

# The Life of Christ, Teacher's Guide

## Lesson 6: Lord Over Disease, Demons, and Death

Mark 5:1–43

### Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

This lesson displays the authority of Jesus over the three great enemies of humanity: demonic powers, disease, and death. In one chapter Mark gathers the deliverance of the Gerasene demoniac, the healing of the woman with the flow of blood, and the raising of Jairus' daughter. Doctrinally, the first aim is to let these accounts do what they were given to do: reveal who Jesus is. These miracles are real, historical works, reported as events that happened before witnesses, and they confirmed His identity and authenticated His message. They are signs that point to His deity and to the in-breaking of God's kingdom. John tells us plainly that the signs were written so that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (John 20:30–31).

The second doctrinal aim requires special care, and it comes to a head at Question 9. While we affirm the miracles as genuine and historical, we must handle rightly the question of miraculous sign gifts today. Scripture presents these signs as serving to confirm God's revelation while it was being given. The Lord worked with the apostles, confirming the word by accompanying signs (Mark 16:20), and the great salvation was attested by signs, wonders, and gifts of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 2:3–4). With the New Testament now complete, the revelation it confirmed is fully given. So we do not teach these miracles as a promise or pattern of present-day miraculous sign gifts. God still answers prayer and still heals according to His will, but the confirming sign gifts of the apostolic age belonged to that age of revelation. Teach this clearly but warmly, keeping the focus on the Christ to whom the signs point.

Formationally, this chapter is a gift. It meets people in their places of deepest helplessness and shows a Lord with authority over every one of them. It calls the delivered to bear witness at home, the comfortable to welcome the disruptive power of Christ, the desperate to press through to Him in faith, and the fearful to answer their fear with trust: "Do not fear, only believe." Help your class bring their own helplessness to the One who is Lord over disease, demons, and death.

### Question 1

#### Student Question:

*In Mark 5:1–13, Jesus confronts a man no chains could hold, possessed by a legion of demons, and with a word He sets him free. What does this account reveal about the reality of evil spiritual powers and about Jesus' authority over them?*

### Commentary and Teaching Notes

Take the reality of the scene seriously. Mark describes a man under the control of many demons, living among the tombs, uncontrollable and self-destructive. The Gospels do not present demonic power as mere ancient superstition; they treat it as real. There is a personal force of evil at work in the world, and its aim is always to enslave and destroy what God has made.

Then set Jesus' authority against that backdrop. The man whom no chains could bind is mastered by a single word from Jesus. The demons recognize Him, fear Him, and must obey Him. There is no contest. The contrast is stunning: the strongest human restraints failed, but the word of Christ prevailed instantly. This is the authority of God over the entire spiritual realm.

Draw out the picture of redemption. At the end, the man sits clothed and in his right mind, restored to himself and to community. This is what Jesus does with those the enemy has ruined: He frees, clothes, and restores. The deliverance is a vivid picture of the salvation Christ brings to every captive of sin and darkness.

Bring it to assurance, without sensationalism. The class need not fear the powers of darkness, for those powers tremble before Christ. Keep the focus on His supremacy rather than on speculation about demons. The point of the passage is not the legion but the Lord who commands it.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- The reality of personal, evil spiritual powers opposed to God
- The absolute authority of Christ over the demonic realm
- The aim of evil to enslave and destroy, contrasted with Christ who frees and restores
- Deliverance as a picture of the salvation Christ brings to captives
- Confidence in Christ's supremacy rather than fear of dark powers

### **Discussion Prompts**

- What does this account show us about the reality of evil spiritual powers?
- How does the ease of Jesus' victory reveal who He is?
- What does the restored condition of the man picture about salvation in Christ?

### **Question 2**

#### **Student Question:**

*After his deliverance, the man begs to go with Jesus, but Jesus sends him home to tell his own people what the Lord has done for him (5:18–20). Where is Jesus calling you to bear witness to His work right where you live, among the people who already know you?*

### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

Notice the man's instinct and Jesus' redirection. The freed man wants to stay with Jesus, which is a good desire. But Jesus sends him home, to his own people, to tell what the Lord has done for him and how He has had mercy on him. Sometimes the call to follow Jesus is a call to go back, not to go away.

Highlight that the man's mission field is home, the very place where his old life was known. Those who knew him as the wild man among the tombs would now see him whole. There is no more powerful testimony than a changed life among the people who knew us before. The man had no theological training; he simply told what Jesus had done for him.

Apply it to the class. Many of us would find it easier to witness to strangers than to family, neighbors, and coworkers who know our past and our flaws. Yet that is often exactly where Jesus sends us. Invite each person to name one person or circle, right where they live, to whom they could tell what the Lord has done for them.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- The call to bear witness where we live, among those who know us
- Testimony as simply telling what the Lord has done for us
- The power of a changed life as evidence of Christ's work
- Sometimes following Jesus means going home rather than going away

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Why do you think Jesus sent the man home rather than letting him follow?
- Why is it often harder to witness to those who know us best?
- To whom, right where you live, could you tell what the Lord has done for you?

### **Question 3**

#### **Student Question:**

*When the townspeople saw the delivered man and learned what had happened to their pigs, they were afraid and begged Jesus to leave their region (5:14-17). What does their response teach us about how people can react to the disruptive power of Jesus, even when He has done something good?*

### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

Let the irony land. Jesus has just done something wonderful, freeing a tormented man, and yet the townspeople respond not with gratitude but with fear, and they ask Him to leave. The loss of the pigs, a loss of property and livelihood, weighed more heavily with them than the restoration of a human being.

Explain the deeper dynamic. The power of Jesus is disruptive. It overturns the settled order of things, including our economies, our comforts, and our control. The townspeople preferred their

familiar world, even with a madman in the tombs, to the presence of One whose power they could not manage. People do not always reject Jesus because He has done wrong; sometimes they reject Him precisely because His goodness costs them something.

Apply it honestly. This is a sober warning that we can prefer our comfort to Christ. The class should not look down on the townspeople too quickly; the same impulse lives in us. Where the power and claims of Jesus threaten our security or our control, we may quietly wish He would keep His distance.

Point to the cost and the invitation. Welcoming Jesus means welcoming the One who will disrupt as well as bless, who will reorder our priorities and unsettle our comforts. The next, more personal question presses this home.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- The disruptive power of Jesus that unsettles our comforts and control
- Preferring property, security, and the familiar over the presence of Christ
- Rejecting Jesus not for doing wrong but for the cost of His goodness
- The warning that we, too, can ask Jesus to keep His distance

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Why did the townspeople ask Jesus to leave after He had done something good?
- What does this reveal about how people respond to the disruptive power of Jesus?
- In what ways might we be tempted to make the same choice?

### **Question 4**

#### **Student Question:**

*The people of that region preferred their comfort and their property over the presence of Jesus. Where are you tempted to choose the familiar, the comfortable, or the safe over allowing Jesus to disrupt your life with His power and His claims?*

### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

This self-examining question turns the townspeople's choice into a mirror. We rarely reject Jesus outright; more often we quietly keep Him at the edges of our lives, welcoming His comfort while resisting His disruption. Help the class see where they do this.

Name the common forms. We may resist His claims on our money, our time, our relationships, or our plans. We may prefer the safety of a manageable, undemanding faith to the upheaval of taking Him seriously. The familiar can be a powerful idol, even when it holds us in something less than life.

Move toward willing surrender. The goal is not to manufacture chaos but to stop resisting the good and reordering work of Christ. Invite each person to name one area where they have been choosing comfort or control over the disruptive power of Jesus, and to ask for grace to welcome Him there, even though it will cost them something.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Keeping Jesus at the edges while welcoming only His comfort
- Comfort, security, and the familiar as subtle idols
- Resisting Christ's claims on money, time, relationships, and plans
- Welcoming the reordering work of Christ even when it costs us

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Where are you tempted to choose comfort or control over the claims of Jesus?
- What familiar thing might you be holding onto more tightly than His presence?
- What would it look like to welcome His disruption in that area?

### **Question 5**

#### **Student Question:**

*In Mark 5:25–34, a woman who had suffered for twelve years reaches out in faith to touch Jesus' garment and is instantly healed, and Jesus says, "Daughter, your faith has made you well" (v. 34). What does this account teach about Jesus' power to heal and about the kind of faith that lays hold of Him?*

#### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

Set the woman's desperation in view. Twelve years of illness, all her money spent on physicians, and only worse for it. Her condition also made her ceremonially unclean, cutting her off from normal social and religious life. She is at the end of every human resource. This is the backdrop against which her faith shines.

Describe the nature of her faith. She believes that even to touch the edge of Jesus' garment will be enough, and she presses through the crowd to do it. Her faith is not perfect or fully understood; it is mixed with fear and perhaps some folk notions about touching His clothes. Yet it is real faith that reaches out to Christ, and Jesus honors it. Power goes out from Him, and she is healed in an instant.

Note how Jesus draws her out. He does not let her slip away in secret. He calls her forward, hears her whole story, and speaks tenderly: "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." He wants more than her healing; He wants her to know the One who healed her, and to leave with peace and dignity restored. Healing leads to relationship.

Be careful, here and at Question 9, not to turn this into a formula promising that enough faith always secures physical healing. The account shows the real power of Christ and the reaching faith that lays hold of Him; it is not a guarantee that every illness will be cured on demand. Keep the focus on Jesus' power and compassion and on a faith that comes to Him with real need.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- The real power of Christ to heal, displayed in history
- Faith that reaches out to Christ even when imperfect or mixed with fear
- Jesus drawing the woman into relationship, not just granting healing
- Christ's tenderness in restoring her peace and dignity
- Avoiding the error of treating faith as a formula that guarantees healing

### **Discussion Prompts**

- What made this woman's situation so desperate?
- What does her reaching faith teach us about coming to Christ?
- Why did Jesus call her forward rather than let her slip away healed but unknown?

### **Question 6**

#### **Student Question:**

*This woman pressed through a crowd and through her own fear and shame to reach Jesus. Where do you need to press through obstacles, discouragement, or embarrassment to come to Jesus with your real need rather than keeping a polite distance?*

#### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

This question invites the class to imitate the woman's determined faith. She did not let the crowd, her uncleanness, or her fear keep her from Jesus. She pressed through everything that stood between her and Him. Many of us, by contrast, keep a polite distance, bringing Jesus our tidy requests while hiding our deepest needs.

Name the obstacles we face. For some it is discouragement, the weariness of long unanswered prayer, like the woman's twelve years. For others it is shame, the fear of being known in our real condition. For others it is simply the crowd of distractions and busyness that keeps us from drawing near. Each must press through something different.

Encourage bold, honest approach. The God who welcomed this trembling woman welcomes us. Invite each person to name the obstacle they most need to press through, and the real need they have been keeping at a polite distance, and to bring it honestly to Christ this week rather than hiding it.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Determined faith that presses through obstacles to reach Christ
- Discouragement, shame, and distraction as barriers to coming to Jesus
- Bringing our real needs rather than keeping a polite distance
- The welcome of Christ to those who come honestly and desperately

### **Discussion Prompts**

- What obstacle most often keeps you from coming fully to Jesus?
- What real need have you been keeping at a polite distance from Him?
- What would it look like to press through and bring it to Him this week?

### **Question 7**

#### **Student Question:**

*When word came that Jairus' daughter had died, Jesus told the grieving father, "Do not fear, only believe" (v. 36), and then took the dead child by the hand and raised her to life. What does this reveal about Jesus' authority even over death, and how does it ground our hope?*

#### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

Feel the weight of the moment. The messengers arrive with the worst news a parent can hear: your daughter is dead; trouble the Teacher no further. Death seems to have spoken the final word. It is into that exact moment that Jesus says, "Do not fear, only believe." He speaks of faith precisely where hope appears to have ended.

Show the tenderness and the authority together. Jesus takes the dead child by the hand, an act that would render Him unclean by the law, and speaks to her in the homely language of a parent waking a child: "Little girl, get up." And she does. Death, which masters every human power, simply yields to His word as the demons and the disease had done. He is Lord over the last enemy.

Ground the class's hope in this. This raising is a sign and a foretaste. The girl would one day die again, but her rising points forward to the resurrection that Christ Himself secures. Because Jesus has authority over death, those who belong to Him need not face it as the end. Our hope is not wishful thinking but rests on the Lord who holds death in His hands and who will Himself rise and raise His people.

Prepare the way to the resurrection theme that will crown this study. The Lord who raised Jairus' daughter is the same Lord who will conquer death decisively at His own empty tomb, and who promises resurrection to all who are His (1 Corinthians 15:54–57).

#### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Christ's authority over death, the last enemy
- Faith spoken into the very moment hope seems ended: "Do not fear, only believe"

- The raising as a sign and foretaste of the resurrection Christ secures
- Hope grounded in the Lord who holds death in His hands
- The link to Christ's own resurrection and the promise to His people (1 Corinthians 15)

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Why is it striking that Jesus says "only believe" at the moment of death?
- What does the raising of the girl reveal about Jesus' authority?
- How does His power over death ground the hope of those who belong to Him?

### **Question 8**

#### **Student Question:**

*Jesus' words to Jairus, "Do not fear, only believe," came at the very moment fear seemed most justified. Where does fear most tend to paralyze you, and what would it look like to answer that fear with trust in the Lord who holds even death in His hands?*

#### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

This self-examining question takes Jesus' words to Jairus and makes them personal. Fear is one of the most common and most paralyzing forces in our lives, and Jesus' command, "Do not fear, only believe," is not a denial of real danger but a call to anchor ourselves in Him in the midst of it.

Help the class name their particular fears. For some it is fear of death, their own or a loved one's; for others it is fear of the future, of failure, of loss, of what they cannot control. Jesus does not shame Jairus for being afraid; He gives him something stronger than the fear, a Person to trust.

Show how faith answers fear. Trust does not always remove the threat, but it changes who we face it with. To answer fear with faith is to fix our eyes on the Lord who holds even death in His hands, and to take the next step trusting Him. Invite each person to name one fear that tends to paralyze them and one way they will answer it with trust this week, perhaps through prayer, through Scripture, or through a step of obedience they have been too afraid to take.

#### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Fear as a paralyzing force, and faith as its answer
- Jesus' call to trust in the face of real danger: "Do not fear, only believe"
- Anchoring ourselves in the Person of Christ rather than denying the threat
- Taking the next step of obedience while trusting the Lord

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Where does fear most tend to paralyze you?



- What does it mean to answer that fear with trust rather than denial?
- What is one step of faith you will take this week in the face of that fear?

## Question 9

### Student Question:

*These miracles were real, historical works that confirmed Jesus' identity and authenticated His message (compare John 20:30–31). At the same time, Scripture presents such signs as confirming God's revelation in the apostolic age (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3–4), now complete in the New Testament. How should we understand the purpose of Jesus' miracles, what they prove about who He is, and why we look to the confirmed and completed word rather than expecting the same miraculous sign gifts today?*

### Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the heaviest doctrinal block of the lesson, and it calls for clarity and care. Begin positively with what the miracles are and what they prove. They are real, historical works, not legends or symbols, performed before witnesses. Their purpose is to reveal and confirm who Jesus is. John states it directly: the signs were written so that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in His name (John 20:30–31). The miracles authenticate His identity and His message.

Then explain the function of signs in God's plan. Throughout Scripture, miraculous signs accompany the giving of new revelation, confirming that the message is truly from God. So when the gospel was first proclaimed, the Lord worked with the messengers, confirming the word by the signs that followed (Mark 16:20). Hebrews says the great salvation, first declared by the Lord, was attested to us by those who heard, while God bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 2:3–4). The signs served to confirm the revelation as it was being given.

Draw the careful conclusion. The revelation those signs confirmed is now complete in the New Testament. The confirming work has been accomplished; the message has been authenticated and written down. So we do not teach these miracles as a promise or pattern of present-day miraculous sign gifts. This is not because God lacks power, but because the purpose those particular gifts served, confirming revelation in the apostolic age, has been fulfilled. We now have the confirmed and completed word, sufficient for everything God intends (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

Guard against two misunderstandings as you close. First, this does not mean God no longer acts or answers prayer; He still heals and works according to His will, and we are still to pray for one another. Second, this does not diminish the miracles of Jesus in the slightest; it honors their purpose. Keep the focus where the signs themselves point, on Christ. The miracles were never

an end in themselves; they were fingers pointing to the Son of God, and that is exactly how we should read them today.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- The miracles as real, historical works confirming Christ's identity (John 20:30–31)
- Signs functioning to confirm God's revelation as it was given (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3–4)
- The completed New Testament as the confirmed and sufficient revelation (2 Timothy 3:16–17)
- Why we do not expect the same miraculous sign gifts today
- God's ongoing care and answer to prayer, distinct from confirming sign gifts
- Reading the miracles as signs that point to Christ, not as ends in themselves

### **Discussion Prompts**

- According to John 20:30–31, why were the signs written down?
- What does Scripture say the confirming signs accomplished (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3–4)?
- Why do we look to the completed word rather than expecting the same sign gifts today, and how is this different from saying God no longer acts?

### **Question 10**

#### **Student Question:**

*Of the three helpless situations in this chapter, the bondage of the demoniac, the long illness of the woman, and the death of the child, which one most mirrors a place of helplessness in your own life right now? Name one specific way you will bring that need to the Lord who has authority over all of them.*

### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

This capstone draws the whole chapter into a personal response. Each of the three accounts pictures a different kind of helplessness: bondage we cannot break, suffering we cannot cure, and loss we cannot reverse. Most people in the class will see themselves in at least one of them.

Invite honest identification without forcing disclosure. Some carry a bondage, an addiction, a stronghold, a pattern they cannot break on their own. Some carry a long affliction, a chronic illness, a wound that has not healed in years. Some carry grief or a death of hope. Help each person quietly name where they are most helpless.

Turn that helplessness toward the Lord. The point of the chapter is that Jesus has authority over every one of these. Encourage each person to bring their specific need to Him in concrete ways this week, through honest prayer, through the support of fellow believers, through pressing through their obstacles like the woman, or through trusting Him in the face of fear like Jairus.

Close by reminding the class that the same Lord who mastered demons, disease, and death in Mark 5 is the One to whom they bring their need, and He is able.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Recognizing our own places of helplessness before the Lord
- Christ's authority over bondage, affliction, and death applied personally
- Bringing specific needs to Christ in concrete, faith-filled ways
- The sufficiency and compassion of the Lord who is able to help

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Which of the three situations most mirrors your own helplessness right now?
- What has kept you from bringing that need fully to the Lord?
- What is one specific way you will bring it to Him this week?