

Jesus is More Powerful than Demons

FOR THE TEACHER:

This week's lesson is based on a story of Jesus casting out a demon. The stories of Jesus' encounters with demons affirm what we learn elsewhere in scripture: everything that exists has its existence in and through Jesus, the Son of God (Acts 17:28, Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3). Since Jesus is the very source of the demon's existence he has absolute authority over the demon and it must do what Jesus tells it to do when he tells it to do it. Why doesn't Jesus just destroy Satan and the demons? He, the Father, and the Spirit are love and they love their creation - all of it. In fact, in Jesus, all creation has been reconciled to the Father (Col. 1:19-20). As long as the demon still exists there is still a chance that he will embrace his reconciliation in Jesus and stop hurting others. So, Jesus restrains the demon's ability to hurt others but does not destroy him. If the Father, Jesus, and the Spirit can love even the most sinful parts of the creation then we can have confidence that they love us too.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are part of the Trinitarian Catechism.

FIRST ACTIVITY: Who in keeps everything together? Let the kids take a few minutes to create some scenes using blocks and action figures. They can create buildings and have the figures interact within the environments they create for them. Who keeps their miniature worlds together and functioning in an orderly way? They do, they created them. In the same way, Jesus, as the one through whom all things were created keeps the whole creation together and working in harmony.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Ask for a helper to pass out a bible to each child. Have them all turn to Mark 1:21-28. For older kids, have them take turns reading.

1:21 They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.

1:22 They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

1:23 Just then there was in their synagogue a man possessed by a demon,

1:24 and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God."

A synagogue is a Jewish church. The Father told the Jewish people to worship him on Saturday, the Sabbath.

As Christians we go to church on Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection.

**What nationality is Jesus? He is Jewish, from the tribe of Judah in the nation of Israel.*

Since he's Jewish, Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath when he lived here on earth.

A demon is like an angel, except evil. Demons are followers of Satan. Because he is evil the demon is hurting the man instead of helping him.

1:25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"

1:26 And the demon, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.

1:27 They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching--with authority! He commands even the demons, and they obey him."

1:28 At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

**Who keeps all people and all creation in existence? Jesus.*

So, is the demon in the story part of creation? Yes. So, does Jesus keep the demon in existence? Yes.

Who is more powerful then: Jesus, or Satan and his demons? Jesus.

Why wouldn't Jesus just destroy the demon? Because our Father loves the whole creation, even the parts that are doing wrong things - like Satan and the demons. As long as the demon still exists there is a chance that he could stop doing bad things and start loving others.

PRIMARY LESSON: Jesus is so much more powerful than Satan and his demons that they are only able to exist because he keeps them in existence and they must do whatever he tells them to do when he tells them to do it.

SECOND ACTIVITY: Acting out the story. Assign each kid a role from the story: one to be Jesus, one to be the possessed man, one as the demon, the others as the crowd at the synagogue. As you read the story to them again have them act out the different parts. Encourage them to really play it up - for example, the possessed man should roll around on the floor and yell when the demon comes out of him. After going through it once, switch roles and let different kids play different parts. Acting out the story will help them remember it and reinforce the lesson.

PRAYER: For older kids, have one of them pray this prayer (or come up with their own). For younger kids, have them repeat after you as you read the prayer.

Father in heaven, thank you for sending Jesus to adopt us as your children and to protect us from evil things. Jesus, we are very happy that you are so powerful that even Satan and the demons have to do whatever you tell them to do. Holy Spirit, help us to believe that our Father loves us and that Jesus is always with us and watching out for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.