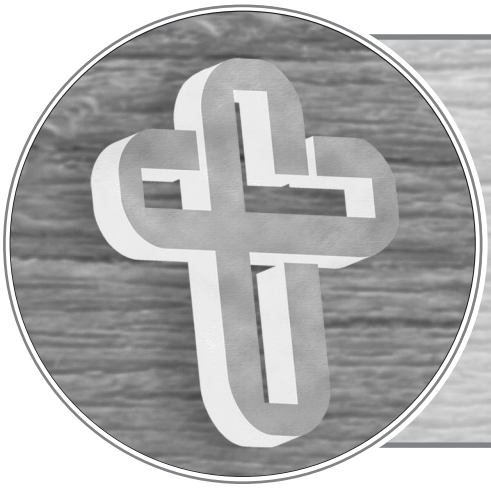


CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
MAY 17/2025

restored at church

Scripture Story: Mark 1:21-28.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 26.
Key Text: Mark 1:27.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

This story of the demoniac is ripe with teaching opportunities. You can use this lesson to teach a variety of spiritual truths. Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to emphasize the spiritual insight that will be most life-transforming for the students.

Consider the role of Jesus as a teacher. The passage highlights the amazement that people had because Jesus taught as one with great authority. A worthwhile track to take on this text would be to challenge the young people to accept Jesus as teacher. Often we speak of accepting Jesus as Savior (i.e., to trust Him for salvation after I die); but Christianity gets real practical when we accept Jesus as t
eacher (i.e., to trust that what He taught determines how I will live every day). To underscore the idea of the authority of Jesus' teaching as the best way to live today could be a very helpful discussion.

Finally, you may wish to explore the topic of temptation with the students and emphasize that healing and freedom come by being in the presence of Jesus. Too often we try to be good by willpower—only to fall again and again to the same old sin. The key, as it flows naturally out of this story, is not to try harder to be good; rather, it is to be in the presence of Jesus. Ellen White points out that the demon-possessed man had just enough spiritual power to come to Jesus, and that was all he needed—after all, wholeness happens when we live in Christ.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Think about the cosmic battle between good and evil. *(Know)*
- Realize how high the stakes really are in this spiritual battle. *(Feel)*
- Completely trust in Jesus as Savior and teacher. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

The Great Controversy, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 8: "All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God's adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the global flood, as presented in the historical account of Genesis 1-11. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation. (Gen. 3; 6-8; Job 1:6-12; Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:12-18; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:4; 5:12-21; 8:19-22; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:14; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Peter 3:6; Rev. 12:4-9.)"

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Note to teachers: Pray earnestly before beginning this lesson that God will fill and surround you and your class with His Spirit. The devil does not like for his ways and methods to be exposed. Pray for wisdom to conduct the discussion in such a way that it meets the needs and challenges of the precious young people who have been entrusted to your care.

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? *section of their lesson.* Have each of the texts read aloud. Discuss what it means that these warnings are given so many times in the Bible. In the second activity, students are to really think about what God means when He says, "I am the Lord your God." Why did He say that at that point? If a number of your students had checked the "All of the above" box, then discuss each statement. What needs are we expressing when we seek out a connection with the supernatural? Who controls our minds? How do we control who control our minds? In the end, lead students to realize that this is all about trusting God. We trust that He knows what is harmful and what is best. We trust that everything that we need to live a happy, hopeful life comes from Him.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

The Word of God warns: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

Roger J. Morneau (1925-1998) was introduced to the occult in his youth. As a result, he experienced life-and-death struggles that he described as playing with fire. By the mercy of God, Roger, shortly before joining a secret society, met Cyril, who offered to give him Bible studies. Cyril and Cynthia Grosse welcomed Roger into their home and introduced him to Jesus, helping him to find Bible answers to his many questions. God used these simple Bible-believing Christians to help the young Roger discover the love of Jesus and accept Him as his Savior just when he was contemplating a fatal decision. It was only by God's miraculous intervention that Roger's life was spared when he accepted Jesus as his personal Savior and claimed the promises of His Word. His story is both troubling and hope-filled. It is troubling because the battle for our minds is real and many people who get involved with the occult are never able to break away from the dark forces of the enemy. Because Roger's story has a happy ending and tells of his deliverance, it is also a story filled with hope. Just as Jesus delivered the demoniac and God had mercy on Roger and saved him from the power of Satan, so He is able and will save those who come to Him, pleading for deliverance. Over the years following his conversion experience Roger Morneau became a man of faith and prayer. His books on the power of prayer have been of encouragement to thousands of people. Some of these titles include: *The Incredible Power of Prayer, When You Need Incredible Answers to Prayer,* and *More Incredible Answers to Prayer.*

The experience of Roger J. Morneau after he found deliverance through Jesus is evidence of the superior power of God. The sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf has crushed the power of the devil. Satan is a defeated enemy who knows that his time is short. Our victory is secured through Jesus, who died for us to "release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:15). In Jesus we have a rock-solid safeguard against the enemy and through His power we can have the victory. He promised, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

Many things involving the supernatural seem spectacular and sensational and as humans, especially teens and youth, we are naturally attracted to such. However, spectacular and sensational supernatural activities such as those portrayed in popular media and those that are glorified in many countries are fleeting and superficial. On the other hand, there is a depth of spiritual experience in the study of God's word. The same Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible inspires us as we study it. The Christ who spoke then speaks now. The Sermon on the Mount and His parables and miracles all echo through the centuries. They still touch our hearts. They still transform

our lives. They still radically change us inside.

Remember the counsel of the apostle James, who declares, "Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). The demoniac you studied about in this week's lesson was changed by Jesus' words. We too can be changed and restored to purity and holiness through the study of God's Word in the Bible through the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Out of the Story for Teachers

Read the *Into the Story* section with your students from Mark 1:21-28. Refer them to one of the questions in the *Out of the Story* section of the students' lesson, in which they were asked to look at three instances in which Jesus spoke with authority to something. Have them list the things over which Jesus exercised authority. (Mark 1:25—demons [powers]; Mark 4:39—nature [life]; Luke 7:14, 15—death.) Then have the class find Romans 8:38, 39. Have them read those verses together. "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Questions for Discussion

- What does the story of the demoniac teach us about the power of God?
- What did the disciples and the demon-possessed man learn about Jesus?
- How can we entrust our lives to God's leading?

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

1. **Note the Context.** Mark, the shortest of the four Gospels, starts with Jesus' baptism, moves to the temptation in the wilderness, and then quickly transitions to the calling of the disciples in order to go public with the proclamation of the gospel. "Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!'" (Mark 1:14, 15, NIV). Jesus launches His ministry by teaching in the synagogue. As soon as you finish reading the story of Satan attacking Jesus after He had been in the desert for 40 days, you find Jesus being confronted by the devil (only this time it is in church!) through this demon-possessed man.
2. **Note the City.** Jesus had recently moved from Nazareth to Capernaum (see Matthew 4:12, 13). Capernaum was known as a city of great wealth. Its reputation for great sin and decadence was well deserved. Being the headquarters for many Roman troops, pagan influences from all around the Roman Empire were commonplace. This was an ideal place for Jesus to confront the skeptics and believers alike with the gospel (Mark 1:14, 15).

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**
  Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.
- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight *statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book* The Desire of Ages. *Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from* Out of the Story.
- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.
- **Further Insight**
  Ask them how the quotes in Further Insight *convey the point of the story in this lesson.*

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

RABBI 101

Who Cares?

According to a Web page dedicated to teaching tips for instructors, caring for the student is suggested as "the single most important ingredient for effective teaching." Here are their suggestions as to how to show students they matter:

Take their questions and concerns seriously. If you don't know the answer to a question, promise to find out and share the answer during the next class session.

Organize and prepare well for each class session, using handouts, outlines, audiovisual materials, or other instructional materials that go beyond the assigned readings.

Make yourself available to students after class and between sessions, taking time to learn their names and get to know them personally. By demonstrating that you respect and care about students, you increase the chances that they will become engaged in the class, and you open the door to relationships in which you learn from students just as they learn from you.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Distribute paper and pencils/pens. Ask students to think about what it would be like if Jesus were to visit them at home one day. Would they share openly with Him everything that preoccupies them? Would they allow Jesus to exercise authority over every area of their lives? They may think that they are fine since they are not guilty of outrageous sins. But have them think about what they are watching, reading, and listening to. How are they spending their time? What is it that occupies their thoughts? When they have identified the area of their lives that they need to surrender to Jesus, have them write it down on paper (without writing down their names!), fold them, and put them in a container. Save them for the prayer at the end.

Summary

Share the following story in your own words:

In his book *The Heat: Steelworkers' Lives and Legends* Joe Gutierrez shares five stories from his 42 years as a steelworker. His story entitled "Snow Danced in August" describes a scene of silvery dust flakes that frequently floated to the floor in an area of the mill where steel strips rolled over pads in a tall cooling tower. For years workers and visitors alike flocked to the sight, which was especially picturesque at night.

The dust was asbestos. "Everybody breathed it," wrote Gutierrez. He now suffers from the slow, choking grip of asbestosis, as do many plant workers.

"Who am I? I'm everybody. Can't walk too far now. I get tired real fast, and it hurts when I breathe, sometimes. And to think we used to fight over that job."*

How many things in our world are like the silver flakes in that steel mill? Enchanting but deadly. Pray with your class, asking God to rebuke all the things written on the papers in the container. Pray that each student and you will experience the power of God's Word in each life. Ask God to remove from us the desire for the things of this world and to help us to trust Him supremely.

*"Steelworkers Break the Mold," Chicago *Tribune*, June 27, 2001.

Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*),* chapter 26.

*A special adaptation, *Humble Hero*, has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.

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MAY 17 2025

STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: Mark 1:21-28.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 26.

restored at church



Photo © Thinkstock 2017

flashlight

"The mind of this wretched sufferer had been darkened by Satan, but in the Saviour's presence a ray of light had pierced the gloom. He was roused to long for freedom from Satan's control; but the demon resisted the power of Christ. When the man tried to appeal to Jesus for help, the evil spirit put words into his mouth, and he cried out in an agony of fear. The demoniac partially comprehended that he was in the presence of One who could set him free; but when he tried to come within reach of that mighty hand, another's will held him, another's words found utterance through him. The conflict between the power of Satan and his own desire for freedom was terrible" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 255).

key text

"The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, 'What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.'"

(Mark 1:27, NIV)

what do you think?

Look up the following passages:

Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19:26; Leviticus 19:31; Leviticus 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 1 Samuel 28:3; Isaiah 8:19. All of these texts speak against spiritualism in some form. Why do you think that the warning prohibiting involvement in these things was given over and over?

Read Leviticus 19:31. Why does God say, "I am the LORD your God"?

____ He can supply all our needs.
____ He knows the suffering of a life controlled by demons.
____ Because He is a good God, He alone must have control of our minds.
____ All of the above.

did you know?

Among the most successful agencies of the great deceiver are the delusive teachings and lying wonders of spiritualism. Disguised as an angel of light, he spreads his nets where least suspected. If men would but study the Book of God with earnest prayer that they might understand it, they would not be left in darkness to receive false doctrines" (Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 524).

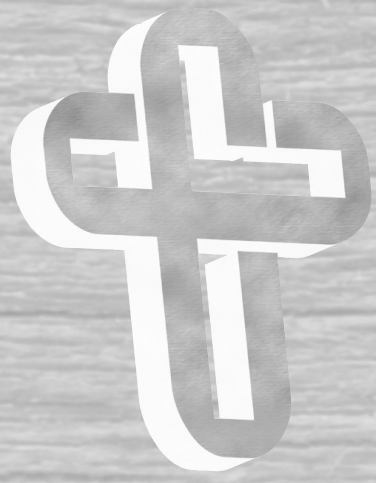
INTO THE STORY

"They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, 'What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!'

" 'Be quiet!' said Jesus sternly. 'Come out of him!' The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

"The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, 'What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.' News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee."

(Mark 1:21-28, NIV)



OUT OF THE STORY

Read Mark 1:21-28; answer the following questions:

1:21 What was the main thing that Jesus was trying to teach His disciples?

_____

_____

1:22 Why were people so amazed at Jesus' teaching?

_____

_____

1:23 How do you picture this man possessed by an impure spirit?

_____

_____

1:24 What strikes you about the demoniac's reaction to Jesus?

_____

_____

Read again Mark 1:25. Compare that to some other times Jesus spoke with authority over something. What was he rebuking in Mark 4:39? Luke 7:14, 15? What does this tell you about the power of Jesus' word?

_____

_____

1:26 What do you learn about this spirit?

_____

_____

1:27 What surprised the people?

_____

_____

1:28 Was the news that spread about Jesus good news or bad news? Explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

punch lines

"Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God" **(Leviticus 19:31, NIV).**

"Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" **(Ephesians 6:13-18, NIV).**

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" **(James 4:7, NIV).**

"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings" **(1 Peter 5:8, 9, NIV).**

further insight

"When once the restraints of God's word and His Spirit are rejected, no man knows to what depths of degradation he may sink."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 258

"The means by which we can overcome the wicked one is that by which Christ overcame,—the power of the word."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 258

Sabbath

Read Ephesians 6:13-18.

All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. . . . [Satan] led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity. . . . This world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation" (The Great Controversy, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 8).

Sunday

Read Mark 1:27.

Read the *Key Text* noting the emphasis in the story on the "authority" of Jesus. Jewish teachers often cited well-respected rabbis in order to give credibility to their teaching. In Jesus' case He did not need to quote some hotshot rabbi. He was and is God. Therefore, His authority eclipses that of any rabbis before Him. Understanding this essential claim of Jesus sheds light on this story and helps us understand why the Pharisees were so exercised about this issue of Jesus' authority.

In what ways do you acknowledge Jesus' authority in your life?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Monday

Read John 14:11-13.

Reflect on the following: Do we have access to the same power that Jesus manifested with the demoniac? If so, why are so many prayers seemingly not answered? Is there anything we can do to lay claim to that supernatural power? If so, what?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Tuesday

Read John 8:31, 32.

Read this week's *Flashlight.* Note how Ellen White points out that it was "in the Saviour's presence" that the darkness was penetrated with light. How can we practice being in God's presence? How will that help us resist temptation? Reflect on how we too can be victorious over sin by living in the presence of Jesus. How does someone live in the presence of Jesus?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Wednesday

Read Romans 8:37-39.

Compile the *Punch Lines* into one verse by taking the main point of each passage and crafting it into one sentence.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thursday

Read Philippians 4:8.

How does the devil try to gain access to my heart? What is the best strategy to resist his advances?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Friday

Read Psalm 139:23, 24.

Ellen White offers this insight into the story of the demoniac: "Every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they can find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart's unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 258).

Do you have a similar plea to God as made in today's Bible reading? Pray and believe that you will receive what you ask.

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 26.

* A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, entitled *Humble Hero*, has been created just for you by the White Estate and Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.