

Ev221 Sharing Your Spiritual Journey

Lesson Ev221–3 Why Share Your Journey?

Do you consider yourself bold or timid? In our last lesson you learned that God wants every person to be born again. As each of us begins to live according to Christ's teachings, we understand that he wants us to tell others about him. This lesson will emphasize again why and how you are to witness—whether you are naturally a bold or a timid person.

Mark's gospel tells the story of Jesus traveling with his disciples to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, a Gentile region. As they get out of the boat a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs, shouting and running towards them. He was a frightening sight, naked and bloody. Sin and the devil cause chaos in the lives of humans. But Jesus came to seek and to save those who are in bondage to the evil one, as he said, "The thief [the evil one] comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they might have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

This man was so terrifying that his own people would not go near him. They were afraid he might kill them. They often chained him hand and foot to restrain him, but the demons made him so strong that he broke all the shackles. He roamed about in the caves of a graveyard, naked, wailing, and cutting himself with rocks. The evil spirits tormented him and wanted to destroy him.

He saw Christ from a distance, ran to him, and fell on his knees. The demons recognized Jesus and shouted loudly. They sensed that they were to be punished. Jesus had said, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!" Jesus' power is well-recognized in the spirit realm.

The man was so full of demons, that when Jesus asked him his name, he growled out a reply. "My name is 'Legion,' for we are many." A Roman legion had 6,000 soldiers, suggesting the man was possessed by numerous evil spirits. They begged the Lord again and again not to send them out of the area.

A herd of about 2,000 pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." Jesus took authority over the unclean spirits and cast the demons out of the poor man. They went into the pigs, which rushed down a steep bank and were drowned in the sea (Mark 5:1-13).

Those who had tended the pigs reported all this to the town. All the people came out to see what had happened. They were shocked at the sight of this formerly demon-possessed man—whom they had feared for so long. He was clothed and in his right mind and sitting calmly with Jesus. The people were afraid. They begged Jesus to leave their region. Even today, some people are frightened by spiritual miracles they don't understand.

As the story ends, Jesus was getting into the boat. The man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people 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 (Ten Cities) how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed (Mark 5:14–20).

Church tradition says that a great revival broke out in the Ten Cities where the man witnessed about Jesus. Because of his witness many more were delivered from their sin. God saves us from our sins, not so that we can immediately go to heaven, but that we might tell others about his saving power and the love he has for us through his Son, Jesus.

The man who had been delivered wanted to travel with Jesus – to just be with him and worship him. But Jesus told him to go home and tell his family what God had done. Many Christians today are like this man. They just want to meet with other Christians, enjoy the presence of the Lord, and thank him for their deliverance. But the love that Jesus has for you, regardless of your former wretched state, should be a motivating force. You should tell others about him. Sharing your spiritual journey with others is the essence of evangelism.

This story is **important** because it teaches that Jesus doesn't deliver you from your sin just to be blessed by fellowship with him. He wants you to tell others about how he can save them from their sin too. Each of you has a mission to evangelize your own family and your own people. Tell them how God has changed your life.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that you recognize the lordship of Jesus in your life. Then this will result in a burden to tell others who are lost about him. Those who have been powerfully delivered and forgiven have a holy boldness to tell others about what Jesus has done for them. The Holy Spirit in you gives boldness to speak, whether you are bold or timid.

Review Questions

1. Why were the people afraid of the demon-possessed man? [Pause 5 seconds.]
A. If you said, "It was because the demons gave him enormous strength and he could not be restrained," you are correct.
2. What did the man ask of Jesus once he was delivered from the demon's bondage and in his right mind? [Pause]
A. If you answered that he asked if he could go with Jesus, you are right.
3. What did Jesus tell the man who had been delivered from demons to do? [Pause]
A. If you said, "Jesus told him to go and tell his family about how much God had done for him and the mercy he had shown him," you answered correctly.
4. What should be our reason for doing evangelism? [Pause]
A. If you said, "The love of God demonstrated in our deliverance from sin, should motivate us to share that love with others," you are correct.

Your **assignment** is to listen to the story of the demon-possessed man until you know it well enough to share it with another person. Reflect on your own life and answer the following questions: Do you find yourself wanting to just "fellowship with Jesus" rather than telling others about him? What can we do to overcome our tendency to just be with Christians, rather than stepping out and sharing the truth of his love with others? (A. We can ask the Holy Spirit to help us overcome our fears, then step out by faith and speak to someone.) Find someone near you who is not a believer, and tell them the story of "Legion."