

“I Was in Prison...”

The Man Possessed by Demons
Luke 8:26-39

Level B

Ages 7-10

Series Theme: You shall love the Lord your God, and your neighbor as yourself.

Lesson Focus: The Lord frees us from evils if we ask Him for help.

Reading Summary: Jesus and His disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee and landed in the land of the Gadarenes. They were met by a man possessed by demons who lived among the tombs outside of the town. Recognizing Jesus, he begged Him not to torment him. Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Although he was chained, the spirit had often seized the man so that he broke his chains and was driven into the wilderness. Jesus asked the spirit’s name, and the spirit answered, “Legion,” because it was really many demons. The demons begged to enter into a herd of swine that were grazing nearby. As soon as this happened, the swine rushed down a steep slope into the Sea of Galilee and drowned. People came to see what had happened and found the man in his right mind, sitting at Jesus’ feet. People in the region were afraid and asked Jesus to leave. He told the man to return to his house and tell others what the Lord had done for him.

Lesson 6		Materials Supplied	Materials Needed
1. Welcome Warm-up Activity (2-3 minutes)	Activity	All Chained Up directions p. 2 <i>Chain Links A-B</i> , pp. 6-7	scissors, tape
2. Focus on the Word Use all activities (5-7 minutes)	Read the Word and Talk About It	see <i>Reading Summary</i> above discussion guide p. 2	Bible or copy of Luke 8:26-39
3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Make turn balloons into pigs, attach rubber bands to the tail; use the tail to punch away things we should not do	Pig Punching Balloons directions p. 3 <i>Pig Drawing Ideas</i> p. 5	pink balloons, black permanent markers, rubber bands
	Make cut out loving action “stones” and use them to make a picture of a heavenly home	A Home in Heaven directions pp. 3-4 <i>My Home in Heaven</i> p. 8	paper to assemble project on, glue <i>optional:</i> markers or crayons, glitter and other decorating supplies
	Coloring Picture	Demons Cast Out p. 9	crayons, markers or colored pencils
4. Wrap It Up (2-3 minutes)	Memory Verse introduce the memory verse for the week	Memory Verse <i>Parent Notes</i> p. 10	

1. Welcome Warm-up Activity

All Chained Up

*This activity illustrates the way in which doing one evil often leads to more, and in time chains us up. Preparation: print & cut apart a copy of *Chain Links*, pp. 6–7*

1. Imagine what could happen if someone was jealous because a friend had something fun that he wanted. (Tape up the “Jealous” *Chain Link* where everyone can see it.)
2. Now imagine that he got angry because the friend was not sharing this thing with him and so he told others that his was mean. (Tape the “Spread Rumors” *Chain Link* next to “Jealous”.)
3. Now what if he realized his friend wasn’t looking and took the thing without asking. (Tape the “Take Something” *Link* up next.)
4. And then when his friend saw that it was gone he told him he hadn’t seen it. (Tape the “Lie” *Chain Link* up next.)
5. All of these evils are connected, like the links of a chain. They can bind up our minds and make us feel unhappy. In our story today the Lord freed a man who was being imprisoned by evil spirits.

2. Focus on the Word

Read: Luke 8:26-39. Teaching pictures are available online, e.g. www.bitly.com/SMLuke8.

Today’s story is about a man who was imprisoned by evil spirits. The evil spirits who possessed him made him hurt himself and others even though he did not want to. For this reason he could not live with other people.

Where was the man living? In caves away from town where the dead were buried. **People believed that anyone who went near dead bodies was unclean, so nobody could go near him.**

How had people tried to help him? They had chained him so he wouldn’t get hurt. He was so strong that he kept breaking the chains, so it did not work.

Sometimes evil spirits stir up bad feelings and thoughts in our minds. For example, we might get angry if we do not get our way. We might yell, “That stinks!” Unclean thoughts like these come from evil spirits that are with us. Our parents might try to help us by giving us time by ourselves to think. Have you ever spent time alone because your parents told you to? What was it like?

Evil spirits were once people living in the world who allowed selfishness to rule permanently in their hearts. They like to stir up bad thoughts and feelings in people’s minds. The Lord lets them do this in certain ways so that people can see their own selfishness and learn to ask for the Lord’s help to fight against it.

Why were the demons called “Legion”? Because there were so many. **Often doing one wrong thing leads to doing other things too, e.g. a person might steal, and then lie about stealing. “Legion” means all evils from the loves of self and the world (see *True Christianity* 533).**

The Lord sent the demons into the pigs. What did the pigs do? They rushed down a cliff and fell into the sea. This is a picture of the Lord sending the evil spirits back into hell. If we are struggling with evil spirits we can ask the Lord for help, and He will send the evil spirits away from us.

What happened to the man once the demons had left him? The man became himself again. He stopped having unclean thoughts. People were amazed when they saw him. The Lord sent him back to live in the town and told him to tell others about what had been done for him.

When we ask for help from the Lord to send away evil spirits that are bothering us, positive thoughts and feelings from heaven can fill our minds instead.

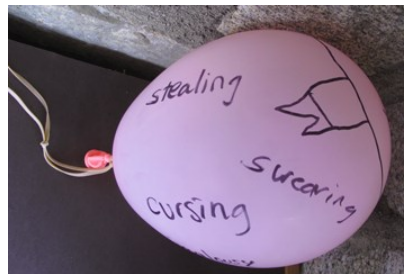
3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

Choice

Pig Punching Balloons

In order to prepare for heaven we must learn to stop behaving in ways that are selfish. When we do this the Lord removes selfishness from inside of us as well as from the behaviors that others see (see *Divine Providence* 100). Children will decorate pink balloons like pigs and write hurtful things that we should try to get out of our lives on them. They will then attach rubber bands to the neck of the balloon and punch the balloon to send the evils away.



1. The evil spirits who were with the man asked the Lord to send them into a herd of pigs that were feeding nearby. We will decorate balloons and make them into pigs.
2. Give each student an inflated balloon and a permanent marker. The tie at the neck of the balloon is like the pig's tail. Draw pig ears, eyes, snout, and legs on the balloon. See *Pig Drawing Ideas* (p. 7) for inspiration.
3. We are going to write the names of hurtful things we want to send away on the balloons. What kinds of things should we write? (lies, stealing, hurting others, hitting, etc.)
4. Give each child three rubber bands. Show them how to connect the rubber bands together by looping one through another.
5. Fasten the chain of rubber bands to the neck of the balloon.
6. Hold the rubber band chain and punch the evils on the balloon away!

Choice

A Home in Heaven

The man with the evil spirits made his home in the tombs outside of town. This represents the state of our minds when we let selfish feelings and false ideas take the lead in our lives. After the Lord cast out the evil spirits, the man could go back to the town and live among others. This represents the state of our minds when we live for others in the light of true ideas from the Word. In the Word, the human mind is represented by a house (see *True Christianity* 395.2). The mind is where we live spiritually, and we are building our heavenly homes through our choices on earth. When are minds are formed by true ideas from the Lord's Word we are building a heavenly home we will live in for ever.

Materials Needed for Each Student

pink balloon (have extras in case some pop), thin permanent marker, 3 rubber bands

Prepare in Advance

Print a copy of *Pig Drawing Ideas* p. 7 to share. Make a sample punching balloon. Blow up the balloons.

New Church Concept Evil Imprisons Us

People who are infested by evils from hell are as though bound in prison, for they cannot help but think about evil, even if they will good. This gives rise to an inner combat and distress from which they cannot be set free, almost like people in chains. *Apocalypse Revealed* 99

Materials Needed for Each Student

My Home in Heaven p. 8, scissors, paper, glue, markers or crayons
optional: fancy supplies for decorating

Prepare in Advance

See next page.



Heavenly Homes *continued*

1. At the start of our story the man was possessed by evil spirits and living in an unclean place away from others. This is a picture of the kinds of thoughts we stay in when we are behaving selfishly. The things we might do at these times—such as lying, and hurting others—do not lead to the happiness of heaven.
2. What kinds of ideas help us build a home in heaven? (True ideas from the Word. See *My Home in Heaven* (p. 8) for ideas.)
3. We are going to build beautiful heavenly homes from “stones” with true ideas. Hand out *My Home in Heaven* (p.8), paper, scissors and glue.
4. Cut out the shapes and build a home by gluing the pieces to the blank piece of paper.
5. *Optional*: decorate your picture with markers, sequins and glitter.

Prepare in Advance

Make a sample heavenly home. *Optional*: make the project more colorful by copying on to paper of various colors. In class, have children trade pieces and build a multi-colored home.



Choice

Coloring Picture: Demons Cast Out

Hand out copies of *Demons Cast Out* (p. 9) and invite the children to color them.

Materials Needed

copies of *Demons Cast Out* p. 9; crayons, markers, or colored pencils

4. Wrap It Up

Memory Verse

Learn phrase six of Matthew 25:35-36 and review phrases one-five. Read the phrases below aloud. Invite the children to repeat them after you and then have them try to say them on their own. To learn as a song with actions, watch the video at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-for-i-was-hungry-song-actions-to-memorize/>. The video repeats three times for easy sing-along learning.

For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.

Matthew 25:35-36

Closing

The Lord helps us by sending away evil spirits when we ask Him to. Then good thoughts and feelings can flow in from heaven and fill our minds instead.

Give Parent Notes (p. 10) to children as they leave.



Jealous

Covet



Spread Rumors

Kill Reputation

Chain Links A



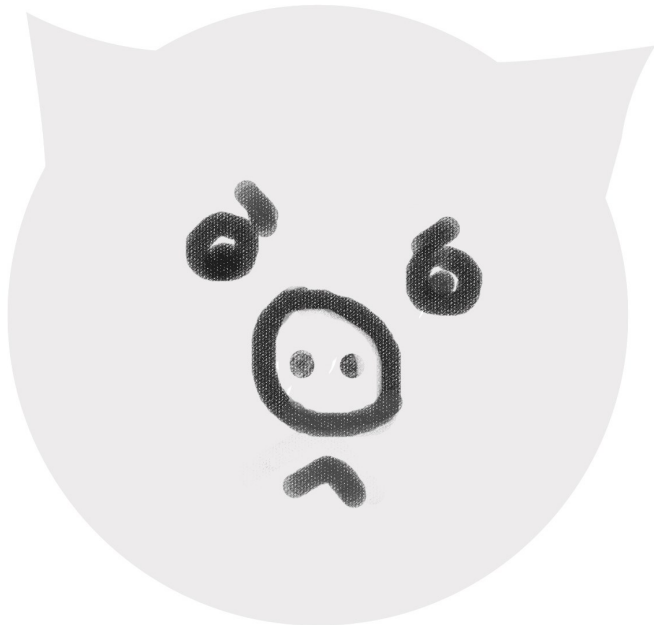
Take
Something

Steal



Lie

Bear False Witness



Trust the Lord

Love the Lord

Love Friends

Be Kind

Share

Tell the Truth

Obey Parents

Control Myself

Be Thankful

The Word

Be Useful

Pray

My Home in Heaven



Demons Cast Out

Parent Notes

Make a copy for each child. Hand out as children leave.

PARENT NOTE

Dear Parents,

Today we learned about a time when the Lord cast out some evil spirits that had imprisoned a man. Ask your child about what happened next!

We have now completed our Memory Verse. We encourage you to review it with your child this week. Here is a video that can help you: <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-for-i-was-hungry-song/>

Memory Verse

For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.
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