

Good News, Great Joy, All People
“Outside the Boundaries”
Luke 8:26-39
Growth Group Discussion Guide

Opening Question (get everyone involved in discussion):

- ❖ Have you ever been on a road trip and made a special stop for something? If so, how far out of your way did you go, and what was it you were willing to stop for? If not, what is something you would you be willing to go out of your way to stop for?
- ❖ Begin your time together with a moment of silence, then pray and ask for God’s Spirit to shape us through his word.

1. Read Luke 8:26-35, and discuss the following.

- What observations, insights, or questions initially jump out to you in this passage?
Discuss as a group.
- On Sunday, Pastor Josh took a few minutes to talk about demons in general. Did this portion of the sermon raise any questions or observations that you would like to discuss with our group?
- Describe the different effects that evil has had on the man in today’s passage.
 - Have you ever experienced sin or evil having any of these impacts on you, or someone you love?
- What is the nature of the demons’ interaction with Jesus? What does this say about him, and also about them?
- When Jesus starts talking to the evil spirits, He asked their name. Why do you think that is?
- Why does Jesus give in to the spirit’s request to be sent into the pigs?
- Pastor Josh observed that **when we give ourselves to sin, it brings about our isolation.**
 - Why do you think this happens?
 - If we let this process play out to its logical end, what is the result?
- Pastor Josh also pointed out that “there is no ‘chain’ that we can put around our sin that can ultimately restrain it, heal it, or keep it from destroying us.” Do you agree or disagree?
- By recording this passage, Luke is ultimately trying to show us (and Jesus was trying to show his first disciples) that **Jesus is willing to go to the utter extremes to rescue outsiders.**
 - Do you believe that it was necessary for Jesus to go such extremes to rescue you? Why or why not?
 - Imagine the dirtiest, nastiest, place you can think of, and what it might say about a person if they lived there. That was the kind of place this man lived. What do we see about God’s heart for humanity that Jesus would go so far out of his way to find even the grungiest of people?
 - Have you ever seen Jesus make a dramatic change in your life or someone else’s life, similar to the dramatic change in this passage?

2. Read Luke 8:36-39, and discuss the following.

- Why do you think the townspeople in the story were so afraid of Jesus that they asked him to leave?
- The healed man wanted to be with Jesus in the boat, but Jesus said no. What fruit came of the man obeying Jesus and going back to his people?
 - We learned that this man became, in a way, the first Gentile missionary – that’s a pretty cool alternative to getting to join Jesus in the boat! Has God ever told you no for something you wanted to do, and then led you to do something even better?
- On Sunday, we learned that **the gospel gives us the ability to go out of our way for outsiders.**
 - Are there people to whom you think God has nudged you to reach out, with his love, but you have resisted for some reason? Share as honestly as you are able.
 - In what ways does the gospel give you the freedom, confidence, and motivation to cross boundaries with the good news of Jesus?
 - We heard Sunday about Jackie Pullinger, a missionary to Hong Kong, who encourages having a “soft heart and hard feet.” What does this phrase mean? How do we become like this?

Prayer:

- Pray about any sin or evil that has come up, as the Spirit leads. Also pray for the people mentioned in the concluding discussion items above.
- Take a moment to share, and pray for any other needs that exist among your group members.