2026-05-10 Jesus Changes Sinners

Introduction

In this lesson, children will learn that Jesus has the power to completely change a sinner's heart. Through the dramatic story of Jesus healing the demon-possessed man in the region of the Gerasenes (Mark 5:1-20), children will see that sin holds people in bondage, and that no one can free themselves by trying harder or being nicer. Only Jesus, who is more powerful than Satan, can break the chains of sin. When Jesus saves a person, He makes them into a brand-new creation, just like 2 Corinthians 5:17 says. The wild, out-of-control man becomes calm, clothed, and in his right mind. He is so changed that Jesus sends him to tell everyone what God has done for him.

Main Ideas:

- **Sin is a Prison:** Sinners cannot free themselves from the power of sin. We need help from outside of us.
- **Jesus Sets Free:** Jesus came to free people from the bondage of sin.
- **Jesus is Stronger:** Jesus is more powerful than Satan. Nothing and no one can stop Him.
- **New Creation:** When Jesus forgives a sinner, He changes the heart and makes the person brand new.

Praise and Worship (15 mins)

> **Parents:** The parent and child scheduled for this week will lead us in singing on Sunday. Please take time to practice the songs together at home, helping your child feel confident and joyful as they prepare to lead.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/oBNGHccTyaE

https://www.youtube.com/embed/vAaQS0poL-Q

Prayer and Offering (5 mins)

> **Parents:** Please encourage your children to bring an offering to church. You may help your child prepare by setting aside a coin for them to bring on Sunday. This is a great opportunity to teach them about giving to God with a thankful heart and trusting Him to provide.

> “ What is Offering?

> Offering is when we **give something to God** to show our love and thankfulness. In church, we often give money as an offering, but we can also give our time, talents, and kindness to God and others.
>
> ### Why Do We Make an Offering?
>
> **To Thank God** – Everything we have comes from God! Giving back is a way to say, “Thank You, God!”
> **To Trust God** – When we give, we show that we trust God to take care of us.
> **To Help Others** – Offerings help the church teach about Jesus, help people in need, and share God’s love.
>
> The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9:7,
> *"God loves a cheerful giver!" That means God is happy when we give with a joyful heart!*

Prayer for Offering

> “ Dear God, thank You for giving us everything we need. We want to give back to You with joyful hearts. Please use our offering to help others and share Your love. Help us to always trust You. In Jesus’ name, Amen!

Review Verse from Last Week

Luke 5:31-32

And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

Bible Story (10 min)

Introduction (2 min)

Props Needed:

- A picture of a caterpillar and a picture of a butterfly (printed, or on a phone/tablet)
- A short length of chain or rope (about 2 feet, safe for kids to see)
- Darkened Heart visual (from previous lessons)
- Shiny/Clean Heart visual (from previous lessons)
- A paper sign labeled "Wild Man" and a paper sign labeled "New Man"
- Some torn rags or a ripped piece of cloth
- A clean folded shirt or robe

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> *(Walk in holding up the picture of a butterfly.)*

> **Teacher:** "Good morning, friends! Look at this beautiful butterfly! How many colors can you see?"
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> **Interaction:** "Flap your arms like butterfly wings! Flutter, flutter, flutter!"
>
> **Teacher:** "Butterflies are so pretty. Now, did you know that a butterfly was NOT always a butterfly? A long time ago, this butterfly looked like THIS."
>
> *(Hold up the caterpillar picture.)*
>
> **Teacher:** "A caterpillar! A fat, crawling, bumpy little worm. Can you believe it? This crawling caterpillar CHANGED into that beautiful flying butterfly. Who made that happen?"
>
> **Interaction:** "Point up to God! God did it!"
>
> **Teacher:** "God made the caterpillar change. And that is amazing. But I will tell you something MORE amazing than that. God can change something even better than a caterpillar. God can change a PERSON'S HEART."
>
> *(Hold up the Darkened Heart.)*
>
> **Teacher:** "We have learned that every heart is born dark and dirty with sin. And today we are going to hear about a man who had a VERY dark heart. His heart was so full of sin that bad spirits were controlling him. And then Jesus came. And Jesus changed him more completely than a caterpillar changing into a butterfly. Let's hear the story."

Story Telling: Jesus Changes Sinners (8 min)

Props / Visuals Suggested:

- Caterpillar and butterfly pictures (still in view)
- Chain or rope
- Torn rags
- Clean folded shirt or robe
- Darkened Heart and Shiny Heart visuals
- "Wild Man" and "New Man" signs

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> ### Part 1: The Wild Man Nobody Could Help (2 mins)
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> **Teacher:** "One day, Jesus and His disciples got into a boat and sailed across the sea. When they got to the other side, they stepped out onto the beach. And right away, they heard a loud, scary sound coming from the hills."
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> **Interaction:** "Everyone cup your hands to your ears. Listen! What do you hear?" *(Make a loud yelling or growling sound.)*

(Hold up the "Wild Man" sign and the torn rags.)

Teacher: "A man came running down from the hills. He was scary. His clothes were all torn to pieces, like THIS."

(Wave the torn rags around.)

Teacher: "He did not live in a house. He lived in the graveyard, where people are buried. He was yelling and screaming day and night. He was hurting himself. He was hurting other people. Everyone was SO afraid of him."

Interaction: "Make a scared face! Hug yourself and shake. Brrrrr!"

(Hold up the chain.)

Teacher: "The people in the town tried EVERYTHING to stop him. They tied him up with strong chains, like this one. Do you think the chains could hold him?"

(Shake head.)

Teacher: "No! The man was SO strong that he broke the chains right off his arms, like they were little pieces of string. SNAP! SNAP!"

Interaction: "Flex your muscles! Now pretend to SNAP a chain! Ready? SNAP!"

(Hold up the Darkened Heart.)

Teacher: "Why was this man so wild and so sad? Because his heart was sick and dark with sin. And something even worse, bad spirits called demons were INSIDE him, telling him what to do. The man could not stop them. Nobody could. The chains were not strong enough. His family was not strong enough. He could not fix himself. He needed someone MORE powerful than the sin inside him."

Part 2: Jesus is More Powerful (2 mins)

Teacher: "When the wild man saw Jesus, he ran STRAIGHT at Him. The disciples were probably very scared. But Jesus? Jesus was NOT scared. Not one little bit."

Interaction: "Stand up tall and put your hands on your hips like a superhero! Jesus is NOT afraid!"

Teacher: "When the man got close to Jesus, something amazing happened. The man fell DOWN on his knees in front of Jesus. The demons inside him screamed out, 'What do You want with us, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?'"

Teacher: "Do you hear what the demons called Jesus? They called Him 'Son of the Most High God.' Even the demons know that Jesus is God! And even the demons know that Jesus is STRONGER than them."

Interaction: "Point up high and say it with me: 'Jesus is STRONGER!'"

Teacher: "Jesus looked at the man with kindness. Jesus said just a few words to the demons, and the demons had to OBEY Him. Chains could not stop the demons. Strong soldiers could not stop the demons. But Jesus? Jesus just said the WORD and the demons had to leave. The demons went out of the man, and the man was FREE."

Interaction: "Everyone, pretend to break out of chains! Arms up high! FREE!"

Part 3: A Brand New Man (2 mins)

(Set down the "Wild Man" sign and the torn rags. Pick up the "New Man" sign and the clean shirt. Switch the Darkened Heart for the Shiny Heart.)

Teacher: "After Jesus sent the demons away, something wonderful happened. People from the town came to see what was going on. And guess what they saw? They saw the wild man, sitting down quietly. He was wearing clothes, nice clean clothes. He was not yelling. He was not screaming. He was not hurting himself. He was just sitting there, calm and peaceful, listening to Jesus."

Interaction: "Sit down nice and calm, fold your hands in your lap. This is what the man looked like now. Shhh."

Teacher: "Was this the same wild, scary man who used to break chains? YES! But also... NO! Because Jesus had CHANGED him. On the inside, the man had a BRAND NEW HEART. Not dark anymore. Not sinful anymore. Clean. Quiet. Happy. In love with Jesus."

(Point back and forth between the Wild Man sign and the New Man sign.)

Teacher: "It's like the caterpillar and the butterfly! Before Jesus? Crawling in the graves, wild and dark. After Jesus? Flying like a butterfly with a brand new heart. Jesus made him a NEW CREATION."

Interaction: "Crawl on your knees for a second like a caterpillar. Now stand up and flap your arms like a butterfly! That is what Jesus does!"

Part 4: Go Tell What Jesus Has Done (2 mins)

Teacher: "Now, when it was time for Jesus to leave, the man begged Jesus. He said, 'Please, Jesus, let me come with You! I want to be with You forever!' Do you know what Jesus said? Jesus said something surprising."

Teacher: *(Open your Bible to Mark 5:19.)* "Jesus said, 'Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you.'"

Teacher: "Mercy is a big word. Mercy means God's KIND love that we did not earn. The man did nothing to deserve Jesus' help. He did not clean himself up first. He did not promise to be

good. Jesus just loved him and saved him. That is mercy."

Interaction: "Cross your hands over your heart. Mercy is a free gift!"

Teacher: "So the man went home. But he was NOT the same man who had lived there before. The whole town saw this wild, scary man who used to break chains, now sitting calmly and telling everyone, 'JESUS did this! Jesus saved me! Jesus changed my heart!'"

Interaction: "Everyone cup your hands around your mouth and shout: 'JESUS SAVED ME!'"

Teacher: "And here is the best news of all. Jesus is still doing this today. If Jesus can save a wild man covered in demons, can Jesus save anybody?"

Teacher Key: YES! Nobody is too bad for Jesus. Nobody is too sinful for Jesus. Nobody is too far gone for Jesus. When Jesus decides to save someone, NOTHING can stop Him, not sin, not Satan, not chains, not anything.

Teacher: "That is what the Bible means when it says, 'If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; the new has come.' Jesus makes us NEW."

Review with Actions

Teacher: "Let's remember the story with actions!"

- **Teacher:** "There was a wild man with a dark heart." *(Kids make a growling face.)*
- **Teacher:** "Chains could not hold him." *(Kids pretend to snap a chain.)*
- **Teacher:** "Nobody could help him. He could not help himself." *(Kids shake heads sadly.)*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus came, and Jesus is STRONGER." *(Kids flex muscles and say, "Jesus is stronger!")*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus spoke, and the demons had to leave." *(Kids point and say, "GO!")*
- **Teacher:** "The man got a brand new heart." *(Kids point to their own hearts.)*
- **Teacher:** "A new creation, like a butterfly!" *(Kids flap arms like wings.)*
- **Teacher:** "Go and tell what Jesus has done!" *(Kids cup hands around mouth and shout, "Jesus saved me!")*

Teacher: "One more time, a little faster!"

- "Wild man, dark heart." *(Growl.)*
- "Chains could not hold him." *(Snap chain.)*
- "Jesus is stronger." *(Flex.)*
- "Demons had to leave." *(Point and say, "GO!")*
- "Brand new heart." *(Hands on heart.)*
- "Like a butterfly!" *(Flap wings.)*
- "Go and tell!" *(Shout, "Jesus saved me!")*

Wrap-up & Discussion (4 min)

(Gather children close for reflection.)

Discussion Questions:

Teacher: "Let's think about what we learned today."

Question: "What was the wild man like before Jesus changed him?"

Teacher Key: He lived in the graveyard. He yelled and hurt himself. He broke chains. He had demons inside him. His heart was dark with sin.

Question: "Could the man fix himself? Could other people fix him?"

Teacher Key: No! He was too strong for chains. Nobody was strong enough to help him. He needed someone more powerful than his sin.

Question: "How did Jesus change the man?"

Teacher Key: Jesus just spoke. The demons had to obey Him. Jesus gave the man a brand new heart, a new creation.

Question: "What was the man like AFTER Jesus changed him?"

Teacher Key: Sitting calmly, wearing clothes, in his right mind. He was no longer afraid or angry. He loved Jesus and wanted to be with Him.

Question: "What did Jesus tell the man to do?"

Teacher Key: Go home and tell everyone what the Lord had done for him and how He had shown mercy.

Question: "Is anyone too bad for Jesus to save?"

Teacher Key: No! If Jesus can save a man full of demons, Jesus can save anybody. Nothing is too hard for Him.

Teacher: "Sometimes we might try to be good on our own. We might try to stop getting angry, stop telling lies, stop being mean. But just like the chains could not hold the wild man, our good trying cannot fix our sinful hearts. Only Jesus can make us brand new. We trust in Jesus. And then, like the man, we tell others what Jesus has done for us."

Closing Thought & Prayer

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> **Teacher:** "Jesus is more powerful than sin. Jesus is more powerful than Satan. Jesus is more powerful than anything that scares us. When Jesus saves a sinner, He changes them completely, like a caterpillar changing into a butterfly. The old is gone. The new has come. What a mighty Savior!"
>
> *(Fold hands and bow heads.)*
>
> **Prayer:** "Dear Jesus, thank You that You are stronger than sin. Thank You that You can save anyone, even people with the darkest hearts. Please change our hearts. Make us new. Help us to trust You and to tell others what You have done for us. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Memorizing Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17

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> **2 Corinthians 5:17**
>
> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
>
> **Hand Gestures:**
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> - **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ..."**: Point out to different people, then clasp hands together tightly (joined to Jesus).
> - **"...he is a new creation."**: Sweep arms wide and spin once, like showing off something brand new.
> - **"The old has passed away..."**: Brush your hands like dusting something off and away.
> - **"...behold, the new has come!"**: Cup hands around eyes like binoculars, then throw arms up high with a big smile.
>
> **Teacher Tip:** "New creation" is the key phrase for ages 4-6. Repeat it often. A great call-and-response: teacher says "In Christ, we are a..." and kids shout "NEW CREATION!" while flapping their butterfly wings.

Craft & Game (10 mins)

Game: "Break the Chain" Relay

Children take turns "breaking" paper chain links to free a paper figure of the wild man. Each chain link has something Jesus is stronger than (sin, fear, anger, selfishness, lying, bad words, etc.). The game ends with the wild man figure flipped over to reveal the new man with a shiny heart.

? **Time:** 5 minutes

? **Age Group:** 4-6 years

? **Lesson Connection:** Reinforces that Jesus is more powerful than any sin that has us trapped. Only Jesus can set us free.

? Setup & Materials Needed:

- A paper figure of a man, with a “wild” drawing on one side (torn clothes, angry face, dark heart) and a “new” drawing on the other side (clean clothes, smiling, shiny heart). Make two so two teams can race.
- 8-10 paper chain links, each labeled with a word or picture: SIN, FEAR, ANGER, SELFISHNESS, LYING, MEAN WORDS, PRIDE, WORRY
- Tape the chain links together into a loop around each paper figure, so the figure is “trapped.”
- A picture of Jesus or a Bible to hold up as the “winner”

? How to Play:

Step 1: Show the children the paper figure trapped inside the chain. Say: “This is the wild man. The chains are all the things that hold him in sin. Can the chains hold him forever?” Kids shout: “NO! Jesus is stronger!”

Step 2: Divide children into two teams (or take turns if the group is small). One child at a time runs up, reads or names what is on the chain link, and rips it off (tears along the tape).

Step 3: As each link is broken, the whole group shouts: “Jesus is STRONGER than [sin/fear/anger/etc.]!”

Step 4: When every chain is broken, flip the paper figure over to reveal the “new man” with the shiny heart. Everyone cheers: “A new creation!”

Step 5: Teacher asks: “Who is the only One strong enough to break the chains of sin?” (Jesus!) “And what does Jesus do to our hearts when He saves us?” (Makes them new!)

Craft: Caterpillar to Butterfly Memory Verse

Children color a caterpillar on one side of a folded card and a butterfly on the other side. Inside the card is the memory verse. When closed, it shows the caterpillar (old, crawling, sinful heart). When opened, the butterfly appears (new creation in Christ). This is a take-home visual of 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Materials: Half sheet of white cardstock folded in half, a pre-printed caterpillar outline (to be glued to the front), a pre-printed butterfly outline (to be glued inside on the right page), crayons or markers, glue sticks, the memory verse printed on a small strip.

The Activity:

- **Step 1:** On the front of the card, glue the caterpillar. Color it with brown, green, and yellow. Above it write: “Old heart” or “The old has passed away.”
- **Step 2:** Open the card. On the right inside page, glue the butterfly. Color it with bright colors. Above it write: “New creation!”
- **Step 3:** On the left inside page, glue the memory verse strip: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- **Step 4:** Decorate the outside of the card with stickers or extra drawings.

- **Take Home:** Children show their family by closing and opening the card: “Before Jesus, I was like a caterpillar with a dark heart. Jesus makes me a new creation, like a butterfly!”

Response Song

https://www.youtube.com/embed/lmgUKoFKM60

Closing Prayer & Snack Time (10 mins)

> "Dear Jesus, thank You that You are stronger than every sin. Thank You that no one is too far from You to be saved. Please change our hearts, make us new creations, and help us tell others what You have done. In Jesus' name, Amen."
>
> Now, let us thank You for the snack we’re about to enjoy.
> We fold our hands.
> We bow our heads.
> We thank You, God,
> for this daily bread.
> Amen.

Free Time & Children Pickup (15 mins)

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