notes

- 1) We're providing this material to you to remove some of the stress and frustration of developing a plan to lead a specific group study. It isn't meant to replace your individual preparation to lead. Our hope is that you would use it as a guide to your engagement with the text and the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead you as you help your study's participants to have their own relevant encounter with scripture and the Holy Spirit.
- 2) This plan isn't meant to constrain you to lead in any specific way. **Please do modify it to better meet the needs of your group and to honor your gifting and authentic style.** For example, when and how you pray and share prayer needs should be in a rhythm that is good for your group as long as you are praying as a group. For another, who and how scripture is read should fit your group and its needs as long as it is read somehow.
- 3) **Be authentic.** If you find yourself saying "They are asking" as in, 'I didn't write this question and I don't really understand why it is being asked.' Don't ask it. Ask something else. It is okay not to understand everything. No one understands everything. If you don't believe in what you're saying, why should anyone else believe it? One way to turn this into a positive is to admit to the group that you are struggling with figuring out a particular bit and allow someone else to contribute their God-given wisdom.
- 4) Some questions, especially earlier in the study, aren't meant to be a mile deep or transformative. These questions are intended to prompt the participants to notice what is there. They give the participants a way to begin to care about the specific words on the page.
- 5) Portions of the plan in quotes are meant to be spoken out loud to the group as in, "Who's buried in Grant's Tomb?" You don't have to repeat the question or statement exactly as it appears. Restate it in a way that feels comfortable and natural for you.
- 6) Portions of the plan in *italics* are meant to be notes to you that you can use as prompts in aiding group discussion and aren't intended to be read verbatim to the group. They may not be the definitive answer but should be a good possible answer. As part of your preparation, please add to and edit the notes to fit where you intend to lead the discussion.
- 7) A **Follow up question** helps participants open up a little more and look a little deeper and is meant to be asked after there has been some discussion of the prior question.
- 8) The last page is the participant handout.
- 9) Please remember that our focus, purpose and practice is to **Love God, Love Others and Make Disciples.**

Let's Go- The One who Conquers Demons

- 1) Scripture: Mark 5:1-20, 1 Samuel 16:14, 2 Cor 1:4
 - A) Parallel accounts- Matt. 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39
- 2) Objective: After studying the listed scripture and participating in the discussion, each person should be able to identify something good God has done for them and share that good news with someone who needs to hear it.
- 3) Resources: Book of Mark, Grassmick. The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Walvoord & Zuck, Easton's Bible Dictionary, Easton, M.G., both Copyright 1983, 2003, 2004 by Cook Communications Ministries
- 4) Preparation:
 - A) Pray for guidance
 - B) Review Leader's Notes and read entire lesson plan
 - C) It might naturally come up in your discussion, so now might be a good time to decide for yourself regarding the difference between a mental health crisis and demon possession. A full exploration of the differences between the two are beyond the capacity of this lesson but this study makes the following assumptions...
 - i. A mental health crisis and demon possession can look quite similar in how they present but are separate events that can occur separately or sometimes in conjunction with one another. Both are real.
 - ii. Unless you're Jesus, it takes a trained mental health professional to diagnose and treat mental health issues and an experienced, theologically mature believer in Jesus Christ to navigate someone's demon possession or oppression.
 - iii. The believer, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, can come under demonic attack but won't be possessed by a demon. The Holy Spirit doesn't take roommates.
 - iv. Prayer and assisting someone to get help from a professional for their mental health crisis are the most effective responses.
- 5) Prayer requests & Open in prayer
- 6) Intro:
 - A) "Last week I asked you what storm are you in right now or do you see on the horizon? What can you do right now to keep your focus on where God is leading you?" Would anyone be willing to share if you were able to do that and tell us

how you feel about the results?" *If you closed last week's study with a different question or application, substitute your closing for this one.*

- B) Tonight, we are examining the day after the storm we read about last week. Look through the eyes of the disciples. They had been terrified of dying in the storm and then were terrified of Jesus when he told the storm to settle down, and it did. Notice that, despite their terror, they didn't run away as soon as they got off the boat and remember the lesson of 'He who has ears let him hear' from the parables. Now look at a man considered to be physically dangerous. A man that the community had tried to help but who was beyond their capacity to do so. See who Jesus rebukes and who he comforts. Think about what Jesus has done for you and how your experience might be good news that will amaze just the right person who needs good news right now.
- C) When we are done, I am going to ask you all to identify someone who needs to hear what you have to tell."

7) The study

- A) Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 5:1-5
- B) Ask "Describe how this possessed guy looks. How does he smell? How does his voice sound? What does he eat? What is his place in the community?" *Big and dangerous like a wild animal. Stinks of BO and human filth. Loud, scary and incoherent. Although people had tried to help him in the past, he was too dangerous to help and was an outcast. He eats whatever he can catch, steal or is left out for him.*
- C) Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 5:6-13
- D) Ask everyone to complete question 1 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.
 - i. "How do the demons in the demon possessed man recognize and address Jesus? What do you find significant or interesting about the demonic response to Jesus?" *'Jesus, Son of the Most High God.' Demons are afraid. Demons acknowledge Jesus' divinity and sovereignty. Demons really don't want to go. The demons go anyway.*
- E) Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 5:14-17
- F) Ask everyone to complete question 2 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.
 - i. "Compare the response of the disciples in Mark 4:41 with the demons and the townspeople in verses 14-17. What similarities and differences do you find?" *Fear of who Jesus is. The disciples were afraid but stuck around, the demons*

and the townspeople wanted Jesus to go away. What can we learn from this difference in response?

G) Ask “Of all the people affected by what happened in this event and the storm, who wasn’t afraid?” *Jesus and the demoniac. Do you find anything instructive in their response?*

H) Ask for a volunteer to read Mark 5:18-20

i. *Interesting note- The pigs that were destroyed were unclean food for Jews and were likely intended for the largely gentile population of the Ten Towns. Instead of another pork dinner they got life-changing good news.*

I) Ask everyone to complete question 3 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.

i. “The formerly possessed man wanted desperately to go with Jesus but Jesus sent him to spread good news. What part of the story of what God has done for you would be good news to your family and community? Please be as specific as possible.” *Ideally, these answers come from the participants. Whether they get them from the study, the Sunday sermon or elsewhere, the best thing that can happen here is they are verbalized by the participants. If they struggle to answer...*

a *What has changed? New hope, delivered from sin(s), delivered from addiction(s), found peace.*

J) Ask everyone to complete question 4 on the handout. Allow 3-5 minutes for them to finish and then ask for volunteers to share their answers.

i. “Can you identify someone you already know who might need to hear about the good God has done for you? Or, will you ask God to send you to someone who needs to hear that good news?” *No need to make it weird. But none of our struggles are unique. We are comforted in our afflictions so that we might share that comfort with others (2 Cor 1:4).*

8) Summary:

A) Encourage your group members to reach out to whomever they identified in question 4 with the simple message of what has God done for them. Plan on asking them next week about the results.

B) Close in prayer

Let's Go- The One who Conquers Demons

Mark 5:1-20

1) How do the demons in the demon possessed man recognize and address Jesus? What do you find significant or interesting about the demonic response to Jesus?

2) Compare the response of the disciples in Mark 4:41 with the demons and the townspeople in verses 14-17. What similarities and differences do you find?

3) The formerly possessed man wanted desperately to go with Jesus but Jesus sent him to spread good news. What part of the story of what God has done for you would be good news to your family and community? Please be as specific as possible.

4) Can you identify someone you already know who might need to hear about the good God has done for you? Or, will you ask God to send you to someone who needs to hear that good news?

For next time... Read Mark 5:21-43