



Cuyahoga
Valley Church

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Week of 2.1.26

Mark 5:1-20// Joe Valenti

Please take the opportunity to revisit the CVC Equip
Portrait of a Healthy LifeGroup on a regular basis

CONNECT (10 MIN)

- ① In his prayer on Sunday, Pastor Joe asked the Lord to “remind us that our worth and identity have never been, and never will be, in our capability. Our worth is that we are made by you, known by you, and loved by you.”
 - How does this statement, this prayer and reminder, speak to your heart today? Does it encourage you? Challenge you? Or neither?
 - Why do you think it can be so easy, and so tempting, to believe that our worth and identity (before God and before others) come from our capability, our ability, or our successes?

EXPLORE (30 MIN)

Create Context (5 min):

HERE is the Sermon Recap video playlist on Vimeo.

Study & Discussion (25 min)

Read Mark 5:1-20.

- ① Review Mark 5:1, 11-13. In the sermon on Sunday, Joe stated that sometimes, “Jesus leads his followers to uncomfortable places.” For the disciples, this meant stepping into a Gentile community that raised pigs (which Jewish people did not eat or interact with at all). For Christians today, this will look a little different than that. But the concept stays the same. Jesus brought his disciples to this place, filled with pigs and a demon-possessed man, on purpose. It wasn’t a mistake. And He will intentionally lead us into uncomfortable places, too. As Joe said on Sunday, “This is not a detour. This is discipleship.”

But sometimes, we want to say to Jesus something like, “Time-out. This is not what I signed up for... I would like discipleship ... that keeps my comfort and preferences right at the center.”

- Can you think of a time in your life when Jesus invited you to walk into, or through, something that made you uncomfortable but gave you opportunity to glorify Him? How did you respond, initially? Did you see the opportunity to glorify Jesus then, or is it only in retrospect that you can see it?

Question continues on next page.



- What do you think it looks like for you to grow in trusting Jesus as He invites you into discipleship moments that might feel like detours to you?
- Can you think of someone in your life or that you know of who exemplifies this posture really well (this posture of trusting Jesus in the midst of uncomfortable situations)? What about them (their words, their attitude, their prayers) speaks to their trust in Him in the midst of uncomfortable discipleship seasons?

② Joe also said on Sunday that “Jesus leads his followers to difficult people.” When Jesus led his disciples to this demon-possessed man, and cast the demons out of this man, it was evident to the disciples that only Jesus had “the power to speak to this darkness and tell it what to do and where to go.” This was something the disciples saw that they knew they couldn’t do in their own power. Jesus wanted them to see that they would need His power and His authority - their own wouldn’t be enough as they walked in faithfulness to what He had planned for them.

In a similar way, in our walk with Jesus we will encounter scenarios that cannot be solved by “clever human means.” We will need the power and authority of Jesus, too, as we seek to be led by Him throughout our lives.

- Can you think of an example of someone in Scripture who trusted in the power and authority of God when faced with a situation or a person that they knew they couldn’t handle on their own?
- What does it look like for you, in your current circumstances right now, to trust in Jesus’ plan for you, and to step out in faith as you seek to be led by Him?

③ Finally, Joe said on Sunday that “Jesus leads his followers to risky obedience.” Joe said that sometimes, “we spend all our time just learning stuff” and are afraid to take steps to implement that learning into action. All the while, Jesus is asking us to “Please, go tell someone what I have done in your life” (like he told the formerly demon-possessed man to do). Joe stated that Jesus is not asking us to be well-prepared enough - He’s asking us to tell people what He has done in our lives, and trust Him to do the rest.

- Do you agree that sometimes Christians can “spend all our time just learning stuff” and forget, or be afraid, to take steps to implement that learning into action? Why or why not? If yes - what can we do as a church, as Christians, and as individuals to grow in this area?
- What step of risky obedience do you think Jesus is asking you to take in this season? How can you take your next step in this obedience as you trust in the power and the authority of Jesus?

PRAY AND APPLY

- Pray for trust when Jesus leads us into uncomfortable places. Pray that CVC becomes the kind of church that follows Jesus first, not comfort first.
- Pray for compassion and courage toward difficult people. Pray for specific people in our lives who feel difficult—family members, coworkers, neighbors, classmates—and ask Jesus to lead us toward them.
- Pray for gospel confidence where only Jesus can transform. Pray that we would carry the gospel with humble confidence: not “we can fix this,” but “Jesus has authority here.”
- Pray for obedience that says “yes” even when it’s risky. Pray that the Spirit would give people in the room a clear next step of obedience—and the courage to take it. We believe there are pastors, missionaries, and the next generation of full-time ministry workers among us. Pray that they would answer the Lord's call on their lives.
- Pray for multiplication: witnesses who tell what Jesus has done. Pray that we would not just attend church, but be sent as a people into our homes, streets, workplaces, schools, and to missions opportunities all over the world—under the authority of Jesus.



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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week of 2.1.26

Please take a moment to share
these announcements with your group.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Women's Breakfast - February 7

We are excited to invite you to our next Women's Breakfast at the Cuyahoga Valley Church - Broadview Heights Campus on Saturday, February 7 from 9-11:00 am. Join us for food fellowship, and teaching from former CVC Ministry Director Lauren Meyer. We would love for you to bring along your friends, family, and neighbors Please register [HERE](#) and let us know if you can join us. The cost is \$5 per person.

Walk Worthy - February 28

Walk Worthy exists to bring men together. Hosted by Moody Radio Cleveland, this one-day men's conference offers biblical insight, real encouragement, and practical guidance for every role God has entrusted to you—marriage, single life, parenting, friendships, church, workplace, and most importantly, your relationship with Christ. Location: The Chapel, 135 Fir Hill, Akron, Ohio. [Sign up here!](#)

YOUNG ADULTS

Superbowl Party - February 8

Young Adults ages 18-29 are invited to join us for food, fun, and fellowship as we watch the big game together! Bring a friend, wear your team gear, and come ready for great food and even better community. Whether you're here for football, commercials, or just hanging out—you're welcome! Lower Level CVC Sign up [HERE](#)

YOUTH

Winter Retreat - February 20

One weekend. Two days away from the routine. A lifetime of impact. Winter Retreat is your chance to grow in your faith, deepen friendships, and make unforgettable memories. Bring your warmest gear, your best attitude, and maybe a sled or two. Find out more about the event [HERE](#). Sign up for the retreat [HERE](#).