

1 We can experience spiritual oppression.

Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. **MARK 5:5**

The man's will, mind, and body were oppressed and affected by an unclean spirit. The unclean spirit caused him to have inhuman strength, live naked among tombs, harm himself, and cry out night and day. He could not free himself, and no one else could either control or free him. There are thoughts or circumstances that oppress us, weighing down on our spirits and affecting how we live. What are some worries, habits, or doubts that can oppress us? Was there ever a time you tried to free yourself from oppression?

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2 Only Jesus has the power to free us from spiritual oppression.

And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. **MARK 5:15**

The unclean spirit in the man had named itself *Legion*, because those oppressing him were *many*. Jesus did what no other person could do—He threw the *unclean spirits* out of the man. The man's oppression had been so strong that when people witnessed what had happened, *they were afraid*. But Jesus not only freed him and restored him to his *right mind*; He also clothed him. How can we respond to God's freedom and great compassion for us?

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3 Because Jesus brings freedom, we can proclaim what He has done for us.

¹⁹*And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."* ²⁰*And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.* **MARK 5:19,20**

The man wanted to follow Jesus wherever He was going next, but Jesus encouraged him to spread the good news instead to his own people, to tell them *how much the Lord has done for him* and about God's love and compassion. Jesus' plan for the man was much greater than being freed from spiritual oppression. It involved even the man's friends and the communities around him. In your sphere of influence, who is God encouraging you to preach the gospel to?

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APPLICATION

- Have you ever experienced the freedom Jesus Christ brings upon receiving Him as your Lord and Savior? Would you like to do so today?
- What is one area in your life that you feel is an oppression that you need to ask God for freedom from? Who is someone you can ask to pray with you over that area this week?
- Is there a family member or friend you know needs to learn about the freedom that Jesus offers? How can you preach the gospel to him or her this week?