



The Study Of  
*MARK*

Friends,

Welcome to this study of the gospel of Mark!

My desire is that this study will help you not only explore the story of Jesus, but bring a richer understanding of the salvation that Christ offers us. Together, we will be going through the 16 chapters of the book of Mark using, along with your Bible, three simple additional resources; the workbook you are now holding, video recorded lectures of the text, and discussion questions for your small groups to consider.

My desire is that you see afresh Jesus' profound care for people, his love for them, and his desire to be involved in their lives. We tend to understand God foremost as a forger of rules and abstractions rather than seeing him primarily through a relational lens. Yet, Scripture actually demonstrates that God is intimate with his followers and deeply yearns to have relationship with them despite their rejection. Just look at the consistent rejection by the Israelites in the Old Testament and God's ongoing affirmation of his covenant with them.

We see the very same thing in the gospels as Jesus is consistently challenged and frequently rejected! Even though he is subject to relentless opposition, Jesus continues to love the disenfranchised people surrounding him, and actively seeks those who are culturally marginalized, embracing them as his children. This is the story of Jesus. And this is the story of his church.

Our study of Mark will see Jesus' ongoing affection in the face of opposition from those who resist him. Here's the basic outline we'll be following:

- I. The Coming of God's Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, 1:1-1:45
- II. The Christ's coming provokes opposition, 2:1-3:6
- III. The Christ's response to rising opposition, 3:7-8:30
- IV. The Christ prepares his disciples for opposition, 8:31-10:31
- V. The Christ confronts opposition, 10:32-13:37
- VI. The Christ bears opposition, 14:1-16:20

The workbook you have in your hands is the anchor to the study. It is intended to be a helpful tool to explore the gospel. Please keep the following in mind as we move forward through this study:

- Please fill in the blanks as I talk.
- At the end of each session, you'll see a section titled, "***Additional Comments***". In those pages, I'll be filling in details and some biblical trivia I think you might find particularly interesting. Please look over these additional comments after each section is done.
- You will find discussion questions for the small group woven into each session. Please do not hesitate to pause and talk. A particularly high value in the small group experience is the discussion you share.

Please take time to enjoy that connective element and not simply listen to me talk. Even if it means you cannot complete the materials for the session in one sitting.

In some cases, because of the high volume of material we cover and the depth of your own conversations, you may actually need two meeting times to cover a single session. That's OK! Savor both the information and the connection with one another.

May the study provoke you to consider your own faithful walk with God and your relationship with Christ Jesus. I'm blessed to share this study with you.

In Christ,


Pastor Dan

## INDEX

|                                      |         |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Session 1, INTRODUCTION & PART I     | Page 01 |
| Session 2, PART II                   | Page 06 |
| Session 3, PART III                  | Page 11 |
| Session 4, PART III (Cont)           | Page 16 |
| Session 5, PART III (Cont) & PART IV | Page 24 |
| Session 6, PART IV (Cont)            | Page 29 |
| Session 7, PART V                    | Page 34 |
| Session 8, PART V (Cont) & PART VI   | Page 40 |
| Session 9, PART VI (Cont)            | Page 46 |
| Bibliography                         | Page 55 |

# STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 1

## INTRODUCTION TO OUR STUDY OF MARK

 Begin Video. Use this workbook to follow and to take notes.

Goals for our study of Mark:

1. That we will see Jesus as \_\_\_\_\_ in the life of the people around him.
2. That we see that Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ about his mission.
3. And in our small groups, that we can share a commonality as followers of Jesus to be an encouragement to each other. Faith cannot be lived out in \_\_\_\_\_.

To start a study of Mark, let's take a look at a timeline of dates and then we'll look at Mark specifically.

- Jesus was born between \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus' ministry was between \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus died and resurrected between \_\_\_\_\_.
- The first books of the New Testament were written about \_\_\_\_\_ after Jesus had ascended, around \_\_\_\_\_. We believe the first epistles were \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.


Three reasons for the writing of the gospels. All three are understandable.

- a. The apostles were getting old and they realized their \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. The new church was growing faster and bigger. They needed a book of \_\_\_\_\_ explaining who Jesus is.
- c. There was confusion about the nature of Jesus. To prevent \_\_\_\_\_ the gospels were written to bring clarity.

Mark was written sometime between \_\_\_\_\_. Along with Matthew and Luke they are called the \_\_\_\_\_. It seems that Matthew and Luke used Mark's outline as the basis of their gospels.

Mark's audience were \_\_\_\_\_. And \_\_\_\_\_ was the voice behind the gospel.

## PART I: THE COMING OF GOD'S CHRIST, JESUS OF NAZARETH MARK 1:1-1:45


 Pause the video, read Mark 1:1-11 as a group, then restart the video.

- Note there is no Christmas story. Look at Luke 2 or Matthew 1-2 for the Christmas story.
- The book of Mark begins with John the Baptist as an adult. It takes place where the Jordan River meets the Dead Sea.
- John modeled the Old Testament prophets and attracted the crowd.

Mark 1:9-11 is actually the beginning of the gospel story.

Notice the reference of the Trinity. The Father spoke, a dove came representing the Holy Spirit, and Jesus, the Son

*For more information on verses 12-13, read comment A in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 1 worksheet.*

 Pause the video now, read Mark 1: 14-20 as a group, then restart the video.

*Concerning John's arrest, check out Comment B in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 1 worksheet.*

- Jesus' calling of the disciples was NOT a call to be apostles but to be a disciple, a follower.
- Who Jesus called is important. He chose fisherman and not the intellectual elites. Understand that \_\_\_\_\_ of the population were called the \_\_\_\_\_. The 90% paid for the 10% to have a good life.

*Check out Comment C in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 1 worksheet for thoughts on fishing.*

Mark 1:21-28 now has Jesus actively moving into ministry. We find out a few things:

- A worship at the synagogue happened weekly throughout Jesus' ministry
- \_\_\_\_\_ was the headquarters for Jesus' ministry.

- Sabbath started at sunset on Friday and ended when three stars appeared on Saturday at sunset. The rest was intended to study Scripture and have a restful time with your family.
- Synagogue had three functions: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ . What we see is that Jesus read the Scripture and then gave explanation.

*For additional information about the three “offices” in the synagogue, see Comment D in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 1 worksheet.*



Pause the Video and read Mark 1:22 as a group.

Talk about these questions:

- 1) What does it mean to speak with authority? Who have you seen that speaks with authority?
- 2) How did they speak with authority?



After your conversation, read Mark 1:29-34 as a group, then restart the video.

A demon possessed man is healed in the synagogue. This is the beginning of Jesus challenging tradition over compassion. Is healing “work”? We’ll be hearing much about this throughout Mark.

- When the sabbath service was done, the men would go home and have a sabbath lunch about noon. Peter’s mother-in-law was ill and Jesus, again on the sabbath, heals her.



Pause the Video, read Mark 1:40-45 as a group, then restart the video.

- The chapter ends with the healing of a leper (also found in Matthew 8:2-4) A leper was to stay isolated from the community but broke with cultural norms and reached out to Jesus. His approach was one of humility.

Jesus accepts the approach and actually breaks cultural norms, touches the man and heals him.

*For additional information about the disease of leprosy, see Comment E in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 1 worksheet.*

Assignment for next session:

Before the next session, read Mark 2:1 **through** Mark 3:6

## Additional Comments on Mark 1:1-45

- A) In **vs. 12-13** Mark notes that Jesus was in the wilderness with “wild animals.” In the first century there were jackals, wild boar, leopards, and possibly bears. Most fearful for me is that there are ten different varieties of poisonous snakes in the Holy Land. I hate snakes. This would have me screaming out of the wilderness.

Jesus walked into this wilderness for 40 days. The number 40 does have a meaning. Numerology is very much part of biblical teaching. The number 7 signifies “complete and whole”. The number 4 signifies “the complete earth”, the number 40, “a complete generation”. We have Noah on the boat for 40 days and Israel wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, and now we see Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days. It is a statement that Jesus is now engaging his ministry and change is coming.

- B) In **vs. 14-20**, John the Baptist was arrested by Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. John publicly confronted Herod and the scandalous relationship he was having with his niece, Herodias. Yes, having an intimate relationship with his niece was wrong but she was also married to Herod Antipas’ brother, Philip, and had an affair with her uncle. Of course, she was married to her uncle. Yes, this is all true.

Herodias’ dad was Aristobulus, the brother to Philip and Herod Antipas. The whole thing was repugnant to the Jewish people and John the Baptist simply pointed out what everyone already was thinking. John was thrown into prison as a result.

- C) Concerning **vs. 14-24**, fishing in the Sea of Galilee:  
Today fishing is still a very active industry. You can see the netting of the fish happening when you travel around the Sea of Galilee. The fish there today is commonly called the “St. Peter’s fish” from the Tilapia family. It is about a foot long and quite tasty.



Figure 1: St. Peter Fish



The fish was typically salted and preserved. People rarely ate meat, it was too expensive. To eat fresh fish was a great delicacy because anything caught had to sustain a family during the dry times.

There were two kinds of nets. One was called the seine which was weighted and stood upright in the water. As a boat moved forward the four corners were drawn together. The second was called an ambphiblestron, a smaller net that was cast by hand and looked like an umbrella.



Figure 2: Fishing Net Weight



Figure 3: Fishing Net Weight

D) Vs. 21-28, All religious Jews were expected to be active in the synagogue. It was through the synagogue that the local Jewish community was served. There were three offices that administrated and maintained the congregation.

- “The ruler of the synagogue” who administrated and organized the services
- “The Distributor of the Alms” who took the daily collection in cash as well as items that would be given to the “widows and orphans” and the poor.
- Chazzan or “The Minister” who took care of the sacred scrolls, cleaned the synagogue, and had the task of “blowing blasts on the silver trumpet” when sabbath started.

The trumpet is a shofar. There are two kinds used today, both are kosher. One is a very long antelope horn, often coming from Yemen, used to start the sabbath or shabbot. The other is a short “ram’s horn” which is used on the most holy days of the Jewish year.

E) Vs. 40-45, There were different kinds of leprosy.

1. Nodular or tubercular that lasted about 9 years
2. Anesthetic that had a loss of nerve feeling. It lasted 20-30 years
3. A mix of both nodular and anesthetic

Leprosy was more common in the Middle East because of the dry climate. We in the States will rarely see leprosy because of the humidity. I come from Michigan. Our state is a big swamp surrounded by big lakes.


**STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 2**  
**PART II: THE CHRIST'S COMING PROVOKES OPPOSITION**  
**Mark 2:1-3:6**

In this section you will see Jesus creating tension. He is quite intentional pushing buttons on the religious about their traditions taking precedent over relationship.

For Conversation:

- Describe a family tradition you have in your home or you grew up with as a child. This could certainly be around a holiday or something else.


**JESUS CREATES TENSION #1**

-  Have someone in your group read Mark 2:1-12, then begin today's video. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes.

*For more information on Mark 2:1-12, read comment A in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 2 worksheet.*

- Houses were small and made of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus looks at the crippled guy and said, "Son, your sins are \_\_\_\_\_." The man's heart must have been pretty hardened, and Jesus speaks right \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Teachers of the Law, or the \_\_\_\_\_ were the \_\_\_\_\_ . What Jesus was doing challenged the very mind of what they believed.
- The man picks up his mat and walks out of the room. Jesus has authority to heal.

**JESUS CREATES TENSION #2**

-  Pause the video and read Mark 2:13-17 as a group, then restart the video. (NOTE: This scene is also found in Matthew 9:9 and Luke 5:27-32)


- Capernaum was a center for \_\_\_\_\_ and owned by Herod Antipas
- Levi, son of Alphaeus, was collecting taxes, he is \_\_\_\_\_. It was an offense for a Jew to collect taxes. The offense bridged on hate and, yet, he sits at a table collecting the taxes. He was an outcast.

- He was working for the \_\_\_\_\_. The family of Herod were allies with the Romans.

*For more information on Jews in government work, read comment B in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 2 worksheet.*

- Jesus approaches him. \_\_\_\_\_.
- He eats lunch with Levi and his friends called "sinners." For any of the religious Jews this was a deep offense.
- Jesus is challenged and simply notes: It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

### **JESUS CREATES TENSION #3**

 Pause the video and read Mark 2:18-22 as a group, then restart the video.

- Stricter Jews fasted \_\_\_\_\_ (Monday and Thursday) from 6am to 6pm.
- Jesus describes his ministry like a \_\_\_\_\_, a time of celebration.
- The two word-pictures of vs. 20-22. The clothing and a patch and wine skin. The point: \_\_\_\_\_.

*For more information on old and new wineskins, read comment C in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 2 worksheet.*

### **JESUS CREATES TENSION #4**

Mark 2: 23-27

- \_\_\_\_\_ Laws were extensive controlling every aspect of life. I'll give some examples.
- The eating of grain as they walked through a field could be considered work.
- Jesus is pushing this point: What drives our faith walk? Do the rules drive faith or faith drive the rules.

*The OT story Jesus uses is referenced in comment D in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 2 worksheet.*

- The important point is that God is \_\_\_\_\_.

## JESUS CREATES TENSION #5

Mark 3:1-6

- The shriveled hand was a \_\_\_\_\_ to see what Jesus would do.
- The Greek tells us that the shriveled hand \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- To Jesus, faith is \_\_\_\_\_.

*For additional thoughts on the impact and implications of this scene, see comment E in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 2 worksheet.*

Discuss the following within your small groups:

- Jesus enters the home of Levi and eats with "sinners." Who would that be today? Please be careful of being too extreme. Usually the "sinners" are right in front of us.
- In Mark 2, I'm struck by Jesus' words on the Sabbath. How do we in our own worship life, restrict the Gospel from being heard?
- Have you experienced opposition to your faith? Share a story.

Assignment for next Session:

Before the next session, read Mark 3:7 **through** Mark 4:41

## Additional Comments on Mark 2:1-3:6

### A) Mark 2:1-12

- Vs. 1-2, Homes were made out of **stone** because that was the local resource. They simply didn't have trees. You'll see this today in Israel as well. The local stone around Capernaum was basalt, a black colored stone. In Jerusalem, buildings were made out of limestone, a white colored stone, and easy to manipulate.
- Vs. 6 notes the **Scribes** in the ESV and "Teachers of the Law" in the NIV. Scribes were men who were very religious and copied the scrolls. All Scrolls in that day were copied onto parchment. The Scribe was a highly gifted student of the Scriptures and meticulous in copying the Scriptures. In studying the book of Isaiah from the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery in 1948, we see the work of the Scribes. Their work is extraordinarily good and each writer was nearly identical with the next writer. It is only recently with the use of new technology that they have identified that there were two writers for the Isaiah scroll. (Biblical Archeology Review, fall 2022)
- The skill of the Scribes was highly respected by the culture. While a common laborer made one denarius a day, the Scribe was paid 5 denarii a day.

### B) Mark 2:13-17

- For a Jew to work for the government was truly offensive. In fact, they could not serve as witnesses or as judges and were expelled from the synagogue. In fact, not only was the person rejected, so also was their family shamed.

### C) Mark 2:20-22

- When the grape harvest came, the juice was poured into animal skins. Typically, a goat skin was used tying up the legs and pouring the juice through the neck and then the neck would be tied off. As the fermentation took place the skin would expand. New wine skins easily expanded. Once it was done and the wine used, the skin was discarded. It no longer had the flexibility. Jesus is clear that his message is new and the old simply couldn't manage it.

### D) Mark 2:23-27

- Check out I Samuel 21:1-6 and read the story of David and Abiathar, the High Priest. David is fleeing from King Saul. The point is that it is always to do good and save life.

### E) Mark 3:1-6

- The incident of the shriveled hand occurred on the sabbath in the synagogue. For the religious Jew this would have been work and inexcusable. Jesus challenges this thinking as he did with the eating of wheat on the Sabbath day in Mark 2:23.

- At the end of the reading, we're told that both the Pharisees and Herodians were working together to kill Jesus. This relationship is really bizarre. Pharisees were offended by the Herodians and the Romans. Any contact with them would make a religious Jew unclean. To create a partnership shows the extent in which they feared Jesus as a challenge to the status quo.
- For any of us, change is remarkably difficult. We all want to hold to the status quo unless we are pushed into change and are forced out of the status quo. Jesus NEVER lives in the status quo. He calls us out of convenience and comfort. We will all find this difficult.


# STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 3

## PART III: THE CHRIST'S RESPONSE TO RISING OPPOSITION

### Mark 3:7-30

#### For Conversation:

- How does the American education system teach?
- What do you think American students need?
- How about people at the time of Jesus?

 Begin Video for Session 3. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes.

Now we go into a lengthy section on Jesus responding to opposition. We have seen that he is not scared of creating some opposition. He knows where to poke to create a response. Of course, this means the opposition by the power elites will continue to grow.

#### Mark 3:7-12, The Crowds Are Coming

- Another use of the word crowd is \_\_\_\_\_ or a \_\_\_\_\_ group of people.
- Notice that people are coming from all over the region. Check out the map from the video.

#### Mark 3:13-19. Calling of the Apostles

- Jesus gives them the expectations. Three of them:
  - a. Vs. 14, that they might \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Vs. 14, send them out to \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Vs. 15, authority to \_\_\_\_\_
- The twelve were called the \_\_\_\_\_ who willingly committed their lives to the teacher.

*For more information on Talmidin and their rabbi, read comment A in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 3 worksheet.*

#### Mark 3:20-30, Jesus' popularity


- Vs. 21 says his family came to \_\_\_\_\_.

- At the same time, vs. 22 tells us that \_\_\_\_\_ (ESV) “*Teachers of the Law*” (NIV) had come from \_\_\_\_\_.

*For more information on the derogatory insult of these men, read comment B in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 3 worksheet.*


- Vs. 28-29 says, “*Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.*”
- It means if you \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus is God and you still \_\_\_\_\_ him, you are binding the Holy Spirit from touching your heart.

This is not the same as drifting away from faith. Very few people know who Jesus is and then deny him. They simply walk away.

 Please pause the video and read Mark 4:1-8 as a group


As you read, fill in the worksheet listing the four types of soil.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

 Restart the video when you have finished reading these verses.

- Mark 4:1, When Jesus was ready to instruct, he \_\_\_\_\_ down.
- Jesus is teaching in the \_\_\_\_\_. Instruction was to take place in the synagogue. It was counter cultural for Jesus to preach in this way.
- Jesus goes to the people. It does seem like the right thing to do, but typically we wait for people to come to us.

*For more thoughts on the sowing of seeds in this region, read comment C in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 3 worksheet.*

 Please pause the video, read Mark 4:13-20 as a group and then restart the video.



Take your list of the four points from vs. 1-8. What does Jesus say about each point? Fill in the worksheet

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

*For more information on Jesus' warnings about materialism, read comment D in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 3 worksheet.*

Mark 4:21-34 Jesus speaks three more short parables for the crowds. The parables were a tool to create conversation. How do we craft these moments so conversations can happen?

*For more an additional thought about why Jesus uses parables, read comment E in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 3 worksheet.*

Mark 4:35-41, the stilling of the storm (Mt. 8:23-27, Luke 8:22-25)

- Vs. 37, "A furious \_\_\_\_\_ came up..."
- They appeal to Jesus and he \_\_\_\_\_ the waves. What does this tell us about Jesus? Think Genesis 1.

*For an additional thought about the significance of storms and the kind of boat in which Jesus and the disciples may have been riding, read comment f in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 3 worksheet.*

Discuss the following within your small groups:

- In Mark 3 Jesus calls twelve to the office of apostle. Notice the three expectations. Most important was to "be with Jesus." In your life who has influenced you by simply being in their presence.
- Describe one crafted conversation that someone had with you, or you had with someone. How did it go?

Assignment for next Session:

Before the next session, read all of Mark chapter 5.

## Additional Comments on Mark 3:7-4:41

### A) Mark 3:13-19

- In first century Judaism, schools were associated with the local synagogue. It seems that each community hired a teacher (rabbi). He instructed children from age 4-12 and adults. At about age 13, the very best male students advanced to “Beth Midrash” while the majority of boys ended their formal schooling and began working in the family trade. By this age, girls had completed their formal schooling and remained at home.
- A few (very few) who were outstanding sought permission to study with a famous rabbi traveling with him for a lengthy period of time. These students are called the Talmidin or disciple. He dedicated his life to the teacher and wanted to know everything about the teacher. He wanted to imitate the teacher. These students were passionately devoted to the rabbi.
- Jesus chose his twelve Talmidin and they weren’t all that bright. The people would see that he did everything differently.
- Do understand that the Jews in Galilee memorized Scripture throughout their lifetimes because they were determined to know and live by the Word of God and to pass their faith to their children.

### B) Mark 3:22-29

Vs. 22, Beelzebul is also described as a “heathen diety; may mean ‘dung god,’ ‘god of flies,’ or lord of the dwelling.”

### C) Mark 4:1-8, Sower and the Seed parable

- It was common for farmers to have a bag of seed and walk the field throwing the seed out and hope it would germinate and give them a harvest. Obviously, there wasn’t much science to all of this. The region is a dry climate so there is always a fear of drought and famine. When you read the Scriptures, you will frequently find that there is a famine. Remember Genesis 12:10, “Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt...” or Acts 11:28, “...through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world (this happened during the reign of Claudius)...” This did happen between 46-47 A.D.
- After the seed was thrown out, an ox with a harrow or a flock of sheep and goats was driven through the field to turn the soil over the seed. Again, this isn’t all that scientific.

D) Mark 4:13-20

I find vs. 19 quite interesting. Jesus says, "...but the worries of his life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word..." Jesus does more instruction about the desire of materialism than any other topic. We, Americans, do live in an extraordinarily prosperous country and I do think the gospel message is difficult to receive, based on Jesus' own teaching.

E) Mark 4:21-34, parables

Ray Vander Laan, a biblical scholar, notes that the people of the Scriptures had an Eastern mind-set rather than a Western mind-set. Whereas, he writes, Westerners tend to collect information to find the right answer, Hebrew thought stresses the process of discovery as well as the answer. Thus, Jesus spoke in parables.

F) Mark 4:35-41, storms

- Water was seen as a place of evil and chaos because water could not be controlled. Traditionally, the Jews have feared the sea as a symbol of the abyss, the place where evil spirits live. This would certainly speak to the heart of the disciples when Jesus stills the storm.
- In 1986 a first century fishing boat was found in the mud of the Sea of Galilee. The boat was 27 feet long and 7.5 feet wide. It does give us a perspective of the boat being used. There would have been a small sail and oars. The sides were low so they could cast nets. Below is a picture from the museum at the kibbutz Ginosar on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.




## STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 4

### PART III: THE CHRIST'S RESPONSE TO RISING OPPOSITION (continued)

#### Mark 5 and 6

#### For Conversation:

- In your group, describe a time you were so excited about something that you had to tell people. Yes, you have a story. I see them on Facebook all of the time.

 Begin Video for Session 4. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes.

#### Mark 5: 1-20

Today we're going to look at Mark 5. It is a chapter filled with two very powerful stories of Jesus reaching into the lives of people. These stories are worth telling over and over again.


Look at the onscreen map. Note where Capernaum is located. Remember this is the headquarters for Jesus' ministry.


Decapolis means the ten cities; \_\_\_\_\_ means "ten", \_\_\_\_\_ means "cities". This is the region of ten \_\_\_\_\_ retirement cities.

Open your Bibles to Mark 5:1-20 (Mt. 8:28-34, Luke 8:22-25).

This story is found in all three of the synoptics.


*For additional information about the synoptics, the Decapolis and demon possession, read comment A in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 4 worksheet.*

-  Pause the video and read vs. 2-10 as a group. Answer these reading questions and talk through this part of the story:
- a. When they landed, where did they end up?
  - b. What was the immediate result? Looking at vs. 2-5, we get a pretty good picture of the guy(s).
  - c. Notice how the demon possessed guy responded when he saw Jesus. Then we see a conversation. All of this is really interesting.


 Restart the video after your conversation.

Jewish people \_\_\_\_\_ go to a tomb, it made them \_\_\_\_\_ .

The demon actually said, "My name is \_\_\_\_\_."

 Now pause the video and read vs. 11-20 as a group. Answer these reading questions and talk through this part of the story:

- a. Where did Jesus cast out the demons?
- b. How did the pig herders respond?
- c. How did the demon possessed guy respond?


 Restart the video after your conversation.

In Galilee he, after doing a miracle, Jesus told people to not tell anyone. This is called the \_\_\_\_\_.

In vs. 20, we are told, "...the man went away and began to \_\_\_\_\_ how much Jesus had done for him..."

Mark 5:21-43

A comment about the synagogue ruler.

 Pause the video and read Mark 5:24-34 as a group, considering the following questions as you read.

- a. How many years has the woman had an issue with bleeding?
- b. How was the medical care?
- c. In her act of desperation how does she approach Jesus.
- d. How does Jesus react?
- e. Ultimately, what does the woman do? What does Jesus do?.


 Restart the video after you have read the section.

- The woman was \_\_\_\_\_ unclean (Lev. 15:25) for \_\_\_\_\_. She was \_\_\_\_\_ from public worship and \_\_\_\_\_ from her family and the community.

Every religious Jewish man wore an outer robe with four \_\_\_\_\_ called the \_\_\_\_\_. It was a fulfilling of Numbers 15:38-39.

*For additional information about the synoptics, the Decapolis and demon possession, read comment B in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 4 worksheet.*

He looked at the woman and said, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."


 Pause the video and read Mark 5:35-43 as a group. Talk briefly among yourselves about which verses catch your attention, then restart the video.

Jesus looks directly at Jairus, *“Don’t be afraid; just believe.”*

*For additional information about funerals at the time of Jesus, read comment C in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 4 worksheet.*

- Vs. 43, He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this. This, again, is the \_\_\_\_\_.

Interesting that the woman had bleeding for 12 years and the young girl who had died was 12 years old. Both are given hope when there was no hope.

 Pause the video and spend a minute in your small groups on this question: *Describe a presentation you had to make before a group of people that created anxiety for you.* After your discussion, restart the video.

*For additional information about Jesus teaching in the synagogue of his home town, read comment D in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 4 worksheet.*

Looking at Mark 6:6b-12, we see that Jesus gathers his twelve apostles and sends them out two by two. I love the description in vs. 7, *“..and gave them authority over evil spirits.”* Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ his new followers to experience spiritual authority.

It does provoke the question of our own preparation for the next generation.

*For additional information about the death of John the Baptist, read comment E in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 4 worksheet.*

The chapter closes with two important stories. Remember that Jesus is preparing the next generation.

The first is the Feeding of the 5000 in Mark 6:30-44. This the only miracle found in all \_\_\_\_\_ gospels.

The apostle’s \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus what they were able to do.

Jesus says, *“\_\_\_\_\_ with me by yourselves to a \_\_\_\_\_ place and get some \_\_\_\_\_.”*

Mark 6: 34 speaks to Jesus. He puts aside his time for the sake of others. Look at the language, *“...he had \_\_\_\_\_ on them because they were like a sheep \_\_\_\_\_ a shepherd so he began \_\_\_\_\_ them many things.”*

Scripture is filled with expectations for the next generation.


II Timothy 2:2, “...entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to \_\_\_\_\_”

Moses speaks to this in Deuteronomy 6:6, “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. \_\_\_\_\_ them on your children...”

So, Jesus teaches to thousands and at the end of the day, the people are hungry. Jesus pointedly looks at the disciples and calls them to feed the people. He says, “\_\_\_\_\_ give them something to \_\_\_\_\_.”

It would seem an easy request since they had just returned from their missionary trip, but with many of us, we forget.

*For a bit more information about the feeding of the 5000, read comment F in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 4 worksheet.*

 Pause the video and read the second story of Jesus walking on Water, in Mark 6:45-56 with your small group. Then restart the video.

Jesus says, “Take \_\_\_\_\_! It is I. \_\_\_\_\_ be afraid.”

What’s missing from the story? Matthew 14 tells us. \_\_\_\_\_ walking on water.

As with all of this, Jesus is pushing his disciples to keep growing.

*For a more information about Jesus’ walking on the water, read comment G in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 4 worksheet.*

Assignment for next Session:

Before the next session, read Mark Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

## Additional Comments on Mark 4 and 5

### A) Mark 5:1-20

- When you read the other two gospels (the synoptics), you'll see some additional information. Most notable is that Matthew says there were two demon possessed guys but Mark and Luke say there is one. The discrepancy for some is bothersome. One thought is that the guy in Mark and Luke was the talker so he is identified. The other guy did a lot of watching. Seems like a simplistic answer but I do think this is likely.
- The Decapolis (ten cities) were essentially Greek and Roman cities. Since the Roman government was encouraging settlement of soldiers, they were given some advantages. For example, they were semi-independent, had their own ruling council, their own coinage as well as Roman tax breaks. The cities were well known for their deep passion of Greek thought and life.
- Does demon possession happen? Jesus acknowledges them and we see frequently Jesus confronting demon possession and exorcising the demons. We, today, are much more rational and usually come up with some definition that avoids the existence of evil beings. Scripture never does this acknowledging there is a devil and that the devil's head will be crushed. So, yes, someone could be possessed today.

### B) Mark 5:21-34

- The Talmud, which compiled the civil and ceremonial law, listed 11 cures. She likely did all 11 and none of them worked. She was in a hopeless situation.
- Notice she had the bleeding for 12 years and the young girl healed was twelve years old.
- The Jewish robe had the Tzitzit (tassels). Today the religious Jewish male after bar mitvah (around 13) wears a tallit, a small poncho, with four tassels under their shirt.

“However, the standard is that on each of the four corners there are eight strings with five knots. This is especially meaningful as the *gematria*, or numerical value, of the word *tzitzit* is 600, plus the eight strings and five knots, which brings the sum to 613, which is the number of mitzvot or commandments in the Torah.”

<https://www.learnreligions.com/tzitzit-and-tallit-2076788>

As you can tell this is quite complex.

### C) Mark 5:35-43

- In Jewish culture a girl became a woman at her 12<sup>th</sup> birthday and one day. Her parents would match a husband her (yes, like Mary and Joseph) and she would be married around 14 years old. So, in the prime of her new adulthood, she dies.



- Mourning in the first century had very detailed customs. The mourners would rend their garments. There would be two flute players. A flute was always connected to death. It was forbidden to work for three days and, for 30 days, could not leave the village. And men could not shave. We're seeing all of this in the text.
- Talitha Koum! Is the Aramaic phrase which means "little one, get up!" Aramaic was the local language. Today it has ceased to be used as a local language but is still used in the Syriac Orthodox church as the liturgical language.
- The Messianic Secrecy Motif is the reoccurring theme that Jesus asks people to NOT tell anyone what he did. We see this pattern throughout the gospel of Mark.

D) Mark 6:1-6a, Jesus goes to his hometown and confronts resistance from his own synagogue.

- This is no surprise. It is often that the child coming home is not received. We do learn that Jesus does what he always does, goes to the synagogue. He was asked to teach and so he did.
- In Synagogues there was no professional pastor (Rabbi). The members did the teaching so a guest coming in would easily be asked to say something to a given reading. Jesus' visit would be acknowledged and a kind gesture to speak to the community.
- You'll note in the text that the attenders (yes, his neighbors) could not fathom how a carpenter's son could have so much wisdom and were confused by his miracles.
- We also note that he had siblings. Mary and Joseph did go on to have other children and they were well known in the community.
- Ultimately, Jesus had to walk away rejected by his neighbors. Verse 6 says it well, "And he was amazed at their lack of faith."
- I wish I could say we wouldn't do the same thing. Are we receptive to hearing a message from those closest to us? Often, I have prayed that God would draw other voices into a person's life because they won't be receptive to my message.

E) Mark 6:14-29, The death of John the Baptist is the result of a woman's vengeance. John the Baptist had publicly called out the adulterous relationship between Herod Antipas and Herodias. You can see in the genealogy below that Herodias was married to her uncle, Herod Philip, and then had an affair with her other uncle, Herod Antipas who she ultimately married.

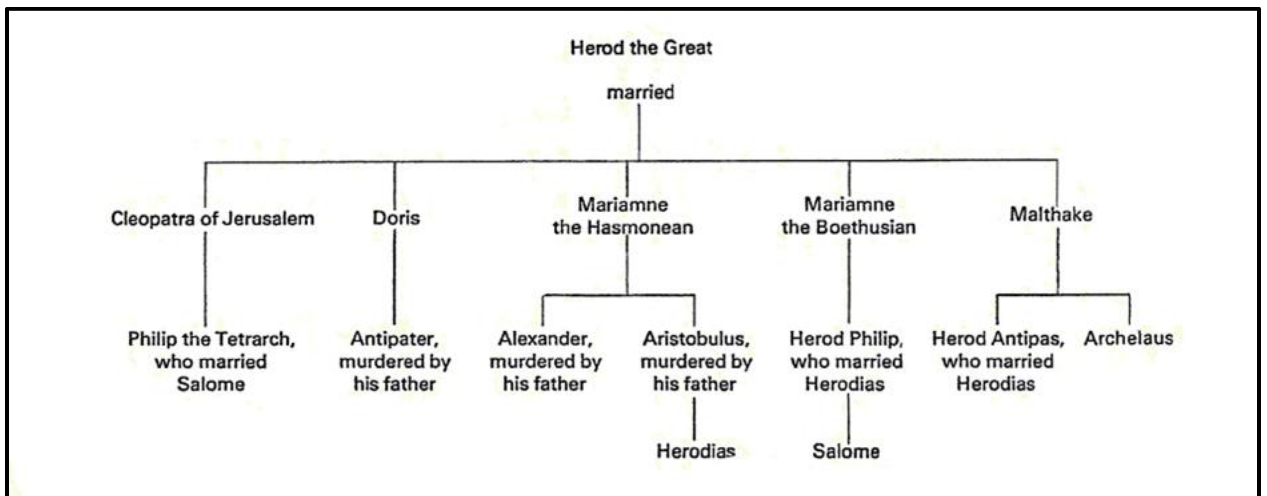
The dance that Salome did was sexually charged. Rarely did someone in her elite status as a princess do this kind of dance. Prostitutes would be brought into the Roman

banquet. Her immorality was inexcusable, and Herod Antipas tolerated the behavior because of his desire to favor the leaders who were at the dinner.

Herod's promise to her demonstrated weak leadership and ultimately the death of John the Baptist.

Not in noted in Scripture because it has nothing to do with salvation, Herod was married to the Nabatean princess. The Nabatean empire had control of fresh water in the desert which resulted in substantial wealth. The capital of the empire was Petra.

The princess was shamed by Herod's behavior and the dad, yes, the king, called out his army and there was a battle. Herod Antipas was soundly defeated.



F) 6:30-44, The Feeding of the Five Thousand.

The story is found in Matthew 14:13-21, Luke 9:10-17, and John 6:5-13. Matthew and Luke have similar stories to Mark in the same context. John adds some unique information, such as the type of bread.

Numerology in Scripture tells us that numbers mean something. In this story there are 7 items and the number seven is the number of completion. There were 12 baskets collected. Number 12 is a complete nation, a promise intended for everyone.

G) 6:45-56, Jesus walks on Water


Storms are not uncommon on the Sea of Galilee. The lake is 13 miles long and 8 miles wide and surrounded by mountains so the winds are funneled and sudden storms can blow up. It says the men were straining to move the boat into the 4<sup>th</sup> watch. They had left much earlier and simply hadn't gone too far. Now, it is 3-6am and Jesus can still see them fighting against the wind.

He simply glides across the water and catches up to them. They scream in fear as we would do the same. Missing from the story is Peter walking on water. Matthew 14 records this. Peter helped Mark write the gospel and I expect he was embarrassed at his lack of faith looking back some 25 years. Who of us aren't embarrassed at decisions we made when we were young?

**STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 5**  
**PART III: THE CHRIST'S RESPONSE TO RISING OPPOSITION (continued)**  
**Mark 7 and 8**


For Conversation:

- In your small group spend some time talking: What is one tradition that you and your family do or you grew up doing?

 Begin Video for Session 5. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes.

Chapter 6 demonstrates the divine authority of Jesus. Feeding the 5000, walking on water, and even sending his apostles to do what he does. Now in chapter 7 we run into conflict. No surprise!

I'll be doing some talking about the opposition theme.

 Pause the video, read Mark 7:1-5 as a group, then restart the video.

Jerusalem was about \_\_\_\_ miles away.

Pharisees were a group of religious Jewish men that followed the rules of the faith

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ were paid generously for the job they had – copy the scrolls of the Old Testament as well as interpret the text.

*For additional information about the activities of the scribes, read comment A in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 5 worksheet.*


The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Elders is oral law based on the moral principles of the Law. Meaning over hundreds of years the religious leaders had developed a system of expectations on how to live out the law.

The issue was with \_\_\_\_\_ washing.

*The washing was a big deal. For additional information about ceremonial washing, , read comment B in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 5 worksheet.*


In Isaiah 29:13, God says, "These people \_\_\_\_\_ me with their \_\_\_\_\_, but their hearts are \_\_\_\_\_ from me..."

\_\_\_\_\_ says you can skirt the responsibility of your parents by saying the money needed to care for them has been devoted to God.

 Pause the video, read Mark 7:17-23 as a group, then restart the video.

His list is pretty inclusive.

Mark 7:24-30 is a contrast with the Pharisees. It is a warm and affectionate story.

 Pause the video, read Mark 7:27-30 as a group, then restart the video.

Jesus does a play on words with this dear lady.

I can see the woman smiling as she responds **Even the \_\_\_\_\_ under the table eat the children's crumbs.** I may not deserve it but maybe a crumb to the puppy.

## Mark Chapter 8

*For additional information about the feeding of the 4000, read comment C in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 5 worksheet.*

Mark 8:14-21, Jesus pushes the disciples to see the opposition of the Pharisees and of Herod.

Yeast or leaven were understood as \_\_\_\_\_ of evil in the ancient world.

Mark 8:27-30. The first confession of faith is publicly spoken. Jesus asks, "Who do people say I am?". Peter steps out and speaks what he believes. "You are the \_\_\_\_\_."

## **PART IV: THE CHRIST PREPARES HIS DISCIPLES FOR OPPOSITION**

### **Mark 8:31 – Mark 10:31**

Jesus actually calls his followers now to discipleship and what does it actually mean. He gives three points in vs. 8:

- a. Deny himself.
- b. Take up his \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ me.

Jesus says, *“For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel will save it.”*

Remember Jesus is speaking to \_\_\_\_\_!

For Conversation:

- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all and 10 being completely, how confused do you think the disciples were about Jesus’ teaching about the cross when he first spoke of it?
- What did they expect from Jesus?
- What do modern day Christians expect from Jesus?

Assignment for next Session:

Before the next session, please read Mark Chapter 9 and Chapter 10.

## Additional Comments on Mark 7 and 8

A) Mark 7:1-5. From Biblestudy.org. Here's a thoughtful comment about the Scribes.

- New Testament scribes, the organization of which began at the time of Ezra the prophet, were men trained to write. At first they were merely transcribers of God's law and synagogue readers. They later became interpreters of God's law whose responsibility was to teach the Torah.
- Scribes produced legal documents, recorded deeds, etc. and could act as notary public and court secretary. Although some of them copied documents, this was not necessarily a part of their job.
- As in other parts of the world, these people were considered honored professionals whose modern-day equivalent would be judges or lawyers. They were generally the most educated men in the nation and as such became influential.
- Scribes followed meticulous procedures and methods for making copies of God's law (Torah). For example, those who performed the copying were permitted to use ONLY animal skins that were clean for writing. Additionally, the ink they used had to be prepared using a very special formula and had to be black in color.
- Before each time a scribe wrote the name of God they were to completely wash both their writing instruments and themselves. Each word had to be read aloud before it was written down.
- Additionally, every column written by one of the scribes had to have a minimum of 48 lines of text. They were not allowed to write columns that had 61 lines of text or more. Their work was generally reviewed within thirty days. If 3 or more pages required any corrections, the entire manuscript had to be rewritten.
- Scribes had to count the number of letters, words, and so on of each manuscript they wrote. If just two letters touched each other the document was deemed invalid. Once completed and verified, the manuscripts were usually put in a sacred place.

B) Mark 7:1-5, How they washed their hands:

- The water was typically stored in special large stone jars. Clay was seen as too porous and the water would be contaminated.
- They would wash with hands held with finger tips pointing upwards. Water was poured on them with the expectation that it would run down the wrist. The minimum water was one and half egg shells. While hands were still wet, the fist of

one hand, rubbed onto the palm of the other. Water now unclean because it had touched unclean hands. Next hands held with finger tips pointing downwards and watered poured over them from wrist to fingers.

- This would be done multiple times during the meal.

C) Mark 8:1-13.


- This feeding of the 4000 is distinctive from the feeding of the 5000. Jesus initiates the conversation. Yes, it is a test. They had experienced the 5000 and now he is prompting them to consider how to feed them. They don't get it and in vs. 4, do the same thing as the feeding of the 5000, where are we going to find food?
- We're told that they are in the region of Dalmanutha. This is in the Decapolis on the gentile side of the Sea of Galilee. Remember the healed demoniac and the legion in the pigs. It would seem that he did some talking and so Jesus' arrival would have been received by these many gentile people. Again, for a religious Jew, this was completely counter cultural, even revolutionary.
- Check out Matthew 15:29-39 for more detail.
- Now we have 7 baskets full of food.
- The challenge is at the end when the Pharisees challenge Jesus.



**STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 6**  
**PART IV: THE CHRIST PREPARES HIS DISCIPLES FOR OPPOSITION (CONT)**  
**Mark 8:31 through Mark 10**

For Conversation:

- When you were in high school, describe one person that was considered the most popular. Do you know where they are today?

 Before starting the video, read Mark 9:1-12 as a group. Start the video. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes.

\_\_\_\_\_ means to cross over.

*For additional information about the location of this event, read comment A in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 6 worksheet.*


- Moses represents the \_\_\_\_\_ and the promise of salvation.
- Elijah represented the \_\_\_\_\_ of all things.
- Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the Law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah)

In Mark 9:7, a cloud \_\_\_\_\_ them and a voice came out of the \_\_\_\_\_. Throughout Scripture a cloud is frequently a symbol of God's presence.

*For additional information about cloud imagery, read comment B in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 6 worksheet.*

Follow along in Mark 9:14-32.

The father pleads to Jesus in vs. 22, "...\_\_\_\_\_ you can do anything, \_\_\_\_\_ pity on us, and \_\_\_\_\_ us." Jesus' response, "If you can? \_\_\_\_\_ is possible for him who believes."

 Pause the video, read Mark 9:33-50 together as a group. As the verses are read, summarize together verses 33-37, 38-41, and 42-50. Write a brief note for each section in your workbook.

Vs. 33-37 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 38-41 \_\_\_\_\_


Vs. 42-50 \_\_\_\_\_

*For additional information about and a photo of a millstone, see comment C in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 6 worksheet.*

### **Mark, Chapter 10**

Jesus is now doing his final walk to Jerusalem. The disciples would not understand this. Jesus and his disciples, along with other religious Jews, would go to Jerusalem for the major festivals. Now is the Passover and they are on the walk from Galilee to Judea.

In Mark 10:1, they are now in the region of Judea, and they just crossed the Jordan River. This would be down by the Dead Sea. This was the normal route that religious Jews would have walked. *"And, as was custom, he taught them."*


 Pause the video, read Mark 10:2-12 as a group, then restart the video.

There were two schools of thinking about divorce. One came from the school of Hillel. Hillel taught that \_\_\_\_\_ which displeased a man is a reason for divorce.


The second came from Rabbi Shammai. He interpreted divorce strictly. \_\_\_\_\_ in the matters of adultery was divorce permissible.

Jesus calls the people to see what Moses taught in Genesis 2:24 and from that understanding, he supports Rabbi Shammai. Protect the home.

*For additional information about divorce and Jesus' protection of women, read comment D in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 6 worksheet.*

 Pause the video, read Mark 10:17-27 as a group, then talk about the following in your small groups.

- In your booklet, as a group describe the young rich guy.
- How does Jesus respond to him?

 When you have finished talking, restart the video.


Remember it is all about discipleship. In Mark 10:21, Jesus looks at him and "\_\_\_\_\_ him."

In Mark 10:23-28, Jesus has a major teaching on money. He goes through an illustration of a \_\_\_\_\_ entering through the \_\_\_\_\_ of the needle.

And the disciples ask *"Who can be saved?"*

It is about God intervening for us. *"...all things are possible with God."*

*For additional information about the topic of money in scripture, read comment E in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 6 worksheet.*

 Pause the video, read Mark 10:35-45 as a group, then restart the video.

In Mark 10:43, Jesus says, *"whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave to all."*

We now have the closing story of the chapter which contrasts with James and John's interaction with Jesus. Mark 10:46-52 has the story of an endearing request by a blind man. *"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

\_\_\_\_\_ is a messianic term. This was revolutionary in that culture. No sensible person would suggest such a thing except a desperate blind man. We have his name, Bartimaeus. And his name is remembered for all time.

\_\_\_\_\_, he could see!

*For additional information about Jericho and the route of Jesus here, read comment F in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 6 worksheet.*

For Conversation:

- Name one thing you learned about being a disciple from today's readings.

Assignment for next Session:

Before the next session please read Mark Chapter 11 and Chapter 12.

## Additional Comments on Mark 9 and 10

A) Mark 9:2-12, There has been some question on the place of the transfiguration.

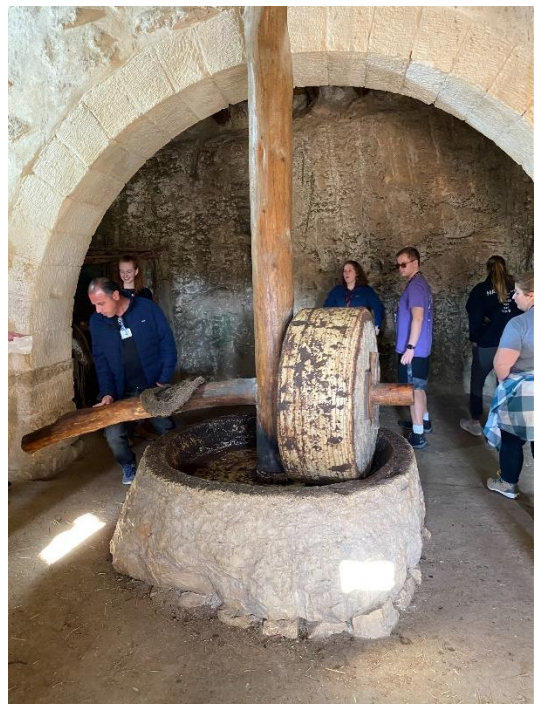
- Mt. Tabor has been noted as the place for the transfiguration traditionally. When you go to the Holy Land, a guide will say that this is the place but there is some question. Mt. Tabor was considerable distance from the region where Peter made his confession that Jesus is the Christ.
- It was some days after the confession that the transfiguration took place. To get to Mt. Tabor would be unlikely. Add to this, there was a Herodian military presence at Mt. Tabor. Again, it isn't likely that religious Jews would have gone in the proximity of the military.
- It seems to me that the transfiguration took place in the foothills of Mt. Hermon. Peter made his confession here and Jesus was spending time with his disciples in this area which would be higher in elevation and more pleasant for conversation.

B) Mark 9:7, about cloud imagery.

- The word study of a cloud in Scripture will frequently show the presence of God. You'll see that God leads Israel as they wandered in the wilderness (Exodus 13:21; 19:9; 33:9; 40:34-38), or the anointing the Temple (I King 8:10-11).
- Peter, James, and John knew this imagery and it would certainly be a confirmation of Jesus' divinity.

C) Mark 9:43, the millstone.

- Large millstone was placed into a trough with a log extended from it. A person or a donkey could pull it this large stone around the trough. They were used often to crush olives. Olives are a tough fruit and to make olive oil they need to be crushed. The millstone was used to crush the olives which was the first step to getting olive oil.



D) Mark 10:2-12, Jewish Divorce

- The only grounds a woman could claim a divorce from her husband:
  - a. The husband became a leper
  - b. He engaged in a disgusting trade or job such as a tanner (unclean by Jewish law)
  - c. He raped a virgin
  - d. He falsely accused her of pre-nuptial sin
- As you can imagine, a woman hesitated to get married because marriage was so insecure. Jesus' teaching is FOR women because he wants marriages restored which protected the woman.

E) Mark 10:23-28

- The whole issue of money and wealth is an extensive teaching by Jesus. Check out Matthew 6:19ff. In fact, of all the teaching by Jesus, he speaks more about materialism and wealth. Apparently, this is the major barrier to our relationship with Christ. All of us wrestle with the question of wealth. Even in the Ten Commandments, the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> deal with our envy of what others have. This is a spiritual battle for any of us doing the faith walk.


F) Mark 10:46-52

- Jericho was the major stop for pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. It was a natural stop because Jericho was an oasis. Even today, Jericho is surrounded by orchards and green contrasting to the environment around them that is the Judean desert. It is striking to see.
- It is the final 15 miles from Jericho that the disciples now walk. It is along this mountainous path that Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan. It was a dangerous road (a strong word, more like a path) so the number of pilgrims walking to Jerusalem keeps everyone safe.

**STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 7**  
**PART V: THE CHRIST CONFRONTS OPPOSITION**  
**Mark 11 and Mark 12**

For conversation:

- Talk about a time when you were in a parade or you had a family member in a parade. Is there a parade that you particularly like.

 When you have finished sharing, begin the video. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes.

The colt symbolized \_\_\_\_\_. By riding the colt Jesus is proclaiming that He is the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Riding the colt was a fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9.

*For additional information about Palm Sunday, read comment A in  
"Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 7 worksheet.*

The palm branch was the symbol from the Maccabean revolt in 167 B.C. and the call to \_\_\_\_\_.

*For additional information about the fig tree, read comment B in  
"Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 7 worksheet.*


This is Monday of Holy Week. Mark 11: 15 says, "...Jesus entered the temple area (the courtyards) and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves."

*For additional information about the Temple Tax, read comment C in  
"Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 7 worksheet.*

According to Mark 11: 18 "The Chief Priests and the Scribes heard this and began looking for a way to \_\_\_\_\_ him."

Mark 11:27-33, The \_\_\_\_\_ class was only located in \_\_\_\_\_ while the \_\_\_\_\_ lived throughout \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.


## Chapter 12

 Pause the video and read Mark 12:1-11 as a group. Read the whole parable. Then, go back and pull the story apart.

- Describe the vineyard. This was a typical vineyard in the first century.
- What did the owner do with the vineyard?
- The rent was paid at harvest time, what happened? List the steps and how they treated the person.

1. (v2 – 3) \_\_\_\_\_
2. (v4) \_\_\_\_\_
3. (v5a) \_\_\_\_\_
4. (v5b) \_\_\_\_\_
5. (v6) \_\_\_\_\_

- What will the owner ultimately do?

 After your discussion, restart the video.

Now we have a series of confrontations where Jewish leaders confront Jesus publicly with the hopes of harming his reputation. The first is about taxes.

*For additional information about Roman taxes, read comment D in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 7 worksheet.*

In Mark 12:13-17, Jesus is asked, “Should Jews pay taxes to Caesar?” How does Jesus outsmart the Pharisees and the Herodians?

A second confrontation takes place concerning the resurrection in Mark 12:18-27

Who are the Sadducees? They were the \_\_\_\_\_ and sophisticated class. They are small in number and liberal theologically. They denied a bodily resurrection. The \_\_\_\_\_ are Sadducees.

Ultimately, Jesus says there is a resurrection of the body. “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead but of the living. You are badly mistaken.” Notice the statement is in the present tense. He refutes the thinking of the Sadducees.

*For additional examples of Jesus taking the offensive here, read comment E in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 7 worksheet.*

Chapter 12 closes with the Widows offering. Here is the question of generosity and the motivation of the heart. *“They all gave out of their wealth ; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on.”*

For Conversation:

- When Jesus speaks, he seems to go to the heart of each listener – whether it is one oppressed by governing bodies or one who has reached a level of prestige and authority. What is his core message to both?

Assignment for next Session:

Before the next session, please read Mark Chapter 13 and Mark Chapter 14.



## Additional Comments on Mark 11 and 12

### A) Mark 11:1-11, Palm Sunday

- For us Palm Sunday is a time to recall the start of the passion story. We see the victory of Jesus. We could even say the exaltation of Christ before his deepest humiliation of death. For the Jews this was the entrance to a most holy festival that celebrated freedom and to remember the freedom from Egyptian slavery.
- For many, this was their once in a lifetime trip to the Temple, their holy pilgrimage so they came with a passion and excitement we may not appreciate. They risked their lives to get there and now they are beholding a great wonder of the ancient world, The Temple.
- And it was an engineering marvel that we still look at in wonder. You can see the huge stones walking through the rabbinical tunnels today and look in amazement at the size of the stones. The pilgrim came into the presence of God there and their passion could not be held back.
- It is into this crowd that Jesus walks Many embrace him and they hoped he would bring freedom to them. No power would ever dominate them again. Of course, Jesus had a different message, a bigger one, than can be imagined. His desire was for us to be in his presence for all eternity.

### B) Mark 11:12-14, 20-25, The Fig Tree

- Jesus is likely staying in Bethany outside of Jerusalem on the other side of the Mount of Olives. He would spend the day at the Temple and then go back to Bethany. He may have stayed with Mary, Martha and Lazarus.
- So, this Monday morning he and the disciples begin the two mile walk and Jesus sees a fig tree. Jesus walks over to the tree to see if it had any fruit, the fruit wouldn't be ripe yet. This didn't happen until the fall of the year. What Jesus found was a tree in leaf early and likely to have green fruit. It didn't. The tree would have no fruit that year. In vs. 14 Jesus is harsh about the tree not bearing fruit.
- In vs. 20, It is Tuesday, we see Jesus and his disciples once again walking to Jerusalem. The disciples see that the tree is withered. Peter remembered, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!"
- Jesus now gives a teaching. The fig tree becomes a metaphor for prayer. You can pray and move mountains to the sea. They were on the Mount of Olives and, in the clear of the sky, could often see the Dead Sea. When you pray, be assured, your prayer makes a difference

- In vs. 25, he makes it clear when you do pray reconcile to those who you have a broken relationship with.
- I do find this quite interesting. A hardened heart or embittered heart prohibits a prayer and your own forgiveness. This is certainly convicting and something we should all be considering when we do a confession of sins.

#### C) Mark 11:15-19, The Temple Tax

- The exploitation of the pilgrims happened in the Court of the Gentiles. Every Jew Had to pay a \$.10 Temple tax. Be aware that an average days was about \$.6 a day. So the Temple tax exceeded a day's wage (read, really pricy tax). At the Temple pilgrims had to pay the tax with the Temple currency and the Priests charged an exchange rate to receive the Temple tax which cheated people. If the coin the pilgrim offered exceeded the Temple tax, they would be charged an extra half day wage. This was a HUGE amount of money for most of the people.
- Sacrifices could only be purchased by the priestly family. They had a monopoly on the market but a pilgrim would not know. They would purchase an animal before entering the Temple that was without blemish and it would be rejected. They had to purchase an animal from the priests and the cost was double.
- Caiaphas and Annas, the High Priests, owned the corrupt business. Everyone knew this but, again, had no options. Meanwhile, faithful pilgrims are misused.

#### D) Mark 12:13-17, the issue of Roman taxes

- Besides the Temple taxes all Jews paid to sustain the Temple, the Roman government had its own system of taxation. They paid:
  - Ground tax. One tenth of all grain and one fifth of the wine and fruit produced were given to the government
  - One percent of a person's income was paid to the government
  - Poll Tax. All men 14-65 and women 12-65 (the average age of person was between 45-50) paid one day's wage (a denarius) for simply existing. Note in our tax code we are given an exemption. The Romans said you had to pay to live. No wonder the Romans had trouble with population growth.

#### E) Mark 12:35-40. Jesus goes on the offensive


- Jesus now challenges the Sadducees and the Pharisees. A question about King David. The Scribes say that the Christ is the son of David. Jesus quotes Psalm 110 where David acknowledges a messiah coming from his family line. There is no answer and the crowds love it. And the leaders hate it.

- And then Jesus points out the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and Scribes. He is pointed in showing how they publicly display rules of the faith but their hearts are far from God. Check out Matthew 23. Here is Jesus is very direct in describing the heresy.
  - a. They did wear flowing linen robes and would intentionally go into the marketplace to pray. This way people could see them.
  - b. They made sure they got the most important seats at the synagogue so they were noticed.
  - c. Even at banquets, they wanted all of the attention.
  - d. Ultimately, they manipulated widows for their money so they could obtain more wealth and live a life of comfort.
  
- Jesus is clear that they will be punished. It is clear to any of us in spiritual authority that there is a judgement. We cannot misuse our office as shepherds.

**STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 8**  
**PART V: THE CHRIST CONFRONTS OPPOSITION (Cont)**  
**Mark 13**

For conversation

- Think about a time you had to say “good bye.” Don’t be too serious, everything has beginnings and ends. Talk about a time when there was an end.

 When you have finished sharing, begin the video. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes.

Mark 13:1-2, Picture the disciples leaving Jerusalem. The road they walked on Palm Sunday they are now they are walking up that road to the top of the Mount of Olives.

*For additional information about the Temple construction, read comment A in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 8 worksheet.*

The temple project started in \_\_\_\_\_ and was done around \_\_\_\_\_ and destroyed by the Romans in \_\_\_\_\_ .

How do Lutherans manage the second coming? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

In Mark 13:9-11, Jesus makes it clear that all believers will be \_\_\_\_\_.

*“You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. And the gospel must be preached to all nations.”*

Persecution is a tool to proclaiming the gospel.

According to Mark 13:20, *“But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.”* Therefore, we know the prayers of a believer do make a difference. We \_\_\_\_\_ a testimony of God’s \_\_\_\_\_.

In Mark 13:26 Jesus notes, *“At that time men will see the son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory...”*. \_\_\_\_\_ are the sign of the divine.

## PART VI: THE CHRIST BEARS OPPOSITION


### Mark 14

Mark 14:1-2, Mark notes that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread have arrived.


*For additional information about the Passover and festivals, read comment B in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 8 worksheet.*

Mark 14:3-9, we witness an act of preparation.

Mark 14:9, "Wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

 Pause the video, read Mark 14:12-26 as a group and answer the following questions together.

- From vs. 12-16 what do you find interesting? What was Jesus quietly doing?
- From vs. 17-22, what does Jesus acknowledge
- From vs. 22-26, the institution of the Lord's Supper

 When you're done talking through the reading, restart the video.


*For additional information about the Passover meal and communion, read comment C in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 8 worksheet.*

Mark 14:27-31, Peter walks into a mess. This is so incredibly sad. We know what is coming. For any of us who choose disloyalty and know it, there is a shame that truly hits the heart.

Mark 14:32-41, They go to the place Jesus often went to pray, the Garden of \_\_\_\_\_, the olive press.

From the reading it is apparent that he is looking for (1) \_\_\_\_\_ fellowship and (2) \_\_\_\_\_ fellowship.

*For additional information about the Garden of Gethsemane, read comment D in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 8 worksheet.*

 Pause the video and read Mark 14:32-41. Assign verses for individuals in your small group to read.

- Read meditatively, pausing and considering quietly what he is doing for our sake. Take the time and let the text become more than a simple reading. Restart the video when you have concluded this meditation.

Mark 14:43-50, In Greek there are two words for a kiss.


- the first is \_\_\_\_\_. Meaning a simple kiss and nothing more, “whom I shall kiss that is he.”
- The second is \_\_\_\_\_. Kata is intensive such as a “lover” kisses his or her beloved. The betrayal was a lover’s kiss. Most awful of the gospel story.

Mark 53-65. An Arrest

There are three Jewish trials:

1. The preliminary hearing before \_\_\_\_\_, the former high priest
2. The trial before \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_
3. The final action of the \_\_\_\_\_ which ended an all-night trial

The goal is to kill Jesus.

 Pause the video and take a moment to read Mark 14:53-65. Again, quietly, reflect on the verses. Take a pause and let the information penetrate into our busy minds. Then restart the video when you have completed the reading.

A final word about Peter....vs. 66-72.

Assignment for next Session:

Before the next session, please read Mark Chapter 15 and Mark Chapter 16.

## Additional Comments on Mark 13 and Mark 14

### A) Mark 13:1-2, Construction of the Temple

- As they leave the city, the disciples remark how beautiful the Temple is. It was Beautiful and an engineering miracle. Herod's engineers didn't level off the mountain but rather figured out how to build a huge platform with supporting buttresses underneath the floor. That was equivalent to 29 football fields. He built four enormous retaining walls. One of which is the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism today. This is what the Dome of the Rock is sitting on today.
- The foundation of the walls were stones weighing at 2-5 tons. The largest stone at the bedrock is 44 feet long, 6 feet high and 6 feet deep. It was massive and to this day, it is not clear how they moved such a stone. You can see it when you do a tour of the rabbinical tunnels. The stones are called dry construction because there is no cement between the stones. Only the weight of the stones keeps it together and, I assure you, there is a lot of weight. (<https://www.jerusalem-insiders-guide.com/temple-of-jerusalem.html>)
- This plaza is where Jesus taught in the final comments at the end of Mark. Remember the story of the widows mite or being confronted by the Sadducees about the resurrection and marriage. These teachings took place on the plaza in various courts. The overturning of the tables was done in the Court of the Gentiles as well as the teachings he did.
- The Temple itself stood about 100 feet into the air. It was painted white and had gold outline it. When you stood on the hills around Jerusalem, the sun was reflected off of the temple giving a holy look to it all.
- I cannot overstate how extraordinary the Temple complex was.

### B) Mark 14:1, The Passover and Festivals

- Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Mark notes them as two Different events. The Passover was a meal only. It recalled being rescued from slavery in Egypt and the Angel of Death passing over the homes who put blood on the door frames. Following the Passover is the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. The first and last days are a sabbath so there are serious rules regulating what you can do. You are to take all leaven or yeast out of your home for the week and recall your sinful nature. Check out this little article, <https://hebrewrootsmom.com/the-feast-of-unleavened-bread-vs-passover-whats-the-difference/>
- All Jewish males within 15 miles of Jerusalem were bound to go to the Temple to worship. In anticipation of the masses of Pilgrims coming, besides roads, bridges,

fixed tombs were white washed so there was no chance that someone would come to Jerusalem unclean. It was common for people to be buried beside a road. Yes, you are correct, there were no laws where people were buried.

- During the festivals the city would explode in growth. In 65 A.D. Cestus, governor of Palestine, had difficulty convincing Nero the importance of Passover. So, he took a census of how many lambs were sacrificed. The number is massive, 265,500 lambs. Considering one lamb was sacrificed per 10 people so there were about 3 million pilgrims.
- You can see that nationalism would be at its peak during the census.

C) Mark 14:22-25, Lord's supper

- The Passover meal was an extensive liturgy recalling the story of freedom. It is no surprise during this meal that Jesus would establish a gift for freedom until he returns a second time. The meal is unique in its structure with a number of steps carefully orchestrated.
- Interestingly, communion took place toward the end of the meal. Jesus lifted up the last of the unleavened bread and offered it to the disciples. This followed, with the cup of Elijah, the third cup shared in the meal. Then they sang Psalm 115-118, drank from a fourth cup, did a prayer. At this point vs. 26 says they had sung a hymn and left to pray at the Garden of Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives.

D) Mark 14:32-41, The Garden of Gethsemane

- We know the location of the Garden today. The Franciscan order of the Roman Catholic church owns the Garden and has done so since the 1600s. There are olive trees growing at the garden, the oldest is about 2000 years.
- At the time of Jesus, the Mount of Olives was covered with olive trees and Gethsemane was the olive press at the base of the mountain.
- When Jesus went there it was in the spring when no one would be using the press. He knew the owner of the Garden and did frequent there to pray. It is how Judas knew where to find Jesus.
- The Franciscan church located at the Garden is beautiful and worshipful with a somber environment reflective of the betrayal that happened.






- Today a major portion of the Mount of Olives is covered by 70,000 Jewish graves. It is believed when the messiah returns that He will first come here and they will be part of the resurrection from the beginning.

**STUDY OF MARK: SESSION 9**  
**PART VI: THE CHRIST BEARS OPPOSITION (Cont)**  
**Mark 15 and Mark 16**


Welcome to our final Session in this Small Group study!

-  Begin the video to hear Dan’s opening comments. Use this workbook to follow along and to take notes. When Dan tells you to pause the video, do so, and read Mark 15:1-15 meditatively as a group, letting the text speak to you.

For conversation:

When you have completed the reading, consider and discuss these questions in your Small Group:

- What insights into Pilate’s and Jesus’ character does this story offer? Why is Pilate indecisive? Why is Jesus silent?
- What insights into the gospel do you see in the release of Barabbas in exchange for Jesus?
- This is more difficult. Have your actions ever mocked the name of Jesus? What can you do to help resist this kind of behavior?

-  Now turn the video back on and let’s consider the text.

In Mark 15:1, we read, “very \_\_\_\_\_ in the morning...” the work day in the ancient world started at \_\_\_\_\_, around \_\_\_\_\_.

The trial would take place in a courtyard (John 18:28ff) so the Jewish leaders did not become ceremonially unclean entering into the home of a gentile.

*For additional information about Pilate, read comment A in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*


Mark 15:3-11 is the \_\_\_\_\_ game. There was always a game between the governor and the Sanhedrin.

Mark 15:10 is striking to me, “...knowing it was out of \_\_\_\_\_ that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him...”

Mark 15:15 tells us he was flogged, whipped. Listen to the description of the flogging. It is brutal.

*For additional information about flogging in this time, read comment B in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

Mark 15:16-20 shows Jesus being mocked by the bored Roman troops.

 Pause the video and read Mark 15:21-32, the crucifixion, as a group. Again, read this meditatively and let the words speak into your hearts. Then restart the video.

Mark 15:21, we read of Simon from Cyrene, located in \_\_\_\_\_.


*For additional information about Simon from Cyrene, read comment C in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

Mark 15:22-32, the march through Jerusalem. The longest road was intentionally chosen to make a Roman statement.

Jesus was nailed to the cross at \_\_\_\_\_. Duly note, at 9am was the \_\_\_\_\_ sacrifice in the Temple when a lamb without blemish was sacrificed.

The four soldiers who marched in procession and crucified Jesus divided up his five pieces of clothing.

*For additional information about crucifixion, read comment D in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

 Pause the video, read Mark 15:33-39 as a group, then restart the video.

Now it is the sixth hour, \_\_\_\_\_, and the synoptics are clear that darkness covers the "\_\_\_\_\_" At \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus shouts out in Aramaic, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

Note that \_\_\_\_\_ was the time of the evening sacrifice in the Temple.

*For additional information about torn temple curtain, read comment E in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

Mark 15:40-41, Mark lists the women who were present at the death. The women were \_\_\_\_\_ to the death.


Mark 15:42-47, I'm going to talk through these verses. Please follow along in your Bibles and fill in some blanks in the book.

*For additional information about the sabbath preparation, read comment F in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

Mark 15:43-45, notes that Joseph was a man of prominence and was a member of the Sanhedrin. We're told that Joseph went \_\_\_\_\_ to Pilate. He was taking a risk asking for Jesus' body.

*For additional information about burials in the first century, read comment G in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

## Mark 16

 Pause the video, read Mark 16:1-8 as a group, then restart the video.

Mark gives a rather quick resurrection story. For more details go to Matthew 28 and Luke 24 and John 20-21.

- The Sabbath day ended at sunset, typically when **three stars** were seen in the sky.

*For additional remarks about Mary Magdalene, read comment H in "Additional Comments" at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

- Mark 16:4-5, the women entered the tomb and saw an angel. Often angels are seen as young men. I love the description of the resurrection angel in Matthew 28:3. The women were alarmed. A nice way of saying they were absolutely paralyzed in fear. And, as angels always do, he said, *"Do not be alarmed."* And then he went on to say, *"You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him..."*
- The dear ladies fled from the tomb for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing.

*For additional remarks about Mark 16:9-20 read comment I in “Additional Comments” at the end of this Session 9 worksheet.*

It is important to remember that, from the other gospels:

- We know Jesus spoke to Mary Magdalene
- We know the Roman guards were frozen with fright when the angel rolled back the stone
- We know Peter and John ran to the tomb and saw the empty tomb.
  
- John 20:8 is an amazing confession of faith... Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and \_\_\_\_\_ ; for as yet, they did not understand the Scripture, that he \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead.

And this becomes our testimony!!

I'm so very grateful that you did this study of Mark. I hope you gained something that encourages your faith and demonstrates to you the hope of the resurrection. Our God knows your name and, for those who believe, your name is written in the book of Life. This story from Mark is God's intrusion, to heal all brokenness and draw us into His Presence.

Thank you for doing the study.

## Additional Comments on Mark 15 and Mark 16

### A) Mark 15:1, Who actually was Pilate?

- For many years, scholars denied the existence of Pontius Pilate. He was a minor Roman official in a minor province in the Roman empire so there was nothing to validate his existence. It was in the ruins of Caesarea on the coast of the Mediterranean that in 1961 a stone carving was found that explicitly noted Pilate as governor.
- Now we know that Pilate was governor from 26 A.D. – 36 A.D. He had continuous tension with the Jews which wasn't uncommon. As governor he tried to bring banners of the emperor Tiberius into Jerusalem which was an affront to Jewish law and created a passive resistance. He finally withdrew the banners.
- According to Josephus and the Roman historian Tacitus, Pilate was removed from office and sent back to Rome after using excessive force to disperse a suspected Samaritan insurrection. Once in Rome, Pilate vanished from the historical record. According to some traditions, he was executed by the Emperor Caligula or committed suicide. <https://www.history.com/news/why-pontius-pilate-executed-jesus>

### B) Mark 15:15, Flogging

- A flogging was a common means of torture. The typical Roman whip had several strips of leather with pieces of bone and lead at the tips. When they began to whip a person, flesh was literally ripped off. I remember watching The Passion movie. Mel Gibson, the director, depicted the torture in a horrific image and he was correct. The flesh was literally torn off. By the time the Romans were done with Jesus, physically he was already near death. Add to this, the beating he received from the Jews during the night, Jesus' body couldn't sustain much more.

### C) Mark 15:21, Simon of Cyrene

- Simon of Cyrene and his two boys, Alexander and Rufus are mentioned here. Simon likely brought his two sons for the Passover and ended being part of something he never anticipated. At this point, Jesus is simply exhausted and incapable of carrying the cross bar. It would seem that Paul notes Rufus in Romans 16:13.
- Today you will see Pilgrims following the Via Dolorosa carrying the cross in memory of this painful walk. I took the following pictures in January 2023.



Figure 1: The Via Dolorosa, January 2023



Figure 2: The Via Dolorosa, January 2023

#### D) Mark 15:22-32, Crucifixion

- Jesus' crucifixion took place outside of the city wall and would have happened at one of the main entrances into the city. The Romans always wanted people to see their justice. The criminal would have hung naked for days slowly dying by suffocation. Typically, it would take days, weeks, for a person to die. At the time of Passover hundreds of people would have seen the death of the crucified and the High Priest would want this done quickly.
- We know from John 19 that Mary could approach the cross and she likely touched him. Jesus was only a foot or so off of the ground and not elevated as some have portrayed. Jesus could see his mom and, yes, could speak to her and to John, the one apostle who was at the death.
- The bodies of those crucified would have been thrown into a common grave and disregarded.
- Today, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is inside the city and recalls both the death of Jesus and his resurrection. Historically, this is believed to be the place. It is loud and people overwhelm the large church controlled mainly by Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Armenian Apostolic faiths. Add to this Coptic Orthodox, Syriac Orthodox, and Ethiopian Orthodox, who have a minor interest, and you can have substantial confusion. In fact, these church bodies are in constant conflict to the point that a Muslim family closes and opens the Holy Sepulcher daily for the last 1600 years.

- E) Mark 15:38, The curtain or veil to the Holy of Holies was a perfect cube — its length, width and height were all equal to 15 feet, making it 60 feet long, 30 feet high and 4 inches thick. It was comprised of 72 squares that were sewn together. <https://sage-advice.com/how-thick-was-the-curtain-to-the-holy-of-holies/#:~:text=How%20thick%20was%20the%20veil%20in%20the%20temple,compried%20of%2072%20squares%20that%20were%20sewn%20together.>
- F) Mark 15:42-43, Sabbath preparation
- Sabbath started at sunset. People would be intensely moving to get ready for the sabbath. I have seen it while I was in Jerusalem. One year we were at the Jerusalem Shuk, an outdoor market in Jerusalem (non-touristy). It is a lot of fun to wander among the 250 vendors BUT it was Friday afternoon, hours from when Sabbath would start. The place was packed with hundreds of local people shopping for their sabbath dinner. We were all overwhelmed by the huge crowd. This was the time of preparation. Google Jerusalem Shuk and you'll find a good article from Wikipedia describing it.
  - This was why Joseph wanted to get the body. It was after 3pm and sunset was only a couple of hours away.
- G) Mark 15:46-47
- When Joseph received Jesus' body, it seemed that he didn't have to walk far to bury Jesus. Archeologist have found evidence of a first century cemetery near Golgotha. Matthew tells us that the tomb belonged to Joseph and had never been used.
  - Jerusalem is on mountains of limestone rock. Limestone is relatively soft so it is easier to make caves and any rain over time will create caves. It isn't unusual that Joseph had a burial tomb. The tomb would have had two rooms. The first room would have had a stone table where a body would be placed and prepared.
  - What we read in the gospels is accurate to the first century. Wrap linens around the body and cover it with spices. Of course, the extraordinary amount of spices noted in the other gospels shows the amazing respect Joseph and Nicodemus had for Jesus. The stone would cover the opening and the body would decay



- A year after the death, the stone would be moved and the family would gather to remember the person they loved. The bones would be placed into a stone ossuary and put on a shelf in the second room.
- Of course, this all changed with this thing called the resurrection.



*Figure 3: Ossuary found in archeological dig*

#### H) Mark 16:1-8

- Mary Magdalene. This would be Mary of Magdala, a wealthy town on the shore of the Sea of Galilee that exported fish products around the Roman world.
- Magdala was recently discovered when a hotel was being built on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The city was likely destroyed by the Romans in the war of 67-72 A.D. and left to history covered by rubble and dirt.
- The discovering was extraordinary because they uncovered a first century synagogue. To this point the only one found that Jesus most certainly would have attended.
- The Franciscans own the property and built an amazingly beautiful sanctuary dedicated to women. You'll see a boat in the altar area and then the large windows looking out on the Sea of Galilee.



*Figure 4: First Century Synagogue excavated*

- Women were a vital part of Jesus’ ministry. Mary Magdalene and the other women were likely patrons that supported Jesus’ ministry. Their faithfulness does become a testimony to us. They never abandoned Jesus and were there until He died and then resurrected.



*Figure 5: Magdalene sanctuary and altar, 2023*

*Pictured L to R: Jack Wright, Carol Wright, Dan Flynn, Kendra Merrell, Mike Merrell*

I) Mark 16:9-20.

- You’ll notice in your Bibles that these verses have a comment before them. They will say something to this effect, “Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include 9-20.”
- We have around 300 very early manuscripts (and some 5000 in total. There are a LOT of biblical manuscripts). The earliest date from 100-300 A.D.
- To be accurate with translation, where there are questions, the translators will note the issue. Information relayed in these verses is also noted in the other gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke)
- Noting the discrepancy does NOT bring into question the inspiration of the gospel, but rather keeps the conversation honest. It is a book penned by human hands with divine inspiration, so at times there will be questions to explore.

## Book of Mark Bible Study Bibliography

Barclay, William. Commentary on Mark. The Westminster Press. 1975

Barclay has written a number of New Testament commentaries. I have found them quite helpful in shaping Bible studies.

Biblical Archeology Review.

This journal leans on the academic side of archeology finds in the Middle East, particularly Israel. It is easily read by non-archeologist.

Holland, Tom. Dominion. ABACUS. Great Britain 2020

His opening introduction gives a strong explanation of crucifixion in the Roman world. It is worth taking the few minutes to just read the introduction of a very fat book a "the making of the Western Mind."

Lutheran Study Bible (ESV). Concordia Publishing House. St. Louis, MO 2009

An excellent tool filled with an abundance of topical articles as well as commentary on the text.

New International Version Study Bible (NIV), Zondervan Publishing House. Grand Rapids, MI 1984.

This has been a standard Study Bible that I have found quite helpful. I really do like the commentary notes.

Serendipity Bible for Groups. Serendipity House. Littleton, CO 1988

I have always found this helpful in crafting conversations for small groups.

Vander Laan, Ray. In the Dust of the Rabbi. Zondervan. 2006.

This is a book that is part of a DVD series on understanding first century culture.

Vander Laan, Ray. That the World May Know: Rabbi and Talmidim.

<https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/rabbi-and-talmidim>

I really like this web site article that was first shared through Focus on the Family. The author does a first century description of the Rabbi and disciples. The model Jesus used was common to the period of time. Who he choose and how he trained them was quite unique.

Yamosh, Miriam. Daily Life at the time of Jesus. Palphot Publishing. Israel.

This is does a nice review of first century life explaining how foods were made, houses built, kinds of coinage, etc. it is an easy read and worth the time for an interested Bible student.

