

Into the Life of Jesus

a study in the gospel of Mark
study #10

Intro – Where have we been?

Recall (perhaps re-read) the verses in Mark 4: 35-41

- Is Jesus confusing, provoking, stretching or illuminating (or all four) in these verses?
- How has God used this story – recently or in the past – to expand your view of Jesus and his influence, or to speak into your experience of life's current storms?

This week: Digging into Mark 5:1-20

Read these verses aloud as a group (perhaps have two people read it in different versions)

- Where is the action taking place (look especially at verses 2 and 3) and what event in Mark's gospel has immediately preceded it?
- Is this a benign 'safe'—perhaps a 'teaching'—story or are there occurrences in it that seem offensive to you? Explain.

Some Questions:

- Is the demon-possessed man 'one of us' or 'someone else'?
- Is there significance to 'herd of pigs' as a species and a conduit for cleansing (remember: Jewish law)?
- How does Jesus respond to the evil spirits who have invaded the infected man?
- How does Jesus tell the formerly possessed man—now released—to go forward in life?

Digging Deeper:

- What do you make of a Jesus who seems to negotiate with demons for their release, while still remaining 'in charge'?
- What are the real-life social implications surrounding an unexpectedly rescued person?
- What does Jesus do when neighbours are flustered about the Gospel's Good News?
- WHO is ultimately IN CHARGE? And what difference does this knowledge and conviction bring in our lives? (Big question, strategically important response – as much today, as in Jesus' day).

PRAY: for one another, especially that we could hear—really HEAR—and respond to the call of God with eagerness and trust.