



## Gospel of Mark – A Discipleship Discussion Guide

Mark's Gospel is probably the first gospel to be written down. And Mark tends to be rather concise. His is the shortest gospel. Most important, however, Mark's Gospel provides a straightforward path with which to study of Jesus' life and ministry. His opening declaration states his purpose succinctly:

"The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God." (1:1)

Unlike most of the JesusWalk Bible Study Series studies that are e-mail delivered each week and use an online forum for discussion, this study is designed to provide the curriculum core of a face-to-face discussion-based class or small group that has Bible study as an important component of its life.

### My Life Group

I developed these lessons while leading a 20- to 25-minute discussion each Tuesday night June 2015 through March 2016 as part of a men's Life Group. Here's how our Life Group typically works. We meet for a bit less than an hour and a half. We begin by sharing what is going on in our lives and where we are seeing God's hand. Next, we spend a few minutes praying for each other and our families with sentence prayers. We conclude with about 20 minutes Bible discussion.

Each week I would prepare a few questions on a brief passage from the Gospel of Mark in a 4-per- 8-1/2" x 11" page format that I could cut up to hand to group members. Then I would lead off with the first question. Our study ended up extending for 35 weeks, or just under three quarters. A few lessons might lend themselves to an additional week for discussion.

For each handout I included the questions plus a small black and white illustration I found on the Internet. Unfortunately, I did not take time to trace down copyright ownership of any of these illustrations.

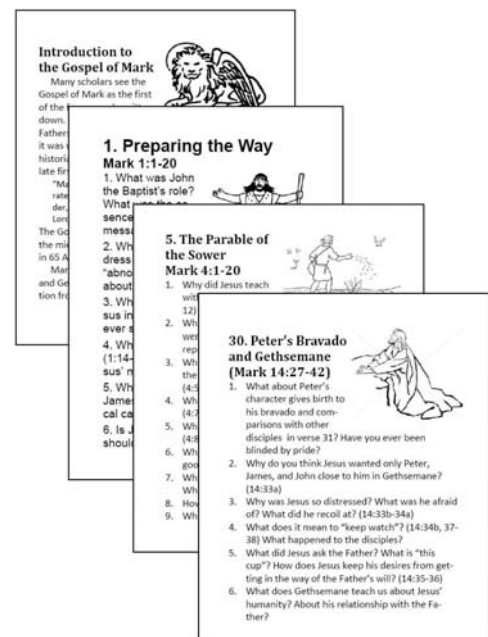
### The Leader's Role

If you're a small group or class leader, I invite you to take advantage of the materials I've developed. There's no charge.

### Leader Preparation

I recommend that you prepare yourself by reading the material for each text in a good commentary on Mark designed for laypersons. Two come to mind, both of which can be purchased online used:

- R. Alan Cole, *Mark* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; InterVarsity Press, 1989), 347 pages.
- Tom Wright, *Mark for Everyone* (For Everyone series; SPCK/Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 244 pages.



Once you've read the appropriate section in the commentary, then, hopefully, you understand the issues involved in the passage, so you can intelligently guide the discussion as needed. However, **don't prepare a mini-lecture!** The method outlined here is a **question-discussion approach to learning**, *not* a lecture approach.

### How to Lead the Discussion

Have someone in the group read aloud the first several verses, and then read out the first question from the handout. Be prepared to rephrase the question if you need to prompt a discussion. Discussion that is based on the Scripture text is not merely trading ignorance. I've found that when people begin to discuss, they find out what they don't know and are often forced back to the text to get the answer. As people engage, the lights begin to go on, and God's Word does its work in hearts.

Your job as leader is to make sure they get the point of the question, but don't give them the answer – unless absolutely no one gets it. If someone gets even a part of the answer, encourage them, and suggest that there's even more. Then be silent. The more you talk, the less they have to think and process.

Your role will require you to move the group along by going to the next question so they are able to cover the whole passage. If you don't get to all the questions, the world won't end. ☺

I humbly present these materials to you as the basis for discussion for use with groups you lead. Though they are copyrighted in order to protect their integrity, I hereby offer you permission to reprint copies for your local ministry use.

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JesusWalk Bible Study Series  
Loomis, California  
July 1, 2016

Below are:

- Handouts (PDF). This document includes (1) these instructions above, (2) a list of the 35 lessons with questions, and (3) the handout questions (35 pages of 4-up masters).

### Introduction to the Gospel of Mark (to be handed out the first week with lesson 1)

Many scholars see the Gospel of Mark as the first of the four gospels written down. The early Church Fathers are unanimous that it was written by Mark (probably John Mark). Church historian Eusebius cites Papias (who ministered in the late first and early second centuries AD):

“Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote accurately all that he remembered, not, indeed, in order, of the things said or done by the Lord.” (Eusebius, *Church History* 3.39.16)

The Gospel of Mark was probably written in Rome in the mid-60s AD, perhaps just after Peter's martyrdom in 65 AD, but before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Mark seems to have been written for both Jewish and Gentile Christians who were undergoing persecution from both the Jews and Romans.

Mark is the shortest gospel. It begins abruptly with the assertion: “The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (1:1). You'll find the word “immediately” used often. Mark also ends abruptly at 16:8, as if the final page of the document were missing. The “Longer Ending” of Mark, containing 16:9-20, is written by another hand to complete the gospel, but is clearly penned in the late decades of the first or early second centuries, and reflects the early church's understanding of Jesus' resurrection and commission.

As you study the Gospel of Mark each week, read the verses indicated, then discuss the provided

questions in your group. As you talk together, everyone will become engaged in the process, the deeper meanings of the text will become apparent, and you'll discover ways you to apply the principles in your own life.

### **1. Preparing the Way (Mark 1:1-20)**

1. What was John the Baptist's role? What was the essence of John's message? (1:1-9)
2. Why did John dress the way he did? Why did he act "abnormally"? What did people think about him? (1:6)
3. Why do you think the Spirit "sent" Jesus into the desert? (1:12-13) Does he ever send us for this purpose?
4. What was Jesus' early message? (1:14-15) What does the world think Jesus' main message is?
5. Why do you think Simon and Andrew, James and John answered Jesus' radical call? (1:16-20)
6. Is Jesus call today so radical? How should we respond to it?

### **2. Jesus Heals (Mark 1:21:-2:12)**

1. What is the significance of Jesus casting out an evil spirit? What had the spirit said? How does this propel Jesus' career? (1:21-28)
2. Why did Jesus heal Peter's mother-in-law? (1:29-33) What effect did this have on the town? Should we routinely pray for sick people?
3. Why did Jesus disappear? What did his disciples want him to do? What did his Father want him to do? How was this "predictable pattern" foundational for Jesus' ministry? Have you developed this pattern? (1:35-39)
4. What faith did the leper have? Why did the leper qualify his prayer with Jesus' will? What was Jesus' will? What was the effect of the leper's disobedience? (1:40-45)
5. Did the paralytic have faith? What is the relationship between forgiveness and healing? How did Jesus' words offend? (2:1-12)

### **3. Jesus Challenges the Status quo (Mark 2:13-3:6)**

1. What was the social standing of tax collectors? Why did Jesus call Levi? How did he respond? How did the religious purists respond? Who did Jesus come for? Are there people "below" you that you fell uncomfortable helping? (2:13-17)
2. Why did the Pharisees criticize Jesus about fasting? What was Jesus' answer? What is the lesson to us of the old and new wineskins? (2:18-22)
3. What is the significance of the Sabbath being made for man, rather than visa versa? What does it mean that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath? (2:23-28)
4. Why were the Pharisees upset about Jesus healing the man with the shriveled hand? Why did they consider this such a serious challenge? (3:1-6)

**4. Pressures & Solutions (Mark 3:7-35)**

1. What effect did the crowds have on Jesus' ministry? How did his disciples assist with the crowds? (3:7-12)
2. What specifically were the "apostles" to do? What is the significance of "being with him"? (3:13-19)
3. How did his family respond to his popularity? How did the religious leaders respond? (3:20-22)
4. Why did Jesus tell the parable of the kingdom divided? Who is the "strong man" in the parable? Why is it so serious to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit? What does this mean? (3:23-30)
5. What did Jesus' mother and brothers plan to do? Who are Jesus' new family? How does Jesus' new family act? (3:31-35)

**5. The Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1-20)**

1. Why did Jesus teach with parables? (4:9-12)
2. What was the soil like along the path? (4:4) Why were the birds able to eat it up? What does this represent? (4:15)
3. What was the soil like over rocky places? Why did the plant spring up quickly? Why did it wither? (4:5-6). What does this soil represent? (4:16-17)
4. What happens to the seed sown in thorny places? (4:7) What do the thorns represent? (4:18-19)
5. What happens to the seed sown on good soil? (4:8) What kind of yield do you get here? (4:20)
6. What is the difference between the result on the good soil and the others?
7. Why did Jesus give this parable to his disciples? What was he trying to teach them?
8. How do you tell if someone is a true believer?
9. What kind of soil are you?

**6. Parables of the Kingdom (Mark 4:21-35)**

1. What does the Parable of the Lamp on a Stand teach us about our witness to others? (4:21-23)
2. What does the Parable of the Measures teach us about the importance of listening carefully to Jesus? (4:24-25)
3. What does the Parable of the Growing Seed teach us about the Kingdom of God? (4:26-29) About our job and God's job?
4. What does the Parable of the Mustard Seed teach us? (4:30-33) How did it reassure the disciples?
5. Is the story of Jesus calming the storm a parable? What was it intended to teach about faith? About fear? About Jesus' power?

**7. Miracles of Deliverance, Healing, & Resurrection (Mark 5)**

1. How would you describe the crazy man's symptoms. What makes you think this might be demonic instead of chemical imbalance? (5:1-20)
2. Who does this story teach us about demons?
3. What did pigs mean to Jews? What is the element of the pigs add to the story? (5:11-13)

4. Why didn't Jesus have the man accompany him? What was his mission instead? (5:18-20)
5. What was wrong with the sick woman? How long had she been sick? What might her touch affect the ritual purity of those around her? (5:24-27)
6. What was the focus of her faith? How did Jesus' sense her healing? What is the role of faith in her healing? (5:27-34)
7. Who is Jairus? What is his position in the community. How does he approach Jesus? What are the obstacles to his faith? How does Jesus encourage him? (5:22, 35-40)
8. Why does Jesus exclude others from the room? What does he give orders not to tell about this? (5:40-43)

### **8. Mission and Danger (Mark 6:1-30)**

1. Why did people in Nazareth have a hard time believing in Jesus? (6:1-6)
2. Why did Jesus send out the Twelve? What authority did he give them? (6:7-11)
3. What were his instructions to them? What was the purpose of these instructions? (6:8-11)
4. What was the content of their message? What miracles did they do? (6:12-13)  
 "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house." (Luke 10:5-7)
5. What are the characteristics of a "person of peace" according to Luke 10:5-7?
6. Why does Mark spend so much space telling about the imprisonment and death of John the Baptist? What are we to learn from this? (6:14-29)

### **9. Feeding the 5,000, Walking on Water (Mark 6:31-56)**

1. Why did Jesus withdraw with his disciples? (6:31-32)
2. Why didn't the people let them get away? (6:33)
3. How did Jesus characterize the people (6:34)
4. Why do you think Jesus assigned the disciples to feed the multitude? (6:37)
5. How did Jesus tell them to start? (6:38)
6. How did the disciples help implement the miracle? (6:39-41)
7. Why did Jesus have the disciples collect the leftovers? (6:43-44, see 8:19-20)
8. Why did Jesus stay behind? What does that teach us? (6:45-46)
9. Why did Jesus scare his disciples by walking on the water? What was he trying to do? (6:48-50)
10. In what way were their hearts hardened? (6:52)
11. How would you characterize Jesus' healing ministry from verses 54-56? What attracted people?

### **10. Clean and Unclean (Mark 7:1-23)**

1. What kind of ceremonial washing were the Jews accustomed to? (7:3-4) What this for sanitation?
2. Why did the Pharisees criticize Jesus' disciples when they ate? (7:1-2, 5)

3. How did the Pharisees fit Isaiah's prophecy quoted in verses 6-7.
4. Can you think of any present-day religious traditions supersede what the Bible teaches?
5. Have you ever been in a church that refused to do things differently than they had always done before – that is, tradition bound? How can you break out of this place?
6. According to Jesus, is uncleanness external or internal? (7:18-20)
7. What are some forms of uncleanness within? (7:20-23)

### **11. Healings in Gentile Regions (Mark 7:24-37)**

1. Why does Jesus "withdraw" to this region outside of Galilee (see Matt 15:21)?
2. Why doesn't Jesus have any privacy here? (7:24)
3. Why does the Syro-Phoenician woman want? (7:25-26)
4. Why does Jesus seem to spurn her? (7:27)
5. How does her answer demonstrate faith and wit? (7:28-29)
6. Why do you think Jesus goes to the mainly Gentile region of the Decapolis? What do these two stories have to do with the previous theme of "clean and unclean" (7:1-23)
7. How does Jesus go about healing the deaf-mute man? (7:32-37) How does this compare to their expectations?

### **12. Signs, Unbelief, and Healing (Mark 8:1-26)**

1. What similarities do you see between the Feeding of the 4,000 (8:1-10) and the Feeding of the 5,000 (6:30-44)? What differences?
2. In this context, what does the Pharisees' request for a "sign" tell you about their powers of observation? Their faith? (8:11-13)
3. What is the "yeast" or "leaven" of the Pharisees? (8:14-15) Why does Jesus tell them to "beware" or "watch out" for it? How might it infect us?
4. What does all this have to do with bread? What is the lesson of the "leftovers" from the feedings of the 5,000 and the 4,000? (8:17-20) What don't the disciples understand? (8:21)
5. What healing procedure did Jesus use to heal the blind man of Bethsaida? (8:22-26) When he wasn't fully healed, what did Jesus do? What can we learn from this for praying for the sick today?

### **13. Confession and Self-Denial (Mark 8:27-38)**

1. Where does this incident take place? (8:27)
2. What questions does Jesus ask? How does Peter answer? (8:28-29)
3. What did the Jews expect the Christ or Messiah to be?
4. Why does Jesus tell them to keep this a secret? (8:30) How might telling endanger Jesus' mission?
5. What does Jesus say about his death and resurrection? (8:31-32) How does this correspond to Jewish ideas of the Messiah?
6. Why does Peter rebuke Jesus in private? Why does Jesus rebuke Peter? About what matter is Peter speaking Satan's words? (8:33)

7. What does it mean to “take up one’s cross” and follow? Which does the cross represent here? Burden? Christian symbol? Death? (8:34)
8. Why is self-denial avoided by Christians? How could one trade the world for one’s soul? Can a person be a true disciple without self-denial? (8:34-37)

#### **14. A Glimpse of Glory (Mark 9:1-13)**

1. Why do you think Jesus brought the three to witness his transfiguration? (9:2)
2. What did they see? (9:3)
3. What is the significance of Elijah and Moses? (9:4)
4. Why did Peter want to put up three shelters? What happens when people memorialize God-sightings in our day?
5. Elijah — Malachi 4:5-6. Who is the “Elijah” Jesus refers to? (9:12-13)
6. In what way did the disciples “see the Kingdom of God come with power”? (9:1)

#### **15. Help My Unbelief (Mark 9:14-32)**

1. Why were the “teachers of the law” arguing with the disciples? (9:14)
2. What does Jesus struggle with their unbelief? (9:19)
3. What faith does “if you can” represent? What does Jesus say about faith and possibility? (9:24)
4. What method does Jesus use for this exorcism? (9:25)
5. Why couldn’t the disciples drive out the spirit? (9:28-29)
6. Why didn’t Jesus want a crowd in Galilee? (9:30-31)
7. Notice how Jesus equates the Son of Man with the Suffering Servant (9:31; Isaiah 53). Why does Jesus warn the disciples about his impending death and resurrection? (9:31-32)

#### **16. Pride, Tolerance, and Sin (Mark 9:33-50)**

1. Why do you think the disciples argued about who was greatest among them? (9:33-34)
2. Jesus gives two responses. What are they? (9:35-36)
3. Why did the disciples want to stop the man casting out demons? What did this have to do with their motivation in vss. 33-34? What was Jesus direction? What does this do with a cup of water? (9:38-41)
4. Who are the “little ones” of verse 42? What do they have in common with those in verse 41?
5. Why is Jesus so adamant about sin? Is he speaking literally or in hyperbole? What is our society’s attitude about sin? (9:42-48)
6. Why is “fire and brimstone” preaching out of favor? What truth does it contain? (9:48)
7. Salt was used with sacrifices in the OT (Leviticus 2:13), probably alludes to living lives of sacrifice. What does a “salty” disciple look like? What about an “un-salty” disciple? Which are you? (9:49-50)

#### **17. Divorce (Mark 10:1-12)**

You must understand: (1) The Pharisees trying to get Jesus to take sides on an ongoing Jewish controversy: whether a man can be divorced for “any cause” (such as burning the toast), or only for

adultery. (See Matthew 19:3-12 for a fuller statement.). (2) Mark's abbreviated version leaves out the adultery exception, because it was assumed. It is explicitly included in Matt 19:9 and Deut 24:1 ("some indecency").

1. Why did the Mosaic Law allow divorce? (10:4-5) What's an example of "hardness of heart"?
2. How does Jesus see God's original intention for marriage in the creation story? (10:6-7; Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31).
3. What is the significance of "one flesh"? (10:8-9; Gen 2:24)
4. Why would invalid divorce cause adultery? (10:10-12)
5. How can we apply these principles honestly in our very broken world without being either overly sloppy or overly legalistic?

### **18. Entering the Kingdom (Mark 10:13-31)**

1. How is the disciples' attitude in 10:13 similar to their attitude in 9:33-38?
2. What is the point of comparison between welcoming children and people entering the kingdom? What does this teach us about faith? (10:13-16)
3. Who do we learn about the man in verses 17, 20, and 22? What did he mean "inherit eternal life"? (10:17)
4. Why does Jesus question his relative use of the adjective "good"? (10:17-18)
5. Why does Jesus require the man to sell everything and give it to the poor? (10:21)
6. Why is salvation virtually impossible for the rich? (10:23-27)
7. What does Jesus promise those who give up things for Jesus and his gospel? (10:28-30)
8. How will the "first" be last, and vice versa, in the Kingdom? (10:31)

### **19. Power and Service (Mark 10:32-45)**

1. Why do you think the disciple couldn't grasp Jesus' three-time prediction of his death and resurrection? (8:31; 9:31-32; 10:33-34) What prophecies do we find it hard to believe?
2. Why do James and John ask to sit Jesus' right and left? How does it show faith? How does it show pride? How does Jesus answer them? (10:35-41)
3. How do secular officials tend to exercise authority? What does "lord it over" mean? (10:42) How does this show up in church history? In your local congregation?
4. How does this contrast with Jesus' servant leadership? What does it mean to be a servant, a slave? (10:43-44)
5. How was Jesus' life an example? (10:45; Philippians 2:5-8) How did he illustrate this at the Last Supper (John 13:4-17)
6. In what way did Jesus come as a ransom? (10:45; see Isaiah 53:5, 11).

### **20. The Son of David (Mark 10:46-11:11)**

1. Why is Bartimaeus sitting by the roadside? (10:46)
2. What does the title "Son of David" mean? What does this say about Bartimaeus's faith? (10:47-48)



3. Why did people try to quiet Bartimaeus? Why didn't he quiet down? What does this say about his faith? (10:48)
4. Why does Jesus ask him what he wants? Isn't it obvious? How does he answer? (10:51)
5. What is the connection between faith and healing? What does "following" Jesus entail? (10:52)
6. Read Zechariah 9:9. How does Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey fulfill prophecy? (11:1-10)
7. Do you think Jesus has already arranged with the donkey's owner to use his animal? Why or why not? (11:2-6).
8. Why should we obey Jesus' instructions when they make no sense to us? (11:2-6)
9. In what ways do the people worship Jesus at the triumphal entry? (11:7-10)
10. What do the people's shouts tell us about their faith? About their understanding of who Jesus is?(11:9-10)

### **21. The Withered Fig Tree and Barren Temple (Mark 11:12-26)**

1. What does the fig tree symbolize in Israelite culture? (see Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:10)? (We need to understand this act symbolically.)
2. How had the Israelites corrupted the true use of the temple? What was the true use of the temple (11:17). How had the high priests (who received a cut of profits) corrupted it and made it "a den of robbers"?
3. What did Jesus do in the temple? How was it received by the chief priests and teachers of the law? (11:15-18)
4. Why do you think Mark interweaves the accounts of the withered fig tree and the barren temple? What does the fig tree represent here symbolically? (See a similar parable using a vineyard as the symbol in Mark 12:1-12.)
5. What does Jesus teach about the power and importance of faith in prayer? (Mark 11:22-24)
6. Why is forgiveness so important to integrity in prayer? (Mark 11:25; also Matt 5:23-24; 6:12,14)

### **22. The Parable of the Tenants (Mark 11:27-12:12)**

1. When Jesus cleansed the temple (11:12-19), why did the Jewish leaders question his authority to do so? In what way was this a "trick question" in order to entrap him? (Mark 11:27-33)
2. How did Jesus' question about John's authority to baptize stop the Jewish leaders from pressing their attack on Jesus' authority? (Mark 11:29-33)
3. In Jesus' Parable of the Tenants, who does the vineyard builder represent? The vineyard? The tenants? The son? (Mark 12:1-9)
4. Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22-23. In that prophecy who is the stone? The builders? The capstone/cornerstone? (Mark 11:10-12)
5. According to Matthew 21:41, 43, who are the "other tenants" to whom the Kingdom will be given?
6. When people reject Jesus in our day, what is the consequence of their blind eyes (2 Corinthians 4:4) and their rejection?

**23. Jesus Answers Trick Questions (Mark 12:13-27)**

1. Who wanted to trap Jesus regarding taxes? Why? What was the trick question? (12:13-15)
2. What would Jesus do if he said they should pay taxes to Caesar? What would they do if he said they shouldn't?
3. How were they hypocrites? (12:14-15a)
4. What was Jesus' answer? Why did it disappoint them? (12:15b-17)
5. Who wanted to trap Jesus about the resurrection? (6:18-23) How could a woman become a widow seven times over? How did levirate marriage require a man to marry his brother's widow? (Deuteronomy 25:5-10)
6. What will be the state of marriage in heaven? (6:25)
7. How does Jesus demonstrate resurrection from God's words to Moses? (6:26)
8. What do we learn from this about responding to insincere questions?

**24. The Great Commandments (Mark 12:28-34)**

1. Who asked Jesus the question? What do you think his motive was? In what way was this a "test question"?
2. "Love the Lord with all your heart" comes from the Shema recited daily by observant Jews (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). What is involved in obeying this command? What does it mean to "love" God?
3. "Love your neighbor as yourself" comes from Leviticus 19:18. How do we fulfill this command?
4. In Matthew, Jesus said: "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:40). In what ways is this true?
5. Our world generally acknowledges the greatness of the Second Commandment. Why do they ignore the First Commandment?
6. How did the questioner respond? What did Jesus say to him? In what way was he "not far" from the Kingdom?

**25. The Widow's Offering (Mark 12:35-44)**

Context: Various groups have asked Jesus questions: Should we pay taxes? How can there be a resurrection? What is the greatest commandment?

1. Jesus quotes the messianic Psalm 110:1, "The Lord says to my Lord...." What is his question? To whom does he ask it? What is his point? (12:35-37)
2. What sins are the "teachers of the law" guilty of? Where do we see these sins today? (12:38-40)
3. Why does Jesus look at people giving offerings? Does he look today? (12:41-44)
4. Jesus contrasts the rich people who "threw in large amounts" with a "poor widow." What can we surmise about this widow? (12:41-44)
5. How much did she put in the offering? How could it be "more than all the others?" (12:44)
6. Is Jesus' measurement scale for offerings absolute or relative? What does this teach us about how much we should give? How does this relate to tithing?

7. What about this story makes us uncomfortable?

## 26. Signs of the End (Mark 13:1-25)

Called Mark's "Little Apocalypse" because it is short, these verses are difficult to interpret fully. Like a puzzle with some missing pieces. But let's see what we can learn.

1. What disciple's statement prompted Jesus to discuss the end times? (13:1-2)
2. What will the disciples be doing during this time? (13:9-11)
3. In spite of betrayals, why must we stand firm to the end? (13:12-13)
4. When should they flee? What will this period be like? (13:14-20)
5. What is done "for the sake of the elect"? Who seems to be present on the earth at this time? (13:20)
6. What kind of deceptions should we expect? (13:21-23; also 13:5-6)
7. Jesus quotes Isaiah 13:10; 34:4. What will be the signs in the heavens? (13:24-25)

## 27. Parables of the End (Mark 13:26-37)

1. What does "the Son of Man coming in the clouds have to do with prophecy? (13:26; hint: Daniel 7:13-14) Who will the Son of Man?
2. The so-called "rapture" is depicted here as the angels sent to "gather his elect" (13:27) How do you think this will take place?
3. What is the Parable of the Fig Tree? What does it teach us regarding Christ's return? (13:28-31). Note "generation" (*genea*) can mean (1) "race" (2) "generation, contemporaries," or (3) age.
4. Who knows the date? (13:32) Why should we be skeptical of Bible teachers setting dates?
5. In your own words, related the Parable of the Watchful Servant (13:33-37). What is the point of the parable?
6. In practical terms, what does it mean for us to "watch" or "keep watch"? (13:33, 35, 37)

## 28. Anointing at Bethany (Mark 14:1-11)

Note: This is probably the same event as in John 12:1-8 and Matthew 26:6-13, but NOT Luke 7:36-50 (about a sinful woman). In our passage the woman seems to be Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus (John 12:1-2).

1. Who was plotting to kill Jesus? Why? What occasion were they seeking? (14:1-2)
2. Why did the woman anoint Jesus with such expensive perfume? What do you think was the woman's motive?
3. How valuable was it in terms of a laborer's wages? How would these wages translate to your currency today? (14:5)
4. Why were some people upset about the extravagance? Would you be upset at this extravagance? Why or why not? (14:5)
5. How did Jesus interpret the gesture? Why did he defend her? (14:6-8)
6. John tells us that Judas objected to the extravagance (John 12:4-6)? According to John, what was his motive?

7. Why do you think Judas betrayed Jesus? How would his intelligence be important to the conspiracy? (14:2, 10-11)

### **29. The Last Supper (Mark 14:12-26)**

1. What were Jesus instructions on where to prepare the Passover meal? Had Jesus made previous arrangements, or was this a divine appointment? (14:12-16)
2. Passover evening, Jesus revealed a betrayer among the Twelve. Did Judas act of his own free will? Was he compelled by predestination? Was he responsible for his actions? (14:17-21)
3. In what sense is the broken bread on this Passover night Jesus' body? (14:22; see also 1 Corinthians 11:23-24). What meaning do you think the disciples attached to this, at this time and later?
4. What did his blood represent? (14:24) What is meant by the phrase "the blood of the covenant" (Exodus 24:8). Look for the origin of the phrase "for many" in Isaiah 53:11-12. In what way does Jesus' blood affect us?
5. What promise do you see in verse 25? How does this relate to Revelation 19:9?
6. What is the purpose and effect of partaking of the Lord's Supper regularly? (1 Corinthians 11:26)

### **30. Peter's Bravado and Gethsemane (Mark 14:27-42)**

1. What about Peter's character gives birth to his bravado and comparisons with other disciples in verse 31? Have you ever been blinded by pride?
2. Why do you think Jesus wanted only Peter, James, and John close to him in Gethsemane? (14:33a)
3. Why was Jesus so distressed? What was he afraid of? What did he recoil at? (14:33b-34a)
4. What does it mean to "keep watch"? (14:34b, 37-38) What happened to the disciples?
5. What did Jesus ask the Father? What is "this cup"? How does Jesus keep his desires from getting in the way of the Father's will? (14:35-36)
6. What does Gethsemane teach us about Jesus' humanity? About his relationship with the Father?
7. How does the command to "watch and pray" aid us when we're tempted? (14:38) How can we implement watching? Praying?

### **31. Arrest and Trial before the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:43-65)**

1. Why did Jesus' enemies need to find him away from the crowds? (14:2). What key role did Judas play in the conspiracy? (14:43-45). What is the irony of Judas's kiss? (14:45)
2. Whose ear got cut off in the scuffle? (14:47). How did Jesus respond? See also John 18:10.
3. Why didn't various accusations against Jesus stand up to scrutiny in court? (14:58-59) Why, do you think, Jesus didn't answer these false charges?
4. Why did the high priest ask Jesus if he was the promised Messiah? What was he hoping to hear? (14:61)
5. How did Jesus answer the high priest? (14:62) In what ways does his answer correspond to the prophecy in Daniel 7:13-14?

6. How does Jesus admitting to being the Christ (Messiah) relate to the eventual charge before Pilate as claiming to be “King of the Jews”?

### **32. Peter’s Denial, Jesus before Pilate (Mark 14:66-15:20)**

1. Why does bold Peter, who cut off an ear hours before (John 18:10), deny Jesus so vehemently now? What has changed?
2. What does Peter’s denial teach us about obeying Jesus’ instruction in Mark 14:38?
3. What does Peter’s restoration in John 21:15-17 teach us about forgiveness?
4. How does his charge “King of the Jews” designed to cast Jesus as a threat to Pilate? (15:2)
5. Why doesn’t Jesus answer the false charges against him? Why do you think Pilate is amazed by this? (15:3-5)
6. What indications are there that Pilate is sympathetic to Jesus? (15:6-11)
7. Why does Pilate give Jesus over to flogged and crucified? (15:12-15)
8. What did flogging involve? Why were condemned criminals flogged so brutally? How did this help accomplish the Roman’s task to subdue the Jews? (15:16-20)
9. How is “wanting to satisfy the crowd” (15:15) a temptation in your life?

### **33. The Cross (Mark 15:21-32; Psalm 22)**

1. Why do you think Simon of Cyrene was conscripted to carry Jesus’ cross? Why do you think his sons are mentioned? (15:21)
2. Read Psalm 22:7-8, 14-18. In what ways does 15:24 fulfill the prophetic words of this psalm?  
Note: The 6th hour is noon, the 9th hour is 3 pm.
3. What did crucifixion involve? What would Jesus be feeling physically? Emotionally? Spiritually?
4. How accurate was the placard on the cross above him: “The King of the Jews”?
5. Read Isaiah 53:12? How does verse 29 fulfill some of these words. What does Isaiah mean when he says “for he bore the sin of many”? Who is in charge in Isaiah 53:12. The victim or his enemies?
6. What light does Isaiah 53:12 shed on Jesus’ explanation of his own death in Mark 10:45?
7. In what sense did Jesus die for our sins and ransom us? Where would we be if he didn’t die for us?

### **34. Jesus’ Death and Burial (Mark 15:33-47)**

1. Why do you think Jesus cries out the first words of Psalm 22:1? Why did the Father forsake him? (15:34)  
Note: Wine vinegar was *posca*, a drink Roman soldiers had on duty to relieve thirst, not to intoxicate.
2. What is the significance of the curtain of the temple being torn from top to bottom? (15:38) What did the curtain separate? (see Hebrews 6:19; 9:3)
3. Why did the centurion call Jesus the Son of God? (15:39)
4. Why were the women present? How did they minister to Jesus? (15:40-41; see Luke 8:2-3)

5. What do we know about Joseph of Arimathea? Why did Pilate see him so readily? Why was Pilate surprised that Jesus was already dead? (15:43)
6. How did Joseph prepare the body? Where did he place it? Who knew? (15:45-47) What additional do we learn from John 19:38-42?

### **35. Resurrection and Commission (Mark 16)**

1. Why were the women concerned about opening the tomb? What did they find when they got there? What was their reaction? (16:1-5)
2. How did the angel reassure them? What was his announcement? (16:6-7)
3. What did the women do then? Later, after Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, what did she do? Why do you think Jesus choose to reveal himself first to a woman? Why did the disciples have so much trouble believing? (16:8-11)

NOTE: Mark 16:9-20, the so-called “longer ending” of Mark is very early, but written by a different hand than the rest of the Gospel, probably because the last page was missing from the manuscript.

4. What are the parameters of the “Great Commission” in Mark’s Gospel? (16:15)
5. What signs were the apostles told to expect among believers? (16:16-18) Which of these occur in the Book of Acts? Which occur today?
6. What was the effect of the signs that accompanied the disciples’ subsequent preaching? (16:20)

## Introduction to the Gospel of Mark

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“Mark became Peter’s interpreter and wrote accurately all that he remembered, not, indeed, in order, of the things said or done by the Lord.” (Eusebius, *Church History* 3.39.16)

The Gospel of Mark was probably written in Rome in the mid-60s AD, perhaps just after Peter’s martyrdom in 65 AD, but before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Mark seems to have been written for both Jewish and Gentile Christians who were undergoing persecution from both the Jews and Romans.



Intro to the Gospel of Mark (page 2)

Mark is the shortest gospel. It begins abruptly with the assertion: “The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (1:1). You’ll find the word “immediately” used often. It also ends abruptly at 16:8, as if the final page of the document were missing. The “Longer Ending” of Mark, containing 16:9-20, is written by another hand to complete the gospel, but is clearly penned in the late decades of the first or early second centuries, and reflects the early church’s understanding of Jesus’ resurrection and commission.

As you study the Gospel of Mark each week, read the verses indicated, then discuss the provided questions in your group. As you talk together, everyone will become engaged in the process, the deeper meanings of the text will become apparent, and you’ll discover ways you to apply the principles in your own life.

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# 1. Preparing the Way

## Mark 1:1-20

1. What was John the Baptist's role? What was the essence of John's message? (1:1-9)



2. Why did John dress the way he did? Why did he act "abnormally"? What did people think about him? (1:6)

3. Why do you think the Spirit "sent" Jesus into the desert? (1:12-13) Does he ever send us for this purpose?

4. What was Jesus' early message? (1:14-15) What does the world think Jesus' main message is?

5. Why do you think Simon and Andrew, James and John answered Jesus' radical call? (1:16-20)

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## 2. Jesus Heals

### Mark 1:21:-2:12

1. What is the significance of Jesus casting out an evil spirit? What had the spirit said? How does this propel Jesus' career? (1:21-28)

2. Why did Jesus heal Peter's mother-in-law? (1:29-33) What effect did this have on the town? Should we routinely pray for sick people?

3. Why did Jesus disappear? What did his disciples want him to do? What did his Father want him to do? How was this "predictable pattern" foundational for Jesus' ministry? Have you developed this pattern? (1:35-39)

4. What faith did the leper have? Why did the leper qualify his prayer with Jesus' will? What was Jesus' will? What was the effect of the leper's disobedience? (1:40-45)

5. Did the paralytic have faith? What is the relationship between forgiveness and healing? How did Jesus' words offend? (2:1-12)



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### 3. Jesus Challenges the Status quo

Mark 2:13-3:6



1. What was the social standing of tax collectors? Why did Jesus call Levi? How did he respond? How did the religious purists respond? Who did Jesus come for? Are there people "below" you that you fell uncomfortable helping? (2:13-17)
2. Why did the Pharisees criticize Jesus about fasting? What was Jesus' answer? What is the lesson to us of the old and new wineskins? (2:18-22)
3. What is the significance of the Sabbath being made for man, rather than visa versa? What does it mean that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath? (2:23-28)
4. Why were the Pharisees upset about Jesus healing the man with the shriveled hand? Why did they consider this such a serious challenge? (3:1-6)

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### Mark 3:7-35

1. What effect did the crowds have on Jesus' ministry? How did his disciples assist with the crowds? (3:7-12)
2. What specifically were the "apostles" to do? What is the significance of "being with him"? (3:13-19)
3. How did his family respond to his popularity? How did the religious leaders respond? (3:20-22)
4. Why did Jesus tell the parable of the kingdom divided? Who is the "strong man" in the parable? Why is it so serious to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit? What does this mean? (3:23-30)
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## 5. The Parable of the Sower

### Mark 4:1-20

1. Why did Jesus teach with parables? (4:9-12)
2. What was the soil like along the path? (4:4) Why were the birds able to eat it up? What does this represent? (4:15)
3. What was the soil like over rocky places? Why did the plant spring up quickly? Why did it wither? (4:5-6). What does this soil represent? (4:16-17)
4. What happens to the seed sown in thorny places? (4:7) What do the thorns represent? (4:18-19)
5. What happens to the seed sown on good soil? (4:8) What kind of yield do you get here? (4:20)
6. What is the difference between the result on the good soil and the others?
7. Why did Jesus give this parable to his disciples? What was he trying to teach them?
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## 6. Parables of the Kingdom Mark 4:21-35



1. What does the Parable of the Lamp on a Stand teach us about our witness to others? (4:21-23)
2. What does the Parable of the Measures teach us about the importance of listening carefully to Jesus? (4:24-25)
3. What does the Parable of the Growing Seed teach us about the Kingdom of God? (4:26-29) About our job and God's job?
4. What does the Parable of the Mustard Seed teach us? (4:30-33) How did it reassure the disciples?
5. Is the story of Jesus calming the storm a parable? What was it intended to teach about faith? About fear? About Jesus' power?



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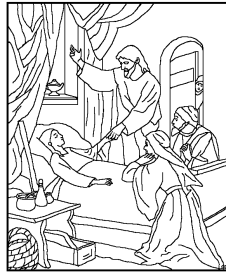
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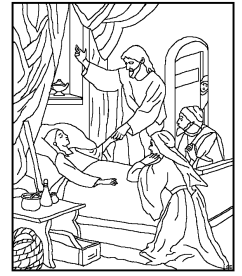


## 7. Miracles of Deliverance, Healing, & Resurrection. Mark 5



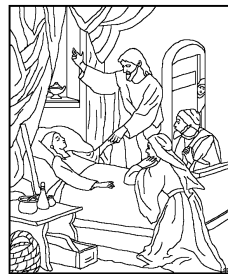
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2. Who does this story teach us about demons?
3. What did pigs mean to Jews? What is the element of the pigs add to the story? (5:11-13)
4. Why didn't Jesus have the man accompany him? What was his mission instead? (5:18-20)
5. What was wrong with the sick woman? How long had she been sick? What might her touch affect the ritual purity of those around her? (5:24-27)
6. What was the focus of her faith? How did Jesus' sense her healing? What is the role of faith in her healing? (5:27-34)
7. Who is Jairus? What is his position in the community. How does he approach Jesus? What are the obstacles to his faith? How does Jesus encourage him? (5:22, 35-40)
8. Why does Jesus exclude others from the room? What does he give orders not to tell about this? (5:40-43)

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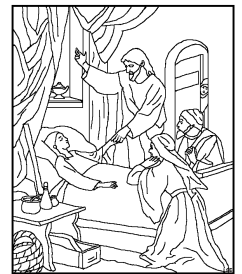
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## 8. Mission and Danger Mark 6:1-30

1. Why did people in Nazareth have a hard time believing in Jesus? (6:1-6)
2. Why did Jesus send out the Twelve? What authority did he give them? (6:7-11)
3. What were his instructions to them? What was the purpose of these instructions? (6:8-11)
4. What was the content of their message? What miracles did they do? (6:12-13)



“When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.” (Luke 10:5-7)

5. What are the characteristics of a “person of peace” according to Luke 10:5-7?
6. Why does Mark spend so much space telling about the imprisonment and death of John the Baptist? What are we to learn from this? (6:14-29)

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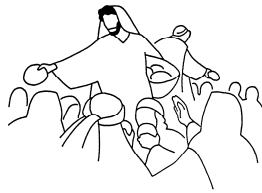
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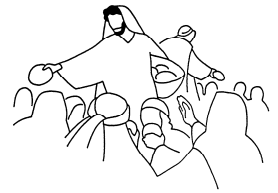
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## 9. Feeding the 5,000, Walking on Water Mark 6:31-56



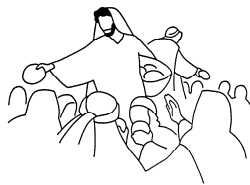
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5. How did Jesus tell them to start? (6:38)
6. How did the disciples help implement the miracle? (6:39-41)
7. Why did Jesus have the disciples collect the leftovers? (6:43-44, see 8:19-20)
8. Why did Jesus stay behind? What does that teach us? (6:45-46)
9. Why did Jesus scare his disciples by walking on the water? What was he trying to do? (6:48-50)
10. In what way were their hearts hardened? (6:52)
11. How would you characterize Jesus' healing ministry from verses 54-56? What attracted people?

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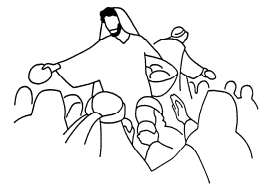
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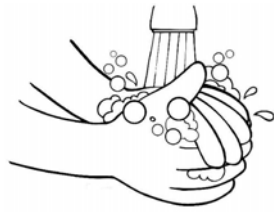
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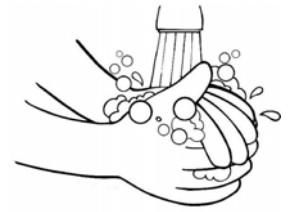


## 10. Clean and Unclean Mark 7:1-23



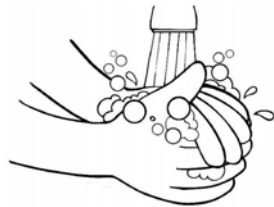
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2. Why did the Pharisees criticize Jesus' disciples when they ate? (7:1-2, 5)
3. How did the Pharisees fit Isaiah's prophecy quoted in verses 6-7.
4. Can you think of any present-day religious traditions supersede what the Bible teaches?
5. Have you ever been in a church that refused to do things differently than they had always done before — that is, tradition bound? How can you break out of this place?
6. According to Jesus, is uncleanness external or internal? (7:18-20)
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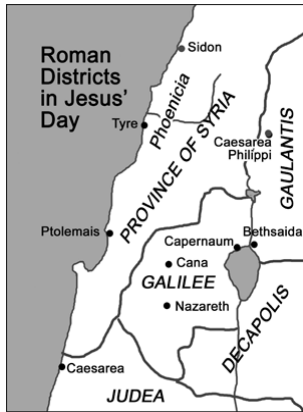
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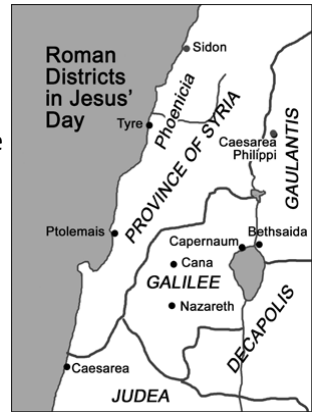
## 11. Healings in Gentile Regions (Mark 7:24-37)

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2. Why doesn’t Jesus have any privacy here? (7:24)
3. Why does the Syro-Phoenician woman want? (7:25-26)
4. Why does Jesus seem to spurn her? (7:27)
5. How does her answer demonstrate faith and wit? (7:28-29)
6. Why do you think Jesus goes to the mainly Gentile region of the Decapolis? What do these two stories have to do with the previous theme of “clean and unclean” (7:1-23)
7. How does Jesus go about healing the deaf-mute man? (7:32-37) How does this compare to their expectations?



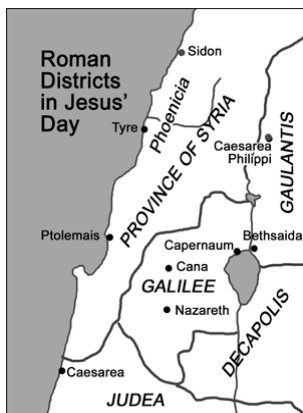
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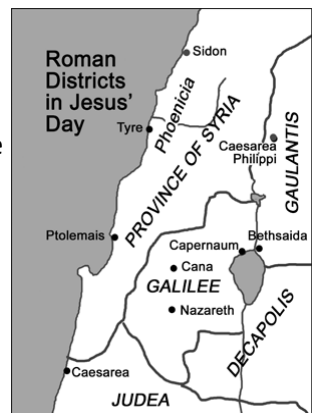
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## 12. Signs, Unbelief, and Healing Mark 8:1-26



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2. In this context, what does the Pharisees' request for a "sign" tell you about their powers of observation? Their faith? (8:11-13)
3. What is the "yeast" or "leaven" of the Pharisees? (8:14-15) Why does Jesus tell them to "beware" or "watch out" for it? How might it infect us?
4. What does all this have to do with bread? What is the lesson of the "leftovers" from the feedings of the 5,000 and the 4,000? (8:17-20) What don't the disciples understand? (8:21)
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4. Why does Jesus tell them to keep this a secret? (8:30) How might telling endanger Jesus' mission?
5. What does Jesus say about his death and resurrection? (8:31-32) How does this correspond to Jewish ideas of the Messiah?
6. Why does Peter rebuke Jesus in private? Why does Jesus rebuke Peter? About what matter is Peter speaking Satan's words? (8:33)
7. What does it mean to "take up one's cross" and follow? Which does the cross represent here? Burden? Christian symbol? Death? (8:34)
8. Why is self-denial avoided by Christians? How could one trade the world for one's soul? Can a person be a true disciple without self-denial? (8:34-37)



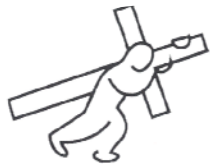
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## 14. A Glimpse of Glory (Mark 9:1-13)

1. Why do you think Jesus brought the three to witness his transfiguration? (9:2)
2. What did they see? (9:3)
3. What is the significance of Elijah and Moses? (9:4)
4. Why did Peter want to put up three shelters? What happens when people memorialize God-sightings in our day?
5. Elijah — Malachi 4:5-6. Who is the “Elijah” Jesus refers to? (9:12-13)
6. In what way did the disciples “see the Kingdom of God come with power”? (9:1)



## 14. A Glimpse of Glory (Mark 9:1-13)

1. Why do you think Jesus brought the three to witness his transfiguration? (9:2)
2. What did they see? (9:3)
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## 15. Help My Unbelief (Mark 9:14-32)

1. Why were the “teachers of the law” arguing with the disciples? (9:14)
2. What does Jesus struggle with their unbelief? (9:19)
3. What faith does “if you can” represent? What does Jesus say about faith and possibility? (9:24)
4. What method does Jesus use for this exorcism? (9:25)
5. Why couldn’t the disciples drive out the spirit? (9:28-29)
6. Why didn’t Jesus want a crowd in Galilee? (9:30-31)
7. Notice how Jesus equates the Son of Man with the Suffering Servant (9:31; Isaiah 53). Why does Jesus warn the disciples about his impending death and resurrection? (9:31-32)



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## 16. Pride, Tolerance, and Sin

### Mark 9:33-50

1. Why do you think the disciples argued about who was greatest among them? (9:33-34)
2. Jesus gives two responses. What are they? (9:35-36)
3. Why did the disciples want to stop the man casting out demons? What did this have to do with their motivation in vss. 33-34? What was Jesus direction? What does this do with a cup of water? (9:38-41)
4. Who are the "little ones" of verse 42? What do they have in common with those in verse 41?
5. Why is Jesus so adamant about sin? Is he speaking literally or in hyperbole? What is our society's attitude about sin? (9:42-48)
6. Why is "fire and brimstone" preaching out of favor? What truth does it contain? (9:48)
7. Salt was used with sacrifices in the OT (Leviticus 2:13), probably alludes to living lives of sacrifice. What does a "salty" disciple look like? What about an "un-salty" disciple? Which are you? (9:49-50)



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## 17. Divorce

### Mark 10:1-12



You must understand: (1) The Pharisees trying to get Jesus to take sides on an ongoing Jewish controversy: whether a man can be divorced for “any cause” (such as burning the toast), or only for adultery. (See Matthew 19:3-12 for a fuller statement.). (2) Mark’s abbreviated version leaves out the adultery exception, because it was assumed. It is explicitly included in Matt 19:9 and Deut 24:1 (“some indecency”).

1. Why did the Mosaic Law allow divorce? (10:4-5) What’s an example of “hardness of heart”?
2. How does Jesus see God’s original intention for marriage in the creation story? (10:6-7; Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31).
3. What is the significance of “one flesh”? (10:8-9; Gen 2:24)
4. Why would invalid divorce cause adultery? (10:10-12)
5. How can we apply these principles honestly in our very broken world without being either overly sloppy or overly legalistic?

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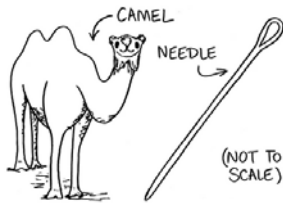


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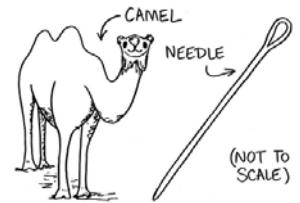


## 18. Entering the Kingdom Mark 10:13-31



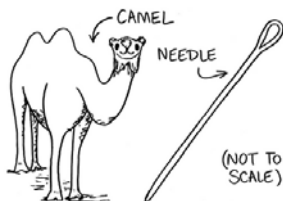
1. How is the disciples' attitude in 10:13 similar to their attitude in 9:33-38?
2. What is the point of comparison between welcoming children and people entering the kingdom? What does this teach us about faith? (10:13-16)
3. Who do we learn about the man in verses 17, 20, and 22? What did he mean "inherit eternal life"? (10:17)
4. Why does Jesus question his relative use of the adjective "good"? (10:17-18)
5. Why does Jesus require the man to sell everything and give it to the poor? (10:21)
6. Why is salvation virtually impossible for the rich? (10:23-27)
7. What does Jesus promise those who give up things for Jesus and his gospel? (10:28-30)
8. How will the "first" be last, and vice versa, in the Kingdom? (10:31)

## 18. Entering the Kingdom Mark 10:13-31



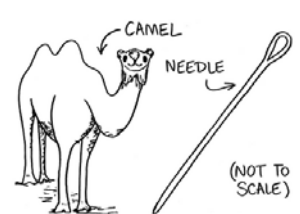
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## 19. Power and Service

### Mark 10:32-45



1. Why do you think the disciple couldn't grasp Jesus' three-time prediction of his death and resurrection? (8:31; 9:31-32; 10:33-34) What prophecies do we find it hard to believe?
2. Why do James and John ask to sit Jesus' right and left? How does it show faith? How does it show pride? How does Jesus answer them? (10:35-41)
3. How do secular officials tend to exercise authority? What does "lord it over" mean? (10:42) How does this show up in church history? In your local congregation?
4. How does this contrast with Jesus' servant leadership? What does it mean to be a servant, a slave? (10:43-44)
5. How was Jesus' life an example? (10:45; Philippians 2:5-8) How did he illustrate this at the Last Supper (John 13:4-17)
6. In what way did Jesus come as a ransom? (10:45; see Isaiah 53:5, 11).

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## 20.The Son of David

### Mark 10:46-11:11



1. Why is Bartimaeus sitting by the roadside? (10:46)
2. What does the title “Son of David” mean? What does this say about Bartimaeus’s faith? (10:47-48)
3. Why did people try to quiet Bartimaeus? Why didn’t he quiet down? What does this say about his faith? (10:48)
4. Why does Jesus ask him what he wants? Isn’t it obvious? How does he answer? (10:51)
5. What is the connection between faith and healing? What does “following” Jesus entail? (10:52)
6. Read Zechariah 9:9. How does Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey fulfill prophecy? (11:1-10)
7. Do you think Jesus has already arranged with the donkey’s owner to use his animal? Why or why not? (11:2-6).
8. Why should we obey Jesus’ instructions when they make no sense to us? (11:2-6)
9. In what ways do the people worship Jesus at the triumphal entry? (11:7-10)
10. What do the people’s shouts tell us about their faith? About their understanding of who Jesus is?(11:9-10)

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## 21. The Withered Fig Tree and Barren Temple (Mark 11:12-26)

1. What does the fig tree symbolize in Israelite culture? (see Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:10)? (We need to understand this act symbolically.)
2. How had the Israelites corrupted the true use of the temple? What was the true use of the temple (11:17). How had the high priests (who received a cut of profits) corrupted it and made it “a den of robbers”?
3. What did Jesus do in the temple? How was it received by the chief priests and teachers of the law? (11:15-18)
4. Why do you think Mark interweaves the accounts of the withered fig tree and the barren temple? What does the fig tree represent here symbolically? (See a similar parable using a vineyard as the symbol in Mark 12:1-12.)
5. What does Jesus teach about the power and importance of faith in prayer? (Mark 11:22-24)
6. Why is forgiveness so important to integrity in prayer? (Mark 11:25; also Matt 5:23-24; 6:12,14)



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## 22.The Parable of the Tenants (Mark 11:27-12:12)

1. When Jesus cleansed the temple (11:12-19), why did the Jewish leaders question his authority to do so? In what way was this a “trick question” in order to entrap him? (Mark 11:27-33)
2. How did Jesus’ question about John’s authority to baptize stop the Jewish leaders from pressing their attack on Jesus’ authority? (Mark 11:29-33)
3. In Jesus’ Parable of the Tenants, who does the vineyard builder represent? The vineyard? The tenants? The son? (Mark 12:1-9)
4. Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22-23. In that prophecy who is the stone? The builders? The capstone/ cornerstone? (Mark 11:10-12)
5. According to Matthew 21:41, 43, who are the “other tenants” to whom the Kingdom will be given?
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## 23. Jesus Answers Trick Questions (Mark 12:13-27)

1. Who wanted to trap Jesus regarding taxes? Why? What was the trick question? (12:13-15)
2. What would Jesus do if he said they should pay taxes to Caesar? What would they do if he said they shouldn't? (12:14-15a)
3. How were they hypocrites (12: 14-15a)
4. What was Jesus' answer? Why did it disappoint them? (12:15b-17)
5. Who wanted to trap Jesus about the resurrection? (6:18-23) How could a woman become a widow seven times over? How did levirate marriage require a man to marry his brother's widow? (Deuteronomy 25:5-10)
6. What will be the state of marriage in heaven? (6:25)
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## 24. The Great Commandments (Mark 12:28-34)

1. Who asked Jesus the question? What do you think his motive was? In what way was this a “test question”?
2. “Love the Lord with all your heart” comes from the Shema recited daily by observant Jews (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). What is involved in obeying this command? What does it mean to “love” God?
3. “Love your neighbor as yourself” comes from Leviticus 19:18. How do we fulfill this command?
4. In Matthew, Jesus said: “All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:40). In what ways is this true?
5. Our world generally acknowledges the greatness of the Second Commandment. Why do they ignore the First Commandment?
6. How did the questioner respond? What did Jesus say to him? In what way was he “not far” from the Kingdom?



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## 25. The Widow's Offering (Mark 12:35-44)

Context: Various groups have asked Jesus questions: Should we pay taxes? How can there be a resurrection? What is the greatest commandment?



1. Jesus quotes the messianic Psalm 110:1, "The Lord says to my Lord...." What is his question? To whom does he ask it? What is his point? (12:35-37)
2. What sins are the "teachers of the law" guilty of? Where do we see these sins today? (12:38-40)
3. Why does Jesus look at people giving offerings? Does he look today? (12:41-44)
4. Jesus contrasts the rich people who "threw in large amounts" with a "poor widow." What can we surmise about this widow? (12:41-44)
5. How much did she put in the offering? How could it be "more than all the others?" (12:44)
6. Is Jesus' measurement scale for offerings absolute or relative? What does this teach us about how much we should give? How does this relate to tithing?
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## 26. Signs of the End (Mark 13:1-25)

Called Mark's "Little Apocalypse" because it is short, these verses are difficult to interpret fully. Like a puzzle with some missing pieces. But let's see what we can learn.



1. What disciple's statement prompted Jesus to discuss the end times? (13:1-2)
2. What will the disciples be doing during this time? (13:9-11)
3. In spite of betrayals, why must we stand firm to the end? (13:12-13)
4. When should they flee? What will this period be like? (13:14-20)
5. What is done "for the sake of the elect"? Who seems to be present on the earth at this time? (13:20)
6. What kind of deceptions should we expect? (13:21-23; also 13:5-6)
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## 27. Parables of the End (Mark 13:26-37)

1. What does “the Son of Man coming in the clouds have to do with prophecy? (13:26; hint: Daniel 7:13-14) Who will the Son of Man?
2. The so-called “rapture” is depicted here as the angels sent to “gather his elect” (13:27) How do you think this will take place?
3. What is the Parable of the Fig Tree? What does it teach us regarding Christ’s return? (13:28-31). Note “generation” (genea) can mean (1) “race” (2) “generation, contemporaries,” or (3) age.
4. Who knows the date? (13:32) Why should we be skeptical of Bible teachers setting dates?
5. In your own words, related the Parable of the Watchful Servant (13:33-37). What is the point of the parable?
6. In practical terms, what does it mean for us to “watch” or “keep watch”? (13:33, 35, 37)



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## 28. Anointing at Bethany (Mark 14:1-11)

Note: This is probably the same event as in John 12:1-8 and Matthew 26:6-13, but NOT Luke 7:36-50 (about a sinful woman). In our passage the woman seems to be Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus (John 12:1-2).



1. Who was plotting to kill Jesus? Why? What occasion were they seeking? (14:1-2)
2. Why did the woman anoint Jesus with such expensive perfume? What do you think was the woman's motive?
3. How valuable was it in terms of a laborer's wages? How would these wages translate to your currency today? (14:5)
4. Why were some people upset about the extravagance? Would you be upset at this extravagance? Why or why not? (14:5)
5. How did Jesus interpret the gesture? Why did he defend her? (14:6-8)
6. John tells us that Judas objected to the extravagance (John 12:4-6)? According to John, what was his motive?
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## 29. The Last Supper (Mark 14:12-26)



1. What were Jesus instructions on where to prepare the Passover meal? Had Jesus made previous arrangements, or was this a divine appointment? (14:12-16)
2. Passover evening, Jesus revealed a betrayer among the Twelve. Did Judas act of his own free will? Was he compelled by predestination? Was he responsible for his actions? (14:17-21)
3. In what sense is the broken bread on this Passover night Jesus' body? (14:22; see also 1 Corinthians 11:23-24). What meaning do you think the disciples attached to this, at this time and later?
4. What did his blood represent? (14:24) What is meant by the phrase "the blood of the covenant" (Exodus 24:8). Look for the origin of the phrase "for many" in Isaiah 53:11-12. In what way does Jesus' blood affect us?
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4. What did his blood represent? (14:24) What is meant by the phrase "the blood of the covenant" (Exodus 24:8). Look for the origin of the phrase "for many" in Isaiah 53:11-12. In what way does Jesus' blood affect us?
5. What promise do you see in verse 25? How does this relate to Revelation 19:9?
6. What is the purpose and effect of partaking of the Lord's Supper regularly? (1 Corinthians 11:26)

### 30. Peter's Bravado and Gethsemane (Mark 14:27-42)



1. What about Peter's character gives birth to his bravado and comparisons with other disciples in verse 31? Have you ever been blinded by pride?
2. Why do you think Jesus wanted only Peter, James, and John close to him in Gethsemane? (14:33a)
3. Why was Jesus so distressed? What was he afraid of? What did he recoil at? (14:33b-34a)
4. What does it mean to "keep watch"? (14:34b, 37-38) What happened to the disciples?
5. What did Jesus ask the Father? What is "this cup"? How does Jesus keep his desires from getting in the way of the Father's will? (14:35-36)
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### 31. Arrest and Trial before the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:43-65)

1. Why did Jesus' enemies need to find him away from the crowds? (14:2). What key role did Judas play in the conspiracy? (14:43-45). What is the irony of Judas's kiss? (14:45)
2. Whose ear got cut off in the scuffle? (14:47). How did Jesus respond? See also John 18:10.
3. Why didn't various accusations against Jesus stand up to scrutiny in court? (14:58-59) Why, do you think, Jesus didn't answer these false charges?
4. Why did the high priest ask Jesus if he was the promised Messiah? What was he hoping to hear? (14:61)
5. How did Jesus answer the high priest? (14:62) In what ways does his answer correspond to the prophecy in Daniel 7:13-14?
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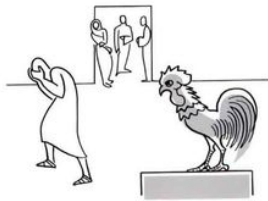
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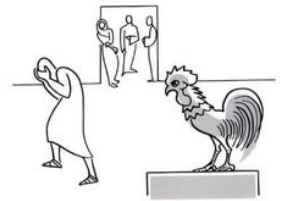
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2. What does Peter's denial teach us about obeying Jesus' instruction in Mark 14:38?
3. What does Peter's restoration in John 21:15-17 teach us about forgiveness?
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5. Why doesn't Jesus answer the false charges against him? Why do you think Pilate is amazed by this? (15:3-5)
6. What indications are there that Pilate is sympathetic to Jesus? (15:6-11)
7. Why does Pilate give Jesus over to flogged and crucified? (15:12-15)
8. What did flogging involve? Why were condemned criminals flogged so brutally? How did this help accomplish the Roman's task to subdue the Jews?
9. How is "wanting to satisfy the crowd" (15:15) a temptation in your life?



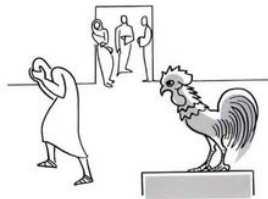
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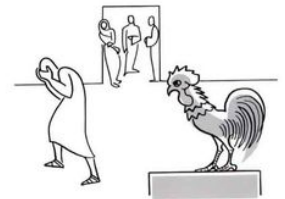
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### 33. The Cross (Mark 15:21-32; Psalm 22)



1. Why do you think Simon of Cyrene was conscripted to carry Jesus' cross? Why do you think his sons are mentioned? (15:21)
2. Read Psalm 22:7-8, 14-18. In what ways I does 15:24 fulfill the prophetic words of this psalm?

Note: The 6th hour is noon, the 9th hour is 3 pm.

3. What did crucifixion involve? What would Jesus be feeling physically? Emotionally? Spiritually?
4. How accurate was the placard on the cross above him: "The King of the Jews"?
5. Read Isaiah 53:12? How does verse 29 fulfill some of these words. What does Isaiah mean when he says "for he bore the sin of many"? Who is in charge in Isaiah 53:12. The victim or his enemies?
6. What light does Isaiah 15:12 shed on Jesus' explanation of his own death in Mark 10:45?
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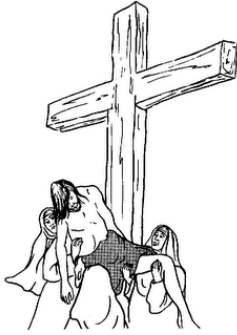


### 34. Jesus' Death and Burial (Mark 15:33-47)

1. Why do you think Jesus cries out the first words of Psalm 22:1? Why did the Father forsake him? (15:34)

Note: Wine vinegar was *posca*, a drink Roman soldiers had on duty to relieve thirst, not to intoxicate.

2. What is the significance of the curtain of the temple being torn from top to bottom? (15:38) What did the curtain separate? (see Hebrews 6:19; 9:3)
3. Why did the centurion call Jesus the Son of God? (15:39)
4. Why were the women present? How did they minister to Jesus? (15:40-41; see Luke 8:2-3)
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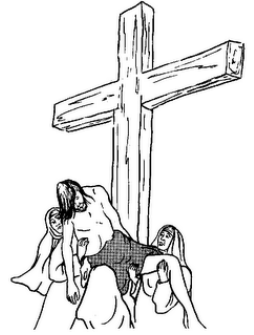


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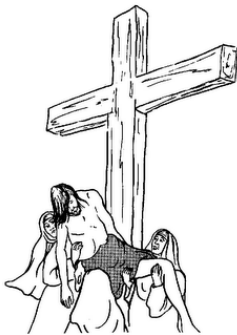


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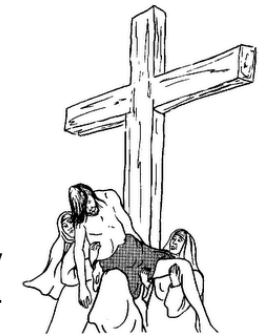


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## 35. Resurrection and Commission (Mark 16)



1. Why were the women concerned about opening the tomb? What did they find when they got there? What was their reaction? (16:1-5)
2. How did the angel reassure them? What was his announcement? (16:6-7)
3. What did the women do then? Later, after Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, what did she do? Why do you think Jesus choose to reveal himself first to a woman? Why did the disciples have so much trouble believing? (16:8-11)

NOTE: Mark 16:9-20, the so-called “longer ending” of Mark is very early, but written by a different hand than the rest of the Gospel, probably because the last page was missing from the manuscript.

4. What are the parameters of the “Great Commission” in Mark’s Gospel? (16:15)
5. What signs were the apostles told to expect among believers? (16:16-18) Which of these occur in the Book of Acts? Which occur today?
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