

DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE TALE OF TWO PATHS

The Gospel of Mark — Week 26

ICEBREAKER: To feel rested, how many hours of sleep do you need each night?

OVERVIEW: All of us are on one of two paths – the path of life or the path of death. If you are following Jesus, then you are on the path of life, and you are headed for life in abundance. But if you are rejecting or rebelling against Christ, then you are on the path of death, and you are headed for a life of sorrow and destruction. In this study we will look at the transformation of a demoniac in Mark 5:1-20 and get insight and inspiration to stay on the path of life.

1. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key takeaway from Sunday's message?)
2. The Christian life involves self-denial. When you desire something that is against God's will, you deny yourself and submit to God. But non-Christians don't have to live with self-denial. They have no authority other than self. They can do whatever they want. Are you ever tempted to be jealous of non-Christians? Do ever feel like the struggles of the Christian life aren't worth it? Explain. How do you stay spiritually motivated?
3. Read Mark 5:1-5. Describe the characteristics of the demoniac. How is this an illustration of the path of death – the direction people are headed if they continue to reject and rebel against Christ?
4. Read Mark 5:6-13. How does this passage support the claim that Jesus Christ is God?
5. Why do you think the demons wanted to enter the herd of pigs? Why do think Jesus allowed the demons to destroy the herd of pigs?
6. Read Mark 5:14-20. Describe the demoniac after Jesus exorcised the demons. How is this an illustration of the path of death – the direction people are headed if they continue to follow Jesus?
7. Just like the demoniac before Christ, people who reject and rebel against Christ are on the path of death, and they can expect relational dysfunction, mental darkness, self-destruction, and spiritual death. How have you personally experienced one or more of these before you started following Jesus?
8. Like the demoniac after his encounter with Christ, people who follow Jesus are on the path of life, and they can expect peace, purity, perception, and purpose. How have you personally experienced one or more of these since deciding to follow Jesus?
9. How does this story help you to share Christ with people who are far from God, or with Christians who are backsliding?

The Last Word: Apart from Christ you are on the path of death, but Christ is willing and able to give you life in abundance.