

Chapter 5

Bible Concept: The Author of Mark's Gospel

The Bible is a collection of 66 individual books written over the course of many centuries. Many men and women were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the books of the Bible. The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) were written during the first 50-70 years after Jesus died and rose from the dead.

The Gospel of Mark is believed to be the earliest written Gospel. It dates to around 65 AD, or about 30 years after Jesus' death and resurrection. We say the author is Mark, though we do not know for certain since the author did not put his name into the text. A man known as John Mark was a friend of the evangelist Paul, author of many New Testament letters. Many scholars believe this John Mark is the author of Mark's Gospel. We do not know if John Mark ever knew Jesus in person. He most likely used stories from people who did know Jesus to write his Gospel.

The Gospels are not considered to be of the genre of biography or history. The literary genre of the Gospels is very unique in that it uses historical information and biographical information but is designed to capture our hearts in faith toward God and his Son, Jesus Christ. We read the Gospels to learn about Jesus' life and we accept by faith, not by historical accuracy, the events of Jesus' life.

Watching documentaries on television help us to understand how historical sources and archaeology do or don't make the case for the historical accuracy of the Bible. But our faith in Jesus Christ does not depend on history, it solely rests on the truth that Jesus has died and is risen and now we are forgiven.

Chapter 5 Verse 36 reads:

But Jesus ignored their comments and said,
"Don't be afraid. Just trust me."
New Living Translation (NLT)

But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to
the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear,
only believe."
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Reflect on that statement for a moment.

When we face a difficult situation, it may be hard to trust Jesus. He is not physically standing beside us. We only have our faith to help us trust Jesus. What can help us to learn to trust Jesus more during difficult times?

Definition

The Land of the Gerasenes, or country of Gerasenes, was a place located on the southeast corner of the Sea of Galilee. It was part of the Decapolis, or Ten Towns, which was a political alliance of ten towns. This was outside of the area Jesus would normally travel in. The people who lived in the Decapolis were not religiously or ethnically Jewish.

Memory
Verses

Focus Story: Jesus heals a demon-possessed man, 5:1-20

Is there a person known in your community as someone to avoid? Describe the reasons you are told to avoid this person.

Is there someone who always seems to avoid you? Why do you think this person always avoids you?

The man in today's focus story is possessed by a great multitude of demons. How else is he described?

Would you avoid him? Why does Jesus approach him?

After the pigs drown in the lake, what do the herdsmen do?

What is the reaction of the townspeople?

Sometimes the power of Jesus can be very frightening, we do not understand what is happening and we are scared. What about the powers of Jesus frightens you?

The man who was healed wanted to travel with Jesus, but Jesus had a different task for him. What did Jesus ask him to do?

Who might Jesus be calling you to tell about your faith?

*praying
together*



Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Praying together as a family is a special time. Light a candle to remember God is in your midst as you pray. Be sure there are no distractions while you pray. Agree not to answer the phone. Turn off the TV and radio.

Pray together: O Shepherd Jesus, thank you for making a difference in our life and giving us the gift of forgiveness. Guide us as we share our faith with someone who needs to experience your love, too. Amen

Talk about a news story that causes people to be frightened. Ask God to comfort those who daily experience fear because of war, terror or hunger. Who do you turn to when you are frightened? Ask God to be present with you when you are frightened.

Conclude your time by saying the Lord's Prayer.