



11.01.09/ Mark 5:1-20

Materials Needed

Diluted bleach or soapy water, container, white t-shirt, and WASHABLE markers.

Opening Activity

Step 1: Talk about ways we can get ourselves dirty on the outside.

Step 2: Each child that suggests a way they can make marks using a marker on the fabric.

Step 3: Once the fabric is really dirty, tell people that you have to wear this shirt to a party and that if you wore it like this, you would be distracted because of how dirty your shirt was, and you wouldn't be able to enjoy the party! Then soak it in the bleach water for a few minutes while taking time to read the passage.

Read Mark 5:1-20

They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the pigs, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea.

The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

Discussion

Check out what happened to the fabric after soaking it into the bleach. (hopefully, it will be white again – you may want to test this out ahead of time just to be sure it works). Now you can go to the party and have a good time. Discuss how what we did to the shirt reflects what Jesus did with the man's life.

Question 1: How did Jesus treat the man with the unclean spirit?

He healed the man by sending away the spirits that were tormenting him. He then told him to tell his friends that the Lord has had mercy on him and done good things for him.

Question 2: Why do you think the people asked Jesus to leave their region?

Let the kids answer the question on their own. Some answers might be, "They were scared," "They didn't like the fact that Jesus helped someone they didn't approve of," or "They didn't understand who he was."



Question 3: Jesus took away something that was distracting the man from focusing on God. What distracts you from focusing on God?

Let the kids answer the question on their own.

Question 4: Jesus asked the man to share with others what Jesus had done for him. Do you think that was easy or difficult for him to do? Is it easy for you to share with your friends what Jesus has done in your life?

Let the kids answer the question on their own.

Wrap Up

Remind the kids that just like Jesus did so much for the man in the story and had mercy on him, He wants to do the same for us. He came to live among us even though He is God, and He chose to die and then come back to life to pay for all of our sins. This is one way He shows us His beautiful mercy, and He loves to show it to us every day by removing things that keep us from focusing on Him when we ask Him.

Close in prayer by asking God to show us the things that distract us from God. Ask God to remove these things, and then thank Him for His mercy. Pray that we would all look for opportunities to share with others the love of Jesus.