

# The Gospel of Mark

FOLLOWING JESUS  
ON THE PATH  
OF THE CROSS



LHBC

*community  
groups*





# LIVINGHOPE

baptist church

*Blessed be the God and Father  
of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who according to  
His abundant mercy  
has begotten us again to a  
Living Hope  
through the resurrection of  
Jesus Christ from the dead.*

*1 Peter 1:3*



## **Community Group Purpose Statement**

We, as smaller gatherings of one family, will practice with our lives the gospel truths that we confess with our mouths. Together, we will allow our lives to be challenged by the gospel and one another; we will live lives of boldness and purpose. As we walk in the light of the gospel, we will point to the grace of God and its power to set lives free from sin and death. We will continue praying, teaching, making disciples, and bearing one another's burdens. Following the pattern set before us by Jesus, we will bring joy to our family (the church) and glory to his name.

## **What is a Community Group?**

Community groups are small gatherings of people that meet regularly for friendship, accountability, study and prayer, laughter, and occasionally tears. Community groups are an essential expression of the mission of Living Hope Baptist Church. They're a place where we learn more about Jesus and life together. They're the place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another toward the life that God intends for us.

Each community group is unique, shaped by its neighborhood and the people who attend. However, you can expect a weekly gathering in a residence that involves food, conversation, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, and service in the neighborhood. At the heart of each community group is the desire to see an authentic community marked by love for Jesus, one another, and the neighborhood.

## **Why Should I Join a Community Group?**

The God of the Bible is a Trinitarian God who is one and three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. God has made us in his image, which means we are made for community and friendship. And when we are not living in community we suffer because life in a sinful world is too complex and tempting to journey alone. Therefore, community groups are a place where we can live in relationship with one another through the ups and downs of life.

# The Gospel of Mark

FOLLOWING JESUS  
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# **The Gospel of Mark**

## ***Following Jesus on the Path of the Cross***

### INTRODUCTION

Mark begins his fast paced gospel account, bypassing Jesus birth and childhood, and going immediately to the testimonies that prove that this Jesus is truly the long awaited Messiah. Jesus is The Messiah that is the Good News, the Messiah that changes lives, the Messiah who is the authoritative One, the Messiah that is sent by the Father, and the Messiah who demands authority over the lives of those who follow Him. Mark's gospel informs his readers that following Jesus will include something that the crowds and even His close disciples will struggle with, and what is rarely talked about even today – following Jesus on the path to the cross. We will see that instead of running to Him and embracing Him, they concluded that this was not the Messiah they wanted at all, and they killed Him. Mark's gospel presents Jesus as the One who has the right to have authority over our lives and the one who follows Jesus must follow Him, even if it takes him to a “cross”.



lesson one

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# This Jesus is the Good News

## **Mark 1:1-15**

### **SUMMARY**

It is a desperate time in the world and a desperate time among God's chosen people. Sin had caused a continual decline away from following God and it has been 400 years since a prophet of God had spoken. The people are in a seemingly hopeless situation and most did not even know it. Wickedness, rebellion, self-righteousness, and a religion of outward show with inward hypocrisy ruled in the land. Mark begins his fast paced Gospel by introducing his readers to the only One who could bring real change and hope to their hearts. That person is the promised Messiah. Mark gives us three testimonials as to the validity of this person's claim to be the promised Messiah. We will see that this person alone has the authority to defeat the devil and conquer sin and that this person alone is the Good News.

(The message that goes along with this lesson, and those that follow, can be heard in its entirety on our website which is [www.lhbcevv.org](http://www.lhbcevv.org).)

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Read **Luke 1:17**. What does the prophecy about John's future ministry tell you about the culture of the people at this time?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Read **Luke 1:15**. What do you see in this verse that gives us insight into the power behind John's life and ministry?

3. In **Mark 1:2**, who sends the messenger?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. In **Mark 1:2,3**, what is the purpose for sending the messenger?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Read **Luke 1:19**. What did the angel Gabriel call the promise of John's birth? Why would he call his birth by this description?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. As you read **Mark 1:4**, what makes this baptism different than all the other baptisms that took place in this culture? (See also the end of **verse 5**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What attitude do you see from John as he compares himself with Jesus in **verse 7**?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What limitation of his ministry did John understand as seen in **verse 8**?

9. What two things occurred after Jesus was baptized by John? **Mark 1:10,11**

10. What can we see concerning the authority of Jesus in **Mark 1:13**?

11. What was Jesus' message in **Mark 1:14,15**?

### **APPLICATION**

1. You will note that the wilderness is used in these first verses various times. We learned that Israel is said to be in a wilderness situation due to their sin (**Is. 64:10**). John is in the wilderness, and Jesus is led to the wilderness by the Spirit.

Why is “wilderness” a good description when sin is dominating a life?

2. Are you in a “wilderness” situation now needing Christ or even as a believer who is struggling?

**3.** Jesus showed His authority over Satan and preached the Good News which was about Him. Where is your heart as you look at the wilderness of sin around you and the ability of Jesus to change hearts and defeat the devil? Think about those you are praying for and are burdened about.

### **PRAYER**





lesson two

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# Jesus Authority to Call and to Change

## **Mark 1:16-20**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus had been preaching for about a year and his followers had been with them up to this point. Mark takes us right to their formal calling to permanent discipleship as Jesus approaches them as they mended their nets on the Sea of Galilee. Today's passage focuses on four men that Jesus called but the emphasis is on the authority of Jesus to call and change those who are called. Jesus commands them to leave their former lives and to follow Him. These men obey Jesus and leave their business and their families to walk the same road as their Master Jesus. Jesus begins His ministry of changing them from fishing for fish to fishing for men.

### **QUESTIONS**

Luke gives us much more detail surrounding the call of these men to discipleship. Turn to **Luke 5** and answer the following questions.

1. How many people are said to be here as Jesus comes to the sea of Galilee? (**verse 1**)
2. What was Jesus doing? (**verse 3**)
3. What did Jesus ask Peter to do? (**verse 4**)
4. What is Peter's verbal response and what is his heart response? (**verse 5**)

5. What is Peter's response to Jesus after the great catch of fish? (**verse 17,8**)

6. What did Jesus tell them that they would be doing from now on? (**verse 10**)

7. What two things did these men do? (**verse 11**)

### **APPLICATION**

1. Jesus promises to make these men fishers of men if they will follow Him.

What is the significance of the order that Jesus gave in **verse 17**? (follow then become fishers of people)

What does it mean to "follow Jesus"?

How do you think Jesus makes you into a "fisher of people"?

**2.** Why do you think Mark emphasized the fact that they left their nets and then followed Jesus?

What things do people refuse to leave which prevents them from following Jesus?

Is there anything in your life that is a struggle to leave?

**3.** What do you think it means that to follow Jesus is to truly lose your life – that your life is over?

## **PRAYER**



lesson three

---

# The Authority of the Teaching of Jesus

## **Mark 1:21-28**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus enters the synagogue to teach which causes a response from a demon and from those in attendance. The demon is terrified at the presence and teaching of the Son of God while the listeners recognize that his teaching is full of authority and power. They contrast His teaching with that of the Scribes. However, we are not told that those in attendance that day responded in repentance and followed Jesus. At this point we are told that the fame of Jesus is now spreading throughout the region of Galilee.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. List the main characters in **Mark 1:21-28**.

2. What was Jesus doing that caused all there to react the way they did?

3. In **verse 23** we are told the demon “cried out”. This word means to cry out loudly in a passionate and excited way usually having shrieks and screams with it. As you read **verse 24**, why do you think the demon reacted in this way? What does that tell you about how demons viewed Jesus?



4. In Luke's account in **Luke 4:35**, what does it seem the demon tried to do to the man but was not allowed to do?

5. If this man who was inhabited by an unclean spirit was like this for some time and his practice was to come to the synagogue weekly, how come the teaching of the Scribes never moved him in the same way as the teaching of Jesus?

### **APPLICATION**

1. In what practical ways can we obey the first part of **Colossians 3:16**?  
Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...

2. If you are not moved by the Word of God to repentance, obedience, thankfulness, awe, or worship; what might be your problem?

**3.** Take the remainder of your time together discussing ways to be more prepared to receive the Word of God with the power and authority of Jesus when the church gathers and songs are sung about Jesus and His Word is proclaimed.

(Hints: Through the week / Saturday / Sunday morning / While the service is going on)

## **PRAYER**





lesson four

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# The Authority and Compassion of Jesus

## **Mark 1:28-34**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus leaves the synagogue and enters into Simon's house where Simon's mother in law is sick. Jesus heals her and she immediately begins to serve. After the Sabbath was officially over, the whole town makes their way to Simon's house to see Jesus. Jesus shows his authority over physical sickness and also spiritual sickness and the dark evil kingdom of Satan by healing their infirmities and casting out demons who would keep them bound in darkness.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Why do you think they told Jesus about Simon's mother in law?
2. Why do you think Mark only records the fact that Simon's mother in law began serving, and didn't record anything about her reaction to her healing, or anyone else's reaction?
3. What similarities do you see in **verse 30** and **verse 32** related to those who were not sick or demon possessed?

4. Why did the people wait until sundown to leave their houses and come to Jesus and bring their loved ones to Jesus?

5. As you read **verse 34**, how do you picture the heart of Jesus as he saw what sin had done to these people?

6. How can this quote never apply to Jesus? “All power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men.”

7. Read **Mark 6:34** and also **Luke 13:34**. What about the heart of God do you see in these two verses?

## **APPLICATION**

1. Do you serve Jesus with joy in your home, in your church, and in the world? In which of these areas do you struggle?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Look at **Mark 1:31**. What caused her to serve? Is this missing in your life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How is it a blessing to you to know that Jesus is not only Authority and Power but also merciful and compassionate?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What lesson can you learn from the example of the people in **Mark 1:32** related to those who need Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How will possessing the heart of God as seen in the Son of God in this passage help you to serve even after long days and early mornings? (What consumed Jesus?)



**PRAYER**



lesson five

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# The Authority and Humility of Jesus

## **Mark 1:35-39**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus, after a long day of serving, rises early to fellowship with His Father in prayer, confirms His ministry and purpose to His disciples, and leaves to preach the Gospel to those who have not yet heard.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. How do you think the physical body of Jesus was feeling after a long day of service and then rising very early in the morning?
2. Why do you think Mark makes sure his readers know that Jesus got up very early while it was dark? Why didn't he just say, "Jesus went out to pray in the morning."?
3. Why do you think the disciples of Jesus were able to find Jesus when they were hunting for Him?

4. As you read the first thing they said to Jesus in **verse 37**, what does that tell you the disciples were concerned about?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Why didn't Jesus share the same concern as the disciples?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. As you read **verse 38**, why does Jesus not race back to those who were looking for Him. Why does he seemingly ignore them?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Describe a person who does not pray:

- Their view of God is:

- Their view of themselves is:

2. List your greatest hindrances to prayer.

**3. What practical steps can you take to remove those hindrances you listed in the previous question?**

4. How can you use the example of Jesus in **verse 35** to help you have times of prayer with the Father?

5. What does Jesus' dedication to prayer show you about your life of prayer?

6. As you look at your weaknesses, struggles, burdens, and lack of energy to serve and see your failures to handle all these to the glory of God, what part do you think failing to pray with earnestness plays in all of these?

## **PRAYER**





lesson six

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# The Authority of Jesus to Cleanse and Forgive

## **Mark 1:40-2:12**

### **SUMMARY**

In this passage we will see the power and authority of Jesus to cleanse and forgive. Mark gives us two accounts of men coming to Jesus in a very bold way. However, one came with the wrong heart, and the other came with a right heart. They both were healed physically but only one received spiritual life and forgiveness of sin. Jesus incites anger in the hearts of the religious leaders as He declares His authority to forgive sins.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. As you read the two accounts of the leper (1:40-45), and the man who was paralyzed (2:1-12), what similarities and differences do you see between these two accounts?

•Similarities:

•Differences

2. Did the leper and the paralytic leave Jesus in the same condition? Explain your answer.

### **APPLICATION**

1. Is it possible for you to seek God for the wrong reasons and with the wrong heart? If yes, list some reasons why you may seek God for the wrong reasons and with a wrong heart.

2. Look up the following verses and write down the ways leprosy resembles sin.

a. **Leviticus 13:3 –**

b. **Leviticus 13:7,8**

c. **Leviticus 13:44-46 –**

d. **Leviticus 13:57 –**

3. With sin being so ugly and so repulsive to God, do you find yourself making excuses for your sin, therefore failing to see it as God sees it? In what ways can we grow in this area?

4. Jesus was so opposite of the religious leaders as seen in how they treated lepers. In what ways do you see yourself acting like the religious leaders toward sinners, rather than acting like Jesus?

5. Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic. As a believer, are there any sins in your life, or maybe a period of time in your life, where you are struggling to believe and rest in the forgiveness of Jesus? Share this with your group?

**PRAYER**



lesson seven

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# Jesus Came for the Worst of the Worst

## **Mark 2:13-17**

### **SUMMARY**

In Lesson Seven Jesus calls a tax collector to follow him. Tax collectors were viewed by the Jewish people as the worst of the worst of sinners. Jesus dines with tax collectors and sinners causing the religious leaders much grief. Jesus informs them that He came for sinners and not for people who see themselves as righteous in their own eyes.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. As you read the account in **Mark 2:13-17**:

a. What main difference do you see between Jesus and the Pharisees?

b. What main difference do you see between the Pharisees and the tax collectors and sinners?

### **APPLICATION**

1. How does the phrase, “and such were some of you”, in **1 Corinthians 6:11** help you to avoid the same spirit the Pharisees had towards the tax collectors and sinners? (Be sure to read **verses 9 and 10.**)



2. According to **Ephesians 2:1-5**, who did believers (you) follow before they (you) experienced God's grace?

3. Have you ever experienced rejection and how did you feel as a result of that rejection?

4. What do you think was the main reason the Pharisees rejected the tax collectors and sinners? How can this easily bleed over into your heart? (See **Luke 18:9**)

**PRAYER**





lesson eight

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# The Authority of Jesus over False Religion

## **Mark 2:18-22**

### **SUMMARY**

In Lesson Eight the Pharisees and the disciples of John ask Jesus why His disciples are not fasting as they do. Jesus informs them that their old lifeless false religion must go for it is impossible to mix it with Jesus and truth.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. In **Mark 2:18** we discover that the Pharisees and John's disciples were fasting and Jesus and His disciples were not. Look up **Luke 18: 9-14**. Although this Pharisee was doing a "religious" act, what do you see about his heart in these verses?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Why do you think people so easily reject the grace gift of Jesus and instead turn to a religion of works?

2. Are there any "religious" actions in your life that you believe earns favor with God?

3. How is it easy for you, a believer, to slip back into a lifeless, mechanical, religious system of works?

4. Have you experienced the pain of knowing family members have rejected Jesus (the new) because they held on to the old? Share with your group.

## **PRAYER**





lesson nine

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# The Danger of Hard Hearted Religion

## **Mark 2:23-3:6**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus is challenged twice by the Pharisees concerning His and the disciples actions on the Sabbath. Jesus takes them to Scripture showing that mercy and compassion take precedence over ceremony and ritual and then shows them that very thing as he heals the man with a withered hand. The true issue here is who Jesus is. Jesus informs them that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, claiming to be God. His Word and His actions nullify any man-made tradition that the Pharisees held to which totally missed the true meaning of the Sabbath. These Pharisees revealed the hardness of their heart as they refused the truth that Jesus taught and immediately set out to plot how to kill Jesus.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. In **Mark 2:23**, why did the disciples pick the heads of the grain?
2. In **Mark 2:24**, what law do you think the Pharisees were referring to?
3. The Pharisees had a rule that you could only walk 3,000 feet on the Sabbath. Why didn't the Pharisees bring this up as the disciples were making their way on foot through the fields? (Hint: who was there also?)

4. In **Mark 2:28**, who does Jesus say is master over the Sabbath? How do you think the Pharisees thought about that statement?

5. What were the Pharisees watching for in **Mark 3:1**?

6. Why do you think the Pharisees were silent after Jesus asked this question in **Mark 3:4**?

7. What does **Mark 3:5** say was the real problem of the Pharisees?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Why is a hard heart the most dangerous thing for a person to have?

2. How does a person get a hard heart?

3. Have you ever experienced a hard heart? Share with your group and then share how your heart was softened.

4. Jesus said that He was the Lord of the Sabbath. Is there any area of your life where you are struggling in responding to God in your attitude and actions rather than acknowledging that He is the Lord of \_\_\_\_\_ in your life?

5. Read **Deuteronomy 5:12-15**. Instead of a Sabbath day being a day of pleasure and self-centered fun because Israel was off work, what do you see in these verses that are to be the focus of God's people on the Sabbath Day?

How can we use this principle in our life as we set aside a day to cease from our normal work?

**6.** How does **Ephesians 2:7-10** exemplify the Sabbath Day principle that God gave to Israel and Jesus clarified in His examples while on earth?

## **PRAYER**



lesson ten

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# He Desires Who? The Calling of Jesus' Men

## **Mark 3:7-19**

### **SUMMARY**

In today's lesson we will see an overview of the ministry of Jesus and we will see the ones He desired to be with Him to carry on His ministry after He will be gone. We will see that the ones He picked were not a part of the religious leadership in Israel and they were certainly not the "best" choice in the eyes of the religious leaders or the world. These truths should be a great encouragement to us as we see our weaknesses and struggles as compared to others but yet also see what God can do in us when we are "with Jesus".

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **1. Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31**

**26** For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; **28** God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, **29** so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. **30** And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, **31** so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

#### **2. Answer the following questions from this passage:**

- a.** What is different about the world and God concerning who they choose?



- b.** How would most people feel and react being called a “nothing” as in **verse 28**?
- c.** What is God’s purpose in choosing such people to be His children as seen in **verse 29**?
- d.** In **verse 30**, what four things are given to these people from God because of Christ?
- 1.**
  - 2.**
  - 3.**
  - 4.**
- e.** As you read this passage and see the above four things. Is there any way these people can earn these things and therefore brag about them? Why or why not?

3. Jesus wanted these twelve Apostles to be “with Him”. How can you today be “with Him”? How are you doing being “with Him?”

4. Are there any characteristics about yourself you wish you didn't have or are there some you wish you had?

I wish I wasn't like this –

I wish I was more like this –

5. Have you ever used any of the above as an excuse to not serve God? Have these held you back? Have you convinced yourself God couldn't use you because you are not like so and so?

**6.** Being with Jesus will grow you and change you but you will never arrive while in this world. How does the passage in **1 Corinthians** and the choosing of the Apostles encourage you to an active, faithful, servant of Jesus?

## **PRAYER**



lesson eleven

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# What Do You Say About Jesus?

## **Mark 3:20-35**

### **SUMMARY**

In this passage Mark gives us an account of what Jesus' family and the Scribes were saying about Jesus. His family said He was "mad" and the Scribes said He received His power from Satan. Jesus informs the Scribes that it is impossible that His power comes from Satan and if they persist in rejecting the Holy Spirit they will never have forgiveness. He also claims that He is stronger than Satan and will defeat him. When His family came to stop Him He did not stop serving but He informs all those there that being a part of His spiritual family is the most important relationship there is.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. As you observe what Jesus' family thought of Him in this passage, saying that He was mad, or insane, would you say your devotion and sacrificial life for God's kingdom would cause anyone to say this about you? Meditate upon this and examine whether or not your life for Jesus is seen as average, normal, and acceptable, or as dedicated, disciplined, and sacrificial.

2. In **Mark 3:35**, Jesus informs His listeners how they can know if they truly are a part of His spiritual family. Does your life prove that you truly are a child of God?

**PRAYER**





lesson twelve

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# The Secret of Kingdom Growth

## Part 1

## **Mark 4:1-20**

### **SUMMARY**

At this point in the ministry of Jesus, he was teaching the people in parables. A parabolic teaching “brought heaven to earth and earth to heaven”, but it also caused further hardening in the ears of those who rejected the Messiah and His words. This lesson will examine the parable of the “Sower and the Seed.” It will examine the purpose of parables and the plan of God which grows His kingdom. In part one we will see those who are inside the kingdom and those who are outside the kingdom. We will also examine the “seed” which grows the kingdom. In our next study we will examine the different responses to the seed which grows the kingdom.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Look up the following verses in **Isaiah chapters 1-5** and write down Israel is described:

1:2 \_\_\_\_\_

1:4 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1:5 \_\_\_\_\_

1:21 \_\_\_\_\_

1:23 \_\_\_\_\_

2:8 \_\_\_\_\_

5:11 \_\_\_\_\_

2. What do the following verses call for them to do, even though God knows that the majority will still rebel and will be judged?

1:16 \_\_\_\_\_

1:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What result is promised to Isaiah from his preaching to these people?  
See **Isaiah 6:8-13**

a. To the Wicked (**verse 9-13a**) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. To the believing and obedient (**verse 13b**) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. As you read what Jesus said in **Mark 4:11,12**, quoting **Isaiah 6**, what determines who is on the inside and who is on the outside of God's kingdom?

5. What is the “secret” that grows the kingdom? Read **Mark 4:14**

6. If you present the Gospel of the Word of God to someone and they reject it, has the seed failed? Explain your answer?

7. What is the temptation for us, and the church in general related to the “seed” of God’s Word when we experience repeated rejection when we share it?

8. Where must your heart be in your relationship with Jesus as we live in an ever increasing consumer oriented society and individually and as a church we face repeated rejection of the Gospel?

9. Do you face fears of rejection when sharing the Gospel?

**PRAYER**



lesson thirteen

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# The Secret of Kingdom Growth

## Part 2

## **Mark 4:1-20**

### **SUMMARY**

In part two of the parable of the soils, we will examine the different soils of the heart and the responses to the gospel that flows from the different soils. We will observe the various enemies of the soil (heart) and also see that not every response to the Gospel (seed) is a saving response.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. List the four soils Jesus discusses:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Write down what the following stand for in this parable:
  - a. The Seed:
  
  
  - b. The Sower:
  
  
  - c. The Soil:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. In **Mark 4:15**, who are we told is present when the seed is sown?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What do you notice that is initially the same in each soil? (**Mark 4:15, 16,18,20**)



5. How is the last response in **verse 20** different from the other responses, even though they all did what you answered in question 4?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Can someone receive the Gospel and show great fervor and emotion, and still not be saved? See **verse 16**.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What, in **verse 17**, brings out what is really in the soil of their heart?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What is it in **verse 18 & 19** that is the enemy of the soil?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Read **John 3:19**. How does this verse give us more insight into what Jesus said in **Mark 4:18,19**?

## **APPLICATION**

1. What do you think Jesus' intent was in telling this parable? In other words, what was burning in His heart that He wanted his listeners and us today to grasp?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Does it bother you when you read this statement? "Not every believing response to the Gospel is a saving response?" Why or why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. It is so common to hear people say they are a child of Jesus yet their lives show no care, no burden, and no concern for Jesus, His Word, and His will. Yet they are convinced they are saved because they prayed a prayer, walked a church isle, or had an emotional experience. As you read **1 John 3:4-10**, what should be our prayer for people like this?

What should be our prayer if we see ourselves in this condition?

4. Evaluate your life and your faithfulness and consistency in sowing the seed of the Gospel.

Share with your group your answer, your struggles, and your desires to grow and trust God, even if the seed is rejected by most people.

## **PRAYER**



lesson fourteen

---

# Being a Part of Kingdom Growth

## **Mark 4:21-34**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus continues His parables concerning the kingdom highlighting the truth of how the kingdom grows and how true disciples are an important part of God's plan for His kingdom.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What are the three parables that Jesus shares in this passage?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. How do we know that the “lamp” Jesus speaks of in **verse 21** is the “seed of the Gospel”?

3. What does Jesus say would be senseless and foolish related to the lamp in **verse 21**?

4. What promise does Jesus tell His disciples related to these parables that most can't understand right now, in **verse 22**?

5. What responsibility does the disciple of Jesus have related to the truth and related to gaining further spiritual blessing from God? See **verses 24, 25**.

6. What is the disciple's responsibility with the seed of the Gospel as seen in **verse 26**?

7. Does the disciple make the seed grow? See **verse 27, 28**.

8. What's the promise in **verse 29**?

9. In the parable of the "Mustard Seed", what comparison did Jesus make using this small seed as related to the kingdom? (See **verses 30-34**)

### **APPLICATION**

1. Are there activities and responsibilities in your life that crowd out shining the light of the gospel? If so, what are they?

2. What internal struggles do you battle that cause you to hide the light of the gospel to others? (example, fear, etc....)

3. Do you really trust the seed of the gospel so that you can rest in peace as in **verse 27**, or do you have a tendency to try to win people with the use of other things to entice them towards the gospel?

4. How can you be burdened for the lost yet not worry and fret and manipulate but instead be like the farmer in **verse 27**?

5. How does God's principle of starting small and growing to a harvest of His choosing encourage you when you feel overwhelmed and rejected when you share the Gospel?



**6.** In what practical ways can you be involved in the growth of the kingdom?

## **PRAYER**



lesson fifteen

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# Power Displayed to Prepare the Disciple

## **Mark 4:35 - 5:43**

### **SUMMARY**

After a very busy day Jesus displays to His disciples four miracles that are designed to strengthen them, challenge them, give them further understanding of who He is, and to prepare them for their future ministry in a world that brings fear in many areas. Jesus shows his disciples then and His disciples today that He is the authority they can trust in as they move out into the world to sow His seed in hostile conditions.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. List the four miracles in this section.

2. In the first miracle while they were in the boat, how did they fear change while in the storm to when the storm ceased by the words of Jesus?

3. What do you find “odd” about the towns people reaction when they saw the man sitting and clothed and in his right mind? (5:15)

4. In **Mark 5:35**, what does their statement reveal about their belief of the extent of the powers and authority of Jesus?

5. In **Mark 5:30**, why did Jesus ask a question when He already knew the answer?

### **APPLICATION**

In these four miracles there are some similar things that flow through each one. Here is the list that was mentioned in the message preached on this passage:

- There was trouble of some kind
- There was nothing humanly possible to remove the trouble and give hope
- There was danger of harm or death
- There was fear
- There was supernatural power displayed
- There was some element of faith
- There was always a response to the power displayed whether it was positive or negative.
- Someone is always falling at Jesus feet!

*Lesson Fifteen: Power Displayed to Prepare the Disciple*

1. How can seeing the authority of Jesus over these things be used as we go out into a hostile world as disciples of Jesus to sow the seed of the Gospel?

2. How can seeing the authority of Jesus in these things help us, as His disciples, when we face things like this in our lives?

**PRAYER**







lesson sixteen

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# When Life takes an Ugly Turn, Jesus is still the Authority

## **Mark 6**

### **SUMMARY**

The popularity of Jesus is at its peak, yet He is rejected by the people of His hometown, His disciples will face rejection and persecution, John the Baptist is murdered, the crowds who followed were mainly seeking a show and personal provisions, and even His disciples were struggling with hard hearts. In all of these struggles and disappointments Jesus shows Himself as the authoritative One who can be trusted and followed no matter what troubles His disciple's face.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What disappointment did Jesus face in **Mark 6:1-6**?
2. What can the disciples anticipate will happen to them from the statement of Jesus in **Mark 6:11**?
3. What was Herod's fear in **Mark 6:16**? Why was He afraid?
4. What do you see about John's character from what he said to Herod in **Mark 6:18**?

5. What do you think John's disciples were thinking when they came and got John's headless body? **Mark 6:29**

6. What do you see about Jesus concerning the people as seen in **Mark 6:34**?

7. Why were the disciples so afraid and terrified when they were in the storm and saw a "figure" walking alongside their boat on top of the water? (**Mark 6:52**)

### **APPLICATION**

1. What is one of your greatest fears in this life? (If you have more than one, please write that down also).

2. In what ways do you react to "storms" in your life in the same way as the disciples?

3. What do you think is your heart issue that causes you to act the same way as the disciples?

4. As a disciple of Jesus, how does seeing His authority over the natural laws of His creation in multiplying the food and walking on the water and calming the storm and making the boat immediately be on the shore, encourage you in your troubles?

5. How does continuing to walk as a disciple of Jesus in all kinds of troubles prove the genuineness of your faith? (**1 Peter 1:6,7**)

**PRAYER**



lesson seventeen

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# A Far Away Heart

## **Mark 7:1-23**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus encounters more opposition from the Pharisees and the Scribes over an issue of washing hands before eating. This tradition was a ritualistic man-made teaching that was believed to make the unclean person clean. Jesus and His disciples are attacked for not keeping this tradition. Jesus goes right to the heart of the issue informing them that the main problem is a problem of a sinful heart and no outward act can remove this problem and make one acceptable to God. Heartless man-made traditions that are placed above the words of God cannot remove defilement but instead they push people further away from God.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. Why were the religious leaders upset with Jesus and His disciples?  
(v5)

2. What did Jesus call the religious leaders as a result of their question?  
(v6)

3. As you read **verses 6 & 7**, what reasons did Jesus give for calling them hypocrites?



4. Throughout this entire passage, what do you see was the most important and valuable thing to them? (See **verses 3-13**)

5. In our society and culture we tend to blame bad behavior on outward things such as culture, the neighborhood we grew up in and so on. What does Jesus say is man's problem in **verses 20-23**?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Is it more dangerous to be "religious" and far away from God or "not religious" and far away from God? Both have the same outcome, but which is more dangerous to keep a person separated from God? Explain your answer.

2. What is in the heart of man that makes him believe an external religious act can gain access to the One True Holy God?

3. Is it possible to direct your worship and honor towards the true God, yet it be totally worthless in His sight? See **Mark 7:6,7**

4. What is it that would make the worship in vain and result in eternal separation from the One the person is worshipping? See **Mark 7:6-7**.

5. Is it possible for you, a believer in Jesus, to possess a similar heart as the rejecters of Jesus did, and worship in vain? If this is possible, how do you do that?

6. As you examine your heart, do you have any “traditions” you hold on to that God never said? (Think hard and deep)

**PRAYER**



lesson eighteen

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# **Saving Faith for All at the Master's Table**

## **Mark 7:24-30**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus and His disciples leave Galilee and travel into Gentile territory. It seems that Jesus is looking to spend much time with His disciples in order to teach and train them. News spreads quickly that He has arrived and Jesus is approached by a Canaanite woman pleading for mercy. Jesus uses this opportunity to teach His disciples and to also give life to this woman who shows great faith and to deliver her young daughter who is oppressed by a demon.

### **OBSERVATION**

**1. Read Isaiah 42:6.** What was God's purpose in revealing Himself to the nation Israel in relation to other nations?

**2. Read Galatians 3:8.** What does this verse tell us about God's plan with the Jews and the Gentiles?

**3. Read Ephesians 3:6.** How would a Jewish person who still held on to his prejudices towards the Gentiles react to this verse?

What truth is revealed in this verse?

4. Matthew's account in **Matt. 15:23** tells us that the disciples wanted Jesus to send her away. Why do you think they asked Jesus to do that?

5. Matthew tells us that this woman asked Jesus for mercy. What does that request tell you about her heart and how she viewed herself?

6. This woman refused to take no for an answer and she refused to be offended when Jesus ignored her, and then told her He had come for the Jewish people. Why did this woman persist rather than quitting?

### **APPLICATION**

1. As you think back over your life, what kind of prejudices prevailed in society?

2. Before Christ opened your heart, did you struggle with any of these prejudices? If so, which ones.

3. How does the cross of Jesus take away prejudices? (**See Galatians 3:28**)

4. Why is your answer to question 3 so important as related to sharing the Gospel?

5. When you see people of other nationalities, or other skin color, or even outwardly boastful in their rebellion against God, how do you tend to view them and what do you tend to think about them?

According to the truth in this passage in Mark, how should a child of God view them?



**PRAYER**



lesson nineteen

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# Bad Eyes and Bad Ears

## **Mark 7:31-8:26**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus is still ministering in Gentile territory as He heals a deaf man and also feeds the four thousand. He leaves and arrives back to Galilee where He is met by the religious leaders who immediately begin their attack and demands Jesus show them a sign. Jesus rebukes them and leaves them. Burdened deeply about the influence of these false teachers and immoral people, Jesus warns his followers to beware of this danger. The disciples once again fail to grasp what Jesus is saying to them. Jesus rebukes them and clarifies what He is truly concerned about. The religious leaders possess a hardened heart of stone and unbelief while His disciples believe, but they are still trying to grasp just who this person Jesus truly is.

### **OBSERVATION**

**1. Read Matthew 16:2,3.** What was Jesus' rebuke to the Pharisees and Sadducees? What was Jesus referring to when He said "the signs of the times"?

**2. In Matthew 16:4,** what kind of a generation asks for signs, especially when God in flesh is standing right in front of them?

3. In **Mark 8:15**, what are the two commands that Jesus gives to His disciples?

4. In **Mark 8:17**, what was Jesus concerned about in His disciples lives?

### **APPLICATION**

1. In **Mark 8:18** Jesus asked them if they remembered what He had done in feeding the five thousand and the four thousand. There is a sense of astonishment in this question.

Are there times in your life where Jesus would ask the same question to you? How can remembering God's faithfulness in the past help you in the present to know the God you serve?

Can you think of some Scriptural examples of God's faithfulness that can also encourage you today? **Romans 15:4** - For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

**2. In Mark 8:15**, Jesus was burdened about the dangerous influence of the false teachers and the thinking of the day.

What influences shape your thinking in the course of a day?

What influences shaped your thinking before God opened your heart?

Are there any changes you need to make to avoid being “infected” by teachings contrary to Jesus?

**3.** The disciples were thinking solely on an earthly level and totally missed the point. How are you doing in seeing God’s work in your life in your daily routine, in your trials, in your family, in your health, and everything?

## **PRAYER**







lesson twenty

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# There Must Be a Cross

## **Mark 8:27-9:1**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus asks His disciples who the crowds say that He is but then points the same question to them personally. Peter, the spokesman for the 12, claims boldly that He is the Christ. Matthew's account reveals that this answer was divinely given by the Father. For the first time Jesus now plainly informs them that He is going to suffer death and Peter foolishly rebukes Jesus for this statement. Jesus in turn rebukes Peter and then turns to the crowd and explains what it means to truly follow Jesus.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What would be the danger of telling people that he is the Messiah?  
(**Mark 8:30**)
2. In **Matthew 16:17**, who does Jesus say revealed this to Peter?
3. How could Peter receive such a revelation from God the Father, and then do what he did in **Mark 8:32**?
4. What does Jesus strong answer tell you about His determination to go to the cross as He predicted in **verse 31**?

5. What does it tell you about Satan that he would incite Peter to do this supposedly brave and courageous thing in protecting Jesus from such suffering?
6. When a person is influenced and follows the things of man, who are they really following?
7. What is unusual about Jesus's statement in **verse 35** compared to the way man thinks?
8. What are the three commands in **Mark 8:34**?
9. What is the outcome for those who reject Jesus and choose the things of the world? **Mark 8:36-38**

## **APPLICATION**

1. Jesus accomplished His greatest work through suffering and death. How does this apply to your life when you face suffering for the gospel and how is this an encouragement to you.

2. Though no believer will ever be perfect in denying himself, taking up his cross, and following Jesus, do you see these desires in your life?

What happens in your heart when you fail in the commands mentioned above?

If a person has no concern for these commands, what would Jesus say about them?

3. As followers of Jesus, our hearts are directed to deny ourselves, die to self, and walk with Jesus. These give us assurance that we are children of God. However, the flesh continues to fight in order to dominate your life. Spend the rest of your time together discussing what it looks like to live these three commands along with the struggles you face daily in living life as a follower of Jesus.

**PRAYER**



lesson twenty one

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# Can You Keep a Secret?

## **Mark 9:2-13**

### **SUMMARY**

Having just informed His disciples that He is going to suffer and die, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up to the mountain where He is transfigured before them. Moses and Elijah also appear discussing with Jesus is soon coming death. Jesus allows these three to see his blazing white glory but tells them to tell no one until after he is risen from the dead. They are still growing in their understanding of just who the Son of God really is, and Jesus encouraged them to know that He is the Son of God even though He must face suffering and death. The Father gave His approval as His voice thundered down in full approval of His Son. This experience would shape their lives after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended back to the Father.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. After being told of Jesus suffering and death, why was it important for these men to see the glory of Jesus?
2. How does Mark describe Jesus when this transformation took place? (v.3)
3. Who appeared with Jesus? (v.4) What was the significance of these two people?
4. Read Luke 9:31. What were Jesus, Elijah, and Moses talking about?



5. Why do you think Peter wanted to make booths or tents for these three? (v.5)

6. What does what the Father said about Jesus tell you the about the Father's view of Jesus? (v.7)

7. What did Jesus tell the disciples about this experience in **verse 9**?

8. What does their questioning in **verse 10** tell you about their understanding of Jesus at this point in their lives?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Why do you think that there was nothing outwardly about Jesus to draw people to Himself? (**Isaiah 53:2**)

How can we apply this principle to our lives?

2. Following Jesus is following Him on the path to the cross. How does what the Father said about Jesus in **Mark 9:7** encourage you that you are following the right person?

3. They saw Jesus as they had never seen Him before. As Peter wrote about this experience, what did He direct God's people to, that is even greater than the experience he had on that mountain? See **2 Peter 1:19-21**

How is your effort and devotion and "listening" to Jesus reflecting Peter's words in **verse 19**? "...you will do well to pay attention."  
(What would most people want: the vision on the mountain or the Scriptures?)

4. This great scene on the mountain was important to them at that moment but it was also for their benefit in the future.

As God teaches you and grows you and goes with you and ahead of you in your sufferings, how are you doing at seeing these things for use in future ministry toward others? Would you say your focus in suffering is just to get out of it?

5. What joys arise in your heart as you focus on that future glory that belongs to all of God's children? (a glimpse was seen on the mountain)

**PRAYER**



lesson twenty two

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# Coming Down from the Mountain. A Lesson in Faith

## **Mark 9:14-29**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus, along with the three disciples, Peter, James, and John, make their way down the mountain. They see quite a commotion as the Scribes are arguing with the nine disciples that did not go up with Jesus. The nine disciples had failed to heal a boy possessed by a demon and Jesus uses this opportunity to teach His disciples and the father of the demon possessed boy, a lesson on faith.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What was going on at the foot of the mountain between the Scribes and the nine disciples? (**Mark 9:14**)
2. What was everyone amazed at? (**Mark 9:15**)
3. What prevented the disciples from answering Jesus' question? (**Mark 9:16,17**)
4. In what ways does this passage describe the condition of this boy?

5. What does **verse 18** tells us about the disciple's efforts to help this boy?
6. How would you describe the reaction of Jesus to their failing? (**Mark 9:19**)
7. What is the father struggling with as seen in **verse 22**?
8. What honesty and humility do you see from the father after Jesus gently rebuked him? (**Mark. 9:23**)
9. Why did the disciples fail? (**Mark 9:29**) (Don't forget to tie this answer in with Jesus reaction to them in **verse 19**)

## **APPLICATION**

1. In what ways do you at times reflect **Proverbs 24:10** as you live in a fallen world that is opposed to you and your Savior?

*“If you faint in the day of adversity,  
your strength is small.”*

2. How does knowing that God knows your imperfections but still invites you to live by faith encourage you in your walk with Jesus?

3. In what ways can you identify with the father’s statement in **verse 24**? How is this an encouragement to keep living by faith even though your faith is not perfect?

4. Is there something in your life that would fall under the category, “all things” as in **verse 23**? What concerns about your life and character do you need to have faith that Jesus can provide?



5. How does prayer and faith fit into your answer above? (**verse 29**)

**PRAYER**



lesson twenty three

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# Who is the Greatest?

## **Mark 9:30-37**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus continues to teach His disciples that He is going to be delivered over to the hands of men and they will kill Him but He will arise three days later. The disciples are afraid to ask Jesus more about this as it destroys their mind set of a kingdom arriving now in their lifetime. After such deep and troubling news was given to them, the disciples find themselves arguing among each other about who is the greatest in God's kingdom. Jesus uses this occasion to teach His disciples a lesson on what true greatness really is.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What is Jesus trying to get the disciples to understand in **Mark 9:31**?
2. Why do you think they were afraid to ask Jesus for more information? See **Mark 9:32**.
3. Jesus knew what they were talking about, so why did Jesus ask them anyway? (**Mark. 9:33**)

4. Why did they keep silent at first instead of just quickly answering Jesus? (**Mark. 9:34**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. When you read **verse 34** along with what Jesus was teaching them in **verse 31**, what is troubling about the disciple's hearts?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. When you read **verse 35**, does Jesus condemn the desire to be great? Explain your answer.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What are some differences in the object lesson Jesus used (a small child) if Jesus would have brought up and adult of great fame, strength, wealth, stature, etc..? (**Mark. 9:36,37**)

### **APPLICATION**

1. When Jesus said if you want to be first, or great, you must be a servant; did He mean that you cannot excel in the gifts and talents He has blessed you with? Why or why not?

2. What things in our culture are viewed as being great? How do those things differ from what Jesus said? How are your children or grandchildren affected by the world's evaluation of what and who is great?
3. What are some struggles servants face?
4. What does it reveal in your heart when you get treated like a servant, and you get discouraged, upset, angry, and even may desire to quit?
5. What does it reveal in your heart when you are asked to serve in a way that to you that seems "beneath you?"
6. Heart Examination: Would we welcome the struggling, hurting, broken, messed up person or family with equal joy as we would the family with wealth, possessions, stature, and social graces? (See **James 2:1-9**)

7. Read **Mark 10:45**. Who is our great example of servanthood and why?

**PRAYER**





lesson twenty four

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# Viewing Ourselves and Others in the Kingdom

## **Mark 9:38-42**

### **SUMMARY**

After Jesus taught the disciples a lesson on true greatness in His kingdom, John asks a question that stems from an incident that didn't reflect what Jesus had just taught them. Jesus teaches them a new lesson that if someone is serving Jesus, even if they are not among their group, they should be appreciated and accepted as true servants who are on the same side for the kingdom. The disciples struggled with this concept as they tried to stop someone from serving who was not a part of their group.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. In **9:38**, what unspoken group of people in this verse are being neglected in the disciple's thinking?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What will a true servant of Jesus not do according to **verse 39**?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What is Jesus' conclusion then in **verse 40**?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What is it about others that should motivate us to serve them, no matter who they are and what position they hold in the body of Christ? (**v. 41**)

5. Jesus wasn't referring to children in **verse 42**, though they would be included. Why did he choose the description, "Little Ones."?

6. What is Jesus' view regarding leading another into sin? (**v. 43**)

### **APPLICATION**

1. What kind of distinctions related to each other can enter into a church that would displease the Lord?

2. What would be the cause of some of those sinful distinctions?

3. What kind of things would make us feel more important than others in the church?

4. How does **1 Corinthians 12:18** help us to take away those sinful distinctions?
5. There are many differences in different churches and denominations. What do you think is the most important issue where we could be thankful and say, “The one who is not against us is for us?” even with other differences?
6. Can you identify your “cup(s) of water” that you give to others in God’s kingdom?
7. How can we be thankful for every cup of water we receive from all kinds of different people within the church? (**See verse 41**)
8. How could you hurt and discourage believers whose cup of water doesn’t seem that significant therefore displeasing the Lord? (**Verse 42**)

**PRAYER**



lesson twenty five

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# Self Sacrificing Discipleship

## **Mark 9:42-50**

### **SUMMARY**

In this passage Jesus teaches His disciples a lesson about sin and the dangers sin brings. He discusses three areas that the disciples are to be warned related to sin: how their sin affects other believers; how sin affects them personally; and how sin destroys their godly influence in the world. Jesus clearly emphasizes the great danger sin brings and warns His followers that self-sacrificing discipline is a must in order to defeat sin in their lives. Jesus also emphasizes what awaits those who allow sin to rule their lives. Jesus, of course, is the ultimate source of victory over sin, even when his followers fail. Jesus kept this passage perfectly for those who believe and follow Him.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. As you read this passage, (**Mark 9:42-50**), how would you describe Jesus' view of sin?

2. As you read **verses 43,45, and 47**, what exact words are repeated or similar words repeated?

3. How is hell described in this passage?



4. What is the significance of salt as used in **verse 50**?

**APPLICATION**

1. How does this passage destroy the idea of people just living to themselves and not getting involved in other people's lives? (**Also see Galatians 6:10**)

2. We are to be a compelling force helping to produce godly effects upon the actions, behavior, and opinions of others...a godly influence: As you examine your life, do you see any areas where you need to grow and change in these following relationships?

*Parents to Children:*

*Spouse to Spouse:*

*Friend to Friend:*

*Co-Worker to Co-Worker:*

*Believer to Believer:*

3. Jesus used a method called “hyperbole” – an intentional exaggeration to make a point when talking about cutting off a hand or a foot and removing an eye. In what ways can you transfer this meaning to your life in dealing with sin? What should you do with a sin you are struggling with in order to “cut it off or remove it?”

4. As you examine your view of sin, where would you say it is as related to Jesus view of sin? On a scale of 1 to 10, Jesus would be a 10. Where would you be?

5. In what ways can you maintain your “saltiness” – influence to believers and to the world around you?

**PRAYER**



lesson twenty six

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# **Stick to the Original: A Hardened Heart Always Strays**

## **Mark 10:1-12**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus is back in the territory where John the Baptist was killed and is confronted by some Pharisees concerning marriage and divorce. They are attempting to trip Him up by the answer He will give hoping that he will cause many to turn from Him and even possibly cause Him to have trouble with Herod. Jesus gives them an answer that makes them look back to God's original plan for marriage and also to look at the hardness of their heart. The disciples get with Jesus and ask Him further questions as they realize the importance of this issue that the Pharisees brought up. God's original plan is that marriage is permanent. We today should always strive to be as the original was. For those who find themselves away from that original plan, there is still grace.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. How do you know from **verse 2** that these Pharisees didn't really care about what God said or even care about the people affected by divorce?

2. In **verse 3**, what did Jesus refer them to?

3. What is the spiritual reason why people strayed from God's original plan? See **verse 5**.

4. How far did Jesus take them back to in order to show them what their view of marriage should be? See **verse 6**.

5. What key points do you see in **verses 6-9** related to marriage and divorce?

6. Jesus does not give a full teaching on divorce in this passage, but according to **verses 11,12** what is the result of a divorce that is not approved by God?

7. **Read Ephesians 1:7.** Can and does God forgive those who are divorced or who have married someone divorced but not according to reasons approved by God?

## **APPLICATION**

1. In Jesus day, and even long before He came to earth, divorce had become so common for any and every reason. What reasons can you think of that are in the heart of man for this huge departure from God's original plan?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What things contribute or can contribute to your marriage relationship suffering?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Most people view dating and marriage based on emotion and feelings. What in this passage do you see it based on? Do you see any romance, or feelings, in this passage?

So then, is it possible, if your heart has changed toward your spouse to the negative, to change it back again? Explain



4. What is the answer for any of us who have failed in this area of marriage and divorce in order to be pleasing to God?

5. Have you been affected by divorce in any way? Take some time and share with your group for encouragement and prayer.

## **PRAYER**



lesson twenty seven

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# Entering the Kingdom Like a Child

## **Mark 10:13-16**

### **SUMMARY**

Parents are bringing their children to Jesus to be blessed and the disciples are rebuking them for doing so. Jesus is indignant with His disciples and commands the children to be brought to Him because “to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.” Jesus is very emphatic as He informs His disciples that no one will enter the kingdom if they do not receive it as a child. Jesus took the children in His arms and blessed them. We will see four things from this passage:

1. We must recognize that Jesus is our children’s greatest need.
2. We cannot fail to see ourselves as recipients of grace.
3. We must know that all need grace to enter the kingdom.
4. We must know that Jesus has the power to save.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What do you think is in the hearts of the parents as they are bringing their children to Jesus? (What are the parents thinking?) **See verse 13.**

2. Looking at the response of the disciples in **verse 13**, what things are they thinking?

3. As Jesus observed his disciples and what they were doing to the ones bringing the children, what was He thinking? (**See verse 14**)

4. How did Jesus show the disciples they were wrong in their thinking? (See verse 14)

5. What spiritual lesson concerning salvation and entrance into the kingdom did Jesus make? (See verse 14,15)

6. What did Jesus do to the children who were brought? (See verse 16)

### **APPLICATION**

1. What a great example these parents were who brought their children to Jesus. What things in our culture are we tempted to see as more pressing and more important than bringing our children to Jesus?

2. In what ways can we today bring our children to Jesus?

3. Are there some ways that we can turn our children “away” from Jesus? List some of these ways.

4. How does remembering we are recipients of God’s grace, help us to desire grace for others, no matter who they are and no matter what their sins are? (Don’t forget how Jesus viewed this attitude)

5. How does a person coming to Jesus for entrance into the kingdom equate with an infant or a young child? What’s the connection there?

How can pride keep a person from the kingdom?

**PRAYER**





lesson twenty eight

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# What Do You Want Me to Do for You?

## **Mark 10:17-52**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus encounters a young rich man who asks Him how to obtain eternal life. Jesus attempts to lead the man to see his inability to earn it and his failure to keep the commandments. Because of the young man's love for riches, he walks away from Jesus sad. Jesus uses this to teach His disciples an important lesson concerning salvation – Man's inability, and God's ability. Jesus teaches them that following Him is greater than anything the world could offer – even the persecution that is going to come. He offers Himself up as the supreme example of discipleship and closes with healing a blind man as an example of what the power of God can do over the inability of man.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. In **verse 20**, what does the young man's statement reveal about how he viewed himself?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How is this view in contrast with what we saw earlier in **chapter 10** in how the children came to Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. **Read 10:23**. Why did Jesus make this statement and how is it true?

4. Can wealthy people be saved? How can they be saved? **See verse 27.** What would keep them from being saved?

5. How is rejecting riches and following Jesus better as described in **verses 29-30**?

6. What blessing in **verse 30** seems out of place?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Before you were saved, what things did you love more than Jesus that you would rather have than Jesus?

2. What do you think would happen in most churches if a person came asking to have eternal life? How does what Jesus did possibly differ in what most churches or even believers might do in that same situation?

3. What things in your life seem to draw you back in to the world to compete for your love that is to belong to Jesus? (How do you know you are loving something?)

4. Evaluate your life as compared to the great example of Jesus in **Mark 10:45**. Think of different areas such as: Your marriage / Your parenting / Your church / Your job / Your finances / Your health / Other\_\_\_\_\_

5. How does **verse 27** give you hope for those you are praying for to be saved?

**PRAYER**



lesson twenty nine

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# Impressive Without, Empty Within

## **Mark 11**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus has now entered the last week of his earthly life. Word is out that He is coming to Jerusalem and a crowd gathers to shout His praises as the Messiah. However, the desires of the people are not for a suffering Messiah, but rather for a conquering Messiah. Jesus, in this passage condemns a fruitless fig tree and a fruitless worship system in the Temple. He urges His followers to have faith in God that He is the sacrifice that brings forgiveness and changes lives and kills an empty and vain religious system.

### **OBSERVATION**

**1. Read Jeremiah 7:9,10.** What does God see as a problem in these verses?

**2.** How did God describe His house in **Jeremiah 7:11**?

**3.** What statement in **Jeremiah 7:11** should have shocked these people concerning their behavior?

**4.** What is the heart of God towards people who are not Israelites? **See Isaiah 56:6-8**



5. What attribute do you see in Jesus as He told his disciples where to find the colt and what to say when they objected? (**Mark 11:2-6**)

6. As you read **Mark 11:8-10**, how do you think that these same people could shout “Crucify Him” just a few days later?

7. **Read Luke 19:41 -44.** Describe the heart of Jesus even as He is heading to His murder.

8. How is the cursing of the fig tree and illustration of what is going on in the Temple?

9. Since the temple was on the mountain and Jesus said “say to this mountain be cast into the sea”, what is Jesus referring to?

## **APPLICATION**

1. As you observe the heart of Jesus (**Luke 19:41-44**) approaching the city where He is to be murdered while having full knowledge of it; how does that challenge and convict your heart towards others who rebel against Jesus and His truth, and sin against you as well.?
  
2. As you observe the courage and strength of Jesus in standing for truth as displayed in the Temple, how does that convict and challenge you as you stand for truth in this age?
  
3. As you observe that God's people turned the Temple into, a "den of robbers"; how does that challenge and convict you as to your part of the family of God in His church in this age?
  
4. How is forgiving others being like Jesus and how can it be considered a sacrifice? Do you find it hard to forgive others?

**PRAYER**



lesson thirty

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# The Battle of Authority

## **Mark 12**

### **SUMMARY**

The question of Jesus' authority has been an issue throughout our study of Mark. Jesus is the supreme authority and the religious rulers refuse to acknowledge that truth. In chapter 12 Jesus tells a parable that is aimed directly at these religious rulers and their rejection of the Father's plan and the authority of Jesus as God's Son. Following this parable the enemies of Jesus present Him with three questions in an attempt to trip Him up and discredit Him before the multitudes and even cause the civil authorities to rise up against Him. Jesus answers each challenge with great wisdom and then condemns them for their evil hearts and the evil religious system they have put in place. Jesus also reveals that this evil system will be destroyed and all those who reject His authority will be destroyed as well.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. Match the figures in the parable with what they stood for:

Beloved Son	Israel
Vineyard	Old Testament Prophets
Tenants	The Church
Servants	Jesus Christ
Others	Jewish Religious Leaders

2. What was the motive of the tenants in killing the beloved son in verse 7?

**3.** What is the two-fold response of the owner in **verse 9**?

**a.**

**b.**

**4.** Jesus changes the image of a vineyard to a building? Who is the stone that the Jewish Religious leaders rejected?

**5.** In **verse 12**, why did these religious leaders want to arrest Jesus?

**6.** In the three questions that Jesus was asked, Jesus identified their problem in each one. Look at the following verses and write down their problem:

**a. Verse 15**

**b. Verse 24**

**c. Verse 34**

## **APPLICATION**

1. In **verse 12**, when they perceived that Jesus was talking about them, what should have been their response? How do you respond when you are told a truth about yourself that is not pleasant to hear? How should you respond and how should you view the person who told you?
  
2. In **verse 24** Jesus said they were wrong because they did not know the Scriptures or the power of God. However, these men were experts in the Scriptures. How can this statement be true? In what ways does your life reflect this statement? (What's the danger here?)
  
3. How can you know you are not like the man in **verses 32-34**? He got the answer right but he was not in the kingdom! (See **verses 35-37**)
  
4. How can we, as a church, follow and obey Christ's concern and warning in **verses 38-40**? (See also **Matthew 23** for more characteristics of false teachers who abuse people.)



**PRAYER**



lesson thirty one

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# When Will These Things Be?

part 1

## **Mark 13**

### **SUMMARY**

After leaving the temple Jesus informs his disciples that the temple will be destroyed. Naturally, the disciples ask Jesus about when this is going to happen. Their question includes three parts: When will these things be, what will be the sign of your coming, and what will be the sign of the end of the age? Jesus answers their question by telling them there will be a delay before the end comes. This delay will involve many characteristics that will be true for all generations. In Jesus answer He gives the general characteristics and then some immediate characteristics concerning the fall of the Temple and of Jerusalem.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. Match the figures in the parable with what they stood for:  
What did Jesus predict about the temple in **Mark 13:2**?

2. Why would it be hard for the disciples to grasp a long period of time between the destruction of the temple and the coming of the kingdom?

3. As you look down through **verses 5-13**, what things will be characteristic of this age between Jesus' first coming and His expected second coming?

## **APPLICATION**

**1.** Which of the following best describes your normal pattern related to your spiritual fervor? Be prepared to discuss.

- a.** I'm like a roller coaster: I'm up and I'm down, and I really don't go anywhere.
- b.** I'm like a temperature gauge: I'm hot, and I'm cold, and I'm in between.
- c.** I'm thrilled on Sunday but bored the rest of the week.
- d.** In a trial and when I see no way out but God, my passion is increased but it always fades when the pressure is gone.
- e.** I really don't have a spiritual fervor; this stuff's ok but I don't see what the big deal is – It's just not the most important thing to me
- f.** Other:

**2.** Spiritual persecution and opposition has been the norm for Jesus' church throughout the history of the church. Mark lists for us religious, national, family, and a general hatred of people toward believers. (You might want to review these in **verses 5-13**)

- a.** Have you ever been taught that the church of Jesus will not face persecution?
- b.** Why does the church face persecution?
- c.** What is the danger of ignoring the coming persecution?

- d. How can you prepare yourself for persecution?
- e. What may persecution reveal about your heart?
- f. How do you right now when persecution comes, even on a small scale.

**PRAYER**







lesson thirty two

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# When Will These Things Be?

part 2

## **Mark 13**

### **SUMMARY**

Part two of this lesson will continue examining some of the characteristics of the world between the First Advent and the Second Advent of Jesus. This lesson will also examine the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD as well as the sign of the coming of Jesus for His redeemed.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What related truths do you see in **Matthew 28:18-20** and what Christ said in **Mark 13:10**?

2. **Matthew 24:10** says that “many will fall away”.

How do you see this truth as compared to the parable of the soils in **Mark 4:1-9; 14-20**? In other words, how do they go together?

3. In **Matthew 24:12**, what two things characterize those who “fall away?”

4. What characteristic(s) do you see in Jesus in giving the disciples the warnings in **Mark 13:14-19**?

5. How is the return of Jesus described in **Mark 13:26** and **Matthew 24:30**? How is it different than His first coming?

6. Look at **Mark 13:31**. Will these things come to pass?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Why do you think there has been and still is so much opposition to the true gospel message?

2. When was the last time you proclaimed the gospel? How does your answer challenge your heart related to telling others?

**3. What hindrances do you personally face that fight against you in proclaiming the gospel?**

4. What fears do you personally face as you desire to share the gospel?

**5.** We clearly see from this passage that God's people are not to "sit on their" hands waiting for Jesus to return. There are things to guard from and things to do. Examine how you are ordering your life for the kingdom while you are waiting for the return of Jesus. What is your active part in the kingdom? What has Jesus called you to do? Be prepared to discuss with your group.

**PRAYER**



lesson thirty three

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# When Will These Things Be?

part 3

## **Mark 13:32-37**

### **SUMMARY**

In this passage Jesus urges His disciples to stay awake spiritually and to not live as though Jesus will not return so His return would not take them by surprise. A believer's life is to be characterized by constant watchfulness to guard himself against the evils of this age while waiting for the return of Jesus.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. Does any human know when Jesus is going to return? (**Mark 13:32**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How many times is this “not knowing” seen in these verses? (**32-37**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How many times do you see the phrase “stay awake”, or “keep awake”? (**32-37**)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. As you read **Matthew 24:36-39**, what stands out about the world at the time of the return of Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What can the wicked expect at the return of Jesus? (**Matthew 24:51**)



**6.** What kind of a lifestyle can overtake a believer if not careful? (See **Luke 21:34**)

**7.** What key spiritual truth do you see in **Luke 21:36** that believers are to be engaged in to escape the dangers of this wicked world, thereby proving they are truly God's child?

### **APPLICATION**

This week's application question will take on a different form. Instead of having several questions, there will be only one.

**1.** Thoroughly examine your life and identify any area in your life where you believe you have "fallen asleep" spiritually. After you identify an area or areas, write down what you need to do to change in each of those areas.

*(There may be some you wish not to share with your group, but if there are some you can share, please share with your group)*

**PRAYER**





lesson thirty four

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# God's Redemption Using Evil

## **Mark 14**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus is now in the last few days of his life before He is crucified. With the exception of Jesus' obedience and Mary's example of sacrifice in anointing Jesus for His death, there is nothing in this chapter but sin, evil, darkness, and the failure of man. Jesus is betrayed by one of his own and after bold statements from His followers that they would never deny him, they all ran away from Jesus. While this looks like a sure defeat at the hands of evil men instigated by their father the devil, God is actually using their evil to accomplish His plan of redemption for sinful man. Jesus, in spite of His sorrow, and in spite of His followers deserting Him, obediently follows His Father's plan for the salvation of His sheep.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What was Jesus' reason for rebuking the disciples for condemning her act of sacrifice? (**See verses 3-9**)

2. Why do you think Jesus revealed this startling statement to his disciples here and now? (**See verse 18**)

3. What difference do you see from the disciple's response in **verse 19** compared to their response in **verse 31**?

4. As you read **verse 21**, you see that prophecy is being fulfilled in God's sovereign plan, but in that sovereign control, who is held responsible for their actions?

5. What is the prophecy in **verse 27** and how does **verse 50** show it is fulfilled?

6. Throughout Jesus life He emphatically claimed that He came to die. Why then would He make this statement three times? (**See verses 35, 36**)

7. Where do you see the resurrection in the following verses? **24, 25; 28; 62**

8. What does Luke's account tell us about Jesus when the cock crowed the second time? See **Luke 22:61, 62**.

## **APPLICATION**

1. How does Mary's act of devotion, love, and worship when darkness was all around her, encourage, challenge, and convict you?

2. How does Peter's denial and the denial of the other disciples reflect your life at times?

3. In what ways does Jesus example of faithful obedience amidst Satanic attacks and the failures of His own followers expose your heart when you feel attacked and discouraged and defeated and when others have failed you?

4. How does knowing God uses evil for His purposes encourage you as you walk with Christ in a dark and sinful world and even when you fail yourself?



**PRAYER**



lesson thirty five

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# The Agony of Victory

## **Mark 15:1-41**

### **SUMMARY**

Jesus is facing the hatred of the religious leaders, the poor justice of Pilate, and the easily swayed crowds as they shout for His murder and call for a murderer to be freed. The agony and humiliation Jesus bore is beyond human comprehension. Perhaps the greatest pain of all was when He bore our sins and His Father turned His face away. Jesus goes to His death in full control and in full obedience to His Father. The work was truly finished in His death and in His anticipated resurrection. The veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom signifying that entrance to God was only found in the person and work of His beloved Son. The cross work of Jesus should break our hearts, humble our hearts, and reassure our hearts that Jesus is the Father's only way of salvation for sinners.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What insight did Pilate show as found in **Mark 15:10**?
2. What poor philosophy did Pilate follow as found in **Mark 15:15**?
3. What fear did the religious leaders have in **Mark 15:11** which caused them to stir up the crowds to pick Barabbas?
4. Why did these Roman soldiers pick this type of a “mockery game” to make fun of Jesus? (**15:16-20**)

5. Why do you think Jesus refused the drink that was a common mixture to dull and numb the pain of a convicted criminal?

6. Why would it be humiliating for Jesus to be hung in the middle of two thieves? (**Mark 15:27**)

7. Why would Jesus make this statement in **Mark. 15:34**?

8. What is the significance of the veil being torn in the temple and being torn from top to bottom? (**Mark 15:38**)

### **APPLICATION**

1. Read **John 19:11**. How does Jesus statement help you to trust Him when someone turns against you and holds some kind of authority over you?

2. As you observe the confession of Judas in **Matthew 27:3-5**, what lessons can we learn from this when we repent. How can we tell if we truly repent?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why is it easy to go along with the crowd, especially when many are saying the same thing? What issue must be settled in your heart to avoid joining a crowd to sin?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Read **John 18:28**. What hypocrisy do you see here? In what ways do we do the same thing?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Spend your remaining time sharing with each other your story of salvation.

**PRAYER**





lesson thirty six

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# Hope for Those Who Fail

## **Mark 15:42-16:8**

### **SUMMARY**

Mark presents to us a very short account of the time Jesus is on the cross, His removal from the cross, and His resurrection. Mark is not so much interested in all the details surrounding these events as he is in showing his readers the work of God resulting from these events to a people who stumble and fail miserably. This is to show his readers that it is the power of God alone that will spread this gospel to the world and change lives. No human can take any credit from this amazing work of God with a people so prone to failing and sinning. This resurrection power will be seen in their lives in the days ahead, though Mark ends on a sad note.

### **OBSERVATION**

1. What is surprising about Joseph of Arimathea (**Mark 15:43**) and Nicodemus (**John 19:39**) desiring to minister to the dead body of Jesus?
2. Why would it take courage to go and ask Pilate for the body of Jesus? (**Mark 15:43**)
3. Why would the centurion be a worthy person to ask if Jesus was dead? (**Mark 15:45**)

4. When they went to the tomb early on the first day, what were they expecting to find? (**Mark 16:1,2**)

5. What three facts concerning Jesus are given in **Mark 16:6,7**?

6. Describe the mental and emotional state of the women as given in **Mark 16:8**.

7. Connecting **verse 7** and **verse 8**, what disobedience do you see there?

### **APPLICATION**

1. How does knowing God changed the heart of Joseph and Nicodemus, members of the groups against Jesus, convict and challenge your heart related to those you are praying for and burdened about to turn to Christ?

2. How does Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in **John 3** with no apparent conversion that night convict you and encourage you as you share the gospel with others?

3. In what ways does your life lack the courage of Joseph and Nicodemus? Are there any areas you would like to grow and change that require courage?

4. Read **Mark 16:8**. Is there anything in your life that reflects the descriptions given in this verse? What in **verse 7** should have given them assurance and how does that give you assurance?

5. What is so amazing about Mark ending his gospel on such a low note. How is that encouraging to you?

**PRAYER**

**PRAYER NEEDS**

## **PRAYER NEEDS**



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