

## Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of April 30, 2017

Luke 8:26-29

*These questions are to be used as a spring board for discussion.*

*Answers may or may not be found in the sermons.*

### **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

<sup>26</sup> Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee.

<sup>27</sup> As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs.

<sup>28</sup> When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me" — <sup>29</sup> for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.)

### **Common English Bible (CEB)**

<sup>26</sup> Jesus and his disciples sailed to the Gerasenes' land, which is across the lake from Galilee. <sup>27</sup> As soon as Jesus got out of the boat, a certain man met him. The man was from the city and was possessed by demons. For a long time, he had lived among the tombs, naked and homeless. <sup>28</sup> When he saw Jesus, he shrieked and fell down before him. Then he shouted, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" <sup>29</sup> He said this because Jesus had already commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had taken possession of him, so he would be bound with leg irons and chains and placed under guard. But he would break his restraints, and the demon would force him into the wilderness.

### **Connection Questions:**

1. Jesus goes out of his normal routine to go across the lake to a place where they raised pigs. Why could this be a problem for Jesus?
2. Jesus often sought out people who seemed to be in hopeless situations to perform healings. Why did he do that?
3. In the first century people looked at people who dealt with issues that could not be medically explained as being demon possessed. What does demon possession mean to you?
4. One in six people deal with anxiety issues every year. Twenty-five percent of our population deals with some type of mental illness every year. How might these statistics help us see mental illness in a new light?
5. People who dealt with mental illness in the first century were generally stigmatized. How and why do we still stigmatize people with mental issues today?

6. In what ways did Jesus go out of his way to bring healing to this defeated man? What can we learn from Jesus in this story that could assist us in ministering to people with mental issues?
  
7. Jesus didn't eradicate mental illness in his culture through this one healing. In addition to prayer, what can the church offer to help people dealing with mental illness?
  
8. What would a holistic approach toward mental illness look like for the church?
  
9. After the man is healed, Jesus tells him to go back to town and share what God has done. What does this say about discipleship?
  
10. Faith-based programs like AA are led by people who have dealt with alcoholism themselves. Share how faith helps people gain victory over addictions or particular illnesses.