

Explore the Bible.®

DEAF PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

Mark

Calvin Wittman, General Editor



JESUS

Only one bridge makes it possible for us to cross from death to life. His name is Jesus.

Bridges are more than simply a means to get from point A to point B. Bridges make it possible for us to access what was once inaccessible. Spiritually, only one bridge makes it possible for us to cross from death to life. Jesus alone is the way to God.

The Bible records a phenomenal event that took place when Jesus died on the cross: “the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom” (Mark 15:38). This refers to the huge, heavy, thick curtain in the Jewish temple that hung before the most holy place. Its tearing signifies that through Jesus’ death, all human beings now have access to God. That the curtain was torn from top to bottom signifies this was the work of God, not of human hands.

Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). He is waiting for you now.

- **Admit** to God that you are a sinner. Repent, turning away from your sin.
- **By faith receive** Jesus Christ as God’s Son and accept Jesus’ gift of forgiveness from sin. He took the penalty for your sin by dying on the cross.
- **Confess** your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

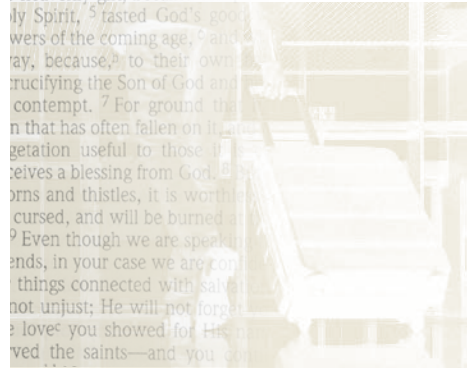
You may pray a prayer similar to this as you call on God to save you: “Dear God, I know that You love me. I confess my sin and need of salvation. I turn away from my sin and place my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. In Jesus’ name I pray, amen.”

After you have received Jesus Christ into your life, tell a pastor or another Christian about your decision. Show others your faith in Christ by asking for baptism by immersion in your local church as a public expression of your faith.

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» MEET THE WRITER



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A WORD FROM THE GENERAL EDITOR



No doubt you've heard someone say something to the effect of, "God is more concerned with our being than our doing." What he or she is trying to communicate is that God wants us to "be" Christians rather than just go through the motions of Christianity; He is more concerned with who we are than what we do. But since who we are will always dictate what we do, our actions, more than our words, will ultimately demonstrate whether we are really followers of Jesus. The disciples "left their nets and followed him." Strong verbs describing decisive action.

The Gospel of Mark is all about action. Does it teach deep theology? Absolutely. Does it tell us interesting and insightful things about Jesus? Of course it does. But why? I believe it is to spur us to action, to cause us to take the truth we hold in our hearts and demonstrate it with our hands. Mark's Gospel is all about being doers and not merely hearers of the word.

For many today, Christianity is about morality, knowledge, or social connections. But for first century Christians it was first about identity with Jesus—being like Him, following after Him, doing what He did, saying what He said, and obeying His commands.

As you walk through this short but powerful book, many of your preconceptions about Christianity may be challenged. You may find yourself faced with difficult questions about what it actually means to be a follower of Jesus. And if this happens you will be blessed.

God has given us this book in order to continue our transformation, to continue to make us more like Jesus. May that be your goal.

Calvin Wittman

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INTRODUCTION TO MARK

The Book of Mark is one of four books in the New Testament called “Gospels.” The Gospels tell about the life of Jesus. Three of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are called the Synoptic Gospels. The word “synoptic” is a combination of two Greek words that mean, “to see together.” That means that these three books tell the story of Jesus in very similar ways.

WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF MARK?

Most all Bible teachers agree that Mark, also called John Mark, was the person who wrote the Gospel of Mark. Mark was Barnabas’ cousin. Mark went with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary trip. However, Mark left the trip early. This later caused Paul and Barnabas to split up and go on separate mission trips. Many years later, Paul and Mark healed their broken relationship. During the last days of his life, Paul wanted Mark to be with him.

WHEN WAS THE BOOK OF MARK WRITTEN?

Bible teachers do not all agree on when Mark was written. The date of Mark is connected to which of the synoptic Gospels was written first. For most of Christian history, people thought Matthew was written first. In the last hundred years that idea has changed. Today, most Bible teachers think that of the three Synoptic Gospels, Mark was written first. Some Bible teachers think that Mark was written sometime between 50 and 60 AD. Many Bible teachers think it was written between 60 and 70 AD.

TO WHOM WAS THE BOOK OF MARK WRITTEN?

Mark became a friend of Peter, traveling with Peter and helping him as an assistant. Bible teachers believe Mark wrote his Gospel based on Peter’s stories and sermons. Most Bible teachers believe Mark wrote for the Gentiles in Rome. The book may have been written while Peter and Mark were in Rome. The Romans did not know Jewish customs and words. That is why Mark took the time to explain them. Mark used many Aramaic words and then interpreted the meaning. These hints lead us to believe the book was written for Gentile Christians.

WHY WAS THE BOOK OF MARK WRITTEN?

The purpose of Mark’s writing was to show that Jesus is the Son of God. Mark also is the Gospel of Jesus in action. Mark added clear descriptions

of events as if he were there and saw the event. He often used the word *immediately*. Mark showed one mighty act after another, including the death and resurrection of Jesus. His writing is simple and clear.

WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT JESUS IN THE BOOK OF MARK?

Interestingly, Mark does not include birth stories about Jesus. Most of the resurrection stories are also missing. What Mark does teach us about Jesus is that He is the strong Son of God. Mark also showed Jesus as a servant. He served His Father by obeying His Father's will. He provided the only way of redemption and salvation to all people with His death and resurrection.

OUTLINE OF MARK

- I. Authority Revealed (1:1–3:6)**
- II. Authority Rejected (3:7–5:43)**
- III. Gathering a New Community (6:1–8:26)**
- IV. Equipping a New Community (8:27–10:52)**
- V. Judgment Pronounced (11:1–13:37)**
- VI. Salvation Secured (14:1–16:20)**

WORD LIST

Alabaster—a white stone that can be carved into jars or ornaments

Aramaic—the language people in Judah spoke when Jesus lived; It is similar to Hebrew

Atonement—doing what is necessary to remove sin

Blasphemy—to say something bad against God; to insult God

Capernaum—the town on the north end of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus lived during his years of ministry

Court of the Gentiles—a courtyard inside the temple in Jerusalem into which Gentiles could go to worship

Court of the Women—a courtyard inside the temple in Jerusalem into which women could go to worship

Day of the Lord—an Old Testament idea about a day in the future of God's great blessing; the prophets often interpreted the Day of the Lord as a day of God's great punishment

Decapolis—an area of ten cities near the Sea of Galilee that were Greek in culture

Demon—an evil spirit who does the work of the devil

Disciples—the twelve men chosen by Jesus to follow Him

Galilee—the northern area of Israel near the Sea of Galilee

Golgotha—the place where Jesus was crucified; also called Calvary

Grace—God showing favor to someone not based on their worthiness of that favor

Herod—The son of Herod the Great; he was Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee; he was always under the control of Rome; he put John the Baptist to death

Isaiah—an Old Testament prophet who wrote one book of the Old Testament; he lived about 700 years before Jesus

Israel—descendants of Jacob; God gave Jacob the name Israel; the Jewish country was also called Israel

Jewish law—the Old Testament laws; also sometimes used to mean the laws added by religious leaders to the laws found in the Old Testament

Linen—a cloth made from flax

Malachi—an Old Testament prophet who lived about 450 years before Jesus

Messiah—the “Anointed One;” the expected King, Deliverer God promised in the Old Testament

Miracle—an event that cannot be explained by natural law or science

Mt. Moriah—the mountain in Jerusalem where the temple was built; also where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac

Nazareth—the town where Jesus lived while growing up; it is west of the Sea of Galilee

Pharisees—Jewish leaders who strictly followed Mosaic law; they believed in the resurrection

Ransom—the payment made to free a prisoner; also used to mean the price Jesus paid to rescue people from sin

Reconcile—to connect together or to heal a broken relationship

Redeem, Redemption—pay to receive back; payment for sin to provide salvation

Resurrection—come back to life from the dead

Sabbath—from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday

Sadducees—Jewish leaders who only followed the books of Moses and did not believe in the resurrection

Satan’s kingdom—the rule of Satan in the lives of some people

Sanctification—the process of growing spiritually

Sanhedrin—the high court of the Jews

Second Adam—Jesus is the Second Adam, giving life to all who died as a result of the first Adam

Shekel—Jewish money both when Jesus lived and today in modern Israel

Synagogue—the place used for worship and education by Jews

Tabernacle—the meeting place where Jewish people worshiped God

Transfiguration—an event in Jesus’ life in which His appearance was gloriously transformed

BIBLE READING PLAN

MONTH 1

- ☐ 1. Mark 1:1-8
- ☐ 2. Mark 1:9-15
- ☐ 3. Mark 1:16-20
- ☐ 4. Mark 1:21-28
- ☐ 5. Mark 1:29-34
- ☐ 6. Mark 1:35-38
- ☐ 7. Mark 1:39-45
- ☐ 8. Mark 2:1-12
- ☐ 9. Mark 2:13-17
- ☐ 10. Mark 2:18-22
- ☐ 11. Mark 2:23-28
- ☐ 12. Mark 3:1-6
- ☐ 13. Mark 3:7-12
- ☐ 14. Mark 3:13-19
- ☐ 15. Mark 3:20-30
- ☐ 16. Mark 3:31-35
- ☐ 17. Mark 4:1-12
- ☐ 18. Mark 4:13-20
- ☐ 19. Mark 4:21-25
- ☐ 20. Mark 4:26-29
- ☐ 21. Mark 4:30-34
- ☐ 22. Mark 4:35-41
- ☐ 23. Mark 5:1-13
- ☐ 24. Mark 5:14-20
- ☐ 25. Mark 5:21-29
- ☐ 26. Mark 5:30-43
- ☐ 27. Mark 6:1-6
- ☐ 28. Mark 6:7-13
- ☐ 29. Mark 6:14-20
- ☐ 30. Mark 6:21-29
- ☐ 31. Mark 6:30-44

MONTH 2

- ☐ 1. Mark 6:45-52
- ☐ 2. Mark 6:53-56
- ☐ 3. Mark 7:1-7
- ☐ 4. Mark 7:8-13
- ☐ 5. Mark 7:14-23
- ☐ 6. Mark 7:24-30
- ☐ 7. Mark 7:31-37
- ☐ 8. Mark 8:1-10
- ☐ 9. Mark 8:11-21
- ☐ 10. Mark 8:22-26
- ☐ 11. Mark 8:27-30
- ☐ 12. Mark 8:31-33
- ☐ 13. Mark 8:34-38
- ☐ 14. Mark 9:1-13
- ☐ 15. Mark 9:14-29
- ☐ 16. Mark 9:30-32
- ☐ 17. Mark 9:33-37
- ☐ 18. Mark 9:38-41
- ☐ 19. Mark 9:42-50
- ☐ 20. Mark 10:1-12
- ☐ 21. Mark 10:13-16
- ☐ 22. Mark 10:17-22
- ☐ 23. Mark 10:23-31
- ☐ 24. Mark 10:32-34
- ☐ 25. Mark 10:35-45
- ☐ 26. Mark 10:46-52
- ☐ 27. Mark 11:1-11
- ☐ 28. Mark 11:12-19
- ☐ 29. Mark 11:20-26
- ☐ 30. Mark 11:27-33

MONTH 3

- ☐ 1. Mark 12:1-12
- ☐ 2. Mark 12:13-17
- ☐ 3. Mark 12:18-27
- ☐ 4. Mark 12:28-34
- ☐ 5. Mark 12:35-37
- ☐ 6. Mark 12:38-44
- ☐ 7. Mark 13:1-8
- ☐ 8. Mark 13:9-13
- ☐ 9. Mark 13:14-23
- ☐ 10. Mark 13:24-27
- ☐ 11. Mark 13:28-31
- ☐ 12. Mark 13:32-37
- ☐ 13. Mark 14:1-11
- ☐ 14. Mark 14:12-16
- ☐ 15. Mark 14:17-21
- ☐ 16. Mark 14:22-26
- ☐ 17. Mark 14:27-31
- ☐ 18. Mark 14:32-42
- ☐ 19. Mark 14:43-52
- ☐ 20. Mark 14:53-65
- ☐ 21. Mark 14:66-72
- ☐ 22. Mark 15:1-5
- ☐ 23. Mark 15:6-15
- ☐ 24. Mark 15:16-20
- ☐ 25. Mark 15:21-28
- ☐ 26. Mark 15:29-32
- ☐ 27. Mark 15:33-41
- ☐ 28. Mark 15:42-47
- ☐ 29. Mark 16:1-8
- ☐ 30. Mark 16:9-13
- ☐ 31. Mark 16:14-20



CALLS

Jesus is the promised Messiah, and we follow Him because He is worthy.

MARK 1:9-20

In every group there are those who lead and those who follow. The followers may accept the leader due to his personality or skills. For a group to succeed the followers must trust the authority of the leader. When Jesus came, He spoke and acted with authority. His authority came from God. Jesus used His authority to call twelve men to follow Him. We see Jesus calling some of these men in today's lesson.

The whole Bible agreed on one great announcement—the Messiah was coming. The prophets Malachi and Isaiah especially wrote about the coming Messiah. After Malachi, God did not speak again for 400 years. God's silence ended with John the Baptist. Mark wrote about the life of Jesus. Mark told how John the Baptist confirmed Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus had authority to call the disciples, and they rightly followed Him. The message of Jesus was repent and believe the good news. The message of Jesus is still the same today. Jesus calls us to repent and follow Him. He is worthy, as God's Messiah, to be followed.

MARK 1:9-20

9 At that time Jesus came from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the **Jordan River**. **A**
10 Immediately, as Jesus was coming up out of the water, **B** He saw heaven open. **C** The Holy Spirit came down on Him like a dove, **D** **11** and a voice **E** came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love, and I am very pleased with You.” **12** Then the Spirit sent Jesus into the desert. **13** He was in the desert forty days and was **tempted by Satan**. **F** He was with the wild animals, and the angels came and took care of Him. **14** After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, preaching the Good News from God. **15** He said, “The right time has come. The kingdom of God is near. **Change your hearts and lives** **G** and believe the Good News!” **16** When Jesus was walking by Lake Galilee, he saw **Simon** **H** and his brother Andrew throwing a net into the lake because they were fishermen. **17** Jesus said to them, “Come follow Me, and I will make you fish for people.” **18** So Simon and Andrew immediately left their nets and followed Him. **19** Going a little farther, Jesus saw two more brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in a boat, mending their nets. **20** Jesus immediately called them, and they left their father in the boat with the hired workers and followed Jesus.

- a. The Jordan River is the most important river in Israel. It flows from the Sea of Galilee south to the Dead Sea.
- b. The word “baptize” means to dip or submerge. Jesus was submerged and then came up out of the water.
- c. The Greek word means to tear open.
- d. Some Bible teachers think this means the Spirit had the shape of a dove, but others think the descent of the Spirit was gentle like the descent or landing of a dove.
- e. We see the Trinity here—Jesus the Son, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and the Father speaking.
- f. See Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13 for more information about the temptation.
- g. The New Century Version says “change your hearts and lives.” Most English Bibles use the word “repent.”
- h. Jesus gave Simon the name Peter sometimes called, Simon Peter.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Why is it important that Jesus, the perfect Son of God, had no sin?
2. What was the message of John the Baptist? (See Mark 1:7-8.)
3. How is John's message the same message we should give to people today?
4. Whose voice did Jesus hear? What did the voice say?
5. Why is it important that all three persons of the Trinity were present at Jesus' baptism?
6. How did Satan tempt Jesus? (See Matthew 4:1-11.)
7. What did Jesus want people to do when they heard the kingdom of God had arrived?
8. What did Jesus mean when He said the disciples would fish for men?
9. What did it cost the fishermen to follow Jesus? What will it cost you to follow Jesus?

BIBLE SKILL: *Define the following words. Use a Bible Dictionary or go online for help.*

Baptism: _____

Sin: _____

Repent: _____

Forgiveness: _____

Messiah: _____

Trinity: _____

IN MY CONTEXT

Believers can trust this fact—Jesus is the perfect Son of God.

We can be sure that Jesus is all powerful even over temptation and over Satan who tempted Jesus and tempts us.

Jesus calls us to repent from our sin and believe in Him.

Jesus calls us to give up the things we trusted in the past and shows us we can trust Him now by following Him.

Discuss as a group why it is important that Jesus, the perfect Son of God, had no sin.

What kind of power does Jesus have? How does His power help us when we face temptation?

What keeps you from repenting of things you know God doesn't want in your life? What steps can you take to remove those things you listed?

How does your life show that you are no longer trusting the things of the world but are following Jesus?

MEMORY VERSE

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me, and I will make you fish for people." - Mark 1:17

DAY ONE

Read Mark 1:9-11, looking for why Jesus was baptized.

When John the Baptist preached, many people came to hear his message about repentance and baptism. John's baptism, though, was a call for Jews to repent from sin. Mark told how Jesus walked out of the crowd for John to baptize Him. Jesus, the Messiah, seemed like an ordinary person. But Jesus was not an ordinary man. He was the perfect Son of God. Jesus did not need to repent from sin.

You may wonder then, why was Jesus baptized? Jesus was baptized just like all the other people were baptized. However, His baptism showed a picture of His future death, burial, and resurrection. By His baptism, Jesus gave His approval to John's ministry and message. Finally, by His baptism, Jesus showed He was human like we are.

At His baptism, the Father spoke His approval of His Son's mission on earth. Jesus did not "become" the Son of God when He was baptized. Jesus IS and ALWAYS WAS the perfect Son of God. At His baptism, the Trinity is clear: God the Father spoke; God the Son was baptized; God the Holy Spirit appeared like a dove.

How does the baptism of Jesus help you to understand that Jesus was and is the perfect Son of God?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 1:12-13, seeing how Jesus followed the Holy Spirit.

Notice what happened after Jesus was baptized. He went into the desert and was tempted by Satan. Jesus went from a high spiritual moment immediately to a spiritual challenge. Life is often this way. But when Jesus went to His spiritual challenge, He was following the Spirit. Jesus did not follow His own will but followed the will of the Father. We should always follow the Holy Spirit wherever He leads even when following Him leads to difficult experiences.

In the Bible, people often went into the desert to spend time with God. Moses is an example of this. Jesus was alone in the desert for forty days. Jesus was with God, but He also faced Satan and temptation. He had no food or water. He lived with the wild animals. But even though

these forty days were hard, Jesus resisted temptation. Ultimately, He resisted temptation so all believers could have their sins forgiven. Jesus was tempted many times in His ministry, but Jesus never gave in to the temptations. Because He faced temptation, He understands when we face temptation. He will give us strength to resist the temptation. God never promised He would remove temptations and problems from us. He did promise He would be with us always.

How does the power that Jesus has over temptation and Satan help you to overcome temptation?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 1:14-15, looking for what it means to repent.

The Roman ruler in Israel was a man named Herod. John accused Herod of many wrongs. This made Herod angry so he put John into prison. Eventually, John died in that prison. While John was in prison, Jesus began His ministry in Galilee. Jesus spent most of His ministry in Galilee. Throughout His ministry, He had an important message. His message was the good news of God.

When Jesus began His ministry, He announced that God's time had come—the time the Old Testament had looked toward. God was going to build a kingdom in the hearts of people. Jesus taught that anyone could be a part of this kingdom of God, not just the Jewish people. In Jesus, this kingdom was finally near at hand.

The Jewish people wanted a king to free them from their Roman rulers. But this was not the goal of Jesus. Instead, Jesus called for people to go through a spiritual change. He called people to repent. The New Century Version translates this word (repent) as “change your hearts and lives.” That is indeed what the word means. Jesus wanted people to look inside their hearts, confess their sins, and believe in Him. This was the good news that Jesus announced, and it is still the good news today.

What did Jesus mean when He said the “the kingdom of God is near”?

How can you become part of the kingdom of God? Why is repentance and belief in Jesus important to enter the kingdom of God? How are repentance and belief in Jesus related?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 1:16-18, finding how following Jesus changed people.

At the start of His ministry, Jesus called people to come and follow. In today's reading, we see that He called Simon and Andrew. These two men were brothers. They were also fishermen. They made a living catching fish in the Sea of Galilee. Fishing was hard work, but it probably gave them a fairly good standard of living. Fishing was steady and dependable.

But when Jesus called, these men started a new life. They left their boats, nets, friends, and jobs to follow Jesus. Their lives changed so much that later Jesus even changed Simon's name to Peter. Peter made mistakes while following Jesus, like the time he denied knowing Him before Jesus was crucified. But Peter became a strong leader of the disciples. The call of Jesus changed Peter from a person who caught fish to a person who caught people for the kingdom of God. Jesus still calls each of us to tell others the good news. All of us as believers are to be fishers of men.

Think about when Jesus called you to follow Him. What do you remember about that day?

When you decided to follow Jesus, what changed in your life?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Sanctification*

Sanctification means to be set apart for God's purpose; to be used by God and to grow into the calling God has placed on your life. Jesus called the disciples to follow Him and grow into the fullness of His calling. Jesus calls us to follow Him in obedience to do the work He has planned for us. When we decide to follow Him, the Holy Spirit leads us to serve Him and others.

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 1:19-20, underlining what the men gave up to follow Jesus.

Jesus called James and John, and they responded without hesitation. They were ordinary, everyday people doing their ordinary, everyday jobs. They left the safety of their homes, families, friends, and jobs to follow Jesus. They did not know what would happen in the future, but they gave up everything to follow Jesus.

Did they know when Jesus called them from their boats they would have to turn from the life they knew (fishing) and take the life Jesus gave? The lives of these four men are an example that we should follow. By following Jesus, they showed they trusted Jesus enough to leave the lives they knew for the life that Jesus offered. Jesus still calls every person to choose to follow Him. Listen to God's call for you to "drop your nets" and go after Him.

How did following Jesus show their trust in Him? How do you show your trust in Jesus?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 1:9-20. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

What can you and your study group do to help each other trust the perfect Son of God to give you power to resist sin and Satan?

Who do you know that needs to know the story of Jesus and about repentance and belief? How can you and your friends share this message with your unbelieving friends?

How can you and your friends encourage each other to leave behind the old life and trust Jesus to lead you into a new life of following Him and sharing His good news?



FORGIVES

Jesus has the authority to forgive sins.

MARK 2:1-12

In the garden of Eden there was no sickness. But when Adam and Eve ate the fruit, sin and death came. When Jesus was here, people believed that sickness was a punishment for sin. It could be the sick person who sinned or someone in their family. They thought the sin brought the sickness. Our lesson today is the story of a paralyzed young man. Did he become paralyzed from a sin he had committed from an earlier time in his life? Mark did not answer this question. Mark's purpose was to show Jesus had authority to forgive the sin of every person who approached Him.

Most houses in Capernaum were one room buildings with a flat roof. A mixture of tar, clay, and sand would be rolled hard across wooden beams to make the roof. Narrow stairs led to the roof which one person could climb easily. But in today's story, four people carried a friend on a stretcher to the roof, dug a hole through it, and lowered him to Jesus. They wanted their friend to be well. So did Jesus. But even more, Jesus wanted him healed from sin.

MARK 2:1-12

1 A few days later, when Jesus came **back to Capernaum**, **A** the news spread that he **was at home**. **B** **2** Many people gathered together so that there was no room in the house, not even outside the door. And Jesus was teaching them God's message. **3** Four people came, carrying a **paralyzed man**. **C** **4** Since they could not get to Jesus because of the crowd, they **dug a hole in the roof** **D** right above where he was speaking. When they got through, they lowered the mat with the paralyzed man on it. **5** When Jesus saw the faith of these people, he said to the paralyzed man, "Young man, your **sins are forgiven**." **E** **6** Some of the **teachers of the law** **F** were sitting there, thinking to themselves, **7** "Why does this man say things like that? He is speaking **as if he were God**." **G** Only God can forgive sins." **8** Jesus knew immediately what these teachers of the law were **thinking**. **H** So He said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? **9** Which is easier: to tell this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to tell him, 'Stand up. Take your mat and walk'? **10** But I will prove to you that the **Son of Man** **I** has authority on earth to forgive sins." So Jesus said to the paralyzed man, **11** "I tell you, stand up, take your mat, and go home." **12** Immediately the paralyzed man stood up, took his mat, and walked out while everyone was watching him. The people were amazed and praised God. They said, "We have never seen anything like this!"

- a. Jesus had been in Capernaum before. He had left Capernaum and now was back in town.
- b. The home He was in was probably Peter's house.
- c. We do not know the man's exact medical condition. We only know he was paralyzed.
- d. Making a large hole in the roof would have been a big distraction to Jesus and everyone inside the house.
- e. This would have surprised everyone that Jesus announced forgiveness of sin. This also seems to show that somehow the paralysis was connected to sinful behavior and his feelings of guilt.
- f. Teachers of the Law were often called scribes. They were experts in the Old Testament Law of Moses.
- g. This was the heart of the problem. Jesus was talking as if He were God. The truth is, He was.
- h. Jesus knows everything, even our thoughts.
- i. "Son of Man" are words Daniel used in the Old Testament. They were words that identified Jesus as the Messiah.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Discuss what the life of a paralyzed person may have been like in Jesus' day.
2. Describe the problem the four friends faced? How did they solve the problem?
3. Read Proverbs 17:17. How does this describe these four friends?
4. What do you think Jesus thought about the four friends?
5. Why does Jesus have the authority to forgive sin?
6. Why did Jesus forgive the man's sins before healing him physically?
7. Jesus knew what the religious leaders were thinking. How did He respond to their thoughts?
8. How did Jesus show He is God?
9. How did the people in Capernaum react when the man was healed?

BIBLE SKILL: *What do these verses teach about the forgiveness of sin?*

Exodus 34:7 _____

Psalm 51:1-2 _____

Psalm 85:2 _____

Isaiah 1:18 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

Jesus will forgive anyone who asks Him for forgiveness.

God is the only one who can forgive sin.

As the Son of God, Jesus has the authority to forgive sin. He also has the authority and power to heal the people He created.

When we see Jesus' power to forgive and heal, we are amazed. It causes us to obey Him. We see how awesome Jesus is, and it causes us to worship Him.

Discuss as a group what it means that Jesus will forgive anyone who asks.

When have you asked God for forgiveness of sin? What is in your life that needs forgiveness now?

Discuss some reasons we know Jesus is God's Son and is equal with God. (See Philippians 2:6-11.) How has God forgiven and healed you? Share stories in your group about God's forgiveness and healing.

List things about Jesus that amaze you. What can you do to obey and worship Jesus better?

MEMORY VERSE

When Jesus saw the faith of these people, he said to the paralyzed man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven." - Mark 2:5

DAY ONE

Read Mark 2:1-2, noticing where Jesus stayed.

“A few days later” is a phrase Mark used to mean an uncertain amount of time had passed. Mark is the only Gospel writer who tells us this healing happened in Capernaum. Jesus had taught in Capernaum before and had caused a lot of excitement. Crowds of people had come to see Him. He had left Capernaum to travel around Galilee. After the excitement in Capernaum died down, He returned, but word quickly got out that He was back in town and was staying in Peter’s home.

Notice how Mark described the crowd of people. They filled the small room and stood around the doorway. There must have been a pretty large crowd. Archaeologists tell us that in the first century Capernaum had about 1,500 people living in it. The actions of Jesus were so remarkable that probably a large number of these people had come to Peter’s house to hear and see Jesus. They all wanted to hear the voice of Jesus and the message of God that He came to share with them.

How can you share Jesus with others so they will want to know more about Him?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 2:3-5, looking for the actions of the friends.

Four men had a friend who was paralyzed. They knew Jesus could help their friend. They put him on a stretcher and carried him to Jesus. The crowd did not make room at the front door for them to bring their friend into the house, so they worked their way up to the roof and dug a hole large enough to lower their friend to Jesus. Can you imagine the distraction it was to Jesus and everyone below with pieces of the roof falling down and dust flying everywhere? However, the actions of the men showed their faith in Jesus.

These men believed that Jesus could heal their friend. But the story took an odd turn at this point. When Jesus saw the man and the faith of the friends, Jesus said, “your sins are forgiven.” This was a shock to the people listening. It perhaps showed that somehow sin in the man’s life had paralyzed him. However, this is not clear in the story. But it shows

one thing very clearly—Jesus could forgive sin and He was willing to forgive sin. Jesus forgave the sin of the paralyzed man and we know that Jesus will forgive our sins when we ask Him.

What are your actions that show your faith?

How can faith lead to the forgiveness of sin?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Forgiveness*

Roman 1:18–3:23 is very clear that sin is man's greatest problem. Every person is a sinner. And only Jesus provides an answer for our sin—forgiveness. God showed His love for humans by sending His Son to pay the incredible price for sin. Because the price has been paid, now repentance and faith result in forgiveness. God wants to forgive (Acts 13:38-39). It is the choice of every person to receive forgiveness through Jesus or to reject it.

DAY THREE

Read Mark 2:6-7, underlining the thoughts of the teachers.

The Jewish religious leaders from Jerusalem were interested in Jesus. A group of these leaders traveled to Capernaum to learn more about Jesus. When Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven,” it shocked and angered them. They did not say their thoughts out loud, but Jesus knew what was in their minds. The leaders surely believed the young man was paralyzed as punishment from God because of some sin. But only God had the authority to forgive sins, and the religious leaders saw Jesus as just a man. When Jesus forgave sin, He claimed to have the authority of God. To the leaders, this was blasphemy. According to the Jewish Law (Leviticus 24:10-23) a person who blasphemes must be stoned to death. (Later Mark wrote that blasphemy was the charge that led to the crucifixion of Jesus. See Mark 14:61-64.) But who was Jesus? Was He a man who blasphemed against God? Or was He the true God who alone

can forgive sin? The religious leaders sitting in Peter's house did not believe that Jesus was God. But you and I, 2,000 years later, know that Jesus is the one true God and that as God, He can forgive our sin.

Who can forgive sin? Why was Jesus able to forgive sin? How can Jesus forgive your sin?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 2:8-11, summarizing Jesus' words.

Jesus knew what the leaders were thinking; after all, He was God. By asking which would be easier to say, Jesus was suggesting that the same result would have come from either sentence. The leaders could not "see" forgiveness, but they could see if the man obeyed the commands to "stand," "take," and "walk." So that is what Jesus said. They would not be able to deny the healing that everyone could see.

They knew exactly what Jesus was saying! Using either sentence showed that Jesus had the authority and the power to forgive and heal. The authority to say the first one (your sins are forgiven) showed that Jesus had the authority to say the second (stand, take, and walk). Therefore, the healing of this paralyzed man was proof that Jesus was in fact God. And if Jesus was God, then he had the authority to forgive sin. Jesus could do this for the paralyzed man in Peter's house. Jesus can also do this for you and me.

What do you think is the connection between sin and sickness? Does God still heal people today? Why do you think so?

When have you experienced forgiveness from Jesus?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 2:12, signing the verse as you read.

The healing happened immediately. The healing was so complete that the man was able to get up, carry his own bed, and walk away. This man became a true testimony of the power of Jesus, showing that Jesus has the power to forgive sin and the power to heal paralyzed lives. The people were so “amazed” that they had no words to describe what they felt and saw. They could only praise God.

Jesus has not changed. He still has the power to heal and the power to forgive sin. There is no sin that might be in your life that Jesus cannot forgive. As Jesus forgives, He especially shows His power to totally change lives. Our right response to Jesus when He heals, forgives, and changes lives is awe, worship, and obedience. Do you need forgiveness from your sin? Then go to Jesus.

What has Jesus done in your life that has amazed you? Why is worship a right response to Jesus for His forgiveness of sin?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 2:1-12. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned. You could meet in person or you might meet on VP.

How can the members of your group be a friend like the four friends in this story? What can you do to help other people experience the forgiveness that Jesus can give?

Why does everyone need forgiveness from sin? When have you seen other people receive forgiveness from sin? When have you experienced forgiveness yourself? How did it make you feel?

How do you know that Jesus, the Son of God, is the true and living God? How should you feel about Jesus? Why should you obey Him? When should you worship Him?



UNITES

Jesus calls believers to show we are His by doing God's will.

MARK 3:23-35

Jesus used parables to teach lessons. Parables are simple stories about everyday life that have a spiritual meaning. Jesus told parables to teach important ideas. In today's lesson, Jesus used parables to teach lessons about Satan, a sin that God will not forgive, and what it means to be God's family.

Can you imagine a sin that God will not forgive? That must be the worst of all sins. If you read verse 22, you will see that a group of religious leaders accused Jesus of using the power of Satan to do the mighty acts He did. These people saw the acts of God and interpreted them as the acts of Satan. It is hard to imagine anyone more spiritually blind and sin led than a person like that.

In verse 21 Jesus' own family thought He was out of His mind. What they thought about Him did not make Him quit. But Jesus continued to teach these people and to call them to Himself. Jesus was uniting people into a new family of God who would live in obedience to God's will.

MARK 3:23-35

23 So Jesus called the people together and taught them with **stories**. **24** He said, “**Satan** will not force himself out of people. **25** A kingdom that is divided cannot continue, **26** and a family that is divided cannot continue. **27** And if **Satan is against himself** and fights against his own people, he cannot continue; that is the end of Satan. **28** No one can enter a strong person’s house and steal his things unless he first ties up the strong person. Then he can steal things from the house. **29** I tell you the truth, all sins that people do and all the things people say against God can be forgiven. **30** But anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of a sin that continues forever.” **31** Jesus said this because the teachers of the law said that he had an **evil spirit inside him**. **32** Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to tell him to come out. **33** Many people were sitting around Jesus, and they said to him, “Your **mother and brothers** are waiting for you outside.” **34** Jesus asked, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” **35** Then he looked at those sitting around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! **36** My true brother and sister and mother are **those who do what God wants**.”

- a. The New Century Version uses the word “stories.” Most English Bibles use the word “parables.”
- b. Satan is the “adversary,” the one who opposes. The word is talking about the same person meant by the “devil.”
- c. This is the main argument against the religious leaders. Jesus does not remove demons from people because He is the leader of demons. This would mean Satan was divided against himself.
- d. Jesus always spoke the truth. Jesus meant, “Pay attention! I’m going to say something you need to remember.”
- e. The sin that God would not forgive was speaking against the Holy Spirit in such a way that the one speaking fully rejected God’s Spirit thinking the presence of the Spirit of God was actually the presence of pure evil.
- f. The religious leaders said Jesus’ power over demons is from Satan.
- g. Jesus’ earthly family, Mary, James, and other brothers and sisters
- h. The true family of God, those who have accepted Jesus as Savior and follow Him as Lord

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. How does a person live who follows God's will?
2. Why did Jesus teach with parables?
3. How did the religious leaders explain Jesus' ability to cast out demons?
4. What were the religious leaders trying to say when they said Jesus' power came from Satan?
5. What is the sin that cannot be forgiven?
6. What is the opposite of blaspheming the Holy Spirit?
7. What would happen to a kingdom that was divided against itself?
8. Who are members of God's family?
9. How do you become a member of God's family?

BIBLE SKILL: *What do these verses say about sin and forgiveness?*

2 Chronicles 7:14 _____

Isaiah 30:18 _____

2 Corinthians 5:17 _____

Titus 2:14 _____

1 John 1:9 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

Believers should be confident that God has all power. His power is greater than any power.

Believers should know that some people will not understand what it means to follow Jesus. Even family members and close friends may not understand.

Doing God's will should be the most important thing in a believer's life.

Discuss as a group how we know God's power is greater than any other power. How do the things shared strengthen your belief in God?

What can you do when people close to you don't understand why they follow Jesus and what it means to follow Him?

What can you do this week to show the world that doing God's will is the most important part of your life?

MEMORY VERSE

"My true brother and sister and mother are those who do what God wants." - Mark 3:35

DAY ONE

Read Mark 3:23-27, noticing the actions of the strong man.

Jesus knew that evil was in the world. He knew that Satan was the one who led that evil. Satan was and is powerful and smart. The Jewish religious leaders said Jesus could cast out demons because He worked with Satan. Jesus responded by using a parable to show that what the religious leaders said made no sense. This parable gives a picture of Jesus' authority over evil and Satan.

The Bible says that Satan rules this world. It is his kingdom of evil, misery, and death. Satan rules over the people who follow him. But Jesus came into Satan's kingdom and tied up the strong man. Jesus explained that everything He did opposed Satan's will. By casting out demons, Jesus showed He had defeated Satan, bound him up, and taken back the lives of those who trust Jesus.

Jesus explained that Satan would not fight against himself. Satan would not send out demons to possess men's lives and then work with Jesus to force those demons out. If Satan did he would be divided against himself. Any nation, church, or family that would fight against itself in such a way will destroy itself. Therefore, the words spoken by the religious leaders in verse 22 were completely wrong.

Why do you think the religious leaders thought Jesus was possessed by Satan?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 3:28, underlining the words "can be."

Did you ever feel you did something so bad that God would never forgive you? Have you ever said anything to God that seemed so wrong that God would hold it against you forever? Look at what Jesus said in verse 28. God will forgive any sin you have done or any words you have said against Him. The good news is God wants to forgive you (Isa. 30:18). It does not matter what you did or said. Sin is a serious problem and everyone in the world is guilty. Jesus is the only hope for the forgiveness of your sins. To receive forgiveness, you must confess your sin. To confess means you tell God what you did and what you said. Tell God you know

you were wrong and that He was right. Next, you need to repent. To repent means to change direction. Do you have anything you need to confess right now? What must you repent from? Talk to God and tell Him everything. He will forgive you if you ask.

What sins will God forgive? What must you do to receive God's forgiveness? How would you describe to a friend what they need to do to receive God's forgiveness.

DAY THREE

Read Mark 3:29-30, and summarize Jesus' words.

Jesus stayed in the region of Galilee teaching, healing the sick, and casting out demons. The religious leaders in Jerusalem heard the stories of all the miracles Jesus did. They sent a group to see for themselves. When these leaders found Jesus, He was casting out a demon. They recognized that Jesus had power over Satan. While they could not deny a miracle happened, they did not want to give Jesus the credit of having power from God. They did not criticize Jesus on His ability to perform miracles. Instead they attacked the source of His power. They said the reason Jesus could cast out demons was because the power He had was from Satan.

The religious leaders refused to accept Jesus as Messiah. He did not fit into their picture of what the Messiah would say and do. So they claimed that Jesus' power came from Satan. They chose to deny the power of the Holy Spirit. This was a deliberate rejection of the saving power and grace from God offered through Jesus. They choose to call the work of God the work of Satan.

The work of the Holy Spirit is to show the truth to people. When the Holy Spirit shows someone that Jesus is the true Son of God, that person must make a choice. One, to believe the truth and accept Jesus as Savior or two, to reject the truth and reject Jesus. The religious leaders rejected Jesus. Rejecting Jesus is the sin that God will not forgive.

How do you know that Jesus is the only true Savior? Have you trusted Him to be your Savior? What is the danger of rejecting Jesus?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 3:31-32, noting who was present.

Jesus' family saw Him surrounded by a crowd of people. They could not get to Him, so they sent someone in to call Jesus out. We know from this passage that Jesus' mother and some of his brothers were present. At this point in His ministry, Jesus' family did not understand His true mission. In fact, they thought He was crazy. (See Mark 3:21.)

Family was important in Jewish life, and it was important to Jesus. Of course, one commandment was (and is) to honor father and mother. Jesus did not dishonor His family in this story. But He did point to the importance of faith even over family. Jesus' family did not believe in Him at first. Even Mary, who knew what the angel told her at His birth, seemed to not really believe. But later she did. Even James, one of the brothers of Jesus, became an important leader in the early church. Even those closest to Jesus did not believe in Him at this early date in His ministry. A family is brought together by physical birth, but God's family is brought together by new birth in Jesus. Getting into the kingdom does not depend on the family one is born into. It depends on your relationship with Jesus.

Why was it hard for the family of Jesus to believe in Him? Do you have anyone who is close to you who knows your faith and still does not follow Jesus? How can you help this person become a believer?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 3:33-35, identifying the emotions behind Jesus' words.

Jesus did not reject His family. In fact, later in the Book of Acts, some of His family will come to believe in Him and be part of beginning the church. They were earthly family. They probably had earthly plans for Jesus. But Jesus was sent from God. He knew God's plan was for Him to create a new family—a family of God. By creating the family of God (through the experience of being forgiven), He would give the orphan a

relationship with a real family. He would give the fatherless a real, loving Father. He would give the lonely person an identity. Jesus would create this spiritual family by His life, death, and resurrection. All those who would place their faith in Him would join this family and would show they are part of God's family by living out the will of God. His spiritual family, which was even more important than His early family, were those sitting around Him who believed in Him. As you can see, you and I, when we believe in Jesus and live out the will of God, are the family of Jesus!

How can you make doing God's will more important than family?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Family*

The moment you accepted Jesus as your Savior, you became a new person. You are not your old self. You belong to a new family—the family of God. You are now set apart from the rest of the unbelieving world. You are still part of your earthly family and you still have duties to them. But your new godly family is where you live out the will and purpose of God. It is a wonderful thing when your earthly family is, along with you, also part of the family of God.

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 3:23-35. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How have you seen God's power around you this week? How does the power of God help you to love and follow Jesus?

What can you and your small group do to help those who are close to you understand and follow Jesus?

Why is doing God's will so important? How can you make doing God's will the priority of your life?



RESTORES

Jesus' miracles remind us that He has power over all things, even death.

MARK 5:21-24,35-43

Every person fears death at some point in his or her life. Many fear death because they do not know when or how they will die. Some are afraid because death must be faced alone. Finally, the thought of standing before God and being responsible for our lives is scary. When Jesus arose from the grave with great power, He freed us from the fear of death. For the Christ follower, there is no need to fear. We will not go through death alone, and there is life after death.

Mark told the story of Jairus, the community synagogue leader. He had a daughter who was very sick. When he heard Jesus was in town, he ran to Him. Jesus agreed to go see the girl only to learn that she was already dead. Still, Jesus went. It is clear in the story that people in the crowd thought Jesus was wasting His time. What could Jesus do? How amazed the girl's parents and the disciples were when Jesus raised the dead girl back to life. The disciples had seen the great power of Jesus to do many things. Now they saw that Jesus even had power over death.

MARK 5:21-24,35-43

21 When Jesus went in the boat back to the other side of the lake, **A** a large crowd gathered **B** around him there. **22** A leader of the synagogue, named Jairus, came there, saw Jesus, and **fell at His feet.** **C** **23** He begged Jesus, saying again and again, “My daughter is dying. Please come and put Your hands on her so she will be healed and will live.” **24** So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed Jesus and pushed very close around him.

35 While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of the synagogue leader. They said, “Your daughter is dead. There is no need to bother the teacher anymore.” **36** But Jesus paid no attention to what they said. He told the synagogue leader, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

37 Jesus let only **Peter, James, and John the brother of James go with him.** **D** **38** When they came to the house of the synagogue leader, Jesus found many people there making lots of noise and **crying loudly.** **E** **39** Jesus entered the house and said to them, “Why are you crying and making so much noise? The child is not dead, only asleep.”

40 But they **laughed at him.** **F** So, after throwing them out of the house, Jesus took the child’s father and mother and his three followers into the room where the child was. **41** Taking hold of the girl’s hand, He said to her, “**Talitha, koum!**” **G** (This means, “Young girl, I tell you to stand up!”) **42** At once the girl stood right up and began walking. (She was twelve years old.) Everyone was completely amazed. **43** Jesus gave them strict orders **not to tell people about this.** **H** Then He told them to give the girl something to **eat.** **I**

- a. The Sea of Galilee
- b. During this period of Jesus’ ministry, He was very popular with the people.
- c. A show of respect and humility
- d. The first recorded time Jesus separated the three disciples from the other disciples. He was training them to become leaders.
- e. The people were professional mourners. They were paid to go to funerals to cry and make loud noises of sadness.
- f. They did not believe Jesus.
- g. These words are Aramaic, which was the language used for everyday speech.
- h. A theme in Mark where Jesus told people not to tell others about what He did for them
- i. To show the girl was not dead. Dead people cannot eat.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What makes death such a hard thing to talk about?
2. Who was Jairus and why did he fall at the feet Jesus?
3. How old was Jairus' daughter? Why did Mark give her age?
4. What kind of power did Jesus have and how could He raise someone from the dead?
5. When the people told Jairus his daughter was dead, what did Jesus say?
6. Why did the people laugh at Jesus?
7. Why did Jesus just take Peter, James, and John?
8. Why did Jesus throw everyone out of the house?
9. Jesus told the people not to tell anyone about what happened. Why?
10. How is it important that the parents gave their daughter something to eat?

BIBLE SKILL: *When Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead, He showed His power over death. There are a few other stories of dead people coming back to life. What can you learn from these stories?*

Matthew 9:18-26 _____

Luke 7:11-17 _____

John 11:1-44 _____

Acts 9:36-41 _____

Acts 20:7-12 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

As believers, we can come to Jesus with confidence. We know He will help us when we ask.

Jesus has all power. Even if people do not believe Him, He can do what He plans.

Jesus created the world. He can heal and restore those He created.

Practice as a group signing the memory verse (Mark 5:36b). Discuss how this verse can help you face death.

Discuss as a group about times you asked Jesus for help and He answered.

How do we know Jesus has great power? Give examples; especially give examples from your life and the lives of your friends and family.

How does Jesus' involvement with creation help us to understand His ability to heal people? In what ways can Jesus give us life today and life for eternity? Think about the importance of Jesus restoring someone's life. How does this story encourage you?

MEMORY VERSE

"Don't be afraid; just believe." - Mark 5:36b

DAY ONE

Read Mark 5:21, looking for what will change your life.

Everywhere Jesus went crowds of people went to see Him. People came from all over, many just curious. Some wanted to hear Jesus' teaching and some brought sick family members for Jesus to heal. On occasion, people coming to see Jesus had to squeeze through the mass of folks or find a different way to get around to Him (remember the four friends of the paralyzed man). Jesus loved the people in the crowds. Jesus listened to, healed, and loved people—always responding to their needs and hurts. By this, He changed the lives of people.

What causes people to seek Jesus today?

How does Jesus help individuals who call on Him for salvation?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 5:22-24, finding the faith of Jairus.

It does not matter who you are, bad things happen. Jairus was a Jewish leader in the synagogue, an important member of the community. His responsibilities included everything that happened in the synagogue. Jairus knew about Jesus and the miracles He did in nearby towns. He also knew that the priests and scribes from Jerusalem were against Jesus. But his daughter was very sick, and Jairus knew that Jesus could help her.

Clearly, Jairus loved his daughter. She was precious to him. He did not care what other people would think of him. He was desperate. When Jairus heard that Jesus was back, he humbled himself, went to Jesus, and asked Jesus to come heal his daughter. He knelt at the feet of Jesus not caring who saw him. Jairus knew and believed that Jesus had the ability to come heal his daughter. Jairus was confident that Jesus could help his daughter just as we can be confident that Jesus will help all those who go to Him for help.

What do you see in this story that gives you confidence that Jesus helps those who seek His help?

When have you needed help and sought help from the Lord?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 5:35-36, learning what it means to believe.

While on His way, Jesus healed a sick woman who slowed Him down. No doubt, when Jairus saw Jesus heal her of an illness she had had for years he felt added hope for his own sick daughter. However, suddenly messengers arrived with bad news. Jairus' precious daughter was already dead. The messengers said it was too late. They believed Jesus could do nothing now. But Jesus ignored the news. In this large crowd with all the noise and pushing, Jesus stood calm.

Jesus had seen the pain and love this father had for his daughter. He had also seen the faith of Jairus. Even though his daughter was now dead, Jesus encouraged the father to not be afraid but to continue to believe. Jesus said to replace his fear with faith. Jesus did not leave Jairus alone with his grief. After saying "just believe," Jesus went on with him to his house. The emotions of Jarius probably took a great blow. He seems to have held on to faith, though, because the proof of faith is obedience. Jarius obeyed by going on with Jesus straight to his home.

Can you remember a time when something happened and you felt as desperate as Jairus? Why is it wise to have faith in Jesus even when life is desperate?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 5:37-40, underlining all the people without faith.

The people gathered with Jesus in the room of the dead girl were an interesting group. There was Peter, James, and John—the close friends of Jesus. They were learning that Jesus is the Messiah and had control over nature, diseases, and death. Then there were the mourners. In Jesus' time when a person died, professional mourners would cry with tears and loud noises of sorrow. The crying showed false emotions. They did not care for the grief of the family. They wanted their money. There were the parents of the dead girl. They were heartbroken but trying to believe. Finally, there was Jesus. Jesus was, of course, the master over the whole situation. For Him, the room was not a place of death but a place of sleep. Jesus put the mourners out. He went on into the room with the body of the dead girl leading the disciples and the parents.

Many of the people in this part of the story did not believe. The messengers had no faith in Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus walked confidently into the room of death. He knew what He was about to do! Jesus works with our faith but the power of Jesus is not stopped by doubt and unbelief.

How can Jesus do great things even when people do not believe?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 5:41-43, learning that Jesus is Lord over everything.

Jesus gently called the girl to get up, maybe like her mother would call her to get up every morning. Jesus spoke in the Aramaic language. Mark translated what Jesus said for the Roman Gentile readers. The girl sat up immediately as if she had been sleeping. The girl did not get better slowly. The miracle happened immediately. The girl got right up.

The emotions in that room must have been overwhelming. How could they describe what they saw? Jesus had raised a person out of death and back to life. Amazing!

Jesus told the family to do two things. First, Jesus told the family to say nothing to the unbelieving people about what just happened.

Second, Jesus told the parents to give her something to eat. A body needs food and water. Showing everyone that she was eating and drinking would be clear proof that she was truly alive. By raising this girl to life, Jesus had shown that He was Lord over life and death and all creation.

What kind of control does Jesus have over the world around us? What made it possible for Jesus to bring this dead girl back to life?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Resurrection*

In the story of Jarius' daughter, we see Jesus had the power to restore life. Jesus came to this world, died on the cross, and was buried. But when He rose again, He showed that He had power over death. Jesus came back to life and lives today. Nevertheless, baptism, which is a picture of many things, is also a picture of resurrection. Just as the body of Jesus came back to life so will the bodies of all believers come back to life and live eternally as a new resurrection body.

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 5:21-24,35-43. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

Talk with your group about when you have experienced God's help in desperate times. What gives you confidence in God's help?

How does Jesus overcome unbelief in our lives? How is He able to do great things even when people do not believe in Him?

Why does this story help you understand the power Jesus has over all creation?



SENDS

Jesus sends His followers to tell others about Him.

MARK 6:7-13,30-32

A follower of Jesus is a person who learns about Jesus and wants to become like Jesus. Jesus called twelve men to become His followers. They were normal, hard working men. They were not priests or scribes. They were not Sadducees or Pharisees. They were men who argued and did things they should not do. God uses people like that. These men learned to depend on God. They learned to have faith in God to take care of all their needs. When they became tired, Jesus led them to a place where they could rest. The followers learned Jesus' message. Then Jesus called them to go share it with others.

Life for the Christian today is much the same. Jesus still calls imperfect people to follow Him. Jesus directs us to go and represent Him. Jesus expects us to share the message of salvation with everyone. The way He sends us today might look different. But the work of the gospel and the needs of people have not changed.

MARK 6:7-13,30-32

7 He called His twelve followers together and got ready to send them out **two by two** **A** and gave them **authority** **B** over evil spirits. **8** This is what Jesus commanded them: “Take nothing for your trip except a walking stick. **Take no bread, no bag, and no money** **C** in your pockets. **9** Wear sandals, but take only the clothes you are wearing. **10** When you enter a house, **stay there** **D** until you leave that town. **11** If the people in a certain place refuse to welcome you or listen to you, leave that place. **Shake its dust off your feet** **E** as a warning to them.” **12** So the followers went out and preached that people should **change their hearts** **F** and lives. **13** They forced many demons out and put **olive oil** **G** on many sick people and healed them.

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him about all the things they had done and taught. **31** Crowds of people were coming and going so that Jesus and his followers did not even have time to eat. He said to them, “Come away by yourselves, and we will go to a **lonely place** **H** to get some rest.” **32** So they went in a boat by themselves to a lonely place.

- a. The legal system required two witnesses. The men would also support each other.
- b. Jesus gave the men special power to force demons out of people.
- c. The men had to trust God to take care of them. They depended on the kindness of the people they met to take care of them.
- d. The disciples were to be content with what God provided. Also, staying in the same place would make it easy for people to find the disciples.
- e. This action warned the people that it is dangerous to reject the good news.
- f. People must turn away from sin and accept God’s righteousness. The NCV translates “repent” with the words “change your hearts and lives.”
- g. Olive oil was used as a medicine in the time of Jesus. It also represented the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- h. Jesus sometimes did this with His disciples. See an example in Luke 9:10.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What does it mean to follow Jesus?
2. Why did Jesus send the disciples out two by two?
3. What were the disciples permitted to take with them on their mission trip? Why did Jesus limit them this way? Do missionaries today need to go on mission this same way?
4. What is the cost of following Jesus? (See Matthew 10:36-38.)
5. What are some ways the twelve disciples showed their faith in Jesus?
6. Why did Jesus tell the disciples to shake the dust from their feet? Do missionaries do this same thing today? Why might we do some things differently today than in the time of Jesus?
7. How were the disciples totally dependent on God on this mission trip? How can you live totally dependent on God every day?
8. What was the purpose for anointing oil?
9. Why did the disciples need a time of rest? Why is it there seems to be less time to rest with Jesus?

BIBLE SKILL: *Read the verses below. Write the characteristic of a Christ follower you find in each verse.*

Luke 14:25-26 _____

John 8:31 _____

John 13:35 _____

John 15:8 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

Jesus expects all His followers to serve Him and be part of His ministry.

We can trust that when God calls His followers to work for Him He will provide what they need to do His work.

Jesus gives His followers the power they need to preach and do other things in His name.

When Jesus calls people to serve Him He will also call them to times of rest and renewal.

As a group, list kinds of service followers of Jesus can do. Discuss how this group can be part of the ongoing ministry of Jesus.

What are some ways God provides for His followers to do His work? What have you seen God do to provide for His workers?

How do followers show the power of God to do His work? How are you depending on God's power this week?

How can you encourage other believers to renew themselves spiritually? When have you served the Lord and needed rest and spiritual renewal?

MEMORY VERSE

So the followers went out and preached that people should change their hearts and lives. - Mark 6:12

DAY ONE

Read Mark 6:7, finding why Jesus sent His disciples two by two.

A baseball team wins or loses as a team. If a player makes an error, there are eight other players next to him to pick him up. If a batter strikes out, the next batter is there. In the kingdom of God, God calls individuals, but He calls them to work as a team. He calls Christians to work together to spread the gospel of salvation to all people. God expects that all His followers will be part of His ministry.

In verse 7, Jesus called His followers together. He sent them out two by two. There were several reasons for this. Jewish law required two witnesses in court. Two disciples together would provide proof that the message they preached was true. They could also encourage each other when they became discouraged. If one became sick, the other could care for him. Also, having a partner would help both of them resist temptation. Perhaps of most importance, two people working together would keep them faithful to the work of ministry which Jesus sent them to do.

How are you involved in the work of Jesus? What are some reasons why working with another Christian would be a good way to do things?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 6:8-10, thinking about how to depend on God.

The twelve disciples lived about three years with Jesus. During that time, they learned to depend on God to provide everything they needed. They had confidence that God would do this because of their experience with Jesus. They had seen what Jesus could do. They saw Him heal sick people, raise people from the dead, and feed thousands with little food. While living with Jesus, they had everything they needed. The men were to focus on the message and the work of Jesus. They were not to focus on getting and having things. Their mission was simple. They were to tell people about the kingdom of God and call people to repent. This was the message Jesus had been proclaiming, and now it was their message too. The message was the most important thing. Everything they needed—food, clothes, a place to sleep—God would provide.

It is not always easy to depend on God. When we serve the Lord it is easy to move our focus from serving Him to taking care of ourselves. We easily turn to the business of life or the attractions of the world. We take our minds off God. As we serve Christ faithfully, we learn that Jesus truly does provide for our needs.

How do you depend on God to take care of you? What experiences have you had that have taught you that Jesus will provide your needs as you faithfully serve Him?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 6:11, thinking about rejecting Jesus or accepting Jesus.

Even though this is a strange verse for us, the disciples understood what Jesus meant when He said to shake the dust off their feet. It seems to have come from this tradition—sometimes a Jewish person would need to walk through Gentile land. But before he would take one step onto the Jewish promised land, he would stop and clean off his feet and shake the dust out of his coat. This was to show that the Gentile land was unclean. It was an expression of dislike toward the Gentiles and the Jewish belief that God would judge them.

Jesus told His followers to proclaim His message. But if people rejected the message, they should clean the dust off their feet and walk away. This showed the disciples were finished with their work with the people in that town. They could walk away and not feel guilty. God would judge those who rejected the message. Jesus did preach about love, but He also talked about judgment and punishment. Jesus commands us to share the good news with others and to show love. But some will reject His message and reject the offer of salvation. Each person must decide for his or her self.

How do you feel when you try to share the good news with others? Why do some people accept the message of salvation but others reject it?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 6:12-13, finding the message we need from Jesus.

The message the twelve disciples preached was the same message they heard Jesus preach. It was the same message John the Baptist had preached. The message was for people to repent. Repent means to change our hearts and minds. It means to begin a new way of thinking and living with a new attitude. It is not just saying, “I’m sorry!” It means admitting we are sinners and turning away from sin.

Jesus gave the disciples the power to perform miracles. The purpose of the miracles was to show God has final authority in His creation. The miracles would prove these men were acting under God’s authority. Miracles got the attention of the people which made it possible for the disciples to share the message. You might say that miracles opened the door to the greatest miracle—new life for a sinner who accepts Jesus as Savior.

It seems that miracles did not become the everyday act of the disciples. They did happen from time to time. Miracles were not the everyday act of believers in the early church. Today miracles still happen. They don’t seem to be the normal act of God through His people. God’s daily act is to give His followers power to preach in His name.

What is the message Jesus wants you to tell others? How does Jesus give you power to tell this message?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 6:30-32, learning what it means to rest with Jesus.

Because Jesus knows all things, He already knew what had happened to each pair of disciples. But the men needed a time to share their experiences and learn from each other. Sharing their stories showed they were accountable to Jesus and to each other. They were probably excited about everything they did and wanted to tell Jesus and the others their stories. The time they spent sharing must have been an exciting time!

However, Jesus soon saw they needed time to get away and rest. They needed to focus on Jesus and to “recharge” their spiritual batteries.

Jesus did not tell them to GO rest. He told them, “Come with Me...” He led them away to a quiet place to rest. Just as the disciples needed time to rest and to be spiritually renewed, so do we. Quiet times with Jesus are important. He will give us new strength to continue serving Him.

When you think of rest, what comes to your mind? Why do we need rest and renewal?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Christian Call*

God calls all believers to follow Him. This is what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Jesus goes on to call each believer to minister in the body of Christ. There are some who will obey God’s call by being pastors, teachers, and missionaries. Others will obey God’s call by working in a job outside the church but will just as fully live out God’s call to live for Christ on the job and to share Christ through the opportunities opened by the work they do..

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from Mark 6:7-13,30-32. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned. You can meet by VP if you need.

What is your ministry to the Lord and His people? How is Jesus providing you with what you need to do the ministry that He has called you to do?

What power does Jesus give to His followers? What can you do to use His power to tell your friends about Jesus and do things in His name?

When was the last time you had a time of spiritual rest and renewal? What can you and your friends do this week to rest in the Lord and experience Him anew?



INCLUDES

Jesus breaks down walls to show love to all.

MARK 7:25-37

Mark wrote his Gospel so the world could know about Jesus. Jesus' death, like God's love, is for the whole world. God's original plan with Israel was for Israel to take this message to the world. But Israel thought salvation was for them alone. Jesus ministered to everyone regardless of their background.

Just as Jonah's mission to Nineveh showed God loved the people of Nineveh, the trip of Jesus to Tyre showed Jesus' message of salvation was even for the Gentiles. This must have surprised the disciples. When Jesus showed compassion for a deaf man and healed Him, the disciples learned there was no limit to the desire of Jesus to take His message to everyone, even those often left out by the hearing world. This story should teach us the true heart of God. We live in our Deaf world that is often left out by the bigger world around us. But Jesus shows us that God includes us and everyone else in His saving love.

MARK 7:25-37

25 A woman whose daughter had an evil spirit in her heard that he was there. So she quickly came to Jesus and fell at his feet. **26** She was Greek, born in Phoenicia, in **Syria**. **27** She begged Jesus to force the demon out of her daughter. **28** Jesus told the woman, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and give it to the dogs. **First let the children eat all they want.**” **29** But she answered, “Yes, Lord, but even the **dogs** under the table **can eat the children’s crumbs.**” **30** Then Jesus said, “Because of your answer, you may go. The demon has left your daughter.” **31** The woman went home and found her daughter lying in bed; the **demon was gone.** **32** Then Jesus left the area around Tyre and went through Sidon to Lake Galilee, to the area of the **Ten Towns**. **33** While he was there, some people brought a man to him who was deaf and could not talk plainly. The **people begged Jesus** to put his hand on the man to heal him. **34** Jesus led the man away from the crowd, **by himself.** He put his fingers in the man’s ears and then spit and touched the man’s tongue. **35** Looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to the man, “**Ephphatha!**” (This means, “Be opened.”) **36** Instantly the man was able to hear and to use his tongue so that he spoke clearly. **37** Jesus commanded the people not to tell anyone about what happened. But the more he commanded them, the more they told about it. **38** They were completely amazed and said, “Jesus does everything well. He makes the deaf hear! And those who can’t talk he makes able to speak.”

- a. The woman was from Syria so she was a Gentile. Today, Tyre is in the country of Lebanon.
- b. Jesus said He came to preach to the Jews first.
- c. It seems harsh to use the word “dog” in this place. The Greek word Jesus used is not the street dog but the lap dog.
- d. She understood Jesus’ mission, but she was willing to accept anything Jesus would give her. She showed humility.
- e. Jesus showed His power and authority over Satan by forcing out the evil spirit without going to see the daughter.
- f. The area of Ten Towns was the “Decapolis.” This was a group of towns that had strong Greek cultures.
- g. Even though he was deaf, he still had a group of true friends. They brought him to Jesus for healing.
- h. Moving away from the crowd removed embarrassment and allowed the man who depended on his eyes to be undistracted.
- i. Ephphatha is an Aramaic word which was the everyday language of Jesus.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. How important is it for you to go beyond social barriers to show compassion?
2. Who was the woman who came to Jesus and what did she want?
3. What did Jesus mean when He talked about dogs? Why did Jesus use this word?
4. Why was Jesus impressed with the woman?
5. What did the woman find when she arrived home?
6. What does the story of this woman teach us about how we ought to pray?
7. Why would healing a Gentile woman be surprising to the disciples?
8. What do we know about the man in verses 31-34. How did Jesus change this man's life?
9. What do you think about the story of Jesus healing a deaf man?
What can Deaf people learn about Jesus through this story today?
10. Why did Jesus command people to not tell about this healing?
Why did the people tell about it anyway?

BIBLE SKILL: *Our lesson today teaches us that God's love includes all people. What do the following verses say about who God loves and who God will save?*

Genesis 22:18 _____

Matthew 28:19-20 _____

John 3:16 _____

John 4:42 _____

Ephesians 3:6 _____

1 John 4:14 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

Believers need to follow the example of Jesus. We should show love to all people, no matter their race or ethnic background.

Believers need to follow the example of Jesus. We should show love to people in any social group and to people with disabilities.

When we understand the love Jesus has for all people, we cannot be silent. We must share what we know and tell others about His love.

How can you be like Jesus and reach out to people who are different from us? Why should race or ethnic background never stop us from sharing about Jesus?

What can you do to help people with special needs or disabilities? How can you show them they are welcome in your church?

Record opportunities you have this week to express compassion to someone else. What did God teach you through these opportunities?

MEMORY VERSE

They were completely amazed and said, “Jesus does everything well. He makes the deaf hear! And those who can’t talk he makes able to speak.” - Mark 7:37

DAY ONE

Read Mark 7:25-26, finding what was remarkable about the woman's faith.

Jesus traveled far up the coast to the area of Tyre, many miles from Israel, into Gentile area. Jesus was likely seeking to get away from all the difficulties in Israel. He also went up to this area because He knew there was a woman there who needed His help. Somehow she heard that Jesus was in her town, and she seems to have known who Jesus was. She went to Jesus begging for help. She begged Jesus to help her daughter even though she was not a Jew, and Jews and Gentiles tended to not get along very well. She trusted Jesus could help her.

We do not know how this woman knew Jesus. Maybe she heard stories about Him. Maybe the disciples told her. However she learned about Jesus, she seemed to immediately trust that Jesus could help her daughter. Many of the Jews who saw the miracles of Jesus did not show the faith of this woman. Instead of doubting Jesus, she humbly trusted Him, and thereby showed us that anyone can come to Jesus.

Why do you think Mark told us this woman was Greek? What did the woman do that showed she had faith that Jesus could help her?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 7:27-30, finding how Jesus showed God's love.

The answer Jesus gave was strange. Instead of saying "no" or just healing the daughter, Jesus began to talk about dogs. Was Jesus comparing the woman to a dog? In the Greek language, there are two words for dog. One word is for a large dog that runs wild and eats garbage. The second word is a small lap dog that runs around the house and eats the scraps under the table. In this story, Jesus used the word for the small lap dog. You can see the words did not hurt this woman. She was smart and witty with her answer. She knew she was not part of Israel. But she also knew that many of the blessings given to Israel blessed Israel's neighbors too.

Her answer showed her faith, and Jesus knew it. So He healed her daughter without even going to see the girl. By healing this Gentile woman's daughter, Jesus showed us that the love of God is not limited by

ethnic background. This woman, in the land of idol worshipers, received a miracle from God.

What in this story shows us that God loves all people no matter their ethnic or religious background?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 7:31-32, looking for who is included in God's love.

Tyre and Sidon, where Jesus healed the girl with a demon, were Gentile areas. The area of the Ten Towns was also Gentile. Most of the people living in the Ten Towns were Greek, not Hebrew. But Jesus came to break down the barriers that divide people. He came to save people, not exclude them. That is why He went to these places.

In biblical times, if a person had a disability, others thought the disability was punishment for sin or they thought the person had an evil spirit in them. In this story, some people brought a deaf man to Jesus. They probably thought He was deaf because of sin. However, they knew Jesus healed people. They believed He could heal their friend. They had great love for their friend. But Jesus had even greater love. Jesus came to open the hearts and lives of those who were blinded by sin. He came for people like the hearing friends. But He also came for people like the deaf man. No people group is left out of God's plan of salvation.

**Why is it hard to love people who are different from us?
How can we overcome the differences that people have so we can share Christ with everyone?**

KEY DOCTRINE: *Salvation*

Salvation is the successful rescue or deliverance of someone from danger. Salvation includes someone in danger and someone who can save. Every person is in danger because of sin. But God loves each person and made a plan to rescue everyone. Jesus is God's plan for salvation. By His death and resurrection, Jesus can offer us rescue. Each person must choose to accept for themselves the free offer of God's salvation.

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 7:33-35, thinking about why Jesus healed the deaf man.

Jesus took the man away from the crowd. Ordinarily Jesus performed His miracles in public. But Jesus did this privately. It seems Jesus wanted to meet the man in a personal way. Since the man was deaf, he needed to see Jesus and not be bothered by the crowd. Jesus took time to both heal this man and communicate with him. It is clear that the movements of Jesus communicated to the man. He wanted the man to understand what was happening. That is why He touched his ears and tongue. These parts were where the man suffered the most. This way Jesus made sure the man knew what Jesus was about to do.

When Jesus looked up and sighed, He communicated He was praying. The sigh showed love and may have signaled that salvation had come for this deaf man. Did Jesus think that deafness was a bad thing that needed to be taken away? I don't think so. Keep in mind that in Jesus' day, Deaf people were cut off from everything. In this story, deafness was the point of this man's pain and suffering. Jesus was healing that as well as healing this man's isolation. But just as Jesus reached over to this deaf man we must reach over to people who are blind or paralyzed. We must carry the message of the cross to everyone who is deaf and to everyone else.

How did Jesus communicate with this deaf man? How does Jesus communicate with you? What can you do to communicate the love of Christ and the story of salvation to people who have disabilities?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 7:36-37, thinking about the true gospel of Jesus.

Jesus immediately told the people to not speak about what they had just seen. Why did Jesus do this? It seems Jesus did not want the miracles to be the only thing the people wanted. The miracles were to give the proof that He was the promised Messiah. But the miracles could also distract the people from the full mission of Jesus. He came to free people from sin. He was more than a healer. The miracles themselves were not the gospel. The gospel was Jesus' death and resurrection. The gospel is not about making us comfortable but about making people new.

Jesus told the people not to tell anyone what happened, but the people were so excited and happy, they just could not be quiet. They saw the compassion that Jesus had toward those who needed His help. They saw the changed lives, and this was exciting news. In many ways we should learn from what these people did. The message of Jesus can still be misunderstood. But we should be people who tell the message with joy and excitement. Many of our Deaf friends need to know.

How has Jesus changed your life? Who can you tell about this change?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned in Mark 7:25-37. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

What can you and your friends do to show godly love for people who are different from you?

What kinds of ministry could your church do for people with disabilities?

What have you seen Jesus do that made you so excited you could not be quiet about it?

COMMANDS

Belief in Jesus is very important in all areas of life.

MARK 9:14-27

Peter, James, and John had just had an amazing experience. They saw Jesus in His glory on the mount of transfiguration. They saw Moses representing the Law in the Old Testament. They saw Elijah representing the prophets of old. They heard God's voice. Peter, James, and John wanted to stay on that mountain. It is wonderful when God gives us a mountain top experience.

But much of life happens in the valley. When Peter, James, and John came down from the mountain, they found a problem. A father had brought his son with an evil spirit inside to the disciples for help. The disciples failed to force the evil spirit out. Only Jesus could make the boy well. The experience on the mountain was wonderful, but it was the struggle with evil in the valley that changed the lives of many people. We must always thank God for the high spots in life. But we must have strong faith in Jesus in every part of life—even those that struggle against evil.

MARK 9:14-27

14 When Jesus, **Peter, James, and John** **A** came back to the other followers, they saw a **great crowd** **B** around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them.

15 But **as soon as** **C** the crowd saw Jesus, the people were surprised and ran to welcome him. **16** Jesus

asked, “What are you arguing about?” **17** A man answered, “Teacher, I brought my son to you. He has an **evil spirit in him** **D** that stops him from talking.

18 When the spirit attacks him, it throws him on the ground. Then my son foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and **becomes very stiff**. **E** I asked your followers to force the evil spirit out, but they couldn’t.” **19** Jesus answered, “You people have no faith. How long must I stay with you? **How long must I put up with you?** **F** Bring the boy to me.” **20** So the followers brought him to Jesus. As soon as the evil spirit saw Jesus, it made the boy lose control of himself, and he fell down and rolled on the ground, foaming at the mouth.

21 Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has this been happening?” The father answered, “Since he was very young. **22** The spirit often throws him into a fire or into water to kill him. If you can do anything for him, please have pity on us and help us.” **23** Jesus said to the father, “You said, ‘If you can!’ All things are possible for the one who believes.” **24** Immediately the father cried out, “I do believe! **Help me to believe more!**” **G**

25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was quickly gathering, he ordered the evil spirit, saying, “You spirit that makes people unable to hear or speak, I command you to come out of this boy and never enter him again!”

26 The evil spirit screamed and caused the boy to fall on the ground again. Then the spirit came out. The boy looked as if he were dead, and many people said, “He is dead!” **27** But Jesus took hold of the boy’s hand and helped him to **stand up**. **H**

- a. Peter, James, and John were like an inner circle with Jesus. They had been with Jesus away from the other disciples.
- b. Jesus attracted crowds wherever He went.
- c. Mark used this idea and the word ‘immediately’ often. His writing shows action happened quickly.
- d. There are several Bible stories of people with evil spirits. The Bible does not explain how demon possession happens.
- e. This description is like a grand mal seizure. But it was the demon showing itself through the disguise of epilepsy.
- f. Jesus was clearly disappointed with the disciples and their weak faith.
- g. The father was very honest. He knew his faith was not strong so he asked for help for himself.
- h. The evil spirit wanted to kill the boy, but Jesus would not allow it to happen.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Why is it so hard to trust Jesus in both the easy parts of life and the hard parts of life?
2. Where were Jesus, Peter, James, and John coming from at the beginning of this story? What had happened there?
3. What were the religious leaders arguing with the other followers about?
4. What was the problem with the boy?
5. Why did Jesus criticize the faith of the disciples? What kind of faith does Jesus want in His followers?
6. Describe the faith of the father in this story. What did he ask Jesus to give him?
7. What did Jesus mean when He said: "All things are possible for the one who believes?"
8. How did Jesus heal the boy?
9. Do you think Jesus was frustrated with the disciples for not being able to help the father's son? Explain.

BIBLE SKILL: *What do these verses say about faith?*

Romans 1:17 _____

Galatians 2:16 _____

Hebrews 11:1 _____

Hebrews 11:6 _____

Ephesians 2:8-9 _____

1 Peter 1:8-9 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

If we trust the wrong people, we will experience disappointment.

Believers must renew their faith and belief in Jesus often. This will keep their spiritual lives strong.

We must confess our unbelief to God. Only then can Jesus help us have true faith.

When evil controls a person, Jesus is the only one who can help and heal the person.

Discuss as a group some of the people or things the world trusts today. How does trusting the wrong person or people lead a person to be disappointed?

How can believers renew their faith in Jesus? What is it about faith in Jesus that makes us spiritually alive?

Why is it hard to keep our faith strong? How can we recognize unbelief? Take some time to confess unbelief to one another.

Identify significant spiritual events in your life. How can remembering those help you overcome unbelief?

MEMORY VERSE

Then Jesus asked, "But who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." - Mark 8:29

DAY ONE

Read Mark 9:14-16, finding how the people thought about Jesus.

Peter, James, and John came down from the mountain where they had seen Jesus transformed. Now they were back in the real world. They found the other nine disciples in an argument. A large crowd had gathered, and the nine disciples were arguing with a group of teachers of the law. When the crowd saw Jesus, they were surprised and ran to Him. The word *surprised* could be translated with the stronger word *awestruck*. The people had the kind of attitude middle school students have when their favorite musician shows up. The people knew Jesus was the healer—the miracle man. The people wanted to see what Jesus would do.

Jesus asked what the argument was about, taking the focus off the disciples. A father had brought his son to Jesus. The father needed help because his son had a demon living in him. Because of the demon, the son could not speak. We do not think much about demons living in people today. However, evil is still strong in our world. Jesus is still the right place to go to overcome evil.

How do we know that evil is strong in our world? Where can we go to overcome evil? Why is it right to trust Jesus when facing evil?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 9:17-18, looking for who we trust for life change.

Neither the disciples nor the religious leaders answered Jesus' question. They were silent. The disciples were silent because of their failure. The religious leaders were silent because they knew they were talking to Jesus now. Only the father of the child spoke. He explained about his son. His son had an evil spirit that hurt the boy in many ways. Many Bible teachers have noticed how the boy's actions look like epilepsy. If the boy had epilepsy, the cause for the disease was a demon, and the disciples could not remove it.

The disciples' failure caused the religious leaders to mock them. The father did not do a wrong thing when he brought his son to the disciples. But bringing him to them leads us to an important truth. Apparently, the

disciples could not force out the demon because they depended on their own power. They did not depend on God's power. The father brought his son to the wrong people. Putting faith in the wrong person or persons leads to disappointment. Christian friends can help. But ultimately, place your faith in Jesus for life change.

Why do people who serve God sometimes fail? Why does trusting Jesus never lead to disappointment?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 9:19-21, learning who to go to with your problems.

Jesus went straight to the heart of the problem. No one could heal the boy because no one had the faith needed for healing to happen. We must remember that the disciples had received power from Jesus to heal. But now they could not help the father or heal the boy. All they could really do was argue. No wonder Jesus fussed at them in verse 19. Jesus was disappointed in His disciples and the lack of faith shown by all the people.

Jesus said to bring the boy to Him. This was great advice! Nothing is too hard for Jesus. We must always bring our problems to Jesus. We must believe He has the answers that we do not have. Jesus may not remove our problems, but He has promised to be with us and He will help us through our problems.

When the disciples brought the boy to Jesus, the demon did exactly what the father described. The demon saw Jesus and attacked the boy. There was no doubt about the boy being controlled by a demon. But the right first step had been made. The disciples and the father were going to Jesus. Jesus would make their faith new.

How does it feel to know Jesus is more powerful than any evil? How do you know that going to Jesus will make your faith new?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 9:22-24, finding the path toward true faith.

The father described how the demon tried to kill his son. Look how long the father had been trying to keep his son alive. He had to watch him all day, every day since the demon took control of the boy. It is no wonder that the father's faith felt weak. The disciples could not help, so Jesus was now his final hope. His deep emotional plea to "help us" shows all the family needed help. Jesus responded that the question is not, "Can Jesus help?" but rather, "Do you believe?"

Many people take this verse out of context to teach all kinds of wrong ideas about faith. Some say you can have anything you want if you have enough faith. That is very wrong. Jesus does not work in our lives to give us the things we want. Jesus works in our lives to transform us. Unbelief is what stands in the way. The father cried that he did believe but admitted he needed help. He confessed a level of unbelief. Confession of unbelief is the first step toward true faith in Jesus. The father was about to see what things were possible when there is true faith.

Do you ever experience problems with believing God can do anything? Why? How can you build your faith?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Faith*

Faith is the belief in something for which there is no real physical proof. Faith is the opposite of doubt. Paul wrote in Hebrews 11:1 that faith is "being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it" Our hope is in God who will keep His promises of salvation and eternal life.

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 9:25-27, looking for what Jesus can do.

Jesus turned to the boy and told the evil spirit to leave and never return again. The spirit immediately threw the boy to the ground. It had tried for years to kill the boy and now tried once more. But Jesus, the giver of life, would not allow it. The spirit left and even though the boy looked dead; he was not. Jesus helped the boy up.

How different Jesus was from everyone else in this story. The disciples had been powerless to help the boy. The father had been desperate but weak in faith. The boy had been under the full control of a demon. Only Jesus—who was God in flesh—could change the lives of everyone present. Jesus removed the presence of evil from the boy, led the father to true faith, and helped His disciples know what Jesus could do in the lives of hurting people. Only Jesus could restore life to people controlled by evil. That was true back then, and it is true now.

How does Jesus help people today find new life when their lives are controlled by evil?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from Mark 9:14-27. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

What did you learn about your faith this week? How can you refresh your belief in Jesus?

In what ways are you and your friends like the father? Do you have faith in Jesus but need help with unbelief? How can you help each other build stronger faith?

How can Jesus give new life to people who are controlled by evil? What can you do to lead someone to a life healed of evil?

SAVES

Jesus' death bridges the gap between God and humanity caused by our sin.

MARK 15:27-39

God called Abraham to go to Mount Moriah to offer up his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice to God. Abraham obeyed. He and Isaac traveled to that mountain. They climbed to the top. Abraham built an altar of stone. He put wood on the altar for the burnt offering. Then Abraham tied up his son and laid him on top of the wood. Obeying God and full of faith, he raised his arm to kill his only son as a sacrifice to God. But God stopped the arm of Abraham. God provided a different sacrifice.

Centuries later another sacrifice was offered nearby at a place called Golgotha. God kept His promise to provide the sacrifice. It was Jesus, God's only Son. This time God did not stop the arms that killed Jesus. God's only Son became the sacrifice to bridge the gap between God and people, the gap caused by our sin. It is only in the blood of Jesus that people can find forgiveness for their sins. It is only through the willing sacrifice of God's only Son on the cross a person can have eternal life.

MARK 15:27-39

27 They also put two robbers on crosses beside Jesus, one on the right, and the other on the left. **[28** And the Scripture came true that says, **“They put him with criminals.”]** **29** People walked by and insulted Jesus and shook their heads, saying, **“You said you could destroy** **30** the Temple and build it again in three days. **30** So save yourself! Come down from that cross!”

31 The leading priests and the teachers of the law were also making fun of Jesus. They said to each other, “He saved other people, but he can’t save himself. **32** If he is really the Christ, the king of Israel, let him come down now from the cross. When we see this, we will believe in him.” The robbers who were being crucified beside Jesus also **insulted him.** **33** At noon the whole country became dark, and the darkness lasted for **three hours.** **34** At three o’clock Jesus cried in a loud voice “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani.” This means, “My God, my God, **why have you rejected me?**” **35** When some of the people standing there heard this, they said, “Listen! He is calling Elijah.” **36** Someone there ran and got a sponge, filled it with vinegar, tied it to a stick, and gave it to Jesus to drink. He said, “We want to see if Elijah will come to take him down from the cross.” **37** Then Jesus cried in a **loud voice and died.** **38** The curtain in the Temple was torn into two pieces, **from the top to the bottom.** **39** When the army officer who was standing in front of the cross saw what happened when Jesus died, he said, “This man really was **the Son of God!**” **1**

- a. The Old Testament quote is from Isaiah 53:12.
- b. What Jesus said is in John 2:19. The people misquoted what Jesus said in Mark 14:58.
- c. 1 Peter 2:23-24; He was insulted.
- d. John 3:19-20; people’s dark sins separates them from the light.
- e. 2 Corinthians 5:21, sin is the only reason God turned His head. It was not Jesus’ sin but our sin Jesus took on. Jesus was quoting Psalm 22:1.
- f. John 19:30; a shout of victory. Jesus’ mission was finished.
- g. The curtain in the temple separated the Holy place from the Most Holy Place. The tearing of the curtain showed there is now no more separation from the presence of God.
- h. The army officer came to believe what the religious leaders would not believe.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What is so important about the death of Jesus for Christians?
2. Who was crucified with Jesus? What is important about this?
3. What did the people say as they stood looking at Jesus on the cross?
4. What was the challenge the teachers of the law gave to Jesus as He hung on the cross? Why did Jesus ignore their challenge?
5. Why did God abandon Jesus while He was on the cross?
6. What would your life be like if Jesus did not die on the cross?
7. How long did the darkness cover the land? What did it mean that everything was dark?
8. How could this terrible event become “good news”?
9. What did the army officer say?
10. What did Jesus do for everyone with His death on the cross?

BIBLE SKILL: *Read Psalm 22. Look in Psalm 22 for prophecies that came true in the death of Jesus. See if you can find at least ten prophecies about Jesus’ crucifixion.*

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 10. _____ |

IN MY CONTEXT

Jesus was willing to die in our place.

While Jesus was on the cross, people mocked Him and challenged Him to prove Himself. Jesus ignored them so He could give us salvation.

When Jesus went to the cross, He faced God's anger against sin because He took our sin on Himself.

Because Jesus died for our sin, all who believe in Him can have a relationship with the Father.

Discuss as a group why it was necessary for Jesus to die in our place. Take time to thank Him for dying in our place.

Why do people need proof that Jesus is who He said He is? What can you do to convince your friends that Jesus is the Savior of the world?

List the names of friends who need to know that Jesus died for them. How can you share with one of your friends about Jesus?

MEMORY VERSE

When the army officer who was standing in front of the cross saw what happened when Jesus died, he said, "This man really was the Son of God!" - Mark 15:39

DAY ONE

Read Mark 15:27, looking for details about the two crucified with Jesus.

Jesus was on the cross. There was a sign that said “King of the Jews” above Him. There were two people who had broken the law on crosses beside Jesus, one to the right and the other on the left. It was an emotional picture. A few days earlier, James and John had asked Jesus if one could sit on His right hand and the other His left. They had thought about a kingdom not a cross. Now neither were around. The judgement of the two men on the crosses was different from the judgement given to Jesus, but the punishment was the same. The two men deserved their punishment, but their attitudes were different. Mark does not tell us, but in Luke 23 you can see one was angry but the other turned to Jesus. Jesus did not deserve His punishment. Jesus willingly faced death for all people. During His life, people accused Jesus of being a friend with sinners and outcasts. They were right. He was. He came into the world to die for sinners so they could be with God. There is no limit to God’s love.

**Why do you think Jesus was willing to die on the cross?
Why have Christian people always remembered that two law breakers were crucified with Jesus?**

KEY DOCTRINE: *Substitutionary Atonement*

A substitute is a person who takes the place of someone else like a substitute teacher takes the place of the regular teacher. Substitutionary atonement explains how Jesus was our substitute. The Bible says every person is a sinner. The punishment for sin is death. In His death, Jesus took our sin and its punishment. His death satisfied the justice of God and made salvation available for all people who trust in Christ.

DAY TWO

Read Mark 15:28-30, finding the reason Jesus died.

The place where Jesus was crucified was outside of town on the main road. Anyone coming into or leaving Jerusalem could see Jesus and the two other men on the crosses. People hanging on crosses outside large cities was a common sight in the Roman world. It was a warning to people to obey the Roman law.

The people mocked Jesus. They had heard Jesus say if the temple was destroyed He would rebuild it in three days. They thought He was talking about the temple building. However, He was talking about Himself—that He would be killed and would be raised back to life in three days. They misunderstood Jesus. Still, their mocking was cruel. Imagine for a moment if Jesus had done what they said. What if He had saved Himself and come down from the cross? He had the power to do so, but He had the determination to ignore the mocking and die. That was God's plan. That was God's way to give salvation to sinners.

Why did Jesus ignore the mocking of the people and stay on the cross? What does Jesus staying on the cross teach us about why Jesus came to earth?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 15:31-32, learning why Jesus stayed on the cross.

The priests mocked Jesus. They took the words they heard Jesus say in His teachings and used those words against Him. Their hearts were hard. They did not understand nor did they want to understand how Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies. They saw Jesus' power over sickness, demons, and nature, yet they still did not believe. Jesus showed kindness and love for everyone He met. But these leaders showed no kindness nor love to Jesus. The religious leaders challenged Jesus. They said they would believe Him if He would come down off the cross. I don't think even then they would have believed. After all, what would they have then believed? The message of Jesus was to believe He was the Messiah, the Savior of

the world. If Jesus had come down from the cross, He would not have fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah. And, He would not have been able to save the world. Coming down from the cross would have left nothing to believe in. So Jesus stayed right where He was.

How did Jesus staying on the cross serve as evidence of Jesus' power and identity?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 15:33-36, looking for why the sky was dark.

The Bible says God is light. This means He is truth, goodness, wisdom, life, and right. Light represents God's presence. Darkness represents man's rebellion or rejection of God. Darkness represents when God is not present. Scripture says that the whole country became dark for three hours. It is as if what was happening on the cross was so evil that the whole world had to turn away in darkness. Not even God would look upon this dark moment.

At this terrible time Jesus felt like God had left Him. He cried out to God asking why God had left Him. But even this cry of pain from Jesus was a quote from Psalm 22:1. Jesus must have felt the full weight of the sin of all people. Bearing our sin, something terrible happened—the holy God turned from unholy sin. Jesus felt the full horror of sin. Under that weight of sin and God's anger against sin, Jesus felt abandoned. But keep in mind, Jesus knew that Psalm 22 ended in God's victory.

What in these verses points to the seriousness of sin?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 15:37-39, finding what happened to the temple.

With a final shout, Jesus died. Bible teachers agree this shout was not a cry of pain but a shout of victory. John 19:30 tells us Jesus cried, “It is finished.” Jesus had done what God had wanted. The moment Jesus died, the curtain in the temple was torn into two pieces from the top to the bottom. The curtain was about 30-50 feet tall and at least 4 inches thick. The curtain separated the holy place from the holy of holies. A priest could enter the holy place daily, but the holy of holies was the place of God’s presence. Now, however, believers do not need a priest to go to God for them. The torn curtain is a symbol that Jesus gave us direct access to God’s salvation, tearing down the barrier between Himself and people.

Immediately, Mark wrote about a centurion. This centurion’s job was to kill by crucifixion. Mark described how the religious leaders, Jewish people, and prisoners mocked and screamed at Jesus on the cross. At the same time, a Roman centurion—a Gentile—recognized Jesus as the Son of God. The barrier to God was removed.

How would you describe what Jesus did on the cross? What image would you use to illustrate what Jesus accomplished?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 15:27-39. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

What does it mean to you that Jesus was willing to face death on the cross for you?

How can we explain the way the death of Jesus on the cross made salvation possible for all people?

Who do you know that needs to know the good news of Jesus’ death? When can you share the good news with them?



SERVES

Jesus demonstrated humble service by paying the ransom for our sin.

MARK 10:35-45

Jesus preached the kingdom of God had arrived. At first, people were excited. When Jesus did not match their idea of the Messiah, they turned against Him. Several times Jesus explained about His death. Each time the disciples did not understand. Neither did they understand His teaching about discipleship. Jesus was so different from what they expected.

James and John believed Jesus would set up His kingdom like other earthly kings, and they wanted positions of power. Jesus did not get angry at the two when they asked for special favor. Jesus challenged the two men to think about the cost of sitting in those two seats. Jesus taught the disciples about the attitudes and character of a follower. A follower of Jesus was not a ruler but a servant. The example of the servant life was Jesus Himself. Jesus, the leader of God's kingdom, died to save people. When we are right with God, we will live that kind of servant life.

MARK 10:35-45

35 Then James and John, sons of Zebedee, **came to Jesus** Ⓐ and said, “Teacher, we want to ask you to do something for us.”

36 Jesus asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” **37** They answered, “Let

one of us **sit at your right side** Ⓑ and one of us sit at your left side in your glory in your kingdom.” **38** Jesus said, “You don’t understand what you are asking. Can you

drink the cup Ⓒ that I must drink? And can you be baptized with the same kind of baptism that I must go through?” **39** They answered, “**Yes, we can.**” Ⓓ Jesus said to them, “You will drink the same cup that I will drink, and you will be baptized with the same baptism that I must go through.”

40 But **I cannot choose** Ⓔ who will sit at my right or my left; those places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

41 When the other ten followers heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. **42** Jesus called them together and said, “The non-Jewish people have rulers. You know that those rulers love to show their power over the people, and their important leaders love to use all their authority. **43** But it should not be that way among you. Whoever wants to become great among you must serve the rest of you **like a servant.**” Ⓕ **44** Whoever

wants to become the first among you must serve all of you like a slave. **45** In the same way, the Son of Man did not come to be served. **He came to serve others** Ⓖ and to give his life as a **ransom** Ⓗ for many people.”

a. James and John made a secret approach to Jesus. The other disciples did not know what the two were doing.

b. The most important assistants for a king were the ones who sat on each side of the king. James and John were asking for positions of power and authority.

c. Jesus knew their request was selfish. To drink the cup meant to go through the experience. The experience would be suffering not glory.

d. Their answer was eager but showed they did not really understand everything Jesus told them about His coming death.

e. Jesus is not the one to assign positions of authority in God’s kingdom. Only the Father can do that.

f. Believers lead in a way that is different from the way of the world. The Greek word can mean servant or slave.

g. Jesus is the example. He humbled Himself like a servant.

h. A ransom is a payment, usually money, paid to free a prisoner. Jesus’ life was a payment for people held prisoners by sin.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. How did the life and death of Jesus give the disciples an example of how to live?
2. What was Jesus' response when James and John made their request?
3. What does "the same cup" mean? What does "the same baptism" mean?
4. What did Jesus promise would happen to the disciples?
5. Why were the other ten disciples angry at James and John?
6. What is the difference between the way earthly leaders lead and the way the followers of Jesus are supposed to lead?
7. What did Jesus mean when He said that greatness comes by serving?
8. What did the Son of Man come to do?
9. Why do you think some Christians find it hard to serve?
10. What does it mean to be a ransom? What did Jesus come to ransom?

BIBLE SKILL: *Read the verses and answer the questions about following and serving Jesus.*

Luke 9:23: What is the cost of discipleship? _____

Luke 14:28-33: What is the cost of following Jesus? _____

Romans 14:17-19: What kind of service pleases God? _____

Philippians 2:5-8: What did it take for Jesus to become a servant? _____

1 John 2:15-17: What must the follower of Jesus do? _____

IN MY CONTEXT

People must think carefully about what it means to follow Jesus and what one must give up to follow Him.

Believers must search their hearts to know why they serve. The reason for service should be to please God in everything they do.

When believers serve people in a humble way, they help those people know more about Jesus.

Thank Jesus for giving up His life for your sins. What have you given up to follow Him?

Evaluate your reasons for serving others. What do you need to change to serve for the same reasons Jesus served?

Discuss as a group what believers can do that will help other people know about Jesus. What can you do so others will see Jesus in your life?

MEMORY VERSE

“But it should not be that way among you. Whoever wants to become great among you must serve the rest of you like a servant. Whoever wants to become the first among you must serve all of you like a slave.” - Mark 10:43-44

DAY ONE

Read Mark 10:35-39a, finding a wrong request.

What does it cost to follow Jesus? Do we need to pay God some amount of money and then He is satisfied? Or do we pay something much more than money? James and John thought serving Jesus would reward them highly. Since Jesus was going to set up His kingdom, they wanted two top positions. James and John wanted the glory, honor, power, and authority that come with high positions. They wanted the pride of being someone important. They were hoping that being with Jesus would pay them nicely but not cost them much.

Jesus' response was not in anger. He told them they did not understand what they were asking. Were they willing to go through the same experience He was about to go through? They thought they could, but they did not know Jesus would suffer. They did not understand the cost required to follow Jesus. It is easy to look down on James and John for their attitudes. But we are no different today. Most Christians want the benefits of following Jesus but not the sacrifice He requires. It really is important to think about what it costs to follow Jesus.

What was wrong about the idea that James and John had about following Jesus? What do you think it costs to follow Jesus?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 10:39b-40, finding the misunderstanding of the two disciples.

Jesus warned James and John about the cost to follow Him. Jesus used the picture of the cup and baptism to explain. Both words (cup and baptism) communicate the idea of going through an experience. The experience Jesus had in mind was His cross and suffering. The experience the disciples had in mind was power and glory in the kingdom. The disciples completely misunderstood.

The fact is, both men would experience suffering just as Jesus said. James and John would experience heartache and rejection because of their faith. John would go through grief seeing his brother James and fellow apostles being put to death. He would feel loneliness while forced

to live on an island as a prisoner. James would experience the physical pain of being stoned to death. At some point in the future there would be some kind of glory. Jesus seemed to have that in mind when He said there would be someone on His right and someone on His left. Jesus was leading the disciples to understand what it cost to follow Jesus. Following Jesus is not about glory, but it is about service.

What might a person need to put aside in order to follow Jesus?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Kingdom of God*

The kingdom of God is about both God's rule over all the world and also His rule over each person who trusts in Jesus. The kingdom is wherever people follow Him as King by committing their lives to Jesus Christ. Christians should pray and work so that the kingdom will come and God's will be done on earth. Only in heaven will we see the final reality of God's kingdom.

DAY THREE

Read Mark 10:41, looking for what was wrong in the anger of the other disciples.

When the rest of the disciples heard about what James and John asked Jesus, they became angry. They were ready to start a fight. Why did they become angry? Maybe because the two were trying to set themselves above the others. Or maybe because James and John got to Jesus and asked before the others could. Whatever the reason, the other ten disciples were mad.

They were angry at James and John, but their anger showed they too misunderstood Jesus. Jesus was not leading the disciples to power and glory. Neither was He leading them to anger against one another. Both are worldly responses. Jesus was leading the disciples to be godly. He was leading them to servanthood. He was leading them to be like Jesus.

A committee of Deaf ladies were planning a church party. One lady was bossy and told everyone what to do. Others got angry because no one had appointed the one woman as boss. Before long, they were all complaining to the pastor. It seems we are still acting like the disciples

did with Jesus. It is so hard for us to know that God has a higher goal for His children.

What was wrong about the anger of the other disciples? How did they miss the goal Jesus had for their lives?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 10:42-44, learning how to show the life of Jesus.

Jesus explained how the world thinks about being a great person. He did this by describing the rulers of the nations. Those rulers have authority and like to show it to others. They brag about their power, position, money, and land. People want to be great so they can have the ability to control the lives of other people. They want people to praise them. Jesus said this is not God's idea of greatness. Greatness does not seek authority and is not self-centered. It is not wrong for a Christian to hold a position of power and authority, but Christians must always think about power as a place of service.

Jesus said the great person must have a humble attitude and act like a servant. The picture Jesus described is very clear. His followers should serve in a humble manner even if it means suffering from those who have power. It means being willing to not get any glory or praise. The Christian must always be looking for ways to help or serve someone else at work, school, play, home, and church. While always serving others, Christians are showing people the life of Jesus.

What can a person do to prove he or she is a servant of God?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 10:45, thinking about how Jesus was a ransom.

In the final verse of this lesson, Jesus gave the best example of service. Jesus explained to the disciples that Jesus Himself did not come into the world so others could serve Him. Instead, He came into the world to give His life as a servant. How did Jesus serve? He served first by loving

people. Remember when He washed the disciples' feet (John 13)? This was the job of a house servant. He served by using His power to help others. He taught the people God's Word, and He lived God's words in His actions. Everything Jesus taught and did pointed to the Father.

Jesus' greatest act of service was dying as a sacrifice for the sins of all people. One word that can help us understand this is the word "ransom." A ransom is a price paid to get someone out of trouble or out of prison. Spiritually we were all in the prison of our sins. The death of Jesus was a great act of service that made the payment needed to get us out of the prison of sin. This unselfish act of love by Jesus brings people to God. Unselfish acts of love done now by God's people can also point people to God.

**How does living a life of service help show people the way to Jesus?
What can you do to help people see Jesus in your life today?**

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 10:35-45. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned. You can meet by VP if you need to.

What will it cost you and your friends if you decide that you will follow Jesus completely in your life?

Why do you serve God? Are you trying to satisfy God or is there some selfish reason you might have to serve Him? What do you need to change to serve Him for all the right reasons?

What daily acts of service do you do that help lead others to Christ?



PURIFIES

Jesus desires pure worship shown in our lives by total trust in God.

MARK 11:15-19; 12:41-44

The Jewish religion has many laws and traditions. The religious leaders of Jesus' time used these customs to steal from poor people and foreigners. Visitors to the temple had to pay a half shekel tax. People from other countries had to exchange their coins for the temple coin. The money exchangers charged high prices to exchange foreign coins for the temple coin. Temple worshipers could also buy "clean" animals at the temple. Profits from selling "clean" animals were huge. Temple leaders used these customs to get rich.

When Jesus visited the temple, He saw these cheating practices. He saw how the people were cheated. He saw how buying and selling and making money got in the way of worship. The temple was for meeting God. It was not for buying and selling. In Mark chapters 11 and 12, we see two stories connected to the temple and to worship. In these stories, we can see the right way to approach God. We can also see what true worship is like when people trust God.

MARK 11:15-19; 12:41-44

15 When Jesus returned to Jerusalem, He went into **the Temple** ^A and began to throw out those who were buying and selling there. He turned over the tables of those who were **exchanging different kinds of money**, ^B and He upset the benches of those who were **selling doves**. ^C

16 Jesus refused to allow anyone to carry goods through the Temple courts. **17** Then he taught the people, saying, “It is written in the Scriptures, ‘My Temple will be called a **house for prayer for people from all nations**.’” ^D But you are changing God’s house into a **‘hideout for robbers.’**” ^E

18 The leading priests and the teachers of the law heard all this and began trying to find a way **to kill Jesus**. ^F They were afraid of him, because all the people were amazed at his teaching. **19** That evening, Jesus and his followers left the city.

41 Jesus sat near the **Temple money box** ^G and watched the people put in their money. Many rich people gave **large sums of money**. ^H **42** Then a poor widow came and put in **two small copper coins**, ^I which were only worth a few cents.

43 Calling his followers to him, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, this **poor widow gave** ^J more than all those rich people.

44 They gave only what they did not need. This woman is very poor, but she gave all she had; she gave all she had to live on.”

- a. Jews had one temple and it was in Jerusalem. Herod the Great rebuilt the temple.
- b. The temple tax could only be paid with a special coin so all foreign coins had to be exchanged for the special temple coin.
- c. Doves and other animals were sold for sacrifice. The selling of sacrificial animals was very profitable for temple leaders.
- d. See Isaiah 56:7.
- e. See Jeremiah 7:11.
- f. Killing Jesus seems extreme. Their plan shows how afraid they were that Jesus would take away their income.
- g. There were several offering boxes in the court of women.
- h. Giving a lot of coins would make more noise and everyone would look to see.
- i. These coins were called “lepta.” They were the smallest coin used for buying and selling.
- j. Almost all widows were poor. Calling this widow a poor widow meant she was terribly poor.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What kinds of good things do people do for the wrong reasons?
2. Why did Jesus have a problem with the money changers and animal sellers?
3. How did all the activity interfere with worship in the temple?
4. What does this story teach about Jesus' character?
5. What was the attitude of the religious leaders toward Jesus?
6. Why do you think the priests allowed the money changers, the selling of sacrifices, and cheating in the temple?
7. What does this story teach about the character of the religious leaders?
8. What did Jesus notice about the people who were giving large sums of money?
9. How could the small gift of the woman be more than the large gifts of the rich people?
10. When you give a gift to God, how does it compare with what the widow gave?

BIBLE SKILL: *Read Isaiah 56:1-8. Answer these questions from the passage.*

How does God want people to worship Him? _____

Who can come into God's presence to worship Him? _____

Who cannot come to worship? _____

What is God's "house" for? _____

How is justice and salvation connected to worship? _____

IN MY CONTEXT

God is holy. We must show reverence and honor when we come to Him.

Some people will not respond to God's holiness in the right way. Some will not believe Him or honor Him.

Jesus pays attention. He knows when we worship Him with a pure heart.

When a person trusts Jesus fully, He is happy with them and approves their action.

Discuss as a group ways believers can show honor and reverence to God.

What is the right way to respond to God and His holy ways? What do you need to change to respond to God in right ways?

**Do you have an attitude more like the rich people or the poor widow?
What adjustments do you need to make to be more like the poor widow?**

Discuss as a group ways to encourage pure worship. How can your group help remove obstacles to pure worship?

MEMORY VERSE

“They gave only what they did not need. This woman is very poor, but she gave all she had; she gave all she had to live on.”

- Mark 12:44

DAY ONE

Read Mark 11:15-16, looking for the right way to go near God.

The Jewish religious leaders forgot about God's purpose for the temple. They forgot it was supposed to be a place of prayer and worship for all people. The temple was to be a place where anyone could come seek the one true God. God planned for the court of Gentiles to be a holy place for those who were not Jews to come and pray. The religious leaders changed the court of Gentiles into a place for greed and profit. The money changers and the sellers were in the way of worship. They made it difficult for people to get into the court. There was little respect for God's house.

Jesus saw what was happening, and He decided to take action. He turned over tables and chairs. He blocked the people who wanted to carry items for selling through the temple. These actions showed His understanding for God and for the worship of God. Christians today talk a lot about worship. In our struggles over worship we must be clear that we always go to God with true reverence.

What is the right way to go near to God? When a church worships correctly how does it worship?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 11:17, finding the right reason to gather at church.

It seems that the religious leaders got almost everything wrong. Their concern was keeping the law, not having a right heart. They thought Jesus had power because of Satan when in fact Jesus was God Himself. They considered the temple a place for making money when God's plan was for the temple to be a place where the people of the world could meet God. How sad that those who made the worst mistakes were the people who should have been leading people to God.

But Jesus saw it all correctly. In this story He knew what the temple was for, and He saw exactly what the religious leaders had made it to be. Jesus quoted the Old Testament to show the right way to think about

the temple. It was a place of prayer for all the nations. It was the house of God. Since Jesus was God, Jesus even claimed it as “My temple.”

How can you help your church become a place where all people can approach God?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 11:18-19, thinking about why people reject Jesus.

Jesus was a threat to the religious leaders. He challenged them and their customs. Because of this, the temple priests and scribes hated Jesus, but they also feared Him. Jesus disrupted their businesses and profits. They were afraid because they knew Jesus’ power was greater than theirs. If Jesus used His power and His popularity to reform the temple, they would lose their rich positions. Therefore, they wanted Jesus dead, and they were willing to take steps to kill Him.

It is a bit surprising that people can experience the living God (like the religious leaders did) and want to turn away from Him. This still happens today. Many of your Deaf friends do not want anything to do with Jesus. Often the leaders of our Deaf world deny Jesus as the Son of God and turn from His holiness. That makes it even more important that you live for Jesus and tell His wonderful story.

**Why do so many of our Deaf friends ignore Jesus and the church?
How can you encourage them to love Jesus?**

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 12:41-42, finding an amazing woman.

There were thirteen large metal chests placed in the court of women. These were like our offering plates. People would walk by and place their temple tax and offerings in these chests. It was sort of loud because the money was all made of metal and so were the chests. You can imagine rich people dumping large numbers of coins noisily into the chests. Jesus sat near this place and watched people as they gave. He saw what the people gave, and He knew their hearts. He knew who gave with a heart of worship.

Suddenly, a widow appeared. Widows wore special clothes that showed they were widows. And since Jesus was in the court of women, there were likely many widows around. However, this was a special widow. This was a widow who had a true heart for God. She gave her offering of two small copper coins. They were not worth much, but giving them was an act of true worship. Perhaps this was the reason Jesus sat near the offering place. He had come just to see someone who truly loved and worshiped God.

**What would Jesus think about the way you worship Him?
How is your giving an act of true worship?**

KEY DOCTRINE: *Stewardship*

God is the source of all blessings. All we have and are is because of Him. God trusts us to use what He provides us in a way that honors Him. According to the Bible, Christians should give what they have to give with happiness. Christians should give their time, talents, and money so God's kingdom on earth will go forward.

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 12:43-44, learning how we truly give to Jesus.

Immediately Jesus called His disciples together and pointed out the poor widow. Jesus said a surprising thing. Jesus said the widow gave more than all the others put together. The disciples must have been stunned. They knew Jesus could count. How could Jesus possibly think the two small coins of the widow was more than the thousands of coins of the wealthy? Here is the answer—the widow gave all she had. The rich gave much but only what they did not need.

The widow could have taken those two coins and bought food for herself or something to keep her warm. But she trusted God to bless her and take care of her. She gave to worship and in trust. Jesus knew the woman did right and He praised Her. Jesus still commends those who place all their trust in Him.

What do you learn from the widow? How do you show you are trusting fully in Jesus?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 11:15-19 and 12:41-44. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

**Since God is holy, how should we come near to Him in worship?
Why do many people miss God and His holiness?**

**What do you think God thinks about worship in our churches?
When is our worship true and pure?**

**What does our giving look like when we place all our trust in Jesus?
How can we encourage church members to trust Jesus and to worship Him truly?**

PROMISES

Jesus promised to return to set up His eternal kingdom.

MARK 13:24-37

“When will you be back?” We usually ask this question to a loved one when they leave on a trip. Knowing when a person will be back makes it easier during the days we are apart. Jesus promised to return, but He didn’t know when.

It seems there are two big lessons we must learn when we think about the return of Jesus. The first is that we must be ready. Jesus told us to watch and to be ready for when He will come again. The second is we must do everything we can to tell the wonderful good news about Jesus to people who do not know Him. Reading and studying about the time when Jesus will return should encourage us to go tell people about Jesus. We must be ready whenever it might happen.

MARK 13:24-37

24 “During the days after this trouble comes, ‘the **sun will grow dark**, **A** and the moon will not give its light.

25 The stars will fall from the sky.

And the powers of the **heavens will be shaken.**’ **B**

26 “Then people will **see the Son of Man** **C** coming in clouds with great power and glory. **27** Then he will send his angels all around the earth to gather his chosen people from every part of the earth and from **every part of heaven.** **D** **28** “Learn a lesson from the fig tree: When its branches become green and soft and new leaves appear, you know summer is near. **29** In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know that the time is near, ready to come. **30** I tell you the truth, all these things will happen while the people of this time are still living. **31** Earth and sky will be destroyed, but the words I have said will **never be destroyed.** **E** **32** “No one knows when that day or time will be, not the angels in heaven, not even the Son. **Only the Father knows.** **F** **33** Be careful! **Always be ready,** **G** because you don’t know when that time will be. **34** It is like a man who goes on a trip. He leaves his house and lets his servants take care of it, giving each one a special job to do. The man tells the servant guarding the door always to be watchful. **35** So always be ready, because you don’t know when the owner of the house will come back. It might be in the evening, or at midnight, or in the morning while it is still dark, or when the sun rises. **36** Always be ready. Otherwise he might come back suddenly and find you sleeping. **37** I tell you this, and I say this to everyone: ‘Be ready!’”

- a. Many prophecies include the sun becoming dark. We depend on the sun for our lives. Being without the sun is like being without Jesus for eternity.
- b. Jesus quotes from Isaiah 13:10 and Isaiah 34:4.
- c. When Jesus returns there will be no doubt because everyone will see Him.
- d. Jesus knows who His children are, and the angels will leave no one behind.
- e. God’s Word and promises are longer lasting than the universe. Everything else will go away, but not the Word of the Lord.
- f. The Trinity is a mystery in many ways. Here Jesus tells us that God the Father knows the date of the return of Jesus but Jesus—God the Son—does not know that date.
- g. Four times Jesus commands, “Be ready!” Jesus really meant for us to be ready.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. How does a promised return change how you say goodbye to a friend?
2. What do the two quotes from Isaiah mean?
3. Why will it be important for everyone to see Jesus when He returns?
4. What is the job of the angels when Jesus returns?
5. What is the lesson of the fig tree?
6. Why is the word of God more permanent than even the earth and the sky?
7. Why did Jesus not give us a date for His return?
8. How can God the Father know something that God the Son does not know?
9. How should we live while we wait for Jesus to return?

BIBLE SKILL: *Fill in the blanks in these verses about the return of Christ.*

"After I go and prepare a place _____, I will _____ and take _____ to be with _____ so that _____ may be _____ I am" (John 14:3).

"But the day of the _____ will come like a _____. The _____ will disappear with a _____ noise. Everything in _____ will be _____ by _____, and the earth and everything in it will be _____." (2 Peter 3:10)

"Look, Jesus is _____ with the _____ and _____ will see him, even those who _____ him. And all _____ of the earth will _____ loudly because of him. Yes, this _____ happen! Amen." (Revelation 1:7)

"Listen! I _____ coming _____!" (Revelation 22:12a)

IN MY CONTEXT

When Christ returns, all people will know it. It will be a time of judgment for some. It will be a time of salvation for others.

Believers can trust Jesus. He always does what He promises to do. He promised to return. We can believe it will happen.

Believers must live as if Jesus will return today. Believers must be faithful and ready.

Discuss as a group things people can do today to prepare for the return of Jesus. What actions does your group need to take?.

**How does Jesus' promise to return help you face challenges in your life?
Ask God for strength to remain faithful as you wait for His return.**

**If we lived like Jesus is coming today, how would that change our lives?
What can you do to prepare for the return of Jesus?**

MEMORY VERSE

“Be careful! Always be ready, because you don’t know when that time will be.” - Mark 13:33

DAY ONE

Read Mark 13:24-25, looking for why we hope in Jesus.

The disciples were impressed by the temple. So Jesus explained to the disciples how the temple would be destroyed. The temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

Jesus began to explain what would happen when the temple was destroyed and what would happen at the second coming of Jesus. Jesus started with a prophecy from Isaiah. The Jews knew of the prophecies of the great Day of the Lord and the final judgement from heaven. The Jewish people knew the prophecies of God coming to set up His kingdom while the whole world watched. The words in Isaiah are a special kind of writing called “apocalyptic.” Apocalyptic writing has great powerful images like the sun going dark and the stars falling from the sky. So much of this is hard to understand. At least this is clear—every day nature obeys and worships God.

How can these Old Testament prophecies give us hope in Jesus?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 13:26-27, listing the differences between the first and second coming.

When Jesus Himself comes back, it will be no secret. There will be no doubt as to who He is. Believers and non-believers will recognize Him. Every person on earth will see Him. Every person will say He is Lord.

The first time Jesus came to earth, He arrived quietly. Few people knew. The second time He comes, “Every eye will see him” (Rev. 1:7). The first time Jesus came, He humbled Himself and was born in a stable in a small country town. When He returns, He will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The first time Jesus came, the people He created judged and sentenced Him to death. The next time He comes, He will judge every person according to God’s law. Many will be lost and condemned in judgment. However, He will gather every believer and take them home to worship God for eternity.

How do those verses help us understand the power of Jesus?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 13:28-31, learning that Jesus always keeps His word.

Jesus often taught lessons from nature. Here He used a fig tree for a lesson. When leaves turn color and fall on the ground, we know autumn is on the way. When flowers bloom and animals become active, we know spring is coming. Jesus gave signs we need to watch for as the time of His return gets close. Jesus gave encouragement to wait and watch. We can trust the words of Jesus. Everything will happen exactly as He said.

Jesus expressed His authority in a strong way when He said His words will never pass away. He created heaven and earth, but even heaven and earth will come to an end. Jesus is eternal. Because He is eternal, His words are eternal. Jesus reminded every believer that terrible things will happen. Things will happen that no one can explain. But whatever happens, believers are to continue to trust Him. We should not worry. We know He is in control of all the universe. Even if the return of Christ has not happened, yet we know it will because the word of Jesus never fails.

Why does His eternal nature help us believe in His return?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Last Things*

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its end. Jesus has promised to return, and when He does, all will see Him in His glory. The dead will be raised to life and all people will face judgment: those without Christ will face hell and those with Christ spend eternity in heaven with the Lord.

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 13:32-33, finding what Jesus did not know.

Why do people try to figure out when Jesus will return? Jesus was very clear in these verses. No one knows when Jesus will return. Notice Jesus said that even He did not know when the end will happen. Some people may wonder how Jesus could be God and not know the date of His own return. This is one of the mysteries of the Trinity. Even though God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one, at least this one fact concerning His return, God the Son did not know.

Jesus warned all believers to be ready. It could happen at any minute. This is the most important teaching in these verses. If it is not possible to know the end time, what should believers do while waiting for Jesus to come back? Believers should be focused on the responsibilities God has call us to do. We should be obeying His Word instead of worrying about how and when the end will happen. Believers should always be ready for the end to happen.

What are you doing to be ready for the return of Christ?

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 13:34-37, looking for why it is important to be ready.

Jesus knew He would go to the Father soon. He told a story to help them understand. The story was about a man who went on a trip. Each servant had a job to do while the man was gone. One man's job was to be watching at the door for the man's return. Jesus, of course, is the man who left. We are the servants who have the responsibility of taking care of the "house." Each believer is to take care of the duties God gave them and to be ready for the return of the "Master" at any time. In the story, one servant watched at the door. In the teaching of Jesus, all believers have the duty of watching for His return.

Jesus gave His servants work to do. That work is to tell the gospel. We must go to the world and tell everyone about the love and forgiveness of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, and the empty grave. While Jesus is gone, each believer should do what God called them to do and tell the story of the "Master" who will return.

What is the work God gave you to do while we wait for the return of Christ?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 13:24-37. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

What can your church do to help people, especially Deaf people, to be ready for the return of Christ?

**How do you know you can trust that Jesus will keep His word?
How does His promise to return again encourage you and your friends to be better followers of Jesus?**

How can you help one another live as if each day is the day Jesus will return? What should we do while we wait for Christ?

PREPARES

Jesus willingly paid the price for our sin, thus obeying the Father's plan.

MARK 14:3-11,32-36

Mark wrote three important stories together to teach lessons. The first story is about a woman who took the most precious thing she had and gave it to Jesus. She showed her love through a sacrifice of something valuable.

The second story is very different. It is a story of betrayal. Judas denied Jesus and betrayed Him. Why did he do this? Perhaps he was jealous of the other disciples. Perhaps he was disappointed because Jesus did not prepare to establish a political kingdom. His heart was not pure. He was the treasurer for the disciples and stole money. He decided to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. His rejection of Jesus meant he would spend eternity separated from Him.

The third story is about Jesus. He was willing to obey God's will no matter the cost. It was God's plan to send His own Son to become the sacrifice needed for the forgiveness of people's sin. In the garden, Jesus prayed for another way, but He submitted to the Father's will. But God did not leave His Son in the grave. He raised Jesus back to life.

MARK 14:3-11,32-36

3 Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon, who had a **skin disease**. **4** While Jesus was eating there, a woman approached him with an **alabaster jar** filled with very expensive perfume, **made of pure nard**. She opened the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head.

4 Some who were there became upset and said to each other, "Why waste that perfume? **5** It was worth a full year's work. It could have been sold and the money given to the poor." And they got very angry with the woman. **6** Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why are you troubling her? She did an excellent thing for me. **7** You will always have the poor with you, and you can help them anytime you want. But you will not always have me. **8** This woman did the only thing she could do for me; she poured perfume on my body to prepare me for burial. **9** I tell you the truth, wherever the Good News is preached in all the world, what this woman has done will be told, and **people will remember her**." **10** One of the twelve apostles, Judas Iscariot, went to talk to the leading priests to offer to hand Jesus over to them. **11** These priests were pleased about this and promised to **pay Judas money**. So he watched for the best time to turn Jesus in.

32 Jesus and his followers went to a place called **Gethsemane**. He said to them, "Sit here while I pray."

33 Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him, and He began to be very sad and troubled. **34** He said to them, "My heart is full of sorrow, to the point of death. Stay here and watch." **35** After walking a little farther away from them, Jesus fell to the ground and prayed that, if possible, he would not have this time of suffering.

36 He prayed, "**Abba**, Father! You can do all things. Take away this cup of suffering. But do what you want, **not what I want**."

- a. The skin disease was leprosy. Some Bible teachers think Jesus may have healed Simon.
- b. Alabaster is stone. It looks like marble.
- c. Nard is an expensive oil made from a special plant. It has a strong smell.
- d. John 12 tells us the one who complained was Judas Iscariot.
- e. This woman is remembered for what she did for Jesus.
- f. Thirty pieces of silver for a betrayal.
- g. The word "Gethsemane" means "oil press." It was a garden of olive trees and a place of prayer for Jesus.
- h. "Abba" means "father" in Aramaic. It is what a child might call his father.
- i. Jesus totally obeyed His Father's will, not His own will.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Why might a person give an expensive gift to another person?
2. What did this woman do that caused the disciples to complain? Why did they complain?
3. What prediction did Jesus make about this woman's action?
4. Why did Jesus say she was anointing Him for burial?
5. What were the plans Judas made with the religious leaders? Why did Judas betray Jesus this way?
6. What do we learn about the character of Judas when he betrayed Jesus?
7. What did Jesus pray about in the garden? Why was this such an important prayer?
8. What do we learn about the character of Jesus when He prayed in the garden?
9. How did the events in today's verses prepare Jesus for His death?

BIBLE SKILL: *Read the verses. What do you learn about obeying God?*

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 _____

John 14:15 _____

1 John 2:3-6 _____

2 John 6 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

Sometimes believers have ideas, even good ministry ideas, which prevent others from honoring Jesus. We must always be careful to encourage others in their actions honoring Him.

When followers show love and devotion to Jesus, it satisfies Him.

People who betray Christ will fail. God will judge them as guilty.

Jesus obeyed the Father's plan. He willingly gave His life on the cross to give us salvation.

Discuss as a group how we can be sure our actions honor Jesus.

What can believers do that will satisfy Jesus?

How do people betray Jesus today? What are some actions your class can do to help each other avoid God's judgment?

What do Jesus' actions teach us about obeying God? How will you live differently now that you have learned how Jesus obeyed God?

MEMORY VERSE

He prayed. "Abba, Father! You can do all things. Take away this cup of suffering. But do what You want, not what I want." - Mark 14:36

DAY ONE

Read Mark 14:3-5, seeing why it is important to honor Jesus.

Churches and Christians get involved in different ministries but sometimes forget the real purpose of ministering to others. Ministry does real help for others, but most importantly ministry honors God. Honoring God begins when we are humble before God. Honoring God does not include an attitude of, “Look what I’m doing for God!” It is possible to do ministry in such a way that we dishonor God. It is possible for ministry to point to us instead of Jesus.

The woman in this story loved Jesus so much, she brought the most valuable thing she had and poured it on Jesus. The disciples missed the point. She ministered to Jesus and gave honor to Him. All they saw was the waste of valuable perfume. The disciples suggested the woman should sell the expensive oil and give the money to the poor. Taking care of the poor is an important ministry. The disciples, however, only saw money. They could not understand the honor given to Jesus. To help the poor is good. In this story, to honor Jesus was even better. Ministry ideas, even good ideas, should never get in the way of honoring God.

How can we make sure that when we do ministry we are honoring God above all else?

How does your life honor God?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 14:6-9, looking for how to satisfy Jesus with our actions.

Jesus told the disciples not to bother the woman because she was doing a good thing. It was not clear to the disciples that she was preparing Jesus’ body for burial, but that is what Jesus said her actions were doing. It was the only thing the woman could do for Jesus at the time. It showed her love for Jesus and was a humble act. Jesus said if we humble ourselves

and honor Him, then He will lift us up in His time. This woman humbled herself and gave honor to Jesus, and He lifted her up by saying people would remember what she did.

What the woman did showed her love and devotion to Jesus. Jesus is always satisfied when His followers show their devotion to Him as Savior.

What does devotion to Jesus look like? How do you show your devotion to Him?

DAY THREE

Read Mark 14:10-11, finding the difference between Judas and Peter.

Judas was the man who betrayed Jesus. He did a terrible thing to get some money. His heart must have been really bad. But the story of Judas gives us a chance to compare Judas and Peter. Both men were disciples of Jesus. They were with Jesus for over three years. They heard all that Jesus taught. They saw many ways Jesus healed and helped people. Still both men betrayed Jesus. However, we can see a big difference in the lives of these two men. Judas felt sorry for what he did, but it seems he never repented. He killed himself. Peter felt great guilt and shed many tears also. But he repented for denying Jesus, and his life changed when he realized his sin. He became a preacher for the gospel. His life became a testimony of how God forgives sinners when they repent and confess their sins. Those who do not repent and confess their sins will face judgement.

What happens to people who reject Jesus and salvation?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 14:32-34, underlining why Gethsemane was a hard place for Jesus.

Gethsemane is a beautiful garden outside the walls of Jerusalem. Jesus often went there to pray. On this day—the day before His crucifixion—Jesus had a real need for prayer. Jesus often went by Himself to pray to His Father, but on this day He faced a greater agony than He had ever faced before.

No one can understand the agony He experienced. He knew the pain and suffering that would come. He knew He would bear the sins of all people and the judgement for all those sins. For the only time in His eternal existence, He would experience loneliness. Jesus knew the time had come for His sacrifice. But this was why He came into the world. He came to die. Gethsemane was a hard place for Jesus, but it is where Jesus defeated sin through His act of obeying God.

When have you had a great need for God? How did going to God in prayer help you? How did your Christian friends help you?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Obedience*

Obeying God helps us know Him better. From Genesis to Revelation, God calls His people to obey Him. Jesus learned obedience to His Father's will. He also learned the price of obeying God. Believers must read God's Word so we know what to do. If we love God, we will want to obey Him. But we cannot obey if we do not first trust Him. It is important to remember that people are not saved by obedience. Salvation is a free gift from God. When we are saved, we will want to obey our Savior.

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 14:35-36, identifying what Jesus knew about the cross.

Jesus went a little further into the garden leaving His disciples behind. He was alone with God. There He prayed one of the most powerful prayers ever written down. Mark shared the deep prayer of Jesus. In the prayer there is fear, but also strong trust and submission. Jesus asked God if there was some way to avoid the cross. But He also prayed in submission to the will of the Father.

Jesus knew His Father's love was perfect, and He felt safe in the love of the Father. Even so, Jesus knew that He would experience pain. He knew He would have to go through the cross alone. This happened when His disciples left Him and even God turned away. But Jesus knew it was God's plan. Jesus knew that the Father's plan was right. It was right to accept and obey God's plan, even when it meant going to the cross and death.

Why is it important that Jesus submitted to the Father's plan for our salvation?

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 14:3-11 and 32-36. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

How did the woman in this story show her devotion to Jesus? How do you show your devotion to Him? How does this please Christ?

What happens to those people who betray Jesus and never repent and turn to Christ?

How does the story of Jesus submitting to the Father's plan for our salvation encourage you to submit to God's plan in your life?



LIVES

Jesus is alive today, defeating death for all who believe in Him.

MARK 15:42-47; 16:1-8

Some announcements change everything. A birth announcement impacts the lives of the parents, the new grandparents, and friends. Announcing an engagement between a man and woman starts all kinds of activity from planning showers to clearing the calendar for the couple's wedding day. A death announcement changes everything as loved ones grieve and try to find a way to move forward.

The phrase "He is risen" is the most powerful announcement ever. The power of those words changed the lives of the people who were with Jesus. Those words have changed the lives of millions of people in the 2,000 years since He rose.

MARK 15:42-47; 16:1-8

42 This was **Preparation Day**. **A** (That means the day before the Sabbath day.) That evening, **43** Joseph from Arimathea was **brave enough** **B** to go to Pilate and ask for Jesus' body. Joseph, an important member of the **Jewish council**, **C** was one of the people who was waiting for the kingdom of God to come. **44 Pilate** **D** was amazed that Jesus would have **already died**, **E** so he called the army officer who had guarded Jesus and asked him if Jesus had already died. **45** The officer told Pilate that he was dead, so Pilate told Joseph he could have the body. **46** Joseph bought some linen cloth, took the body down from the cross, and wrapped it in the linen. He put the body in a tomb that was cut out of a wall of rock. Then he rolled a **very large stone** **F** to block the entrance of the tomb. **47** And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw the place where Jesus was laid.

1 The day after the Sabbath day, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought some sweet-smelling spices to put on Jesus' body. **2** Very early on that day, the first day of the week, soon after sunrise, the women were on their way to the tomb. **3** They said to each other, "Who will roll away for us the stone that covers the entrance of the tomb?" **4** Then the women looked and saw that the stone had already been rolled away, even though it was very large. **5** The women entered the tomb and saw a young man wearing a white robe and sitting on the right side, and they were afraid. **6** But the man said, "**Don't be afraid**. **G** You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who has been crucified. He has risen from the dead; **he is not here**. **H** Look, here is the place they laid him. **7** Now go and tell his followers and Peter, 'Jesus is going into Galilee ahead of you, and you will see him there as he told you before.'" **8** The women were confused and shaking with fear, so they left the tomb and ran away. They did not tell anyone about what happened, because they were afraid.

- a. The Jewish day started at sundown and went to the next day at sundown. So Sabbath began at sundown on Friday. All day Friday was the day of preparation for the Sabbath.
- b. Joseph was a secret believer, but finally was able to stand up and show his belief.
- c. The Council was the Sanhedrin—the "court" that condemned Jesus to death.
- d. Pilate was Governor of Judea from 26 to 36 AD. He was the one who ordered Jesus to be crucified.
- e. Death by crucifixion normally took several days. Pilate was surprised Jesus died quickly.
- f. A large, heavy stone was rolled in front of the grave, which was a cave. This sealed the tomb and protected the body from being stolen or bothered by animals.
- g. The same words the angel said to the shepherds at Jesus' birth.
- h. Jesus was already gone. He was alive.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What does the resurrection of Jesus mean to Christians today?
2. Who was Joseph of Arimathea? What kind of person was he?
4. What did Pilate do before giving the body of Jesus to Joseph?
5. What were the women worried about as they walked to the tomb?
6. How did the Jews bury people when Jesus was alive on earth?
7. What did the women find when they arrived at the tomb?
8. What did the angel say happened to Jesus?
9. Jesus said many times He would die and come back to life. Why was the empty tomb so shocking?
10. What were the two commandments the angel gave to the women? Why tell Peter?
11. How does the empty tomb separate Christianity from other religions?

BIBLE SKILL: *List the resurrection appearances that are in these passages:*

John 20:10-18 _____

John 20:19-29 _____

John 21:1-14 _____

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

Jesus experienced real physical death. His death on the cross paid for our sins.

When believers are sad and grieving, Jesus brings comfort and hope. Believers have good news to share. Jesus is alive! He defeated death.

Discuss as a group the death of Jesus on the cross. How can the group follow Joseph's example and make their faith public?

How does Jesus give you hope even when you are sad or grieving?

Jesus is alive and defeated death. How has that truth changed your life?

MEMORY VERSE

But the man said, "Don't be afraid. You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who has been crucified. He is risen from the dead; he is not here. Look, here is the place they laid him." - Mark 16:6

DAY ONE

Read Mark 15:42-45, looking for how we know Jesus was dead.

Joseph of Arimathea was the main leader of those who buried Jesus. He was a secret disciple and a member of the Jewish council. It seems he understood the Old Testament promise of salvation from God. It was Joseph who had the courage to ask for the body of Jesus. He knew the other council members would be angry with him, but he did it anyway.

Crucifixion was a slow and terrible death. That is why Pilate gave the order to break the legs of the men on the cross so they would die faster. (See John 19:31-33.) Jesus was already dead so they did not break His legs. To be sure Jesus was really dead, Pilate asked the Roman soldier in charge of the crucifixion. The soldier said Jesus was dead. Pilate wanted to be very sure that Jesus was dead. There was no doubt; Jesus was really dead.

Some unbelievers have said that Jesus was not dead, He only fainted. Scripture shows this is a false idea. Jesus died a painful death on the cross. This was what had to happen to pay for our sins.

How do we know that Jesus was truly dead? Why is that important?

DAY TWO

Read Mark 15:46-47, noticing the details for the burial of Jesus.

Notice the five things Joseph did for Jesus. 1) He bought new, unused linen cloth. Jewish law allowed the purchase of necessary things for burial (on the Sabbath) as long as no one talked about the price. 2) He took the body down off the cross. Joseph had help removing the body. The Gospel of John says Nicodemus helped Joseph. These two members of the Sanhedrin prepared Jesus' body for burial. 3) He wrapped the body in the linen cloth. 4) He put the body in the tomb. It was a new tomb, perfect for the sinless body of the Son of God. 5) He rolled the stone in front of the tomb. The stone was large enough to cover the

entrance to the cave. The Gospel of Matthew says the stone had a Roman government seal on it to be sure no one could come and steal the body. Also Roman soldiers were placed in front to guard the tomb. Several women, also disciples of Jesus, watched in silence as Joseph prepared and buried the body of Jesus.

**How do you feel when you read about the burial of Jesus?
Why do you think the women stayed and watched?**

DAY THREE

Read Mark 16:1-4, looking for why the women were hopeless that Sunday morning.

Mark is very clear and specific about the women in these verses. He named the women. He described clearly the exact time they went to the tomb—early in the morning, “soon after sunrise.” The women knew and followed the Jewish Sabbath laws. They went on the day after the Sabbath. The women did not think about a resurrection. They saw Jesus die. They saw Jesus being removed from the cross. They saw Joseph wrap the body and place it in a tomb. They saw the large stone rolled in front of the tomb. They must have felt great sadness as they walked toward the tomb. They wondered how they would move the heavy stone so they could properly anoint Jesus’ body. But when they arrived the stone had been moved.

Whatever they thought, the resurrection was about to give them hope when all they had felt before was despair! Jesus gives hope to His hurting followers.

What gives you hope today?

DAY FOUR

Read Mark 16:5-7, finding evidence that the resurrection is true to history.

When the women stepped into the tomb, Jesus was not there. Jesus had already risen. No one saw it happen. However, an angel was there. (Mark calls the angel a young man because that is how he looked.) The words of the angel to the women were simple and clear. The resurrection had happened. The angel invited the women to look where Jesus' body had lain.

The resurrection of Jesus is a historical fact. It happened on a given date, at a specific time, and at a specific place. No other religion can claim their leader is alive.

Finally, the angel told the women to tell the disciples. These women became the first humans to tell about the resurrection. "Jesus is risen!" was the message the disciples preached. It was the center of Paul's sermons and letters. It is the message God commands us to go tell the world today. There is power in the words, "Jesus is alive!" The resurrection of Jesus is the good news that we have today that calls people out of a life of sin and into a life of peace!

**What is the importance of the three facts declared by the angel?
How do we declare those facts today?**

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Resurrection*

Jesus was dead after He was crucified on a cross. He was buried in a friend's tomb. Three days later God raised Jesus from the dead with a glorified body. He appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He was alive when they saw Him, and He is still alive today.

DAY FIVE

Read Mark 16:8, thinking about why it is important to tell of the resurrection.

The angel had just told the women to go tell the disciples and Peter that Jesus was alive. In verse 8, they were overwhelmed by emotion. They were confused and afraid. They certainly could not understand what was happening. They ran from the tomb and did not tell anyone what they had seen.

Keep in mind how shocked the women were. They were so shocked and afraid that as they ran from the tomb they did not tell anyone. But our story does not stop there. We know from the rest of Mark and from the other Gospels that the women soon did tell their story to the disciples and to Peter. Within just a few hours, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, the disciples, and two of the followers of Jesus as they walked to a near-by town. The women did tell their story, and we continue to tell their story today. We have the good news, and in the tradition of the women, we tell how Jesus conquered death!

**How can we share the story of the resurrection today?
What makes you able to share the story of the resurrection?**

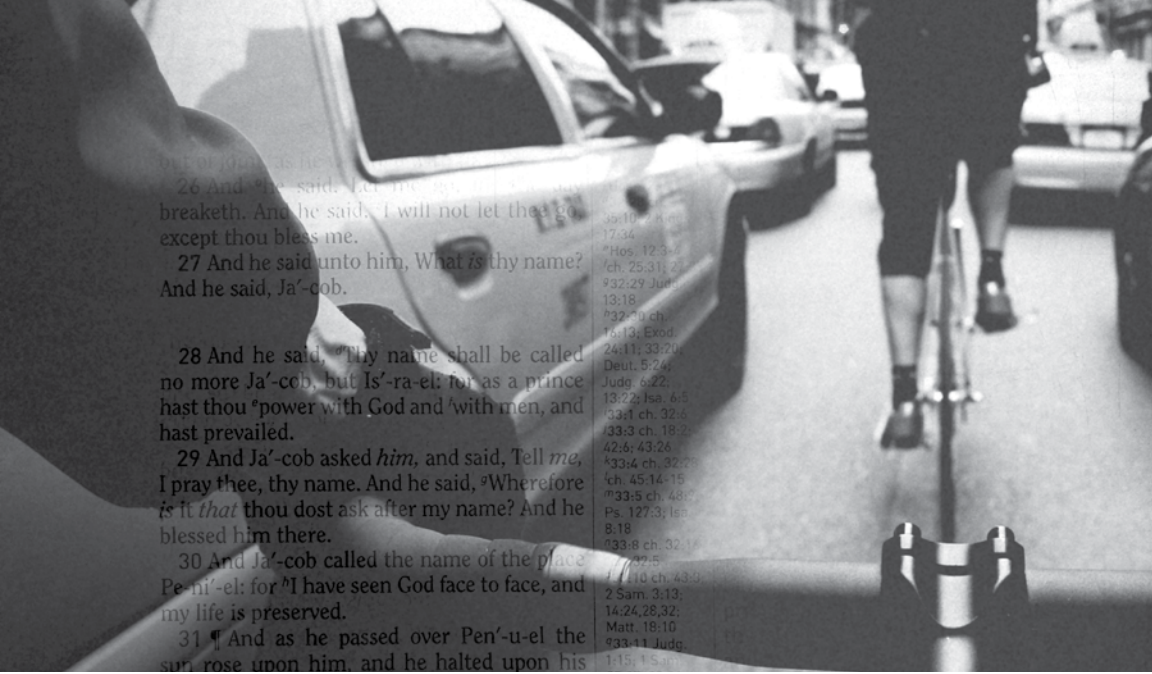
CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you learned from Mark 15:42-47 and 16:1-8. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

**How would you explain the death of Jesus to your Deaf friends?
What does His death mean to you?**

When have you experienced hope from Jesus when you were grieving? Share your experiences of hope with each other.

How can you and your small group share the story of the resurrection with others? Practice telling the resurrection story with each other.



26 And ^{he} said, Let me go, and I will pray. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

27 And he said unto him, What ^{is} thy name? And he said, Ja'-cob.

28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Ja'-cob, but Is'-ra-el: for as a prince hast thou ^{power} with God and ^{with} men, and hast prevailed.

29 And Ja'-cob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, ^{Wherefore} is it *that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

30 And Ja'-cob called the name of the place Pen'-el: for ^I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

31 ¶ And as he passed over Pen'-u-el the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his

35:10-12, 17-34
*Hos. 12:3-4
/ch. 25:31, 32
*32:29 Judg.
13:18
*32:10 ch.
16:13; Exod.
24:11; 33:7-9
Deut. 5:24
Judg. 6:22
13:22; Isa. 6:5
*33:1 ch. 32:4
*33:3 ch. 18:2
42:6; 43:24
*33:4 ch. 32:7
/ch. 45:14-15
*33:5 ch. 48:1
Ps. 127:3, 154
8:18
*33:6 ch. 52:16
*33:7
*33:8
110 ch. 43:3
2 Sam. 3:13
14:24, 26, 32
Matt. 18:10
*33:11 Judg.
1:15; 1:5-6

LEADER HELPS

As the leader of the group, you can build disciples through the group Bible study time, encouraging daily Bible engagement, and by facilitating smaller groups.

Building Disciples through the Group Time

Each week, you will introduce the group to the Bible passage, examine the key message in that passage, and challenge the group to act on that passage. Doing so requires preparation. Here is a way to prepare that gives you adequate time to study the lesson and will make the session fresh in your own life.

Early in the Week (Sunday or Monday)

- Ask God to open your mind and heart to His Word as you study.
- Study the Bible passage.
- Pay careful attention to the In My Context section for that session, looking for ways you need to apply the Bible in your own life.

Through the Week

- Ask God to direct your creation of the group plan.

- Create a group plan, adapting the group plans to fit the needs of your group.
- Complete the Daily Exploration activities in the days leading up to the group time.
- Meet with a group of three to four other teachers to share and pray for each other. Use Connect and Share to start your conversation.
- Create your own using Visual Ideas on pages 160–161).

The Day of the Group Study Time

- Arrive early.
- Pray for the study and the group members.
- Lead the study, adjusting as you go.

After the Group Study Time

- Consider the After the Session idea at the end of the group plans.
- Contact all group members, encouraging them to complete the Daily Exploration section and sharing gathered prayer requests.
- Record insights gained about teaching, group members, and Scripture.
- Do it all again.

Building Disciples by Encouraging Daily Bible Engagement

- Encourage everyone on your ministry list (class roll, membership list, etc.) to engage daily in Bible study. Here are some ways to encourage your group to engage with the Bible daily.
- Ask them. Learn to comfortably ask if group members are studying the Bible. You may want to use a statement such as, “I hope you took a look at the Day 3 activity for this week.”
- Tell them. Let them know that you are using the Daily Exploration section as well. Set the standard.
- Show them. Point to the Daily Exploration section at the conclusion of the group study. From time to time, demonstrate how to use the section, guiding them through Day 1 as a group.

- Invite them. Call on volunteers to share with the group what they are learning and how they use the Daily Exploration section.

Building Disciples through Smaller Groups

At the end of every session, you will find a section entitled Connect and Share. This section is designed for smaller groups of three to four people to meet weekly, holding each other accountable for living a Christ-honoring life.

Create smaller groups:

- Allow group members to form their own initial groups of three by gender (men's smaller groups and women's smaller groups)
- Allow groups to add one person from the names on the ministry list of people who are not present.
- You may want to encourage the groups to form based on neighborhoods or proximity to work.
- Make sure some of the groups have extra space for new group members and guests.
- As the Bible study group grows, you may need to reorganize the smaller groups, but try not to regroup too often so that trust can be built within each smaller group.

Support the smaller groups:

- Provide opportunities for the members of the smaller groups to pray with each other during the group time.
- Make study assignments in the weekly group time based on the smaller groups.
- Pre-enlist a volunteer to share with the larger group how participation in the smaller group is impacting his or her life.
- Periodically organize fellowship events built around the smaller groups. The smaller groups could be the basis for teams during the event.
- Be in a smaller group as well. You may even want to host a smaller group for guests and new group members.

CALLS

Mark 1:9-20

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will understand that following Christ is the most important thing they can do.

Enlist a volunteer to study the Introduction to Mark and summarize it for the class.

Enlist a volunteer to practice signing the story of Jesus' temptation from Matthew 4:1-11. They will sign the story for the group during the session.

Enlist a volunteer to sign Mark 1:1-8 for the group.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Be prepared to answer questions members might have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK question 1 from Explore the Text (p. 13).

ASK the volunteer to give the introduction to the Book of Mark.

ASK the volunteer to sign Mark 1:1-8. **DISCUSS** questions 2 and 3 from Explore the Text (p. 13) in the personal study guide.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Affirmation (1:9-11)

SIGN Mark 1:9-11. **ASK:** Did Jesus need to repent? Why not? Why did Jesus ask John to baptize Him? **EXPLAIN:** As Jesus prepared to start His public ministry, people needed to know who He was. Some knew Him as Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph and Mary. But people needed to know Him as God's Son.

ASK: How did His baptism help people understand who He was? **LEAD** the

group to discuss questions 4 and 5 from Explore the Text (p. 13).

2. The Temptation (1:12-13)

SIGN Mark 1:12-13. **EXPLAIN:** *Mark wrote briefly about the temptation but other Gospel writers wrote more details.* **ASK** the volunteer to sign the temptation story from Matthew. **FOCUS** on question 6 from Explore the Text (p. 13). **REMIND** the group how Jesus responded with Scripture. **INVITE** the group to share verses that help them resist temptation. (Some possibilities are 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:18, Philippians 4:13, and Galatians 6:9.) **ASK:** *What are some things we can do that help us resist temptation?* (Answers could include: prayer, talk with Christian friends, read the Bible, stay away from places and things that cause temptation, depend on the power of the Holy Spirit, etc.)

3. Jesus' Message (1:14-15)

SIGN Mark 1:14-15. **HIGHLIGHT** question 7 from Explore the Text (p.13). **LEAD** the group to give examples of what it means to “change your hearts and lives.” Some translations use the word “repent” for this concept. Bible teachers describe the idea as turning away from sin and turning toward God. It is more than being sorry about our sin. It is making a change. **DISCUSS** the meaning of the “good news.” **EXPLAIN:** *Believing the good news is more than saying it is true. Believing is action.*

4. Jesus Calls Followers (1:16-20)

SIGN Mark 1:16-20. **ASK:** *What action do you see in these new followers?* Their actions were bold. People around them would know something was different in their lives. **FOCUS** on questions 8 and 9 from Explore the Text (p. 13). **ASK:** *How did believing in Jesus change your life? How does He work in your life every day? What does it mean to trust Him?* As time allows, **LEAD** the group to complete the Bible Skill (p. 13).

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points from In My Context (p. 14). **LEAD** the group to discuss the questions. **ENCOURAGE** the group to do the daily readings this week and meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer asking God to help us have hearts willing to give all to follow Jesus closely.

FORGIVES

Mark 2:1-12

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will trust in Jesus' authority to forgive sin.

Enlist a volunteer to prepare to sign the story from Mark 2:1-12 (or you sign the story). They should practice so they do not need to look at the text while telling the story.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Be prepared to answer questions the group may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *What does it mean to have authority?* **EXPLAIN:** Authority means to have the right or power to control something. It can be the power to make decisions. For example, if we have a job, our boss has the authority to tell us what to do. As parents, we have authority to make decisions for our children. Perhaps you have seen a person act bossy. You may have wondered, "Who gave him the authority (or right) to act that way?"

SHARE: *In today's session we will look at the authority Jesus has. During His time on earth, Jesus showed clearly that His authority was the same as God's authority. Some people trusted Jesus and believed He had authority. Some questioned His authority and felt He had no right to forgive sin.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Friends Show Faith (2:1-5)

ASK the volunteer to sign the full story from Mark 2:1-12. **FOCUS** on questions 1-5 from Explore the Text (p. 21). If members have trouble remembering what happened, **INVITE** the volunteer to sign the first part of the story again.

CALL for the group to share examples of ways they can show faith and lead friends to Jesus. They could also share examples of ways friends led them to Jesus.

2. Leaders Doubt Jesus' Authority (2:6-7)

SIGN verses 6-7 again. **ASK:** *What were the religious leaders thinking? Why do you think they had those thoughts? How did Jesus know what they were thinking? How does it make you feel to know God knows what we are thinking?*

LEAD the group to discuss question 6 from Explore the Text (p. 21).

3. Authority to Forgive (2:8-11)

ASK: *What happened next? If no one remembers, sign verses 8-11 again.*

ASK: *How did Jesus prove He has authority to forgive sin?* **HIGHLIGHT** question 7 from Explore the Text (p. 21).

LEAD the group to complete Bible Skill (p. 21). **ENLIST** four different members to sign the verses. **DISCUSS** what each verse says about forgiveness.

EXPLAIN: Often when we talk about forgiveness, the idea of “forgive and forget” comes up. It is hard for us to forget about something mean someone does to us. Does God forget about our sin? Psalm 103:12 says, “He has taken our sins away from us as far as the east is from west.” He doesn’t think on our sin anymore. We should let our sin go also, and follow Him.

4. Power to Heal (2:12)

FOCUS on question 8 from Explore the Text (p. 21). **ASK:** *How do we respond when we see God working in our lives? How do you feel about God’s forgiveness for your sin? How can you share the good news of His forgiveness and salvation with others?*

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 22).

DISCUSS the questions. **ENCOURAGE** members to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share.

CLOSE in prayer, asking God to help us respond in the right way to His authority.

UNITES

Mark 3:23-35

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will grow in love for Jesus and in a desire to obey Him.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Enlist a volunteer to prepare to sign Mark 3:22 for the group.

Be prepared to answer questions the group may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *What kinds of miracles did Jesus do? (Allow members to share some they remember.) How did the Jewish religious leaders feel about Jesus?*

CALL the volunteer to sign Mark 3:22 for the group. **EXPLAIN:** *Beelzebul is a name for Satan. Imagine! The religious leaders were so against Jesus that they accused Him of having a demon or Satan in Him! They thought Jesus got power from Satan and used that power to heal. In the Bible story for today, we will see how Jesus responded to the leaders.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Undivided House (3:23-30)

ASK: *What is a parable?* Use information from the introduction to the session in the personal study guide to explain. Also, use the information to explain why Jesus used parables.

SIGN Mark 3:23-30. **DISCUSS** question 7 from Explore the Text (p. 29).

EXPLAIN: *In verse 27, Jesus talked about tying up the strong person. He was doing this when He forced demons out of people. He was “tying up” Satan. He showed His power over Satan.*

ASK: *What sin will God not forgive? He will not forgive a person who refuses to believe in Him and accept His gift of grace through Jesus.*

2. Jesus' Family Misunderstood (3:31-32)

EXPLAIN: *Everywhere Jesus went, many people came to see Him. Remember the crowd of people at the house in last week's session? The four men had to make a hole in the roof to get their friend to Jesus. Mark 3:20-21 tells us that "there were so many people that Jesus and His followers could not eat." Jesus' family was concerned. They thought Jesus was crazy. It seems they didn't understand fully what He was doing or what His true work was to be. So they went to get Him.*

SIGN Mark 3:31-32. **ASK:** *How do you think Jesus felt when He heard His family was there? Do you think He knew why they came?*

ASK: *Do people misunderstand Christians today? Give some examples.*

3. United by Purpose (3:33-35)

EXPLAIN: *Let's see how Jesus responded to His family.* **SIGN** Mark 3:33-35.

FOCUS on questions 8 and 9 from Explore the Text (p. 29). **ASK:** *Do you think Jesus rejected His family?* **EXPLAIN:** *Remember, the Father sent Him to obey the Father's plan. This plan was more important than plans His friends or family had for Him. This doesn't mean He was against His family. He was focused on His mission. Jesus' words also tell us that following Jesus and being in the Christian family is more important than our earthly family. Matthew 10:37 says, "Those who love their father or mother more than they love me are not worthy to be my followers. Those who love their son or daughter more than they love me are not worthy to be my followers." It is important to keep Jesus in the number one spot in our lives.*

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 30) and lead the group to respond to the questions. **ENCOURAGE** the group to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us understand how important it is to obey God's will.

RESTORES

Mark 5:21-24,35-43

Pray for group members. Pray they will know Jesus cares about them and will help them.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Enlist a volunteer to prepare to sign the story from Mark 5:25-34. They will sign the story for the group.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *Have you ever felt overwhelmed? Have you felt you were stuck and had no one to help you? (Let members share experiences if they feel comfortable.) What are some ways you can ask God for help? (Answers could include: ask for wisdom—James 1:5, ask for His strength—Philippians 4:13, ask for more faith, etc.)* **EXPLAIN:** *In today's session, we will learn about a man who asked Jesus for help. He knew no one else could help. He trusted that Jesus had the power to help. Do we have trust like that?*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Willing (5:21-24)

SIGN Mark 5:21-24. **DISCUSS** questions 1, 2, and 4 from Explore the Text (p. 37). **EXPLAIN:** *Jesus and Jairus started toward Jairus' home. Again we see there was a crowd of people around Jesus.* **ASK:** *Why do you think there was a crowd?* **CALL** on the volunteer to summarize Mark 5:25-34.

2. Focused (5:35-40)

SIGN Mark 5:35-40. **LEAD** the group to respon to questions 5-8 in Explore the Text (p. 37). **ASK:** *How do we know Jesus was focused?* **EXPLAIN:** *People laughed at Jesus, maybe they thought He was crazy to try to heal a dead girl. Their feelings about Him did not influence or change His actions. He continued with His plan. Jesus is an example to us to stay focused on*

God's plan for us. It doesn't matter what other people feel about us and our desire to follow Him. We must continue to do His will.

3. Able (5:41-43)

SIGN Mark 5:41-43. **FOCUS** on questions 9 and 10 in Explore the Text (p. 37).

EXPLAIN: *When Jesus brought the girl back to life, people learned something new about Jesus. They learned that His power is great. They learned His power is stronger than death.* **ASK:** *Is it important for us to know about His power? Why?*

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context. **FOCUS** on the first question, leading the group to sign Mark 5:36b. **ENCOURAGE** the group to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **REMIND** the group that discussing ideas with each other will provide encouragement and support. It is an important part of our growth process. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us to trust Jesus and talk with Him more.

SENDS

Mark 6:7-13,30-32

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will accept the work Jesus wants them to do.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Enlist four volunteers to prepare to sign one verse each from the Bible Skill (p. 45).

Enlist a volunteer to prepare to sign the story from Mark 6:7-13. They will sign the story for the group.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

DISCUSS question 1 from Explore the Text (p. 45). The group can use information from the introductory information in the personal study guide to get ideas. **INVITE** the four volunteers to sign their verses from the Bible Skill. **LEAD** the group to identify the characteristics of a follower based on those verses. **ASK** question four from Explore the Text (p. 45). **EXPLAIN:** *Today we will see how Jesus sends, equips, and empowers.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Jesus Sends (6:7)

CALL on the volunteer to sign Mark 6:7-13. **ASK:** *Why do you think Jesus sent the disciples in pairs? How is it helpful to have a partner for mission work?* (Answers could include: A partner provides emotional support, pairs can provide prayer support for each other, and we do better when we are accountable or responsible to someone. In Jesus' time, two witnesses showed something was true. Having two disciples together helped support their message.)

ASK: Do you think followers today should be involved in Jesus' ministry? How do you know? (See Matthew 28:19-20.)

2. Jesus Equips (6:8-11)

ASK: What does it mean to equip? (It means to give someone the tools to do a job. It is preparing someone for work.) How did Jesus equip the disciples? What were their instructions? (See verses 8-11. The volunteer can sign this part of the story again if needed.) **EXPLAIN:** Jesus didn't let the disciples pack a bag with extra clothes, food, or money. This meant they had to trust God to take care of their needs through other people. They depended on the hospitality of their hosts.

ASK: What kind of warning is shaking dust off your feet? **EXPLAIN:** It shows the danger of rejecting Jesus' message of good news. It is important to note that not all people will accept the good news when we tell them. Even the disciples experienced rejection.

3. Jesus Empowers (6:12-13)

FOCUS on question 7 from Explore the Text (p. 45). **ASK:** How do we know Jesus gave the men power? (They were able to force out demons and heal people.) **FOCUS** on question 8 from Explore the Text (p. 45).

4. Resting with Jesus (6:30-32)

SIGN Mark 6:30-32. Notice again there were so many people around that the disciples didn't have time to eat. **ASK:** What did Jesus recommend? (resting with Him). Yes, as followers we should do the work Jesus wants us to do. He also wants us to rest. We need to renew our strength to continue the work. **ASK:** How can we rest with Him? **FOCUS** on question 9 from Explore the Text (p. 45).

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 46).

DISCUSS the questions. **ENCOURAGE** the group to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share.

CLOSE in prayer, asking God to help us depend on His power to do ministry and remember to rest.

INCLUDES

Mark 7:25-37

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will show love to all people, even people who are different from themselves.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Enlist a volunteer to practice signing the story of the Gentile woman in Mark 7:25-30. They will sign it for the group session.

Enlist a volunteer to practice signing the story of the deaf man in Mark 7:31-35. They will sign it for the group session.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: Question 1 from Explore the Text (p. 53) **EXPLAIN:** *We know God loves everyone, but do we act like it? Do we show love and compassion to everyone? Are we kind when people are not kind to us?*

In today's session, we will see how Jesus treated people who were different. One was a Gentile. Jews did not like Gentiles. The other was a deaf man. Jews thought if a person had a disability, it meant someone had sinned to cause the disability. Jesus showed His good news is for all people.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Humble (7:25-30)

INVITE the volunteer to sign the story about the Gentile woman.

FOCUS on questions 2-6 from Explore the Text (p. 53). **EXPLAIN:** *Jesus' response to the woman seems to mean the Jews should get His message first. Or perhaps Jesus wanted the disciples and others to see the woman's strong faith. Then they would understand that the good news was for Gentiles too. Either way,*

Jesus made it clear He had compassion for the Gentile woman. He also showed His power by healing the daughter without even seeing her.

2. The Outsider (7:31-35)

ASK: *Do any of you ever feel left out? When? (Allow for discussion.)*

EXPLAIN: *That is the reason this text called the deaf man “the outsider.” Often Deaf people feel left out of conversation, even with family. **INVITE** the volunteer to sign the story about the deaf man and Jesus. **CALL** attention to questions 8-9 from Explore the Text (p. 53). Notice how Jesus took time to communicate with the man. Jesus took him away from the crowd. We do not know if the man knew why his friends took him to Jesus or if he knew anything about Jesus. But Jesus showed kindness and gestured so the man would understand. **ASK:** *How does that make you feel?**

3. The Excitement (7:36-37)

SIGN Mark 7:36-37. **EXPLAIN:** *Several times Mark writes about Jesus telling the people not to tell what He did. Why do you think He said that? (maybe because of the crowds or because of the anger and jealousy of the Jewish religious leaders) **ASK:** *How did the people respond? (They talked about Him even more!) Do we share the amazing good news of Jesus with others the same way these people did?**

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context. **LEAD** the group to record their responses to the questions. **ENCOURAGE** the group to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us find ways to minister to many different kinds of people.

COMMANDS

Mark 9:14-27

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members.

Enlist a volunteer to prepare to sign the story from Mark 9:2-9. They will sign the story for the group session.

Practice signing the story from Mark 9:14-27. Practice so you will be able to sign the story without looking at the text.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *Have you experienced something so wonderful you didn't want it to stop?*

EXPLAIN: *Sometimes when Christians meet for a camp or a conference they have a wonderful time. All the campers love Jesus, and they have wonderful times of worship and fellowship. We call this a "mountaintop" experience. We don't want it to stop. We don't want to come down from the mountain. In today's session, we will see what happened when some of the disciples came down from a mountaintop experience. **INVITE** the volunteer to sign the story from Mark 9:2-9 to open the session. **ASK:** *What did Peter want to do? (make tents for everyone so they could stay.) Jesus led them back down the mountain.**

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Powerless (9:14-18)

SIGN the full story from Mark 9:14-27. Then **SIGN** Mark 9:14-18 again.

LEAD the group to respond to questions 2 and 3 from Explore the Text (p. 61). **ASK:** *Why do you think the father asked the disciples to heal his son? (Maybe he thought they could do anything Jesus could do.) Do Christians sometimes put faith in someone other than Jesus? How does that usually work?*

EXPLAIN: *People sometimes trust a preacher or a teacher or a leader. They put more faith in them than in Jesus. People will always disappoint us. But Jesus never will.*

2. Hopeless (9:19-21)

SIGN Mark 9:19-21 again. **FOCUS** on question 4 from Explore the Text (p. 61). **EXPLAIN:** *Note that the evil spirit knew Jesus. When it saw Him, it tried to hurt the boy more. We know Jesus will defeat evil. The evil spirit knew it too.*

3. Faithless (9:22-24)

SIGN Mark 9:22-24. **LEAD** the group to respond to questions 5-7 from Explore the Text (p. 61). **EXPLAIN:** *The father admitted he needed more faith. Probably many Christians would say the same thing. We all need to continually renew our faith and trust Christ more. Perhaps the father's weak faith influenced the faith of the disciples.*

4. Faithful (9:25-27)

SIGN Mark 9:25-27. **FOCUS** on question 8 from Explore the Text (p. 61). **EXPLAIN:** *Remember when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead; He was able to do it even though people doubted and laughed at Him. Here again, we see that the father's weak faith did not influence Jesus' power.*

DIVIDE the group into three smaller groups. **GIVE** each group two of the verses from Bible Skill to read together and discuss. After a few minutes, call the groups back together and let them share what they learned about faith.

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context. **DISCUSS** the questions. **ENCOURAGE** members to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us encourage each other to build our faith.

SAVES

Mark 15:27-39

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will understand how important it is that Jesus died in our place.

Enlist four volunteers to be prepared to sign one of the four sections of Scripture for the session.

Find an illustration of the temple from the time of Jesus. You will show where the curtain was that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

This session may result in someone making a decision to follow Christ.

Be ready to explain the plan of salvation to the group.

FOCUS ATTENTION

DIRECT the group to share parts of the story of Jesus' arrest and trial that they can remember. **CALL** attention to question 1 from Explore the Text (p. 69). **EMPHASIZE** that today's lesson will help the group answer this question.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Crucified (15:27)

ASK the first volunteer to sign Mark 15:27-28. **DISCUSS** questions from Explore the Text (p. 69)

2. Mocked (15:28-32)

INVITE the second volunteer to sign Mark 15:29-32. **DISCUSS** questions 3 and 4 from Explore the Text (p. 69). **EXPLAIN:** *If Jesus did not die on the cross, there would be no hope for us. No one is good enough to get to heaven. All people have sinned. But Jesus was willing to die in our place to give*

us a way to the Father. Again we see how Jesus stayed focused to do the Father's will. He did not let the people influence Him to do what they wanted. What can we learn from this for our lives?

3. Forsaken (15:33-36)

INVITE the third volunteer to sign Mark 15:33-36. **FOCUS** on questions 5-7 from Explore the Text (p. 69). **EXPLAIN:** *Remember God is a holy God. He will not accept sin. When Jesus took on all our sin, God the Father could not look at Him.*

4. Victorious (15:37-39)

INVITE the fourth volunteer to sign Mark 15:37-39. **LEAD** the group to discuss questions 8-10 from Explore the Text (p. 69).

SHOW the group a drawing of the temple, showing where the curtain was. **EXPLAIN:** *The curtain separated the Most Holy Place from the rest of the temple. The Most Holy Place was where the high priest would go to make sacrifices for the people to forgive their sins. When the curtain tore, it showed that Jesus made the final sacrifice for us. We now have a way to the Father.*

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 70).

LEAD the group to discuss the questions. **ENCOURAGE** members to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to give us boldness to tell others about Jesus' crucifixion this week.

SERVES

Mark 10:35-45

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will develop a servant heart.

Find some pictures of servants. (You can do an image search online.) that you can show to the class.

Enlist a volunteer to be prepared to sign the story from John 13:4-15. They will sign the story for the group during the session.

Practice signing the story from Mark 10:35-45. Practice so you can sign the story without reading the text.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *What kind of attitude does a servant have?* **ALLOW** for discussion. (Answers could include: they are humble, they are quick to obey, they look for ways to make their master happy, etc.) **SHOW** the pictures you found of servants. **ASK:** *Does a servant look for attention? Why or why not? What kinds of things do servants do?*

CALL for the volunteer to sign the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet. **EXPLAIN:** *Through all of Jesus' time with the disciples, He gave the example of service. Why did He wash the disciple's feet?*

In today's session, we will see the difference between the world's idea of a leader and Jesus' idea of a leader.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Request (10:35-39a)

SIGN the full story from Mark 10:35-45. Then **SIGN** just the first section again. **LEAD** the group to respond to questions 1-3 from Explore the

Text (p. 77). **EXPLAIN:** *Jesus wanted James and John to really think through what they were asking. They seemed to think Jesus would set up a kingdom, and they wanted to have power in the kingdom. They did not understand Jesus would suffer greatly. He asked if they were willing to go through the same suffering. They said they could, but did they really understand what that meant?*

2. The Reaction (10:39b-41)

SIGN this part of the story again. **CALL** attention to questions 4-6 from Explore the Text (p. 77).

ASK: *What does “motive” mean? (It is a reason for action.) When Christians serve in the church, what are their motives? (Answers could include positive motives like: love for others, love for Jesus, etc. Answers could also include negative motives like: desire for attention, desire for control, etc.) What should our motives be?*

3. The Ransom (10:42-45)

SIGN the last part of the story again. **FOCUS** on questions 7-10 from Explore the Text (p. 77). **ASK:** *What does “ransom” mean? (It is a payment for a set price. The payment required for our sin was death. We should pay for that price. But Jesus came to pay the price for us. He paid the ransom for us.)*

EXPLAIN: *When we serve people with the same attitude Jesus had, people will have a better idea about Jesus.*

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 78).

CHALLENGE the group to record the responses to the questions.

ENCOURAGE the group to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us find opportunities to serve others and show Jesus’ attitude.

PURIFIES

Mark 11:15-19; 12:41-44

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will want to grow in the way they worship Jesus.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Practice signing the verses for the session.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

ASK: *What does it mean to worship God?* (Answers could include: singing, praying, helping others, obeying, serving, etc.) Last week we discussed motive. It is important to know our motive for worship.

EXPLAIN: *One definition of worship is to respond to God as He shows us Himself. This could mean when He shows us His plan, we respond with obedience. Or if He shows us the beauty of His creation, we respond with praise for Him. Think of more examples.*

In today's session, we will learn more about Jesus' ideas about worship.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Jesus Cleanses the Temple (11:15-17)

SUMMARIZE the information from the introduction to the session (p. 83). **EXPLAIN** the temple tax and the requirement for the right coin. Also, explain the selling of animals for sacrifices. All this activity happened in the court where Gentiles could worship. Imagine trying to worship with animals around and buying and selling going on! **ASK:** *How do you think Jesus felt about this?*

SIGN Mark 11:15-17. **LEAD** the group to discuss questions 1-4 from Explore the Text (p. 85). **EXPLAIN:** *Jesus quoted Isaiah 56:7 in verse 17.*

Isaiah made it clear that the temple would be a place Gentiles could worship God. The religious leaders made that very difficult.

2. Leaders Fear Jesus (11:18-19)

SIGN Mark 11:18-19. **FOCUS** on questions 5-7 from Explore the Text (p. 85). **ASK:** *Why do you think the leaders were afraid of Jesus? It is possible they didn't want things to change. Jesus taught a whole new way of life. If they accepted Him, things would change greatly. How did their fear influence their actions?*

ASK: *Are believers sometimes like the religious leaders? How do we resist change?*

3. Jesus Watches (12:41-42)

At another time, Jesus was in the temple again. **SIGN** Mark 12:41-42.

CALL attention to question 8 from Explore the Text (p. 85).

4. Jesus Praises True Giving (12:43-44)

Jesus took the opportunity to teach His disciples about giving. **SIGN** Mark 12:43-44. **LEAD** the group to discuss questions 9 and 10 from Explore the Text (p. 85). **EXPLAIN:** *When the woman gave the two coins, it was a sacrificial gift. She probably did not have money for food. This means she had to trust God fully to care for her needs. On the other hand, it did not hurt the rich people to give. They had plenty. Do you think they trusted God to take care of their needs like the woman?*

ASK: *What kind of attitude should believers have about giving? See 2 Corinthians 9:7.*

IN MY CONTEXT

LEAD the group to answer the questions in the Bible Skill (p. 85).

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 86).

FOCUS on the questions to be discussed as a group. **ENCOURAGE** the group to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to give us hearts to worship Him in the right way.

PROMISES

Mark 13:24-37

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will desire to share the good news until Jesus comes back.

Recruit three volunteers to prepare to sign the three sections of Scripture for the session.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Practice signing the verses for the session.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

EXPLAIN: Chapter 13 in Mark begins with one of the disciples commenting about how wonderful the temple was. Jesus told him the building would someday be destroyed. At other times Jesus told the disciples about false teachers, wars, earthquakes, and famine. He warned of times they would be arrested, and times when family members will betray each other. Many terrible things will happen. Jesus told the disciples to be careful. This message is for us today also.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. All Will See Him! (13:24-27)

CALL for the first volunteer to sign Mark 13:24-27. **FOCUS** on questions 1-4 from Explore the Text (p. 93). See Isaiah 13:10 for help with question 2.

EXPLAIN: We will see Jesus' coming. It will not be a secret. We will recognize Him when He comes. People who are not Christians will experience judgement. But Jesus will gather His people from all over the earth.

ASK: *How does it make you feel to know Jesus will come back? How can you prepare?*

2. We Have Assurance! (13:28-31)

INVITE the second volunteer to sign Mark 13:28-31. **EXPLAIN:** *Jesus told the disciples things what would happen before His coming.*

EXPLAIN: *Verse 30 says, “All these things will happen while the people of this time are still living.” Bible teachers believe this means the people who will be living at the time the troubles begin. Jesus did not mean the people that lived during His time on earth. **ASK:** How do we know Jesus told the truth? (Ask the volunteer to sign verse 31 again.) We can trust Jesus. He wants us to be watching and ready.*

ASK: *If you knew Jesus were coming back today, what would you change? Do you know people who are not believers? How would you talk to them about Jesus? How could you help them to follow Him?*

3. Stay Ready! (13:32-37)

EXPLAIN: *Through history people have tried to predict when Jesus will come back. Some made up exact dates and announced the dates. Some sold everything they had and waited for Jesus to come. Let’s see what Jesus said about the time of His coming. **CALL** for the volunteer to sign Mark 13:32-37. **FOCUS** on questions 5 and 6 from Explore the Text (p. 93). **EXPLAIN:** There are different ideas about how the end will come. Some people believe Jesus will take His people to heaven before the time of tribulation. Others believe we will experience the tribulation first. However, Bible teachers agree, Jesus will come back for us, and we need to be ready! Jesus could come today!*

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points and question from In My Context (p. 94).

ENCOURAGE members to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us live as if Jesus is coming back today.

PREPARES

Mark 14:3-11,32-36

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will find ways to honor Christ in their lives.

Enlist a volunteer to prepare to sign the story from Mark 14:3-9. They will sign it for the group during the session.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

EXPLAIN: *The time was getting close to Jesus' crucifixion. In the Scripture for today's session, Mark told three important stories. The first is about a woman who gave honor to Jesus. The second is about a betrayer. The third is about obedience. As we learn the stories, we have an opportunity to look in our hearts to see if we love and honor Christ. Do we obey Him? Or do we betray and deny Him when times are hard?*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Disciples Misunderstand (14:3-5)

INVITE the volunteer to tell the story of the woman in Mark 14:3-9. Then **DIRECT** them to sign the first three verses again. **CALL** attention to questions 1 and 2 from Explore the Text (p. 101). The Books of Matthew and John also have this story. Matthew said it was the disciples who were upset; John said it was Judas Iscariot. Whoever it was, they were angry with her. They may have thought Jesus would agree with them. **ASK:** *What do you think about their attitudes? How do you think the woman felt?*

2. Honored (14:6-9)

CALL for the volunteer to sign verses 6-9 again. **LEAD** the group to discuss questions 3 and 4 from Explore the Text (p. 101).

ASK: *Do you remember another story in the Bible where one person wanted Jesus to scold another? (If no one remembers, remind them of the time Martha told Jesus to tell Mary to help her. See Luke 10:39-42.)* **EXPLAIN:** *These two stories should teach us something about judging others. A person's way of honoring and serving Jesus may be different from ours. That doesn't mean it is wrong.*

3. Betrayed (14:10-11)

EXPLAIN: *The story of Judas with the story of the woman helps us see the difference in their attitudes toward Jesus.* **SIGN** Mark 14:10-11. **FOCUS** on questions 5 and 6 from Explore the Text (p. 101). **ASK:** *After spending so much time with Jesus, why do you think Judas could betray Him? (See the introduction to the session in the personal study guide for some ideas.)*

4. Committed (14:32-36)

EXPLAIN: *Jesus and His disciples had the Passover meal together and the Lord's Supper. Jesus told the disciples they would leave Him, but they did not believe Him. Next they went to Gethsemane.* **SIGN** Mark 14:32-36. **LEAD** the group to discuss questions 7-9 in Explore the Text (p. 101).

IN MY CONTEXT

GUIDE the group to work together in smaller groups on the Bible Skill (p. 101). **ALLOW** volunteers to share insights gathered from completing the Bible Skill (p. 101).

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 102). **DIRECT** the group to record their responses to the questions. **ENCOURAGE** members to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us obey like Jesus did.

LIVES

Mark 15:42-47; 16:1-8

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will experience joy as they remember Jesus defeated death.

Enlist three volunteers to prepare to sign the three sections of Scripture. They should practice so they will not need to read the text as they sign for the group session.

Find a picture of the empty tomb to put on the wall for the session.

Write the outline for the session on the board.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

EXPLAIN: *On Easter Sunday we studied the crucifixion of Jesus. We learned how He was crucified with criminals on either side of Him. We read about how the people and religious leaders mocked Jesus while He was on the cross. The earth became dark while Jesus took on the sin of all people. When Jesus died, the curtain in the temple tore from top to bottom, and the soldier near Him said, "This man really was the Son of God!"*

There were some women watching everything that happened. These women had followed Jesus and helped take care of His needs during His time of ministry. We will learn more about these women in today's session.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Buried (15:42-47)

INVITE the first volunteer to sign Mark 15:42-47. **FOCUS** on questions 1-4 from Explore the Text (p. 109). **EXPLAIN:** *It is important to understand that Jesus died. Through history, some people have said Jesus just passed out, then later woke up again. Mark made it clear that Jesus died. Pilate made the soldiers*

check to be sure. John 19:31-34 tells us that the soldiers broke the legs of some of the men on the crosses to make them die faster. They did not need to break Jesus' legs because He was already dead. But they did put a spear in His side to be sure.

2. Followers Grieve Jesus' Death (16:1-4)

CALL for the second volunteer to sign Mark 16:1-4. **LEAD** the group to discuss questions 5-7 from Explore the Text (p. 109). **ASK:** *What do you think the women thought when they saw the stone rolled away from the tomb? Apparently they did not expect the resurrection because they came to the tomb to put spices on Jesus' body. They did not have time to do this when Jesus died because of the Sabbath.*

3. Resurrected (16:5-8)

INVITE the third volunteer to sign Mark 16:5-8. **FOCUS** on questions 8-11 from Explore the Text (p. 109).

EXPLAIN: *The other gospels tell us that the women did tell the disciples what they saw. Matthew said they were afraid but had joy. When we look at all four gospels we get a clearer picture of what happened after the resurrection. Take time to read each gospel story of the resurrection and Jesus' appearances. It is important for us to know both that Jesus truly died and that He truly rose from the dead and people saw Him.*

IN MY CONTEXT

DIRECT partners to complete the Bible Skill (p. 109). After a few minutes, bring the group back together to share what they learned.

REVIEW the main points of the session from In My Context (p. 110).

LEAD the group to respond to the questions. **ENCOURAGE** members to do the daily readings for the week and to meet with someone for Connect and Share. **CLOSE** in prayer, asking God to help us share the good news about the resurrection with others.

LEADER PACK

»» **PACK ITEM 1**

Map: Places in Jesus' Ministry

Sessions 1-13

Use the map at the back of the Personal Study Guide or locate a map in a Bible atlas that shows the locations of Judea, Galilee, Samaria, and Caesarea Philippi.

»» **PACK ITEM 2**

Outline of Mark

Sessions 1-13

Refer to the outline printed on page 7.

»» **PACK ITEM 3**

Poster: Jesus' Authority

Sessions 4,8,9

Create a poster that displays the actions of Jesus throughout the region of the Sea of Galilee. Include that Jesus called His first disciples, taught in the synagogue, performed many healings, cast out demons, and fed thousands.

»» **PACK ITEM 4**

Poster: Sea of Galilee

Sessions 1,5,7

Use a Bible atlas to locate a map of the Sea of Galilee and the surrounding areas.

»» **PACK ITEM 5**

Poster: "Don't Tell Anyone"

Sessions 4,6

Use a Bible dictionary to create a poster that lists instances of when Jesus performed miracles and then instructed those present not to share what they had just experienced. Include these Scriptures: Mark 1:40-45; 7:35-36; 8:27-30.

»» **PACK ITEM 6**

Key Verse: Mark 10:45

Sessions 9,10,12,13

Create a poster that lists Mark 10:45:
"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

»» **PACK ITEM 7**

Handout: Mark Time Line

Sessions 1,3

Locate a study Bible with a time line of the major people and events in the Book of Mark (from 75 BC–AD 33). Use it as a reference during this study.

»» **PACK ITEM 8**

Handout: Memory Verses Bookmark

Sessions 1-13

Make a list of these suggested memory verses to distribute to your group:

- Mark 1:17
- Mark 2:5
- Mark 3:35
- Mark 5:36b
- Mark 6:12
- Mark 7:37
- Mark 8:29
- Mark 15:39
- Mark 10:43-44
- Mark 12:44
- Mark 13:33
- Mark 14:36
- Mark 16:6
- Mark 16:6

»» **PACK ITEM 9**

Handout: Gentiles Featured in Mark

Sessions 6,11,13

Use a Bible dictionary or commentary to review Jesus' interactions with Gentiles throughout the Book of Mark. Create a handout that includes the following Scriptures: Mark 5:1-20; 7:24-37; 8:1-20,22-26; 11:15-18; 13:10.

»» **PACK ITEM 10**

Handout: Miracles of Jesus in Mark

Sessions 2,4,6,7

Create a handout of the many miracles Jesus performed in the Book of Mark. Use a Bible dictionary or commentary for help.

»» **PACK ITEM 11**

Handout: Controversy in Mark

Session 2

Use the *Holman Bible Handbook* or other Bible dictionary to review instances of Jesus being in controversy with the Pharisees for His actions. Include His doing good on the Sabbath, right to forgive sin, performing exorcisms and healings, and Jesus' authority to cleanse the temple.

PACK ITEM 12

Handout: The “Son of Man” in Mark

Sessions 2,11

Search the Book of Mark for instances of the title the “Son of Man.” List these verses on a handout for your group.

PACK ITEM 13

Handout: Who Was at the Cross?

Sessions 8,13

Study the Gospel chapters detailing Jesus’ crucifixion (Matt. 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; and John 19), and create a chart of who was present at the cross and which Gospel writer included them.

Places in Jesus' Ministry



Mark

The Gospel of Mark is all about action. Does it teach deep theology? Absolutely. Does it tell us interesting and insightful things about Jesus? Of course it does. But why? It is to spur us to action, to cause us to take the truth we hold in our hearts and demonstrate it with our hands. For many today, Christianity is about morality, knowledge, or social connections. But for first century Christians it was first about identity with Jesus—following after Him, doing what He did, and obeying His commands. As you walk through this powerful book, many of your preconceptions about Christianity may be challenged. You may find yourself faced with difficult questions about what it actually means to be a follower of Jesus. And if this happens, you will be blessed.



Let the Word dwell in you.

The Promise of a

18 But with thee
enant; and thou shalt
thou, and thy sons, and
wives with thee.

19 And of every living
of every sort shalt thou
keep them alive with thee,
and female.

20 Of fowls after their
ter their kind, of every
earth after his kind,
come unto thee, to keep

here, and its meaning is
tions include "roof" or "tent,"
then the text probably in-
ches over the sides of the
dow," then it refers to all
four sides of the boat from

6:17 Only after He com-
did God tell him why it was
a flood—a term used only
all-destroying flood in No-
earth shall die. The bible
in Genesis 6–8 most nat-
covered the entire globe.
this (2 Pet. 2:5, 3:6). That
dominant Christian under-
remains so today. Defen-
explain the flood's impact
also tackle questions su-
quired to flood the entire
pre-flood geography, so
have needed four times
the flood to cover the b-
In this light some defen-
gested that pre-flood ge-
ography. Specifically, the
was flatter in the pre-flood
to flood, and that the viol-
geographical and geologi-
cal approach suggesting
ity is largely the same, but
greater quantity of water
that by an unknown me-
has greatly diminished at

6:18 The term **covenant** is
ment between two parties
tract.

6:19 God's preservation
cal support billions of ani-
male and one female of
every kind.

6:20 "And thou shalt keep