GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

* **Have you or someone you know had a near death experience? If so, describe the experience and how you or the person you know survived.**
* **What do you think it means that Jesus has power over death?**
* **Does Jesus’ power over death affect the way you live your life? If so, how?**

**Main Point**

Jesus reveals the power of God and transforms lives.

Have another volunteer read Luke 7:11-17.

Jesus’ earthly ministry included many miracles that transformed the lives of those who both experienced or saw the miracles take place. A key element in every case was that of faith. Jesus possesses the power to transform live, and faith in Him plays a crucial role.

* **In what ways is this story similar to what Jesus did in your life when He saved you? Read Ephesians 2:4-7 to help you answer.**

In verse 16, the scene shifted from the widow, her son, and the pallbearers to the crowd that had gathered and watched the miracle unfold before their eyes. Because all of them beheld Jesus bring a corpse back to life, no one could ever doubt that He had absolute authority over death. Furthermore, no one would ever be able to say that Jesus lacked compassion for hurting people.

* **How have you experienced Jesus’ presence and help in the past week? What are appropriate responses to that presence and help?**

After the miracle, countless eyewitnesses went their ways telling the story about Jesus and His authority over death. The miracle showed them that God had come to help them, and that Jesus was sent from Him.

Have a volunteer read Luke 8:34-39.

* **When the healed man begged to stay with Jesus, what kind of life do you think he was hoping to experience? How did Jesus change his understanding of what it meant to follow Him?**
* **What does this story reveal about the different ways we can respond to Jesus?**

This crowd reacted differently than other crowds. People who witnessed a healing or exorcism usually crowded Jesus with others to heal and help. Not the Gerasenes. They demanded that Jesus leave their region immediately. The cares of the world and the world’s riches were too much for them. Their livelihood took precedence over human need. They expelled the most powerful and caring person in history without seeking His help for any of their friends and neighbors.

However, the healed man wanted to answer Jesus’ call to follow. Jesus’ response may have surprised him. For this man, following meant going back home and telling fearful friends and neighbors what Jesus had done for him. The man obeyed instantly. He took the good news to a town that had expelled Jesus, telling everyone exactly what Jesus had done for him. The call to faith is a call to commitment to the mission Jesus defines for us—not a call to the things we want to do.

**Application**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

* **Does trusting God come naturally for you, or are you someone who tries to control situations yourself? What is one step toward trust you can take this week?**
* **When have you treated Jesus as Simon the Pharisee treated Jesus? To what extent have you treated Jesus as the woman treated Him? What leads you to these different responses?**
* **What seemingly unconquerable forces in your life do you need to hand over to Jesus to heal? How might this way of living point others to the truth about Jesus?**
* **What are ways we can express gratitude for our salvation? Discuss various ways you can do this as a group and on your own.**

**Pray**

Praise Jesus the Son of the Most High God, whose power and authority changes lives. Thank Him for the work He has done in your life and invite Him to give you opportunities to share that with other people this week.