

WHO'S THAT?

Elementary
Week 4

PARENT BIBLE STUDY

Read: Luke 8:26-37; Isaiah 61:1-2

Each week of this series tells a different story about Jesus, the Savior God promised in Isaiah 61. We see a Jesus who was angry about injustice. We meet a Jesus who healed a woman's broken heart. We see a Jesus that came to set us free from whatever holds us. And we see a Jesus powerful enough to defeat death and bring life everlasting. We see Isaiah's words from years ago become flesh in Jesus.

"He has sent me to ... proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners ... ," Isaiah 61:1.

The man in this story had been stripped of his dignity and robbed of his humanity. Because of the demons inside him, he was naked and homeless, and he suffered from seizures. Unable to be held captive physically because of the strength of the demons, he was banished to the outskirts of his city. Though he couldn't be contained in a physical prison, this man was anything but free – until the day he met Jesus.

We may at first think there is no way for us to relate to this obscure story of demon possession, but if we're honest, we can all relate in some way to the crushing and defeating feeling of captivity. Our job, our circumstances, anxiety, sickness, debt, anger, bitterness, sadness, entitlement, depression, the overwhelming pressure to perform, etc., etc. The list of things that hold us captive could go on forever, and we live lives that are anything but free. Thankfully for us, this story is less about the demon-possessed man and much more about Jesus, who is infinitely enough and infinitely more powerful than anything that threatens to imprison us.

Freedom, after all, is the very reason Jesus came. In Luke 4, Jesus confidently proclaims that he is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy in chapter 61 to "proclaim liberty to the captives." Jesus is clear that no matter what binds us, he came to set us free.

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery," Galatians 5:1.

Name some things in your life that hold you captive.

Do you believe Jesus is more powerful than the things that imprison you? In what ways can you begin to grab hold of the freedom Jesus offers you?

Write Galatians 5:1 somewhere you'll see it often this week and memorize it.