

Don't Mess Around with Demons

by Shae Miller and Carol Duerksen

FAITH STORY:

Acts 19:11-20

FAITH STORY SUMMARY:

While Paul was traveling around, spreading the Word and healing people, a number of Jews decided to get in on the action and heal people too. Seven brothers tried it, but the results backfired on them when the man who had an evil spirit beat them all up.

The story of what happened frightened the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, and they had a new respect for the name of Jesus. They also "came clean" and confessed their evil deeds, including the practice of sorcery. A public bonfire for the burning of their sorcery scrolls drew a lot of attention, which added fuel to the fire of the spreading of the Word.

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Bibles for each student
- White board or newsprint and markers
- Optional: Video camera and laptop to show the video on
- Note cards and pens

SESSION OUTLINE

FOCUS:

Welcome students and spend a few minutes talking about their day or the week that's passed since you met together. Then explain that you are going to say a word, and you want them all to simultaneously yell out the first word that comes to mind when you say the word.

Say: *Demons*

After everyone yelled out their response, go around the group and have each student repeat what they said so you can all hear it.

CONNECT:

Discuss the words the students said.

Ask: Do you believe in demons? What are they? (Assure youth that it's okay if they aren't sure what they think.)

Ask: What do you think the Bible says about demons?

After students respond, hand out Bibles.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE STORY:

OPTION 1:

Put these questions on the white board or newsprint:

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

Ask students to turn to Acts 19:11-20. Read it once, then go back and ask students to answer the questions for each part of the story (Not all parts will have answers for each question)

- Verses 11-12
- Verses 13-16
- Verses 17-19
- Verse 20

Now ask students to read the story found in Matthew 8:28-33 and answer the same questions about that story.

OPTION 2:

Divide the class into two groups, giving one group the Acts 19:11-20 passage and the other group Matthew 8:28-33. Each group should plan a news story with a reporter on the scene of the events described in these stories. The reporter should interview the people involved, find out what happened, make comments, etc. When each group has their skit ready, they can record it.

APPLY:

Ask one student to read James 2:19

Then ask students to help you make a list of what they learned about demons from the Bible passages. The list should include:

- They do exist
- They mess up people's lives
- They are powerful.
- Demons shudder before God.

The most important point to make is that demons shudder before God. God is more powerful than demons.

Say: Demons can be bad spiritual powers, but there are other demons that we all face that mess up our lives. What are examples of those demons, or negative forces, in our lives?

After students have named some demons faced by teens, hand out the note cards and pens. Ask them to write down the personal demons they face, and assure them that no one else will see their card.

RESPOND:

Write the following prayer on the white board and ask students to put it on their index card.

Lord God, who reigns over heaven and earth, be present here.

Lord God, you know the demons and the negative forces in my life.

Lord God, I bring those demons before your throne.

Lord God, I leave those bad influences with you. I don't want them back.

Lord God, be with me every minute of every day. And if those negative forces come back, make them shudder at your presence.

Lord God, thank you! I trust you! I love you!

After students have written the prayer on their card, gather together in a circle and say it together.

Encourage students to take the card home with them and say the prayer every day.