



Sermon Notes

Topic: The Power of Story: God Uses All of Our Story

Bible Passage: Mark 5:18–20

Preacher: Ps Sam Toms & Maya Crooks

Date: 17 May 2026

Study Guide Overview

This sermon centered on a simple but profound truth: God uses *all* of our story to reveal *His* story.

Maya spoke about the aspects of our story that we like to hide, how her ‘hidden potatoes’ was her anxiety. Through owning and being honest about her journey, God was able to work powerfully to encourage and speak into the lives of the youth.

Our testimony is not about how impressive, dramatic, or polished we are; it is about how faithful God has been in the middle of our weakness. God often reveals His character most powerfully through our struggles, pain, and imperfections. Like Peter and John in Acts 4, ordinary people who have “been with Jesus” can point others to Him. Missions, evangelism, and outreach are not about having perfect answers—they are about authentically sharing the character of God shining through our story, trusting that He can use even broken people to reveal an extraordinary God.

Small Group Questions/Discussions

The Power of Story: God Uses All of Our Story

Main Passage: Mark 5:18–20

Supporting Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 | Acts 4:13 | Colossians 1:27

Icebreaker (Choose One)

1. What is a moment in your life you often tell people about? Why does that story matter to you?
2. Have you ever been nervous to share something personal? What made it difficult?
3. If someone asked, “What has shaped you most as a person?” What would you say?

Read the Passage Together: Mark 5:18–20

Context Snapshot:

This man had experienced extreme brokenness. He was isolated, feared, and completely transformed after encountering Jesus. Yet Jesus didn’t ask him to attend Bible college or wait until he “had it all together.” Jesus simply told him:

“Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you...”

His mission began with his story.



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Big Idea: God uses ordinary people with real stories to reveal His extraordinary character.

Our testimony is not ultimately about *us*—it is about *God's faithfulness*.

Discussion Part 1: What Stops Us From Sharing?

What fears stood out from the sermon? The sermon suggested that many hesitations are rooted in fear.

1. Fear of Rejection: “What if people think differently of me?”

- Why do you think faith is often treated as something private today?
- Have you ever held back sharing your faith because you worried how people would respond?
- Why is rejection so powerful?

Reflect: Whose approval do I value most?

2. Fear of Perception: “What if I sound silly or don’t have the right words?” Read: Acts 4:13

Peter and John were described as “unschooled, ordinary men.”

- Why do we often believe we need more knowledge before God can use us?
- How does simply “having been with Jesus” change confidence?
- What makes authenticity more powerful than polish?

Key Thought: God isn’t looking for impressive people—He is looking for willing people.

3. Fear of Judgement: “I’m not far enough along in my faith.” Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9–10

- Why do we think we need to “arrive” spiritually before sharing?
- How can weakness actually make our story more powerful?
- Have you ever seen God work through someone’s vulnerability?

Reflection Question: What weakness in your life has God actually used for good?

4. Fear of “Vanilla”: “My story isn’t dramatic enough.”

The sermon challenged the myth that only radical conversion stories matter.

- Why do dramatic testimonies often seem more significant?
- What are the dangers of comparing stories?
- Why might an ordinary story of consistent faithfulness actually be powerful?

Key Truth: You don’t need a dramatic past to have a powerful present.

Discussion Part 2: Your Story Is Now Part of God’s Story

Read: Colossians 1:27 — “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

The sermon used the phrase: “**His story, not our story.**”

When we follow Jesus, our story gets threaded into something bigger.

Questions:

- What does it mean for your story to now belong to God?
- How could viewing your life through the lens of God’s faithfulness change the way you tell your story?
- Are there parts of your story you tend to hide? Why?

Activity (10 mins) Have everyone finish this sentence: “**One way I’ve seen God be faithful in my life is...**”

Keep it simple. | No pressure. No preaching. | Just authenticity.



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Discussion Part 3: What Does Your Story Reveal About God?

The point of testimony is not: “*Look how impressive I am.*” It is: but “*Look how faithful God has been.*”

Ask: What aspect of God’s character has your life revealed?

Examples: God’s faithfulness God’s mercy God’s patience God’s provision God’s forgiveness
 God’s healing God’s peace in suffering God’s kindness

Personal Reflection: Which statement feels most true for you? “**God has shown me His ____ through ____.**”

Example: “God has shown me His faithfulness through grief.” | “God has shown me His patience through my failures.”

Practical Application: Walking Across the Room | Sharing our story often starts with simple willingness.

Practical Questions:

- Who in your world could benefit from hearing part of your story?
- What relationship might God already be preparing?
- What fear most stops you from sharing?
- What small step of courage could you take this week?

Challenge for the Week

Spend time praying: “**God, give me one opportunity this week to naturally share what You have done in my life.**”

Look for ordinary moments. | A coffee. | A conversation. | A struggle someone shares.

Remember: **missions often looks less like a stage and more like a relationship.**

Prayer Time

Break into pairs or small groups and pray:

1. For courage over fear.
2. For confidence to value our story.
3. For opportunities to share naturally.
4. For eyes to see where God is already at work in relationships.

Closing Thought:

God doesn’t waste stories. Even the painful, messy, unfinished parts can become places where His character shines brightest. Your story may feel ordinary to you—but in God’s hands, it can point someone to Jesus.