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## Dealing with Demons

*Mark 5:1-20*

I had never had a direct confrontation with one of Satan's angels, but the man standing in front of me was definitely under demonic control. He had come into our church on a Sunday morning, but he had not come as a worshiper. A look of disdain for everything we stood for was in his eyes—and there was something more. The power of evil surrounded him. I sensed it the moment I came near him. As I walked to the front of the auditorium to begin the service, I asked the Spirit of God to block the influence of any evil spirits upon our worship. The power of God's Spirit was evident that morning as the congregation worshiped with joy and listened to God's Word with intense interest.

GROUP DISCUSSION. What person or event comes to mind when you think of evil?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Do you think demons are active in our modern world? What leads you to that conclusion?

When Satan rebelled against the Lord and was cast down from his exalted position, a large group of angels followed him. These angels are actively pursuing Satan's agenda. Some psychologists and theologians want to dismiss demons as an ancient myth. Jesus, however, believed that demons were real. He battled with them dozens of times. *Read Mark 5:1-20.*

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1. How would you feel if you lived near the man described in verses 1-5?

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2. When Jesus addresses the man in verses 6-9, who responds—the man or the demons? Explain.

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3. What can you learn from this account about the physical, emotional and spiritual oppression that people under demonic influence experience?

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4. The demons recognized Jesus immediately even though Jesus had never been in the region. What does that tell you about the knowledge evil angels possess?

5. Would you expect demonic control to be exhibited in our culture like it was here in Mark 5? Explain how it might be displayed differently or what elements might be the same.

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6. How would you evaluate the response of the people living in the area to Jesus' restoration of the man (vv. 14-20)?

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7. What steps can we as Christians take to help someone who is oppressed by demonic forces?

What risks are involved in confronting demonic powers?

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8. In your opinion can a genuine Christian be possessed like the man in the passage was? Explain to what level you believe a Christian can be "demonized."

9. Is there an area of your life in which you feel evil influences are trying to gain control? If so, how are you fighting against these influences?

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10. What specific steps can you take to keep your spiritual life and focus in balance?

*Thank God the Father that, in answer to Jesus' prayer, he protects us from the evil one and his angels (John 17:15).*

**Now or Later**

Read Luke 13:10-17. What do you think were the real reasons for the synagogue ruler's reaction to this deliverance?

Based on these two incidents in Jesus' ministry, what should our response be to a person's genuine deliverance and restoration from demonic oppression?