

# **THE GOSPEL OF MARK**

**AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY**

**STUDY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**FOR**

**INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND GROUPS**

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## **Introduction**

The Gospel of Mark is a fast-paced narrative and provides an ideal introduction to the life and teaching of Jesus. This study guide is provided in a worksheet format, guiding you through your own study. It is not a commentary, and answers are not always provided. Instead, you will research and discover the answers on your own, with the help of a teacher or other small group members. These studies are appropriate for use by individuals, families, small groups, Sunday school classes, etc.

When used in a family or small group, I suggest that you encourage all members to read the Bible passage ahead of time. However, do not complete the worksheet ahead of time. Instead, complete the worksheet with the family, group or class. This will provide an opportunity for additional discussion that might be otherwise missed and will also allow the teacher or facilitator to guide the class based on questions and concerns that are discovered through this process. Of course, the teachers or small group facilitator may prefer to complete the worksheets ahead of time so that you have a possible answer for each blank.

### **A Note about Translations**

While I typically use the New American Standard Bible (NASB) or the English Standard Bible (ESV) for my personal study, these lessons are keyed to the New International Version (NIV), as it is currently one of the more popular translations in use. As a result, some of the fill-in-the-blank questions may make the most sense if you read from the NIV. However, you should be able to use your favorite translation for this study. Additionally, and especially if you have read your current Bible translation for several years, I recommend that you also read from an alternate translation, such as The Message (MSG). NavPress publishes a small paperback titled *The Message of Hope* that contains the entire Gospel of Mark with some additional Scripture portions. Although I do not recommend The Message for serious study, when used in conjunction with a more literal translation, it may help provide you with some fresh insights.

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## **Additional Resources**

Additional resources are available at our Web site: [www.thefourwheelers.com](http://www.thefourwheelers.com).

## Lesson 1 - Introduction

How do we learn about Christianity? Who do we go to, what do we go to, where do we go to if we want to learn more about Christianity?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Of these, which is the one and only authoritative source? That is, which of these is all other teaching based upon?

- \_\_\_\_\_

What evidence do we have that Christianity is true?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Since all that we know about Christianity comes from only one place, the Bible, then **our faith in Christianity depends upon our faith in the Bible being a reliable source of truth**. If we believe that the Bible contains truth, then we will believe what it says about God. But if we doubt that the Bible can be trusted, we will also doubt the truth of Christianity. Therefore, it is natural to start this new study by establishing the trustworthiness of the Bible.

Facts about the Bible

- It contains a total of 66 books written by around 40 different diverse authors, including:
  - Moses, educated as the son of a king in Egypt
  - Peter, a fisherman
  - Amos, a herdsman
  - Daniel, an advisor to the king
  - David, a shepherd who became king
  - Luke, a doctor
  - Matthew, a tax collector
- It was written over an approximately 1500 year period
- It was written on three different continents:

- Asia
- Africa
- Europe
- It was written in three different languages
  - Hebrew, the language of the Jews
  - Aramaic, the common language of the near east prior to Alexander the Great
  - Greek, the common language of the known world after Alexander the Great
- It is divided into two parts
  - The Old Testament, containing the holy writings of the Jews prior to the birth of Christ
  - The New Testament, containing:
    - The four gospels – tells of the life of Jesus
    - The book of Acts – tells of the start of the Christian church
    - Letters written by the apostles to the new Christian churches
- It has been translated into more languages than any other book.
- The Bible is considered to be the best-selling book of all time.
- In the fourth century, the “Synod of Hippo” confirmed the collection of writings believed to be inspired and authoritative. Twenty-seven books were recognized. These books had already been recognized and in use by the local churches; this convention affirmed and forever established this recognition.

What does the Bible say about itself?

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 2 Peter 3:15b-16
- “Thus saith the Lord” used many times in the Old Testament

Jesus quotes from or refers to the Old Testament Scriptures, establishing his belief in its authority.

- Matthew 21:42; 22:29; 26:54, 56
- Luke 24:25-27
- John 5:39; 7:38; John 10:35

The Apostles used the Old Testament to preach and teach about Jesus, establishing their belief in its authority.

- Acts 2:14ff
- Acts 17:2

Is our Bible today the same as many years ago, or has it been corrupted through time? (Islam teaches that the Bible has been corrupted.) There is more evidence that the Bible has been accurately transmitted

through time than for any other ancient book (such as writing of the Greek philosophers) and even more recent writings, such as the works of Shakespeare in the 1600s. We can have faith that the Bible of today is an accurate representation of the original writings.

The Bible contains many predictions of what would happen in the future. Some of these predictions have not yet occurred; we still look forward to them happening. But other predictions were fulfilled, with astounding accuracy. If the Bible contained predictions that were proved false, we would have evidence that the Bible is flawed and not written by God. But since the Bible accurately predicts what no man could possibly accurately predict, we have evidence that the Bible is written by God and reliable.

## **Conclusion**

We have faith in many things. For instance, we believe that  $2+2$  is 4. We believe that the area of a circle is calculated with the formula  $2\pi*r$ , even if we don't understand it. We believe that our radios will play music, even though we don't understand how they work. Similarly, our belief that the Bible is true comes down to faith. There is ample evidence that the Bible is true, and this evidence should lead us to trust the Bible, even when we don't understand it.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 1:1 through 4:34 from your own Bible and from *The Message of Hope*. This passage is found on pages 5 through 19 of *The Message of Hope*.

## **For additional study:**

*A Ready Defense*, Josh McDowell

*Is the Bible True?*, Jeffrey Sheler

*Professor and the Prophets* video, Moody Science Classics (available in the church library)

## Lesson 2 – Mark 1 & 2

### The New Testament

The New Testament consists of a total of 27 books that can be categorized into one of three types: history, epistles, prophecy.

1. **History.** A historical book relates the facts of people and places. The New Testament contains five historical books.
  - a. The four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The gospels relate the story of the life of Jesus. The word “gospel” is just a fancy word for “good news”. So, we could title each of the gospels like this:
    - i. The Good News of the Life of Jesus as told by Matthew
    - ii. The Good News of the Life of Jesus as told by Mark
    - iii. The Good News of the Life of Jesus as told by Luke
    - iv. The Good News of the Life of Jesus as told by John
  - b. The book of Acts. The long name of this book is “The Acts of the Apostles”. As the name suggests, the book of Acts describes what the apostles did after the death and resurrection of Jesus.
2. **Epistles.** The word “epistle” is a fancy word for “letter” or “writings”. So, the books that are called epistles are really letters written from some one and to some one.
  - a. The name of the book comes from either who the letter is written to or who wrote the letter. For instance, Romans was written by Paul to the church at Rome; it was named for who the letter was written to. The book of Jude was written by Jude to an unknown person or group; it was named for who wrote the letter.
  - b. The first 13 epistles were written by Paul, and are in order approximately by size (not the date that they were written). Romans is the longest of Paul’s letters and Philemon is the shortest.
  - c. The next epistle is Hebrews, and its author is not known. So, it is named for the recipients of the letter. It is the longest of the remaining epistles.
  - d. Next comes seven epistles written by four different people: James, Peter, John and Jude. These are all named for the author of the letter and are also approximately in order by size.
3. **Prophecy.** The final book, Revelation, relates future events that have not yet occurred.

#### History

Matthew  
Mark  
Luke  
John  
Acts

#### Epistles

Romans  
1 Corinthians  
2 Corinthians  
Galatians  
Ephesians  
Philippians  
Colossians  
1 Thessalonians  
2 Thessalonians  
1 Timothy  
2 Timothy  
Titus  
Philemon  
Hebrews  
James  
1 Peter  
2 Peter  
1 John  
2 John  
3 John  
Jude

#### Prophecy

Revelation

## **The Gospel of Mark**

The gospel of Mark does not identify its author. However, church tradition is that Mark (also known as John Mark) is the author of this gospel. It is generally believed to have been the first gospel written.

Most people think that the gospels were written by men who had lived with and known Jesus. This isn't the case. The gospels of Matthew and John were written by apostles – men who had lived with, known, and listened to Jesus. But neither Luke nor Mark was close companions of Jesus; in fact, it is likely that they never met Jesus at all. So, how did Mark know what to write? Church tradition is that Mark received much of his information from the apostle Peter. And, of course, we believe that Mark's account is also inspired by God. This means that even though Mark learned about Jesus from Peter, God inspired him to write what he did.

What does the Bible tell us about Mark?

Acts 12:12 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 12:25 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 15:36-40 \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 4:10-11 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Timothy 4:9-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Philemon 23, 24 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 5:13 \_\_\_\_\_

We've learned that the Christians gathered together in Mark's mother's house, so he probably had close contact with early Christianity. Mark went with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, but somewhere along the way he deserted the trip and returned home. (We don't know why.) When Barnabas wanted to take him on a mission trip again, Paul disagreed. The disagreement was so sharp that Paul and Barnabas split ways and made separate trips. Paul must have been very disgusted with Mark. However, that's not the end of Mark's story! Later in his letters, Paul writes of wanting to have Mark with him and how helpful Mark is to him. We also know that Peter thought highly of Mark. And, Mark is remembered for recording an account of Jesus' life!

Like Mark, we may have “deserted” friends and the Christian faith. But Mark is an example that God can restore relationships and still use us in His work in some capacity. He can give renewed purpose to our lives.

## Mark Chapters 1 & 2

Mark’s gospel is characterized by *action*. It emphasizes what Jesus *did* more than what He *said*. Read Mark 1 and 2. Try to get a picture of Jesus in action.

- What did Jesus announce was at hand (Mark 1:14-15)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The Jews believed that they lived at the brink of the end of their oppression. They were waiting for the Messiah, who would usher in the time when God would defeat all evildoers and rule the world with peace, justice, health and prosperity. They called this time of God’s rule “the kingdom of God”. The Jews expected the Messiah to defeat the Romans and put Jews in charge. With what you already know about the life of Jesus, is this what Jesus did?  
Yes   No
- How does Jesus want people to respond to what He says and does?
  - Mark 1:15 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Mark 1:16-20 \_\_\_\_\_
- What did Jesus say that He came to do?
  - Mark 1:38 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Mark 2:17 \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus is already starting to make the religious establishment angry. What did He do to make them angry?
  - Mark 2:1-12 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Mark 2:15-17 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Mark 2:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Mark 2:23-28 \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you think this anger is justified?   Yes   No
- From what we’ve read and discussed so far, what are your impressions of Jesus as a person? What is He like? What is important to Him? Would you like to have been around him?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- How would you describe the attitude of the friends in Mark 2:3-4?
- 
- In Mark 2:1-12, who are you most like?
    - The paralyzed man – needing healing of a physical or spiritual wound
    - The friends – wanting to help a friend with a desperate need
    - The religious scholars – concerned that things be done properly
    - The crowd – happy to sit back and see what happens

The friends of the paralyzed man had a “now or never” attitude. They weren’t going to stop until Jesus had met their need. They could have thought, “We’re close now; we can wait for Jesus to find us.” Instead, they didn’t put it off. Sometimes we can easily take the first few steps toward God, but when we get close to seeking forgiveness and restoration, we draw back. Let’s be like these men and go all the way!

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapters 3 and 4 from your own Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## **Facts and Definitions**

Apostle	The general definition is “one sent with a special message or commission”. The specific definition, however, refers to certain men in the Bible. The Bible refers to Jesus as an apostle. The twelve men that Jesus chose to be with Him during His ministry are also referred to as apostles. Paul refers to himself as an apostle.
Baptism	Immersion in water to signify a belief or event.
Epistle	Letter or writings.
Galilee	A northern region of Palestine populated by a mix of Jews and non-Jews. Jews from the south (near Jerusalem) considered Galileans to be backwards and ignorant.
Gospel	Good news.

*The Gospel of Mark – An Introduction to Christianity*

John the Baptist     John was a cousin of Jesus and the first publicly known prophet in 400 years. He is called “the Baptist” or “the Baptizer” because he baptized people as a sign of their individual repentance and belief that the time of the Messiah was near.

Messiah             The one promised of God as the Great Deliver who would deliver God’s people from sin and oppression.

## Lesson 3 – Mark 3

### Mark Chapter 3

#### The Sabbath (Mark 3:1-6)

Read Exodus 20:9-11. What does God say about the Sabbath Day?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

In order to help them be obedient to God’s command to not work on the Sabbath, the Jews had invented an elaborate system of rules and guidelines. For instance, walking a certain distance was OK, but a little further would be work. What started with good intentions – to help define boundaries to help people obey – had become a set of legalistic rules. Eventually, they came to think that obeying these rules and guidelines was obeying God. That is, their rules and traditions about what God said became as important to them as what God actually said.

Do you think that this tendency to add our own rules and traditions to God’s commands affects us today? If so, try to list some examples.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Read Mark 2:27 again. What did Jesus say about the Sabbath day?

- \_\_\_\_\_

What did Jesus do on the Sabbath Day?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider this “work”?                      Yes                      No

Were his actions right or wrong?                      Right                      Wrong

Jesus made a habit of doing good on the Sabbath Day, and the response of the religious leaders was always the same. Note the responses.

**Luke 13:10-17**

What did Jesus do? \_\_\_\_\_

When did he do it? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the people respond? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the religious leaders respond? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 14:1-6**

What did Jesus do? \_\_\_\_\_

When did he do it? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the people respond? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the religious leaders respond? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think the religious leaders may have responded this way?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

The Jewish Sabbath Day is the last day of the week (Saturday). But we go to church on Sunday, the first day of the week. Why?

- Mark 16:2-6 \_\_\_\_\_
- Acts 20:7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Corinthians 16:2 \_\_\_\_\_

Should we still observe the Sabbath Day, on either Saturday or Sunday?

- Colossians 2:16-17 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Different Responses to Jesus (Mark 3:7-35)**

How are the scribes and Pharisees responding to Jesus? (From above)

- 3:2 \_\_\_\_\_
- (from above) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3:22 \_\_\_\_\_

How are the disciples responding to Jesus?

- 3:13 \_\_\_\_\_

How are the people responding to Jesus?

- 3:9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3:20 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3:32 \_\_\_\_\_

How are Jesus' mother and brothers responding to Jesus?

- 3:21 \_\_\_\_\_

How are the demons responding to Jesus?

- 3:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the above characterizes your response to Jesus?

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapter 4 from your own Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## **Facts and Definitions**

Holy                      Set apart or distinctly different.

Pharisee                The group of religious leaders who believed that following the Law of Moses was the Jew's duty. They were the "conservative party" of the Jewish people.

## **Lesson 4 – Mark 4:1-20**

### **Introduction**

How would you answer this question: if a student has been taught by a good teacher, using good methods and good material, and still has not learned, what is the reason for failing to learn?

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The Greeks emphasized knowledge and the intellect. Not only had Alexander the Great conquered most of the known world, but also Greek philosophy highly influenced other cultures. Their teaching methods are still employed in our public schools today. The Greek answer to the above question is the lack of learning indicates a lack of intelligence.

### **Parables**

In the previous three chapters, Jesus has been busy teaching and performing miracles. People are coming to him, perhaps to learn more or perhaps just to see what he will do. As this chapter starts, so many people have come to see him that Jesus has resorted to speaking from a boat a short distance from the shore. He also begins to teach them in parables.

A parable is a short story used to illustrate or teach something deeper. The parable would engage the listener, and would often include a paradox or an unexpected ending. The parable was not necessarily designed to teach, but rather to stir up interest in the hearer.

### **The First Parable (Mark 4:1-20)**

At this time in history, farming was often used as a picture of learning.

sower	=	the teacher
sowing	=	teaching
seed	=	what is taught
soil	=	the students

Jesus used this analogy that the people were already familiar with to teach them about something new. In addition, he started with something familiar – with the well known trade of farming – to teach them a spiritual truth.

### What did the people hear? (Mark 4:3-9)

- A person: \_\_\_\_\_
- An activity: \_\_\_\_\_
- A seed: (What is expected to grow?) \_\_\_\_\_
- Four locations:
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
- Two results:
  1. Either the seed did not bear fruit
  2. Or the seed did bear fruit
- A Challenge (verse 9): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### How did they respond? (Mark 4:10)

- Did the people understand the meaning of the parable?      Yes      No
- What two responses do we see?
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_

Some heard the parable and then responded to it by seeking Jesus to gain a better understanding. They weren't content with what they knew; they wanted more. However, most of the multitude were content to hear the story without really understanding it. If they had thought about it and sought out Jesus, they could have understood.

What does God promise in James 1:5? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What does God promise in James 4:8? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you like the multitude who are content, or are you like the ones who are seeking God?

### Jesus teaches the meaning (Mark 4:14-20)

- What is the seed? \_\_\_\_\_
- Look back to Mark 1:14-15. What more does this tell us about the seed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What fruit should this seed yield?
  1. Mark 4:20 \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Ephesians 2:10 \_\_\_\_\_
- What do the four soils represent?
  1. Pathway: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Rocky: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Thorny: \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Good: \_\_\_\_\_
- When the good news of the gospel is given, what is the response?
  1. Pathway: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Rocky: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Thorny: \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Good: \_\_\_\_\_
- Did the sower decide where to sow the seed?      Yes      No

The Greeks thought that a lack of understanding was caused by a lack of intelligence. However, Jesus teaches here that lack of intelligence is not the cause of the seed failing to produce. Instead, the seed is stifled by Satan, notwithstanding persecution, and by anxiety and wrong priorities. **The real problem is the state of the *heart*, not the state of the *mind*.**

We should all want to be “good soil” that accepts God and His teachings. Jesus tells us that there are three obstacles: Satan, a lack of true commitment that would endure persecution, and the many cares and concerns of this world. Any of these will cause good soil to be hard, rocky or thorny.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 4:21-41 from your own Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## **Facts and Definitions**

Analogy                Explaining something by describing something similar or with similar relationships.

Hellenistic            Having to do with Greek customs and culture, often emphasizing the intellect.

Parable                A story used to illustrate a truth and increase interest.

## Lesson 4 - Self Study

Read more about “the seed” on your own. We would call this seed the gospel, the good news that Jesus can change our life and give us eternal life.

1. Who has sinned? Romans 3:23 \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Are you a sinner?            Yes    No
  
3. What is the result of sin?
  - a. Ezekiel 18:20 \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Isaiah 59:2 \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. The beginning of Romans 6:23 \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Does God love you?        Yes    No
  
5. How do we know that God loves you? Romans 5:8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. The result of sin is death, but what does God want to give instead? Romans 6:23 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
7. God wants to give you the gift of eternal life, not because you somehow can do enough for Him to deserve it, but because He loves you. How can you accept this free gift?
  - a. Romans 10:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. John 3:16-18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 4 – Additional Discussion

Jesus teaches that there are several things that will prevent us from receiving and acting upon his words.

- A hard heart
- Lack of commitment
- Worries of this world (health, food, rent, education, etc.)
- Desire for wealth
- Desire for other things

A good heart that receives and acts upon Jesus' teachings will produce a crop.

- Influencing other people to believe in Jesus
- Abounding in good works, kind attitudes, etc.

The Bible often refers to "fruit" as the result of a Christian's life. Some of this fruit is identified in Galatians 5:22-23.

- love
- joy
- peace
- patience
- kindness
- goodness
- faithfulness,
- gentleness
- self-control

Do you see this fruit in your life?                      Yes                      No

Which name would you choose for this parable?

\_\_\_ The Parable of the Sower

\_\_\_ The Parable of the Seed

\_\_\_ The Parable of the Soil

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 5 – Mark 4:21-41

### Four More Parables (Mark 4:21-34)

Suppose that it's your job to name Jesus' stories. How would you name the stories that start in these verses?

- vs 21: \_\_\_\_\_
- vs 24: \_\_\_\_\_
- vs 26: \_\_\_\_\_
- vs 30: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think is Jesus' main point in each of these stories? What is he communicating?

- vs 21: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- vs 24: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- vs 26: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- vs 30: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did the multitude of people understand Jesus' teachings (4:33-34)?    Yes    No    Some

Jesus was willing to help his followers understand the meaning of his stories. Do you think that he's also willing to help you understand?    Yes    No

**4:21-23** – A person does not take the truth and deliberately hide it or obscure it. The “hidden things” may refer to our actions, or it may refer to the mysteries of God. Both are true. God knows our actions; also, if we seek to know God, he will reveal himself to us. Jesus is the light (John 8:12) that is hidden from some eyes because they refuse to see; yet he will eventually be made known to all (Philippians 2:9-11).

**4:24-25** – Hearing or listening results in action. If a mom tells her daughter to clean her room, and an hour passes and the room still is not clean, then the mom will ask, “Did you hear me?” She is not asking if the daughter heard the sounds, but rather why she chose not to obey. Jesus is challenging the people to act on what is heard. When we receive some understanding of God and his plan and act on it, Jesus says that

we'll receive more understanding. But if we receive some understanding of God and reject it, we will understand less and less about God.

**4:26-29** – The farmer doesn't understand how God causes a seed to grow into a crop; he just has faith that the seed will return a crop. We don't have to understand how God works in the hearts of men; we just need to have faith that he will. It's not our job to make other people grow; it's our job to plant the seeds (God's word and teachings) and have faith that God will work.

**4:30-32** – God can take something small and turn it into something great that will benefit others.

In lesson 4, we discussed the two conditions for receiving wisdom and understanding (James 1:5). What are these conditions?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

When you read and study the Bible, remember to admit your need for help and ask God to give you understanding.

### **An Eventful Trip (Mark 4:35-41)**

After relating some of Jesus' stories, Mark returns to his main theme of *Jesus in action*. Jesus and his followers climb in boats and strike out across the Sea of Galilee. We don't know for sure how big these boats were, but scholars think that they would have a crew of 5 and carry up to 10 passengers and a ton of cargo. These were not rowboats or tiny sailboats!

At least four of Jesus' followers were fisherman (Simon, Andrew, James and John) and were familiar with the sea and it's storms. They would not have been easily frightened. However, they were afraid for their lives. The storm must have been serious!

Compare the followers' reaction with Jesus' reaction.

- What was Jesus doing during this storm? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does that seem unusual to you?                      Yes                      No
- Whose response is showing a trust in God?                      Jesus                      Followers

Jesus had instructed his followers that they were going to the other side of the lake. The storm caused the followers to doubt whether they would make it, even though Jesus had told them that that is what they were going to do.

When is it easiest to trust God?

\_\_\_\_\_ When everything is going well.

\_\_\_\_\_ During a crisis?

During times of crisis (such as the storm on this lake), it can be difficult to keep our faith in God, but that is what Jesus asks us to do.

Jesus' followers had seen him heal the sick and cast out demons. However, now they have seen him control nature and their response is \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapter 5 from your own Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## **Facts and Definitions**

Mustard Seed      1 gram of mustard seed is about 750 seeds.

Mustard Tree      This is an annual plant, meaning that it dies back in the fall and grows from scratch again in the spring from any seeds that develop. It often grew to 8 to 10 feet tall.

Sea of Galilee      It is about 13 miles long and 7 miles wide. The Jordan River flows into the north end of the lake and out of the south end of the lake.

## Lesson 6 – Mark 5

### An Outcast: A Demon Possessed Man (Mark 5:1-20)

Read this account of Jesus' life. What was the man like before and after encountering Jesus?

BEFORE

AFTER

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What made the difference in this man's life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did the demons respond to Jesus?

Mark 1:24 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 3:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 5:7 \_\_\_\_\_

James 2:19 \_\_\_\_\_

When the man saw Jesus, he ran up to him and bowed down, or fell on his knees. His response was humble and perhaps of worship. He did not run *from* Jesus, but instead ran *to* Jesus. Sometimes our pride prevents us from approaching the one that can best help us in our time of need. This man did not run away from the only one who could help him. How about you? Have there been times in your life when you've run away from God rather than run to him? How about now? Are you turned toward God or away from him?

### Another Outcast: The Bleeding Woman (Mark 5:21-34)

How did Jesus respond to this woman (pick one)?

\_\_\_ with compassion

\_\_\_ with anger

\_\_\_ with indignation

This woman's disease caused her to be ceremonially unclean at all times. If another came in contact with her, then they would also be unclean. As a result, for twelve years, she had been prohibited from participating in religious feasts and festivals, from going to the temple or synagogue to worship and learn,

and even from normal social relationships. Plus, she was a woman. She had two strikes against her to prevent her from approaching Jesus. Perhaps this is why she tried to approach him in secret.

After the woman touched his garment, Jesus asked, “Who touched my clothes?” Why?

- \_\_\_ He didn’t know.
- \_\_\_ He wanted the disciples to know.
- \_\_\_ He wanted to give the woman a chance to talk with him
- \_\_\_ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_.

The woman tried to approach Jesus in secret, but he wanted her to approach publicly. God does not want us to have a secret faith in him.

### **Willing to Be an Outcast: Jairus (Mark 5:21-43)**

This is one of my favorite parts of the New Testament. Perhaps it is because I have a daughter.

Based on what we’ve learned so far, how had the religious leaders typically responded to Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

Jairus was an official in the synagogue. His “work associates” did not believe Jesus and were trying to get rid of him. But Jairus had a problem – his daughter was at the point of death. He was willing to risk becoming an outcast from his social peers in order to seek help for his daughter.

Jairus did find Jesus and ask him for help. But Jesus was interrupted while on the way to his house, and he receives word that it’s too late. His daughter was dead. How might he have felt upon hearing this news?

But what is Jesus’ response to this news? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus didn’t give up. Even if he felt the situation was hopeless, Jairus didn’t give up either. They continued on their mission, and Jesus restored the daughter to life!

We have seen Jesus:

- Heal sickness, disease and infirmity
- Cast out demons

- Control the weather
- Raise a dead person back to life

Interestingly, many of the prophets in the Old Testament also performed miracles. (Or, more properly said, God performed miracles through these men.) However, I don't recall any prophet that performed all four of these kinds of miracles. The miracles are confirming to us that Jesus is who he says he is.

Based on what we've read today, how would you respond to some one that said: "The only thing that's important is your spirit. Your body isn't important to God and shouldn't be important to you?"

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Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Is the body important?                      Yes                      No

Jesus was concerned for both the spiritual and physical needs of people. While the spiritual is most important, he didn't neglect the physical to concentrate only on the spiritual. Likewise, we need to take care of our bodies and recognize that they are from God. Nurturing our spirit and relationship with God is most important, but not an excuse to neglect our bodies.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapter 6 from your own Bible and from The Message of Hope.

## **Facts and Definitions**

Child Mortality      60% of children who survived birth died by their mid-teens.

Clothes                      A common superstition was that the clothes of holy men were often thought to contain miraculous power.

Legion                      A Roman regiment of 5400 foot soldiers and 120 horsemen.

*The Gospel of Mark – An Introduction to Christianity*

Mourners	It was customary for the family to hire mourners upon the death of a family member. Mourners consisted of wailers and flute players. Even the poorest of families was expected to hire at least one wailer and two flute players.
Pigs	The law given by God in the Old Testament identified pigs as an unclean animal, not to be eaten. A Jew would never have raised pigs, and certainly wouldn't have a herd of them.
Synagogue	The local place where the Jews would meet to worship.

## Lesson 7 – Mark 6:1-13

### Jesus' Reception at Home (Mark 6:1-6)

- Who is easier to impress?  
 A stranger.  
 An acquaintance.  
 A friend or relative.
- In a perfect world, who would be your strongest supporters? \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus has been healing and teaching and performing miracles, and now he returns to the town where he grew up, where he worked as a carpenter, and where his family still lives. People were flocking to hear from him. How would you have expected the townspeople to respond?  
 With excitement to have him home again.  
 Ready to hear his teachings first hand.  
 Hoping that he would heal their own sick.  
 With suspicion.  
 With jealousy.  
 With a “who does he think he is” attitude.
- How did the people of Nazareth respond to him?  
 With excitement to have him home again.  
 Ready to hear his teachings first hand.  
 Hoping that he would heal their own sick.  
 With suspicion.  
 With jealousy.  
 With a “who does he think he is” attitude.
- Jesus notes that our natural response is to often respect a stranger’s opinion more than the opinion of one that we know. Yet, he is still amazed that they did not respond to his teaching and the miracles that he had performed in other places.

Who are your strongest supporters?

Does your family believe in you?

Would your spouse and children say that you are among their strongest supporters?

Are you ever guilty of relying on a stranger’s opinion more than your spouse’s opinion?

## Principles for God’s Workers (Mark 6:7-13)

- Jesus sent out his disciples to minister as:
  - \_\_\_ individuals
  - \_\_\_ as a team of two
- List some benefits of working as part of a team rather than as a lone ranger.
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you think this is a wise principle for today? Yes No
- If you were in charge of sending out missionaries for a month long trip around the county, what kind of provisions would you have wanted to supply them with?
  - \_\_\_ Hotel vouchers?      \_\_\_ A car?
  - \_\_\_ Changes of clean clothes?      \_\_\_ A credit card for emergencies?
- What did Jesus send them out with?
  - \_\_\_ Everything they already had that might prove helpful.
  - \_\_\_ Almost nothing. In fact, they had to leave stuff behind.
- What might Jesus have been trying to teach them?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Imagine you’re visiting a city and have no place to stay. A poor family invites you to stay at their small but clean home. After a few days, some wealthy people hear you speak and want to learn more. They invite you to stay with them in their house; after all, it’s bigger and more comfortable, and you’d be able to teach some influential people.
  - Would you be tempted to accept their offer?
  - What principles does Jesus give that would influence your decision?\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Which is more important: your message and ministry to others, or your comfort?

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapter 6 from your own Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 8 – Mark 6:14-44

### Comparison of Two Leaders

#### 1. Herod, A Lavish Banquet (Mark 6:14-29)

- How would you describe Herod? ✓ Check words that describe him, X words that don't.

<input type="checkbox"/> Rash	<input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about making a good impression
<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful	<input type="checkbox"/> Likes sensual entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate	<input type="checkbox"/> Easily seduced
<input type="checkbox"/> Evil	<input type="checkbox"/> Good
<input type="checkbox"/> Not afraid of men	<input type="checkbox"/> Afraid of men
<input type="checkbox"/> Innocent	<input type="checkbox"/> Guilty
<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys listening about God, but doesn't change	<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys knowing God, and obeys Him
<input type="checkbox"/> Likes the rich and famous	<input type="checkbox"/> Associates with the poor and needy
<input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about people	<input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about himself
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

#### 2. Jesus, A Simple Banquet (Mark 6:30-44)

- How would you describe Jesus? ✓ Check words that describe him, X words that don't.

<input type="checkbox"/> Rash	<input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about making a good impression
<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful	<input type="checkbox"/> Likes sensual entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate	<input type="checkbox"/> Easily seduced
<input type="checkbox"/> Evil	<input type="checkbox"/> Good
<input type="checkbox"/> Not afraid of men	<input type="checkbox"/> Afraid of men
<input type="checkbox"/> Innocent	<input type="checkbox"/> Guilty
<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys listening about God, but doesn't change	<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys knowing God, and obeys Him
<input type="checkbox"/> Likes the rich and famous	<input type="checkbox"/> Associates with the poor and needy
<input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about people	<input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about himself
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

Jesus used a very interesting phrase to describe the people. He said that they were like sheep without a shepherd. List some things you know about sheep:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Without a shepherd, they wander and get lost.
- Without a shepherd to find good pasture for them, they don't eat.
- They need to be led to water; they won't find it on their own.
- They have nothing to defend themselves against wolves and other predators.

What did the people need? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the solution? \_\_\_\_\_

List some of the miracles that Jesus has already performed that we've learned about in the book of Mark.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus performs a different kind of miracle here. How would you describe it?

- \_\_\_\_\_

True or False:

\_\_\_\_\_ Jesus is able to take my possessions, talents and skills – no matter how small they seem to me – and use them to do great things for His kingdom.

## **Facts and Definitions**

**Herod** Herod the Great had ten wives. All of his sons were named Herod. Therefore, it can be confusing when reading about Herod – it seems he's everywhere! Just remember that there's more than one Herod.

**12 Baskets** There were twelve tribes of Israel. Having 12 baskets left over is a sign that God has enough for all of the Jews. There were also 12 disciples. The leftovers of 12 baskets is also a sign that Jesus is caring for his 12 disciples.

## Homework

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Complete the following activity.

Which of these describe you?

\_\_\_ I am rash

\_\_\_ I am concerned about making a good impression

\_\_\_ I am thoughtful

\_\_\_ I like sensual entertainment

\_\_\_ I am compassionate

\_\_\_ I am easily seduced

\_\_\_ I am not afraid of others and what they think about me

\_\_\_ I am afraid of others and what they think about me

\_\_\_ I enjoy listening about God, but don't want to change

\_\_\_ I enjoy learning more about God, and want to obey Him

\_\_\_ I like the rich and famous

\_\_\_ I associate with the poor and needy

\_\_\_ I am concerned about people

\_\_\_ I am concerned mostly about myself

\_\_\_ I want to be more like Jesus and less like Herod

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank God** for developing the positive characteristics in your life.

**Ask God** to forgive you and change the negative characteristics in your life.

## Lesson 9 – Mark 6:45-56

After all had eaten their fill and the leftovers were collected, Jesus sent the disciples by boat ahead of him.

- What was their destination? \_\_\_\_\_
- About what time would they have left? \_\_\_\_\_

The “fourth watch of the night” is considered to be between 3 AM and 6 AM.

- What had the disciples been doing all that time? \_\_\_\_\_
- What had Jesus been doing?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think that Jesus was surprised by the struggle that the disciples were having? YES NO

Could Jesus have helped them sooner? YES NO

Why do you think he might have waited “so long” before coming to them?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Verse 48: “*He was about to pass them by (NIV)*” Was Jesus just planning on walking past?

- Perhaps Jesus was intending to reveal himself to the disciples, and then await their response.
- Or perhaps this is similar to Exodus 33:19, where God’s glory passed in front of Moses. In other words, as God revealed Himself to Moses, now Jesus is revealing Himself to the disciples in the boat. Certainly seeing Jesus walking across the water would reveal yet one more facet of Jesus and his authority.

The disciples see Jesus walking on water, then calm the winds. What is their response?

\_\_\_\_\_

Think back about what Mark has already recorded. List a few of the miraculous acts that the disciples have already seen Jesus perform.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Are you completely amazed that the disciples were completely amazed? YES NO

What reason does the Bible give for their response? \_\_\_\_\_

The disciples had witnessed Jesus cast out demons, heal the sick, restore life to the dead, calm the storm, feed over 5000 with just a few loaves and fish, and now walk on the water. Yet their hearts were hard, causing them to respond with amazement.

We can know a lot about the Bible and Jesus, but still respond with skepticism or amazement rather than faith. Our response is determined by our heart, our innermost being.

Do you have a hard heart? If so, confess it to God (He knows already) and ask Him to change it.

After Jesus calms the wind, the boat makes progress again.

- Where did the disciples' boat land? \_\_\_\_\_
- Was this their original destination? YES NO
- How did the people respond when they found that Jesus was near?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes when Jesus gets involved in our lives, He ends up taking us where we didn't intend to go. What do you think of this? Does it make you nervous? Or do you trust him to take you where you need to be?

## **Flashback**

As this chapter closes, Jesus is in the country of the Garasenes. Do you recall what happened last time he was here? (See Mark 5:1-20.) Jesus had encountered a demon-possessed man, freed him from that oppression and restored him to his right mind. The locals asked Jesus to leave, and Jesus told the healed man, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

Now Jesus has returned and how do the people respond? Previously they'd asked him to leave, but now they throng to him! What does this tell you about the faithfulness of the healed man?

## **Other Resources**

Watch Faith Lesson 19 from the *That the World May Know* video series (Set 4).

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Matthew 14:22-36 from your Bible. This is Matthew's account of the same event, and he gives some additional detail. Mark received much of his information from Peter; why might Peter have told the story differently than Matthew?
3. Read Mark 7 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 10 – Mark 7:1-23

The religious elite from Jerusalem have tracked down Jesus. We know from Mark 3:6 that their motives are not pure. They didn't come to learn from Jesus; they came to trap him. They're looking for something that they can use to discredit him or even to get rid of him. They think they've spotted something they can use. They see the disciples not following a tradition; their teacher must be guilty too.

What did the religious leaders essentially accuse the disciples (and Jesus) of?

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Was ceremonial washing:

\_\_\_ A command from God, recorded in the Old Testament.

\_\_\_ A tradition.

The religious leaders confronted Jesus with a question about the behavior of his followers. Were they really interested in hearing his answer? No, probably not. They weren't interested in learning or restoring an erring follower of God. Their question was a thinly veiled accusation.

Sometimes we use questions – instead of statements – to let other people know what we think. Instead of saying, “God teaches that we should honor our parents, and you didn't honor them when you ...” we may be tempted to say, “Do you think you were honoring your parents when you ...”

Or, “Were you kind when you...” rather than “You were unkind when ...”.

Or, “Is that big, fat juicy Big Mac that's full of grease healthy?” instead of “Let's try to pick something healthier.”

Asking a question may be a legitimate method to reach the heart of some one else. Or, it may just be “weasely” – a kind of cop-out. After all, when you ask a question, you can always back down later. (“What? I just asked a simple question. I wasn't telling him that he was wrong.”) In the example above, the religious leaders weren't really interested in Jesus' answer. They weren't asking a legitimate question; they were making an accusation. By accusing in the form of question, they were being “weasely”.

Consider this: ask a question only when you're really interested in listening to the answer. If you just want to state your opinion, use a statement, not a question.

How did Jesus respond to their accusation?

- With tact and diplomacy.
- With excuses or apologies.
- With straight-on directness.
- By changing the subject.

Jesus saw through their question, and knew that they weren't really interested in listening to his answer. So, instead of gently teaching them the difference between pleasing God and pleasing man, he confronted them. He immediately accused the religious leaders of being hypocrites. What is a hypocrite in your own words? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Jesus gave two examples to show the difference between being "religious on the outside" and truly following God. What were these examples?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

According to Jesus, what is the source of impurity in our lives?

- A bad environment.
- Poverty.
- Eating the wrong foods.
- Our own hearts.
- Too much government taxes.
- Too little government taxes.
- Too many bad examples on TV.

If that's the problem, then what is the solution?

- A good environment.
- Better jobs and more government programs.
- Better nutrition.
- A new heart.
- Paying less taxes.
- Paying more taxes.
- Watching less TV.

Many people believe that we'd all just get along if (a) we eliminate poverty or (b) give everyone a good education or (c) improve living conditions or (d) remove bad influences. Others believe that the problem of evil can be solved by (a) science or (b) education or (c) better welfare programs or (d) drugs. Their "worldview" is that people can fix their own problems, though they don't agree what that fix is.

However, Jesus clearly teaches that it's not the "outside" that makes us "go bad", but rather our own sinful hearts make us "go bad". The solution isn't programs, but a changed heart that only God can offer. The Christian worldview is that we can't help ourselves; we need God's help.

## Facts and Definitions

**Ceremonial Washing**      A tradition of washing to cleanse yourself from contact with Gentiles or others considered to be unclean or undesirable. It may have originated to remind the Jewish people that they were chosen by God. However, as traditions can tend to do, it spun out of control and became as important as actual commands from God.

**Corban**                      A gift of money, goods, or property to God; typically given to God's temple. The property would remain in the possession of the giver, and could be used by the giver, until the giver chose to give it to the temple or until his death. We might think of it as a donation specified in your will. For instance, "Upon my death, my collection of Pez Dispensers are to be sold, with the proceeds being given to Immanuel Baptist Church."

It was common for a person to "devote his goods to God" in order to avoid having to sell them in order to provide for his parents in their old age. For instance, now that I've dedicated my Pez Dispenser collection to God, you can't use it, and I can't sell it to help you. (I can still use it, but you can't.)

## Homework

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. It's been said that you don't have to teach a child to lie.
  - a. Do you agree?
  - b. If so, what does this say about the source of sin? Is it "learned" or "inherited"?
3. Read Mark 7:24-37 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 11 – Mark 7:24-30

### Review

Based on some of our prior lessons:

- When Jesus was with the Jews in Nazareth, he [ did | did not ] perform many miracles.
- When Jesus was with the Gentiles in Gennesaret, he [ did | did not ] perform many miracles.

Jesus has shown his willingness to help people based upon their:

- \_\_\_ Faith
- \_\_\_ Race or nationality
- \_\_\_ Religious heritage
- \_\_\_ Wealth

### A Trip to “Enemy Territory” (Mark 7:24)

After confronting the Jewish religious leaders, Jesus went “to the vicinity of Tyre.”

- Josephus, a Jewish historian from this same time period, described the people from Tyre “as our bitterest enemies.”
- The region of Galilee (where many Jews lived) was farmland. Much of the food went to Tyre. The wealthy in Tyre ate well, while the poor in Galilee did not. This was another reason that the Jews would not have liked the people from Tyre.

Since the Jewish religious leaders would be unlikely to follow him into this heathen city, perhaps Jesus was seeking some peace and quiet. We do know that he was trying to keep his presence secret. This suggests that he wanted a time of rest. Perhaps he merely wanted physical rest, or perhaps he wanted time for prayer, contemplation and rejuvenation.

Knowing that Jesus, the very Son of God, desired a time for rest and rejuvenation, what would you conclude about your need for rest? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Even in Tyre, however, the people knew about Jesus. What does this indicate about his fame?

\_\_\_\_\_

## A Shocking Conversation (Mark 7:25-30)

**Read Mark 7:25.** A woman whose daughter is possessed by an evil spirit finds Jesus. What social divisions could have prevented the woman from approaching Jesus?

- She was a woman, and women did not initiate conversations with men.
- He was a rabbi, and rabbi's did not converse with women.
- She was a Gentile; he was a Jew.
- She was from Tyre, one of the enemies of the Jews.
- She was affluent; he was a simple teacher and carpenter.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- All of the above.

**Read Mark 7:26-27.** The woman came to beg Jesus for help. How would you describe Jesus' reply?

- |  |                                  |                                      |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate | <input type="checkbox"/> Clever  | <input type="checkbox"/> Witty       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shocking      | <input type="checkbox"/> Probing | <input type="checkbox"/> Insulting   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unexpected    | <input type="checkbox"/> Testing | <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging |

Frankly, I find Jesus' reply very surprising, and I'm not sure that I understand it yet. A desperate woman has come to him seeking help, and his reply seems more suitable for the hypocritical religious leaders. Something else must be going on here...

Dogs were seen as scavengers; always hungry but never satisfied. Jews used the term "dog" as an insult, and often applied it to Gentiles. Given the hatred between people of Tyre and the Jews, the woman may have expected Jesus to treat her as a dog.

However, the Greek word for "dog" used in Mark 7:27 is "kunarion", which typically means "little dog". Jesus may have been referring to a beloved house pet, not to a scavenging wild dog.

Does this information change your opinion of Jesus' reply? Imagine the woman approaching Jesus (remember the barriers we discussed earlier). She is expecting to receive his scorn and rebuff; instead, he refers to her, not as a wild, scavenging dog as she might expect, but rather as a beloved house pet. If so, then his reply is not insulting; it is playful!

We know from his previous actions that Jesus is able and willing to heal the Gentiles, and he won't do miracles for the Jews just because they are Jews. Now a Gentile woman has approached him begging for his help. He doesn't agree immediately, but rather reveals more about his work and plan.

In Jesus' story (verse 27) , who is represented by:

- The children? \_\_\_\_\_
- The dogs? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus is stating that he must first minister to the Jews (Israel), then to the Gentiles. The Gentiles will not be neglected, just as the table dogs are not neglected. However, his priority at this time of his ministry is the Jewish people.

**Read Mark 7:28-30.** However, after overcoming so many barriers, the woman persists. She probably has heard of how he has healed other Gentiles. Her reply indicates that she understands:

- The Jews are the chosen people of God
- Yet God still cares for the Gentiles
- God is not a God only of the Jews
- She comes begging for help, as a dog would beg for scraps of food

In other words, her reply expresses her faith. Jesus responds to her \_\_\_\_\_ by healing her daughter.

On what basis does God accept you?

- \_\_\_ Your faith
- \_\_\_ Your race or nationality
- \_\_\_ Your religious heritage
- \_\_\_ Your wealth

## Homework

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 7:31-37 and the beginning of Mark 8 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 12 – Mark 7:31-8:10

### Healing a Deaf and Mute Man (Mark 7:31-37)

This is at least the third time that Jesus has returned to the Decapolis region.

1. When he cast the demons out of the man; they went into the pigs; the pigs ran off the cliff; they asked him to leave (Mark 5:1ff)
2. After the feeding of the 5000, when people there flocked to him (Mark 6:53ff)
3. Now.

How did the people respond to Jesus this time? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Would you say that Jesus is a popular figure in this area? YES NO

Imagine living in a place without newspapers and books, where the only Bible was kept at church. Writing materials were rare, and in fact, very few could read. Now imagine being deaf. How might you communicate with others?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Some people brought to Jesus as man with two ailments. What were the ailments?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe his probable understanding of Jesus?

- \_\_\_ He probably knew a lot about him.  
\_\_\_ His understanding was probably limited and foggy.  
\_\_\_ He probably didn't know anything about him.

We don't know for sure, but it seems likely that this man would have had difficulty communicating, and therefore difficulty learning about current events. He may have communicated via charades or stick figures in the dirt. If he knew about Jesus at all, his understanding was likely foggy and incomplete.

“Some people” brought him to Jesus, and begged that he would be healed. As a result of their intervention on his behalf, he was healed. What if anything does this teach you about your potential influence upon others? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why did Jesus stick his fingers in the man’s ears, then spit and touch his tongue? Jesus may have been communicating with him about what he would do.

### Feeding the 4000 (Mark 8:1-10)

Jesus again feeds a large group of people. Since the details are different, we know that this is a second miracle, and not just a retelling of the previous miracle.

**Mark 8:2** – Jesus had \_\_\_\_\_ for these people. As a result, he wanted to help them. In this case, it meant feeding them. When we have compassion for others, we’ll want to help them too.

**Mark 8:4** – The disciples response indicates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Just like the disciples, we can tend to have a “what have you done for me lately” attitude, or put our faith in our own abilities instead of in God.

**Mark 8:6** – Before serving the meal, Jesus \_\_\_\_\_.  
It was Jesus’ habit to express thanks before a meal. Is this your habit also?

	<b>Mark 6:30 ff</b>	<b>Mark 8:1 ff</b>
How many were fed?	_____	_____
How many loaves were used?	_____	_____
How many fish were used?	_____	_____
How many baskets were left?	_____	_____
The crowd was mostly:	Jew OR Gentile	Jew OR Gentile

The crowd in the feeding of the 5000 was mostly Jewish, and 12 baskets were left-over. There were 12 tribes of the nation Israel, and 12 disciples. This amount of leftovers could be representing that God has enough to care for all of Israel, and that his plan includes all 12 tribes.

The crowd in the feeding of the 4000 was mostly Gentile, and 7 baskets were left-over. At that time, 7 was thought to represent the number of nations in the world. The amount of leftovers could be representing that God has enough to care for not just the Jews, but also all of the Gentiles as well.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 8 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 13 – Mark 8:10-26

### Jesus vs. the Pharisees (Mark 8:10-15)

- Jesus arrives by boat at Dalmanutha, thought to be on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee.
- Who finds him there? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is the purpose of their questioning? \_\_\_\_\_
- What kind of sign did they ask for? \_\_\_\_\_
- How would you describe the signs that Jesus had already given? \_\_\_\_\_
- Were the Pharisees looking for a reason to believe in Jesus?    YES    NO
- Were the Pharisees looking for a reason to accuse Jesus?    YES    NO
- The Pharisees were not truly seeking to understand Jesus; their hearts were already set against him. How did Jesus respond to their request to perform a miracle? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus didn't seem to waste much time hanging around these religious leaders. When alone with the disciples, he warns them to beware the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod.
  - Yeast (also called leaven) was used to cause bread to rise.
  - Yeast was something of a health hazard because it could easily become tainted and spoil the next batches of bread. What was intended to cause the bread to rise could actually poison the bread instead.
  - Once added to dough, yeast cannot be removed. Its addition is permanent.
- What did the Pharisees and Herod have in common? \_\_\_\_\_

The Pharisees and Herod had only one thing in common: they refusal to believe despite the evidence. The yeast may have represented *attitudes* and *habits*. The attitudes and habits of the Pharisees appeared to be good in many ways, but these same attitudes prevented them from accepting the truth about Jesus. Likewise, Herod's hard heart prevented him from believing Jesus. Therefore, the disciples needed to be wary of accepting these attitudes and habits, lest they replace or inhibit faith in God.

For instance, consider *good works*. Good works (helping the poor, being kind, etc.) are admired. However, many religions teach and many people think that their good works earn their way to heaven. These good works then become an obstacle to accepting the truth about Jesus and our need for forgiveness that we don't deserve. Good words can be an example of something good (like yeast) that can result in death (spoiled or rotten bread) when it prevents people from understanding and responding to the good news of the gospel and the life of Jesus.

## Jesus vs. the Slow-to-Learn Disciples (Mark 8:16-21)

- Jesus and the disciples must have left in a hurry, because apparently the disciples forgot to bring the \_\_\_\_\_
- What had Jesus done just a short while ago? \_\_\_\_\_
- And what are the disciples worried about now? \_\_\_\_\_

After I've seen God do good things in my life and help me through times of trouble,  
\_\_\_ I never forget those times and find it easy to believe that He'll care for me in every circumstance.  
\_\_\_ I still sometimes forget about how He's cared for me before and get worried.

## Jesus vs. Blindness (Mark 8:22-26)

- A \_\_\_\_\_ man was brought to Jesus. Blindness often represents darkness and spiritual blindness, not understanding the works of God.
- Jesus took the blind man outside of the village, perhaps to get him away from the crowds. It would have been [ easier | more difficult ] for the blind man to understand Jesus when he was taken away from the crowd.
- Did Jesus completely and instantly heal the man's blindness? YES NO
- Does it surprise you that it took Jesus "two tries" to heal the blind man? YES NO
- Could Jesus have completely healed the blind man "in one try"? YES NO
- Read Mark 8:18 again. Jesus had just talked to his disciples about their lack of understanding. He had likened them to people with eyes that could not see. People with eyes that cannot see are \_\_\_\_\_. Immediately after, Jesus encounters and heals a blind man. How significant might this encounter have been to the disciples? \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus didn't do anything by accident. Therefore, there must be a reason that he healed this man's blindness in two steps instead of his customary one step.
  - To illustrate that healing is sometimes a process, not instant
  - To illustrate that healing spiritual blindness is sometimes a process. Remember that the disciples had just been worried about tonight's meal even though Jesus had just feed 5000 and 4000! (Read Mark 8:18 again.) Jesus told them that they had eyes but did not see – that is, they were blind! He was in the process of helping them understand and gain spiritual sight.

- To illustrate to his disciples that he wasn't going to give up on them, just as he didn't stop with this blind man before completely restoring his sight.
- To illustrate to us that even though we are spiritually blind or have clouded vision, Jesus is working on us to help us gain better sight and understanding as well.
- Blindness is another picture of people, just as the soil was a picture of people.
  - Blind without knowing it
  - Blind but knowing it, wanting to be healed
  - Once was blind, but now I see

The Pharisees were spiritually blind, but did not admit their blindness. Jesus did not force himself on them.

This man was physically blind, but knew that he needed healing. Jesus healed him.

The disciples, though they could see a little bit, still saw fuzzy – sometimes they understood and acted with faith, but sometimes they didn't. Jesus spent much time with them, helping them to understand.

We need to admit that we are still often “blind” to the ways of God, and ask him to continue giving us sight (and insight) into his ways and his plan.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. When you find yourself in a crowd of people, find a place to sit then close your eyes. Is it easy to follow conversations when you can't see? Or would it be easier if you were in a more secluded place?
3. Finish reading Mark 8 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## **Lesson 14 – Mark 8:26-38**

### **The Midpoint**

We're approaching the midpoint of Mark's story of the life of Jesus. Often the middle of a story is a turning point, as the story starts to move toward the conclusion. This is the case in Mark's story as well. As we study today, see if you can identify the turning point.

### **Review of Mark's Story So Far (Mark 1:1 - 8:26)**

- 1:1 John the Baptist announces the coming of Christ
- 1:9 Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist
- 1:14 Jesus begins to teach, calls Andrew, James and John
- 1:21 Jesus casts out an evil spirit
- 1:29 Jesus heals many
- 1:35 Jesus travels, teaching and healing
- 1:40 Jesus heals a man with leprosy
- 2:1 Jesus heals the man let down through the roof by his friends
- 2:13 Jesus calls Matthew to join him as a disciple
- 2:18 Jesus is questioned about fasting and the Sabbath
- 3:1 Jesus heals the man with the shriveled hand; Pharisees are mad that he healed on the Sabbath
- 3:7 Jesus heals many
- 3:13 Jesus appoints twelve men to be his disciples
- 3:20 Jesus is accused of being crazy or being demon-possessed
- 4:1 The parable of the sower, the seed and the soil
- 4:21 The parable of the lamp
- 4:24 The parable of the measure
- 4:26 The parable of the farmer's seed
- 4:30 The parable of the mustard seed
- 4:35 Jesus calms the storm
- 5:1 Jesus heals the demon possessed man that lived in the cemetery
- 5:21 Jesus heals the woman with the bleeding disease
- 5:35 Jesus restores life to the dead girl, the daughter of Jairus, the synagogue official
- 6:1 Jesus teaches at Nazareth, his hometown, but they don't believe him
- 6:12 Jesus sends the 12 on a missionary trip
- 6:14 John the Baptist is killed by Herod
- 6:30 Jesus feeds the five thousand

- 6:45 Jesus walks on water
- 6:53 Jesus heals many in Gennesaret
- 7:1 Jesus is questioned by the Pharisees
- 7:24 Jesus heals the daughter of the woman from Tyre
- 7:31 Jesus heals a deaf and mute man
- 8:1 Jesus feeds the four thousand
- 8:14 Jesus warns about the unbelief of the Pharisees and Herod
- 8:22 Jesus heals the blind man

So far, Mark's story has focused more on:

- \_\_\_\_\_ What Jesus has done
- \_\_\_\_\_ What Jesus has said

### **“Who do you say I am?” (Mark 8:27-30)**

- Who did the people say that Jesus was?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- Identifying Jesus as a prophet was a sign of honor, and gives him significant status.
- Who did Peter say that Jesus was? \_\_\_\_\_
  - The Jews understood the Christ to be a king who would triumphantly appear, deliver the nation Israel from its enemies, then rule the kingdom of Israel.
  - “Christ” is the Greek word; “Messiah” is the Hebrew word. They mean the same thing.
- When did Jesus have this important conversation with his followers?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ When they were walking from one place to another
  - \_\_\_\_\_ When they were at church or some other important place
  - \_\_\_\_\_ When the crowd was gathered and waiting to hear him teach
- When are some good times for you to have conversations with your family about important things?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ In everyday life (at dinner, while washing dishes, while on the way to the grocery, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ At formal times of teaching (at church, at school, etc.)

### **Jesus Talks about the Future (Mark 8:31-33)**

- The Jews expected the Christ to be a conquering king, but Jesus now talks about doing something entirely different.
- Jesus said that he
  - 1. must \_\_\_\_\_

2. be \_\_\_\_\_
  3. must be \_\_\_\_\_
  4. and after three days \_\_\_\_\_
- What did Peter think of this news? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - And what did Jesus think of Peter’s “advice”? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus tells Peter that he is thinking about things from man’s perspective, not from God’s perspective. To Peter, it didn’t make sense that the Messiah would be talking about suffering and dieing when he should be talking about establishing the kingdom of Israel. But God had something better in mind. He didn’t want to rescue people from the Romans; He wanted to rescue them from sin.

List some areas that you look at through a human perspective instead of through God’s perspective. (Some examples: money, health, work, home, relationships)

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### Jesus Talks about Priorities (Mark 8:34-38)

- How would you answer this question: “What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### What is the turning point in Mark’s story of the life of Jesus?

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### Facts and Definitions

Messiah            Anointed. “Messiah” derives from the Hebrew word, while “Christ” derives from the Greek word. Each has the same meaning. The Jews expected the Christ to be a king who would triumphantly appear, deliver the nation Israel from its enemies, then rule the kingdom of Israel.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 9 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 15 – Mark 9:1-13

### Moses

Find Moses on our timeline (from a previous lesson). Here are some highlights regarding Moses.

- Moses was the person God used to deliver the Israelites from Pharaoh (Exodus 6 and following).
- Moses performed many miracles (Exodus 7:10 and following).
- Moses received and delivered the Ten Commandments and other Laws of God (Exodus 20).
- Moses was a great prophet (Deuteronomy 34:10-12).

Read Deuteronomy 18:15

- Another prophet like \_\_\_\_\_ was expected; this prophet would deliver the people from slavery.

Read Deuteronomy 34:1-6

- Where did Moses die? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who buried Moses? \_\_\_\_\_

### Elijah

Find Elijah on our timeline. Here are some highlights regarding Elijah.

- Elijah denounced King Ahab (husband of Jezebel), announced a drought, then fled for his life (1 Kings 17:1).
- Elijah performed many astounding miracles, including raising the dead back to life (1 Kings 17:8-24).
- Elijah defeats the “prophets of Baal” on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:20-40).

Read 2 Kings 2:1-13.

- Did Elijah die? \_\_\_\_\_
- What happened to him instead? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Malachi 4:5.

- Did the people expect Elijah to return?      YES      NO
- What was to happen then? \_\_\_\_\_

### The Transfiguration (Mark 9:1-13)

- Jesus said that [ some of the disciples | all of the disciples ] would not see death before seeing kingdom of God come with power.
- Who did Jesus take with him up the mountain?  
\_\_\_\_\_ All of his disciples

- \_\_\_\_\_ Some of his disciples
- Peter, James and John saw Jesus transfigured before them.
    - His clothes became \_\_\_\_\_
    - “Dazzling” indicates that Jesus may have glowed or radiated with light.
    - “The transfiguration is not a vision of what is to be, but rather is a revelation of what already is – a revelation of Jesus’ unchanging divine glory which has been concealed beneath the lowliness of a human body.” (Otto)
    - In other words, Peter, James and John saw more of the “God-side” of Jesus than they had seen before. Up ‘till now, he had appeared as a man; now his form is more like God.
  - Jesus conversed with two people.
    - \_\_\_\_\_
    - \_\_\_\_\_
  - How do you think Peter, James and John recognized Moses and Elijah?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ From Polaroid photographs they’d seen in their history books.
    - \_\_\_\_\_ From pictures in their picture Bibles that they’d had as children.
    - \_\_\_\_\_ From Michelangelo’s paintings in the Sistine Chapel.
    - \_\_\_\_\_ From their knowledge of Scripture and their own expectations.
    - \_\_\_\_\_ Something else? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What emotion did the disciples feel? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What emotion do you think you would have felt? \_\_\_\_\_
  - The disciples suggested building three shelters (tabernacles) for Jesus, Elijah and Moses.
    - The tabernacles would honor them.
    - It would also shelter the disciples from them, and protect them from being too close. Remember that no man could look upon God and live; they had just seen Jesus appearing more like God and were afraid. The veil in the temple separated the “holy of holies” from the people; only the high priest could enter into the presence of God, and then only with certain preparations. The disciples may have been uncomfortable being so close to Jesus when he appeared this way, and wanted to draw back and put some barriers between them.
  - The cloud represents the presence of God. God identifies Jesus as \_\_\_\_\_ whom he \_\_\_\_\_, and instructs the disciples to \_\_\_\_\_ to him.
  - Jesus is the prophet like \_\_\_\_\_. Like Moses, Jesus delivered his people from slavery. Moses delivered the Israelites from slavery to Pharaoh. Jesus delivers his people from slavery to \_\_\_\_\_ (See Romans 6:5-7 for a hint).
  - When asked when Elijah was coming, Jesus said that he had already come. Who do you think he was referring to? (See Luke 1:17 for a hint.) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Is this event the event that Jesus predicted in verse 1?            YES    NO    MAYBE

Are there times in your life when you feel that you are getting too close to God – or perhaps that God is getting too close for comfort? The disciples' initial response was to put up barriers. What is your response?

## **Facts and Definitions**

**Baal**                    The common name for God among the Phoenicians. Baal was the farm god who gave increase to families, fields, flocks and herds. Worship of Baal included animal sacrifice and prostitution within sacred places.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read ahead in Mark 9 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 16 – Mark 9:14-29

### Jesus Heals a Boy (Mark 9:14-29)

- Jesus had been up the mountain with three of his followers. How many followers were left behind? \_\_\_\_\_
- A man brought his son to Jesus. What problem affected his son? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What were the symptoms of this problem?
  - He cannot \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He \_\_\_\_\_ to the ground.
  - He foams \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He \_\_\_\_\_ his teeth.
  - He \_\_\_\_\_.
- Today, we would say that it sounds like this boy has a disease named \_\_\_\_\_.
- However, we know that though many of the symptoms were like epilepsy, and perhaps the boy even had epilepsy, the root cause was not a disease. Rather the real problem was that he was possessed by an evil spirit.

We are often prone to trying to fix symptoms rather than identifying and correcting the root issue. For instance, when a child is disrespectful, we often discipline (with varying amounts of success) to correct the disrespectfulness. However, the underlying cause may be ingratitude. By addressing only the symptom (disrespect), we may miss the real cause (ingratitude). The ingratitude will continue.

Is there an issue in your life (as a parent, spouse, employer or employee) where you have been ineffectively dealing with the symptom instead of the root problem?

#### CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION

Though some diseases and illnesses may, in fact, be the result of demonic influence or a spiritual problem, the Bible **is not** teaching here or elsewhere that specific sins or demons are the cause of all sickness, disease and illness. We know that in the general sense, sickness and disease are the result of sin. When Adam and Eve sinned, sickness, disease and death entered the world. So, in this general sense, all sickness and disease and death are a result of sin. However, specific sickness and disease may or may not be related to specific sin, or demonic influence.

- When the man arrives with his son, Jesus isn't available. What does he do?  
\_\_\_\_ Gives up and goes home.  
\_\_\_\_ Decides to wait for Jesus.  
\_\_\_\_ Asks Jesus' followers to help.
- Were the disciples able to help? YES NO
- When Jesus learned of the problem, he commanded that the boy be brought to him. How did the demon react when brought into the presence of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The father had brought his son to Jesus. What does this indicate about his faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- After the disciples tried but failed to help, the man asked Jesus, "If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." What does the "if you can" indicate about the man's faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The man asked the disciples for help, and they were probably pretty confident. After all, they had cast out demons before (see Mark 6:7-13). However, they could not cast out this demon. They probably lead the man to believe that they, as Jesus' followers, could solve the problem. When they couldn't, the man may have doubted whether Jesus could help either. His faith may have been shaken.

We are also followers of Jesus and have a responsibility. We must be careful not to make promises for God and not to give others unrealistic expectations of the Christian life. God doesn't heal every sickness. God doesn't solve every problem the way that we might want. If things don't turn out like we lead others to believe they will, then their faith in God may be shaken.

#### **A Real Life Example**

A current example of this is the Prayer of Jabez fad. The author promises that if you say a four line prayer over and over again, then God will bless your life, you'll experience miracles, and so forth. But the Bible doesn't teach this at all. God isn't a machine that we manipulate into doing what we want by repeatedly saying a prayer. However, when people have been given a false expectation, and when they believe it, their faith may be shaken when their expectations are not met.

- Remember when Jesus was at his hometown, Nazareth (Mark 6:5-6). Why did Jesus not perform many miracles when there? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus told the father that he needed to believe that Jesus could and would help. The man immediately responded. What did he say?
  - I do \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Help me \_\_\_\_\_.
- Do you think the man was contradicting himself?    YES    NO
- Do you ever believe, but still want to believe more?    YES    NO
- Jesus was able and willing to help. At his command, the demon left the boy. Additionally, Jesus commanded the demon to “never enter him again”. What affect would this extra command have upon the father? \_\_\_\_\_
- The disciples asked Jesus privately, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” What does their question reveal about their faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus’ answer directs their faith back to \_\_\_\_\_  
They had not been looking to God to cast out the demon, and it got them into trouble. Likewise, when we look to our own abilities rather than rely upon God, we get into trouble and cause all kinds of problems, too.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Finish reading Mark 9 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 17 – Mark 9:30-50

### Jesus Teaches About the Future (Mark 9:30-32)

- Jesus has now clearly talked about his death and resurrection three times.
  - Mark 8:31ff
  - Mark 9:9ff
  - Mark 9:30ff
- According to verse 32, the disciples did not \_\_\_\_\_
- What prevented them from asking Jesus to explain? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is this a good reason? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did Jesus know that they didn't understand? YES NO
- Is there anything that you are afraid to ask God about, or talk to God about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Does God already know about it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is fear a good reason to keep something from God? YES NO

### Jesus Teaches About Humility and Serving (Mark 9:33-35)

- The disciples had spent a lot of time with Jesus. They were probably pretty focused on doing what's important to God, right? What were they talking about while walking along the road?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Is just being around a godly person enough to make you more like God yourself? YES NO

Jesus was the best example – in fact, the perfect example – of how God wants us to live. He was always focused on doing God's will. However, the disciples were having a very selfish discussion about which of them was the best and greatest. That's not the way that God wanted them to live.

Certainly, it *is* better to be around positive examples than negative examples. (See 1 Corinthians 15:33) However, simply being around the right people is not enough. As the saying goes: hanging around leopards won't give you spots.

- How did Jesus respond to the disciples' argument with each other?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He got really mad and told them off.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He got really mad and grounded them from all extra activities.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He patiently continued to teach them.

- What might have led to this response?  
 He was working toward a long-term goal, not short-term flashes-in-the-pan.  
 He knew that they were still sinful and weak, and needed help.  
 He loved them.
- How does Jesus' response help you as a friend, an employer, an employee, a spouse or parent?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus taught the disciples the secret to greatness in God's eyes, which is true greatness, in verse 35. Put it into your own words. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Jesus Teaches that He Values Children (Mark 9:36-37)

- Does Jesus value children? YES NO
- Does Jesus love children? YES NO
- Does it comfort you to know that Jesus loves children? YES NO
- Children were small and insignificant. When we "welcome" (aid, minister to, receive) children, then Jesus says that it is as if we are doing it directly to \_\_\_\_\_

### Jesus Teaches About "Other" Followers (Mark 9:38-41)

- When the disciples came across some one else that was helping others in the name of Jesus, they were:  
 Jealous  Looking for faults  
 Suspicious  Praising God for the good work  
 Happy to find other faithful followers  Wanting to help
- Jesus responded with a widely quoted saying (did you know this came from the Bible?):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus promised to reward those that help his followers, even for help as insignificant as a glass of water. What is one way that you can help other followers of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Who is our enemy?  
 Others that are genuinely helping people in the name of Jesus  
 Satan

## Jesus Teaches About the Severity of Sin (Mark 9:42-50)

- Is Jesus teaching that we should cut off our hand, cut off our foot, or pluck out our eye rather than sin? No. He is using *hyperbole*, teaching by exaggeration. He is using these extremes to teach about the seriousness of sin.
- Why is sin serious? Because of sin, people go into \_\_\_\_\_
- From what we've studied so far, what does the Bible teach the solution is?  
\_\_\_\_ Don't sin at all, ever, not even once.  
\_\_\_\_ Have more good deeds than sins, so that you can be good enough to go to heaven.  
\_\_\_\_ We need forgiveness that only Jesus offers.
- The more we are involved in a particular sin, or exposed to that sin, the more calloused we become to it. What are some sins that we might be calloused to (or used to) today?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Facts and Definitions

**Children** At the time of Jesus' life on earth, children had no power, status or rights. They were the property of their parents, and not considered "full persons" until they were grown. Many rabbis (the Jewish religious teachers) considered children to be as the deaf, the mute, and the slaves. To be a child was to be small and insignificant. No one would have used a child as an example of what we should be like. However, Jesus welcomed the children and gave them value. When compared to the majesty of God, we are all small and insignificant. We have value because He made us and gives us value. Just like children, we have value because God gives it to us.

**Hyperbole** Using exaggeration to make a point.

## Homework

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Begin reading Mark 10 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 18 – Mark 10:1-12

(Optional: complete or review Family Advice, Part 1, before this lesson.)

### The First Marriage (Genesis 2:18-25)

- It is not good for \_\_\_\_\_.
- God made a \_\_\_\_\_ suitable for Adam.
- The helper's name was \_\_\_\_\_.
- Adam identifies three things that characterize the marital relationship.
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- God intends that your relationship with your spouse be (check all that apply):
  - \_\_\_\_ stronger the relationship with your parents
  - \_\_\_\_ stronger than the relationship with your children
  - \_\_\_\_ an expression of unity
  - \_\_\_\_ about meeting your needs first and foremost
- What do you think? God's plan for marriage is that it be:
  - \_\_\_\_ Great
  - \_\_\_\_ Good
  - \_\_\_\_ OK
  - \_\_\_\_ Tolerable
  - \_\_\_\_ A bit better than being in prison, but not much
- Do you know people that have these attitudes about marriage? What is your attitude about it?

### Moses Teaches about Marriage and Divorce

- Deuteronomy 22:13-21. What does the penalty for lying at the beginning of a marriage indicate about the seriousness of the crime? \_\_\_\_\_
- Deuteronomy 22:22. What does the penalty of adultery indicate about the seriousness of the crime of adultery? \_\_\_\_\_
- If these marriage-related crimes are serious, what can we conclude about marriage? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Marital faithfulness is:
  - \_\_\_\_ a must      \_\_\_\_ nice but not necessary      \_\_\_\_ old fashioned

- Deuteronomy 22:28-29. Moses teaches that people that participate in sex as if they were married should be required to \_\_\_\_\_  
Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Moses allowed divorce under what circumstance? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Moses doesn't say anything about what happens when a woman divorces her husband. What do you think this might indicate?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A woman could not divorce her husband. Only a man could initiate divorce.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A woman would not divorce her husband, because she depended upon him for support.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Since it wasn't common practice for a woman to divorce her husband, Moses did not need to put limitations on it.
- Which of the following best describes Moses' teachings?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He encourages divorce.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He allows divorce.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Since divorce was already being practiced, Moses put limits on it to prevent it from being abused or used merely for selfish reasons.

### Jesus Teaches about Divorce (Mark 10:1-12)

- Herod put John the Baptist in prison, and eventually killed him. Why did Herod put John the Baptist in prison? (See Mark 6:18-19) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The Pharisees have been looking for a way to get rid of Jesus. By asking Jesus about marriage, they may be thinking that Jesus' response would upset Herod. Perhaps Herod will get rid of Jesus, just as he got rid of John the Baptist.
- Did Moses allow divorce?            YES    NO
- Why did Moses allow divorce? \_\_\_\_\_
- Remember, God's plan is that marriage be great. In fact, marriage is used to describe the relationship that Jesus has with all believers, the church.
- Jesus taught that it was God's plan that a man and woman remain married until \_\_\_\_\_.
- Read Matthew 19:8-9. Matthew provides a little more detail that Mark does not provide. Under what circumstance does Jesus "allow" divorce? \_\_\_\_\_
- Moses gave instructions about a man divorcing his wife, but was silent regarding a woman divorcing her husband. However, here Jesus elevates the standard to apply to women. A man who divorces his wife and remarries commits adultery *against his former wife*. Jesus is going beyond the limitation of when to divorce, and returning to the spirit of God's plan for marriage.

## **Paul Teaches about Marriage and Divorce**

We're not making a full study of marriage and divorce here. However, our first lesson on "Family Advice" contains references to some of Paul's teaching on this subject.

### **Discussion**

True or False:

- Most divorces are the result of selfish behavior by the husband and/or the wife.
- Satan would like to hurt the church by hurting families.
- Divorce hurts families.
- Even if we've been divorced, we can agree that divorce is a problem.
- The institution of marriage is not respected as much in our generation as in previous generations.
- A man should have several wives, just like King David and King Solomon of the Old Testament.
- When a husband and wife divorce, they are separating what God has joined.
- Christians are immune to marital problems that could result in divorce.
- Polls indicate that divorce is as prominent among those who claim to be followers of Christ as it is among non-believers.
- Divorce may be a sin.
- "We don't get along anymore" is a good reason for divorce.
- The church can minister to those who have been hurt by divorce.
- The church should not gloss over negative consequences of divorce.
- Divorce is worse than gluttony.
- Smoking in restaurants is worse than divorce.
- Divorce and marital discord is one of many problems that Christians face. It should not be over-emphasized nor ignored in the teaching of the church.
- We all need to be humble enough to admit our needs – finances, marriage relationship, parenting, greed, etc. – and receive help from the church and other believers.
- Since God treats marriage as a serious relationship that should be broken only under extreme and specific circumstances, we need to teach our young people about marriage and offer (or even require) pre-marital counseling.
- The church should affirm and protect marriage.
- As believers, we should esteem couples with successful marriages.

### **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Continue reading Mark 10 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 19 – Mark 10:13-16

### Jesus and Children (Mark 10:13-16)

- What are some possible reasons that people may have been bringing their little children to Jesus?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- How did the disciples respond to this event? \_\_\_\_\_
- What might have motivated their response?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- What does their response reveal about their understanding of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What does their response reveal about their love and compassion? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How did Jesus respond to the disciple's response? \_\_\_\_\_
- How did Jesus respond to the children and their parents? \_\_\_\_\_
- What motivated his response? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who does Jesus love?
  - \_\_\_ The rich and powerful.
  - \_\_\_ The poor and needy.
  - \_\_\_ Adults.
  - \_\_\_ Children.
- Jesus taught that the kingdom of God belongs to people who are like \_\_\_\_\_.
- How does a child trust? \_\_\_\_\_
- How should we trust God? \_\_\_\_\_

### For Consideration

- The disciples' response to the people bringing their children to Jesus revealed a lack of love and compassion. Our response to others will reveal whether we truly love them, or whether our love is lacking as well. How do you respond to other people?
- Is anger always a sin? When is anger a sin? When is anger not a sin?
- Children, especially young children, usually readily believe what they are told by their parents. They believe what you teach them about God. If you teach them that Santa Claus brings them

toys on Christmas or that the Easter Bunny brings candy on Easter, then they will believe in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny also. There is a risk, however. All children eventually learn that Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny are make believe. “Mom and Dad told me about Santa Claus, and he’s not for real. What else have they told me that’s just make believe?”

- Based on Jesus’ response to children, and families with children, how should the church respond to children and families with children?

## **Facts and Definitions**

Child Mortality                      Only 4 of 10 children lived until their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. In other words, 6 of 10 children died before reaching age 16.

Indignant                              “Affected at once with anger and disdain; feeling the mingled emotions of wrath and scorn or contempt, as when a person is exasperated at one despised, or by a mean action, or by the charge of a dishonorable act.” (*Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*)

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 10:17-31 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 20 – Mark 10:17-27

### Introduction

- Imagine that you have a young daughter. She climbs up on your lap and asks, “Mom (or Dad), what do I have to do to get a birthday present this year?” How would you answer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Your children receive birthday presents from you because:  
\_\_\_\_ they work hard all year to keep their room clean.  
\_\_\_\_ you love them.  
\_\_\_\_ they immediately and cheerfully obey your every instruction.  
\_\_\_\_ of their relationship to you.
- Imagine that you are an old man or woman, and have accumulated much wealth in your lifetime. Suppose that your bank account has a balance of 500 million dollars. Now imagine that you have a grown child with a serious medical need, and the surgery will cost 2 million dollars. Without surgery, your child will die. The child comes to you and tells you about the need, then asks, “What do I have to do to get help from you?” How would you answer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- You would help your child because:  
\_\_\_\_ you love him  
\_\_\_\_ he deserves it  
\_\_\_\_ you can afford it  
\_\_\_\_ of his relationship with you

### Jesus Answers “What Must I Do” (Mark 10:17-27)

- A wealthy man came to Jesus with a question. What did he ask? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus answered that he must keep the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Which commandments did Jesus especially mention?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- Compare this to the commandments of Exodus 20. Which commandments did he not mention?

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- Did Jesus know the 10 commandments?    YES    NO
- Was leaving some out simply an accident or oversight?    YES    NO
- How did the man respond? “Teacher, all these \_\_\_\_\_ since I was a boy.”
- Was he telling the truth? That is, had he kept all of these commandments?    YES    NO
- What about the others of the ten commandments that Jesus had not specified? Had he kept all of those commandments, too?    YES    NO
- What instruction did Jesus give to the rich man? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Which of the commandments did Jesus’ answer point out that the man was not obeying?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- How did the rich man respond?  
\_\_\_\_\_ He left sad, because he had great wealth.  
\_\_\_\_\_ He said, “Woe is me. I see now that I have not and cannot keep the commandments. I cannot live up to God’s standard. How can I be forgiven?”
- What prevented the rich man from obeying? \_\_\_\_\_

What obstacles are in your life that prevent you from fully following God?

- Jesus identified that \_\_\_\_\_ is an obstacle that makes it hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of God.
- The disciples were astonished at this, because wealth was seen as they key to good things in life. So, possibly thinking, “If it’s hard for the rich, how much harder must it be for the poor?”, they asked: \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus answer clearly reveals that salvation always comes from God: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- According to Jesus, can a man save himself?    YES    NO

## Conclusion

- How would you answer this question? “Who deserves to be saved?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why does God want to give you eternal life? (Remember the question about giving presents to your children.)  
\_\_\_\_ Because you deserve it by doing lots of good deeds  
\_\_\_\_ Because he loves you
- Which of these attitudes best describes this man’s attitude?  
\_\_\_\_ What good works must I do in order to deserve eternal life?  
\_\_\_\_ I know that I can’t be perfect as the Law requires; can I receive forgiveness?
- What was the man looking for?  
\_\_\_\_ A relationship  
\_\_\_\_ A formula  
\_\_\_\_ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_
- What are you looking for?  
\_\_\_\_ A relationship  
\_\_\_\_ A formula  
\_\_\_\_ Something else: \_\_\_\_\_
- By asking what he must do, the man revealed that he didn’t fully understand his need. He still thought that he could somehow be good enough to deserve God’s favor. Jesus pointed out his weakness by revealing to him the commandments that he had not obeyed.
- Jesus taught that wealth is an obstacle that can prevent people from admitting their need and seeking forgiveness. He did not teach that wealth is the only obstacle. What are some other obstacles that prevent people from admitting their sin and seeking forgiveness?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- If your child tells his friends that he received a really great gift because he deserved it by being such a good son, then  
\_\_\_\_ it would offend you that your child would think he earned your gift  
\_\_\_\_ that would reveal the child’s immaturity and lack of understanding
- God’s own son died a cruel death so that you and I could be forgiven. If we tell others that we are forgiven because of how good we are, or that they can be forgiven if they just change their life and live better, what does that say about how much we value God’s gift? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Homework**

1. Think about our opening questions – giving gifts to our children and helping a child in need. Consider this week how these are pictures of what God has done for us. How are they like salvation? How are they different?
2. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
3. Read Mark 10:17-31 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 21 – Mark 10:28-52

### Reward for Service (Mark 10:28-31)

- Jesus had just discussed how wealth can be an obstacle to following Him. Perhaps thinking about how “not-wealthy” they are, Peter makes a statement. What does he say? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What might his attitude be? \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus replies that when you leave behind people and things to follow him, then you’ll be rewarded \_\_\_\_\_ times now and also receive \_\_\_\_\_.
- T or F If you give \$1 to a television evangelist, Jesus promises that God will give you \$100.
- What do you think Jesus meant? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Jesus Predicts His Death -- Again (Mark 10:32-34)

- Who is going to Jerusalem along with Jesus?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus tells them plainly:
  - He will be \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He will be condemned to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He will be handed over to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - They will \_\_\_\_\_ him.
  - They will \_\_\_\_\_ on him.
  - They will \_\_\_\_\_ him.
  - They will \_\_\_\_\_ him.

### A Strange Request (Mark 10:35-45)

- James and John, brothers and two of Jesus’ disciples, made a request. How did they introduce their request? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was their request? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does this seem odd, given what Jesus had just talked about? YES NO
- Did they understand yet what Jesus’ plan was? YES NO
- What might they have still been thinking was going to happen when they arrived at Jerusalem?  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Jesus knew that they didn't understand, so he pointed this out by asking them questions (verse 38). Look at their response in verse 39. Did Jesus' question help them understand? YES NO
- How did the other disciples respond when they learned what James and John had asked? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus taught them (again) about being a servant. Summarize what he taught. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus wants all of his followers (including you and me) to \_\_\_\_\_ others.

### **A Request Jesus Would Answer (Mark 10:46-52)**

- Who was begging by the side of the road? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did he do when he heard Jesus was near? \_\_\_\_\_
- How did the crowd respond? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why might the crowd have wanted him to be quiet?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- But how did Jesus respond? \_\_\_\_\_
- James and John had asked Jesus to hear their request. Now Jesus asks Bartimaeus to make a request. Bartimaeus tells him what he wants: he wants to see. How did Jesus response? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What is different about the request of James and John and the request of Bartimaeus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **To Think About**

- Bartimaeus was creating a ruckus and the crowd didn't like it. They didn't want him drawing attention to himself; after all, he was just a blind beggar. Who did he think he was? Sometimes people who recognize their need for forgiveness and peace with God respond in ways that "don't fit in" with our ideas of an orderly church meeting. How should we respond?
- What kind of requests does Jesus listen to? What kind of requests does he respond to?

### **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 11 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 22 – Mark 11:1-26

### The King Is Coming (Mark 11:1-11)

- Jesus and his disciples were on the way to \_\_\_\_\_.
- (See Facts and Definitions) What was an unriden colt acceptable for? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How do you think Jesus knew where to find the colt? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Who did Jesus say to say needed the colt? \_\_\_\_\_  
(This is the first time that Mark records that Jesus referred to himself as “Lord”.)
- Read Psalm 118:21-29.
- How are the people treating Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
- How does Jesus respond?  
\_\_\_\_ Tells them to be quiet.  
\_\_\_\_ Tells them not to tell anyone else who He is.  
\_\_\_\_ Allows them to treat Him as the King entering His city.
- Is Jesus trying to keep himself secret? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
- What did Jesus do when he arrived at Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### The Fig Tree, Part 1 (Mark 11:12-14)

- Around what time of year did these events occur? \_\_\_\_\_
- (See Facts and Definitions.) How would a fig tree appear at this time of year? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Would you expect any fig tree to have figs? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
- Jesus came to a fig tree that had leaves but no fruit. What did Jesus do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think Jesus did that?  
\_\_\_\_ He was mad at the tree because he was hungry.  
\_\_\_\_ He didn’t like figs (who does?).  
\_\_\_\_ He must have been trying to teach about something

### Spring Cleaning (Mark 11:15-19)

- Where did Jesus go upon arriving at Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_

- What did he see there? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why was this a problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What did he do about the problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Did Jesus act on the spur of the moment, or had he thought about it? Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **The Fig Tree, Part 2 (Mark 11:20-26)**

- What had happened to the fig tree? \_\_\_\_\_
- Based upon what Jesus had seen in the temple – people acting religious but not really concerned for other people – what do you think the fig tree, full of leaves but without fruit, might have represented? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- In general, what did the people tend to rely upon?  
\_\_\_\_ Their religion and form of worship  
\_\_\_\_ Their God
- Who or what does Jesus tell the disciples to rely upon?  
\_\_\_\_ Their religion and form of worship  
\_\_\_\_ Their God
- True or False: Prayer is an indication of reliance upon God.
- According to verse 25, what is an important part of prayer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Facts and Definitions**

Unridden Colt	A colt that has not been ridden is acceptable for religious or royal use.
Lord	Can mean simply “master” or “boss”, or can have more meaning as in “king”.
Fig Trees	In that part of the world, a fig tree would get leafy in March and bear fruit in June. The fig tree was a symbol of Israel’s peace and security – during peaceful times, neighbors would sit together under the fig tree. See Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:10.
Temple Courts	The temple contained these courts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Court of the Gentiles – anyone could worship and pray here. Gentiles could not advance beyond this court.</li><li>2. Court of the Women – any Jew could worship and pray here, though</li></ol>

typically the men would move one to the next court. Women could not advance beyond this court.

3. Court of the Israelites – only Jewish men were allowed in this court.
4. Court of the Priests – only the priests were allowed in this court. It was further divided into two parts: the holy place and the Holy of Holies where God's presence dwelled.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark 11:27 through chapter 12 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 23 – Mark 11: 27-12:12

### Introduction

Mark 11:27 begins the description of Jesus' last confrontations with the religious leaders. The description continues through chapter 12. The religious leaders are looking for an opportunity to accuse him, so they ask "trick" questions in an attempt to trap him.

### Question 1: "Who Said You Could Do That?" (Mark 11:27-33)

- Where did Jesus go? \_\_\_\_\_
- From our previous lesson: What event had happened there the previous day? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Who questioned Jesus?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (religious leaders)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (religious leaders)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (civil leaders)
- What did they ask? \_\_\_\_\_
- What answers might they have expected?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- How might any of those answers have gotten Jesus in trouble?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- How did Jesus answer instead? \_\_\_\_\_
- The religious and civil leaders did not answer because they were \_\_\_\_\_.
- Why didn't Jesus answer their question directly?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He was afraid of them.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He knew they were asking to trap him, not to learn the truth.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ They should already know the answer, but were in denial.

### Jesus Answers with a Parable (Mark 12:1-12)

- How would you describe the vineyard that the man planted?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He did a shoddy job, barely sufficient to grow grapes
  - \_\_\_\_\_ He did a complete job, providing protection and everything needed for grapes to grow

- Who did the fruit of the vineyard belong to?  
\_\_\_\_ The owner  
\_\_\_\_ The farmers  
\_\_\_\_ Some to the owner, some to the farmers
- Was it reasonable for the owner to request some grapes?      YES      NO
- Did the farmers listen to the messengers?      YES      NO
- What did they do instead? \_\_\_\_\_
- Finally, the owner sent “the ultimate messenger” – his own \_\_\_\_\_. He expected the farmers to \_\_\_\_\_ this messenger. Instead, the farmers \_\_\_\_\_ this messenger.
- Should the farmers expect any other messengers?      YES      NO
- Should the farmers expect any other opportunities to “make up” with the owner?      YES      NO
- What should the farmers expect? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Learning from the Answer**

- Read Isaiah 5:1-7.
- What do the following represent?
  - the vineyard: \_\_\_\_\_
  - the owner: \_\_\_\_\_
  - the tenant farmers: \_\_\_\_\_
  - the messengers: \_\_\_\_\_
  - the beloved son: \_\_\_\_\_
- Were God’s people, Israel, known for treating the prophets well?      YES      NO
- God sent his ultimate messenger, his own beloved son. According to Jesus, should we expect more messengers from God?      YES      NO
- What is the fate of those that do not listen to and acknowledge Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did the religious and civil leaders understand what Jesus was talking about (verse 12)      YES      NO
- Did they repent and believe?      YES      NO
- What may have hindered them from responding to the son?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

After hearing Jesus' story about the vineyard and the tenants, the best response would have been repentance for their disbelief and an acknowledgment that Jesus was really God's son. Instead, the religious and civil leaders set their hearts to continue to treat him as the enemy.

What is your response to Jesus? Do you treat him as God's messenger by listening and obeying? Or do you deny him like these religious people we read about today? What hinders you from obeying?

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Finish reading Mark chapter 12 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 24 – Mark 12:13-12:34

### Introduction

The religious leaders are looking for an opportunity to accuse Jesus, so they continue to ask “trick” questions in an attempt to trap him.

### Question 2: “Should we pay our tax to Caesar?” (Mark 12:13-17)

- How would you characterize the attitude of Jesus’ questioners based upon their first comments?  
\_\_\_\_ They think Jesus is a great guy.  
\_\_\_\_ They are trying to flatter him.
- What do you think of flattery? \_\_\_\_\_
- Read Proverbs 29:5. What does the Bible teach about flattery? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- They asked a “yes or no” question. How many answers are there to a “yes or no” question? \_\_\_\_\_
- What are the possible consequences if Jesus answers “Yes, pay taxes to Caesar”? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What are the possible consequences if Jesus answers “No, don’t pay taxes to Caesar”? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- From our previous lesson: What event had happened there the previous day? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- So, how did Jesus answer this “yes or no” question? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What do you learn from his response? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Question 3: “What about marriage in heaven?” (Mark 12:18-27)

- Read Deuteronomy 25:5-6. What is the purpose of this instruction? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The Sadducees don’t believe in the resurrection, so they don’t believe in life after death. Why would they be asking any question about life after death, then?  
\_\_\_\_ They’ve changed their mind.  
\_\_\_\_ They think they’ve found a trick question.  
\_\_\_\_ They want to show their superiority by asking a question intended to show that believing that there is life after death is just plain silly.

- Since the original purpose of marrying one’s brothers widow was to assure that his name would continue, the Sadducees reveal that they think that if there was an afterlife, it must be like the current life. Perhaps they think, “We have a husband or wife now; if there is an afterlife (which they don’t believe anyway), then we must have a husband or wife then. In fact, maybe we’ll even get married and have children just like we do now.”
- What did Jesus teach about it?
  - \_\_\_ The widow will be the wife of the original brother.
  - \_\_\_ The widow will be wife of her last husband.
  - \_\_\_ The widow will be the wife of each of the brothers. (She’ll be kept busy with laundry and cooking, eh?)
  - \_\_\_ Life in heaven is not like life on earth. It’s like comparing apples to oranges.
- After correcting them, Jesus told them that they were “badly mistaken” and showed them why. What were they mistaken about? \_\_\_\_\_
- The Bible teaches that there are only two results after death.
  1. “heaven”: being resurrected from physical death to always live with God.
  2. “hell”: being resurrected from physical death to always live apart from God; some have described this as the agony of dying without death ever coming.There are no other options.
- Is there a resurrection (that is, life after death)?
  - \_\_\_ Yes
  - \_\_\_ No

**Question 4: “Which command is greatest?” (Mark 28-34)**

- How as this man’s question different than the other questions? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why did the man ask this question? \_\_\_\_\_
- What do you think? Is there such a thing as “the greatest commandment?” YES NO
- What does Jesus say is most important?
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
- Are you able to do that sometimes? YES NO
- Are you able to do that all of the time? YES NO

Read Mark 8:36-37. What is more important than knowing you (your soul) will live with God after your body dies? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Many people would answer the question like this: “There is nothing more important than knowing that I’ll ‘go to heaven’.” However, many people say that, but then live entirely different. What word describes people like that? \_\_\_\_\_

Do your actions and lifestyle match your answer?

## **Facts and Definitions**

Sadducees A term describing a group of Jews that:

- did not believe in life after death
- did not believe in miracles
- did not believe in supernatural beings such as angels
- followed only the written law, and rejected the tradition of the Pharisees (for this reason, the Sadducees and Pharisees were often “enemies”)
- were the “aristocrats” of society – often wealthy and “from the best families”

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Finish reading Mark chapter 12 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 25 – Mark 12:35-44

### Introduction

During our past few lessons, we have read about Jesus being questioned by the religious leaders. Now they have given up trying to trick Jesus, and Jesus begins to teach.

### Jesus Teaches about the Mystery of the Christ (Mark 12:35-37)

- The Old Testament teaches that the Messiah will come from the descendant of King David. Who is greater?

\_\_\_\_\_ The famous father of a famous son

\_\_\_\_\_ The famous son of a famous father

\_\_\_\_\_ Since they are both famous, they are of equal greatness

- After answer so many questions, Jesus poses a question himself. How would you paraphrase his question? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- It might be paraphrased like this: “If the Messiah is to be a descendent of the great King David, and King David referred to the Messiah as his Lord, then who is more important? David, or the Messiah?”

- What point is Jesus making? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Jesus Warns Against Hypocrisy (Mark 12:38-40)

- How does Jesus describe the religious hypocrites of that time?

○ \_\_\_\_\_

○ \_\_\_\_\_

○ \_\_\_\_\_

○ \_\_\_\_\_

○ \_\_\_\_\_

○ \_\_\_\_\_

- What do you think? Are any of us immune from hypocrisy? YES NO

- What are some acts or attitudes that indicate hypocrisy today?

○ \_\_\_\_\_

○ \_\_\_\_\_

○ \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus said that “such men will be punished most severely.”
  - When? \_\_\_\_\_ Now \_\_\_\_\_ The Afterlife
  - What do you think? Will there be “different levels” of punishment in hell, or will all punishment be equally agonizing? This verse suggests that those that had opportunity to know better may be held more accountable than those who had fewer opportunities.

### Jesus Teaches about Giving (Mark 12:41-44)

- Who is more generous?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ One who gives \$100,000,000
  - \_\_\_\_\_ One who gives \$1,000.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ One who gives \$1.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ There’s not enough information to answer. It could be any of these.
- What did Jesus say about the widow’s offering? He said that “this poor widow \_\_\_\_\_ into the treasury than all the others.”
- Jesus didn’t say that she was more generous, but that she had put more in!
- Do you believe that \$1 can be more than \$1000? That’s what Jesus said. How can this be? \_\_\_\_\_

Examine your own giving habits.

- Do you consider yourself generous or stingy?
- Do you wish you could give more, or do you resent giving what you already give? (See 2 Cor. 9:7)
- Do you feel bad because you give only a little while other seem to give more? Jesus teaches here that if you give beyond your plenty, then are giving more than those who “can afford to give more”.

### Homework

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapter 13 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 26 – Mark 13

### Facts and Definitions

- The Temple
- The temple in Jerusalem was considered one of the great wonders of the Roman world.
  - It took forty-six years to complete, and was just nearing completing at this time.
  - The exterior was white, and much of the exterior was overlaid with gold.
  - Some of the foundation stones were 40 feet long by 12 feet high by 18 feet wide.
  - The enclosed temple courtyard was larger than 5 football fields.
  - The temple complex covered approximately 1/6 of the area of the city of Jerusalem.
  - The temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.
  - An Islamic mosque now occupies the “temple mount” where the temple once stood.
- Mount of Olives
- This mount rises about 150 above Jerusalem, and would have allowed the disciples to gaze down upon the temple.
  - Zechariah prophesied that the Christ will appear on the Mount of Olives (see Zechariah 14).

### Introduction

In chapter 13, Jesus is talking about future events. It is clear that some of these events that Jesus taught about happened in the year AD 70. However, some of the events that he talked about do not appear to have happened yet. Therefore, we see the prophecy in this chapter as having two fulfillments – one in AD 70 (that has already happened), and one in the future (that has not yet happened). Our goal is not to make a detailed study of this prophecy and try to come to an absolute understanding, but rather to emphasize what Jesus emphasized, which is to be ready.

### Jesus Teaches about the Future (Mark 13)

**(Mark 13:1-2)** The disciples marvel at the greatness of the temple, yet Jesus predicts that it will be utterly destroyed. The disciples must have been thinking, “How can something so grand and so large be utterly destroyed?”

**(Mark 13:3-4)** Jesus' prediction results in two questions.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ will these things take place?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ will we know when they are going to take place?

“When” and “how” are two common questions that we have about the future. We often have a desire to know about the future before it comes. Jesus is going to answer their questions, at least a little, but he is more focused on helping them be prepared than for telling them ultra-details.

What do they say are the two sure things? Death and taxes. We know that our future holds death. We don't know the date and time and means of our death, but we know enough of the future to know that this earthly life will end. God doesn't reveal the date and times and means to us, but does want to help us know how to be prepared for death.

**(Mark 13:5, 22)** Jesus twice warns about \_\_\_\_\_. The future will contain people who will want to deceive both believers and non-believers and lead them astray.

**(Mark 13:9, 23, 33)** Three times Jesus warns about being on your \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus doesn't want us to just “coast through life” but rather to be alert. What are some things we should be alert for?

- Temptations, so that we can avoid them
- Opportunities to help others with a kind word or deed
- People who try to harm us by false teaching and ideas
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus teaches about what life will be like in the future. This doesn't mean that all of us will experience all of these things, but instead that these things will typify the future.

- **(Mark 13:7)** There will be \_\_\_\_\_.
- **(Mark 13:8)** There will be natural \_\_\_\_\_.
- **(Mark 13:9-11)** Christian believers will be \_\_\_\_\_.
- **(Mark 13:12-13)** Christians will be \_\_\_\_\_ because of Jesus.

**(Mark 13:24-27)** After telling the disciples about some of the problems that the future would hold, Jesus encourages them by promising that he will return with great power and great glory. His people will be gathered back to him.

## **Our Response**

If you have a task to do (clean your room or office, write a note of thanks, etc.) and it doesn't have to be done for another two weeks, what will you likely do?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do it right away so that you don't have to worry about it.

\_\_\_\_\_ Do something fun today, because you have 13 more days to take care of it.

What if the deadline is a year away? 10 years? 50 years? The further away the deadline is, the more likely you'll be to put off the work, right?

Jesus knows that we have a deadline, but none of us knows when it is. He knows that our tendency will be to put off until tomorrow what could be done today. He warns us against this.

**(Mark 13:34-37)** Jesus says that we are like a steward who has been left to care for a household while the master is away. Jesus says, "Do not let him find you sleeping" upon his return. The steward is to be doing his masters business, as if he could return at any time. Likewise, we should be doing our masters business, as if He could return at any time.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapter 14 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 27 – Mark 14:1-26

### Trouble is Brewing (Mark 14:1-2)

After failing to trap Jesus into incriminating himself at the temple, the religious leaders have reached a conclusion about what must be done. They have decided that Jesus must be \_\_\_\_\_ and then \_\_\_\_\_.

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread is approaching. Many Jews will travel to Jerusalem for this observance and festival. Since so many people will be around, the religious leaders decide that they must be careful. What are they worried about? \_\_\_\_\_

---

### Jesus is Anointed (Mark 14:3-9)

Leprosy was a devastating and contagious disease. It was so feared that lepers were cast out of the cities and towns and forced to live with one another in leper colonies. Why might Jesus be found having dinner, then, at the home of “Simon the Leper”? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Mark doesn't identify the woman with the expensive perfume. However, John does identify her. Read John 11:1-2. Who is the woman? \_\_\_\_\_

Mary's perfume was very expensive; some of the disciples said that it could be sold for a year's wages! Imagine that you had a bottle of perfume worth a year of your wages. What would you do with it?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep it safe to pass along to your children.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use it sparingly only on special occasions.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Sell it and give the money to the Salvation Army.
- 

Mary decided to break open the jar and pour all of the expensive perfume on Jesus. What were the reactions?

Jesus: \_\_\_\_\_

Disciples: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think may have motivated Mary's actions? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Mary gave an expensive and extravagant gift to Jesus. She probably gave the best that she had to give.

What do you give to Jesus? Do you give him your best, or your leftovers?

Mary had given her best, but some of the disciples despised her gift and weren't shy about telling her what they thought she should have done. The Bible says that "they rebuked her harshly". How do you respond to the gifts that others give? Do you look for opportunities to encourage, even when you think the gift may have been better used? Or do you rebuke harshly?

### **Jesus is Betrayed (Mark 14:10-11)**

Judas has traveled with Jesus for between 2 and 3 years, but he "just doesn't get it". Perhaps Jesus didn't meet his expectations of being a great war general, or perhaps he's just blinded by greed. He agrees to help in the plot against Jesus, and the religious leaders give him money. Mark doesn't tell us how much, but...

Read Zechariah 11:8-13. The prophet Zechariah tells a story about a shepherd. (It's a longer story than just these few verses that we've read.) Zechariah began to shepherd the flock (replacing three shepherds). But the flock did not want a shepherd, so Zechariah quit. His pay was 30 pieces of silver. It cost 30 pieces of silver to get rid of this shepherd.

Read Matthew 26:15. How much did it cost to get rid of Jesus, the great shepherd? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Jesus' Last Supper (Mark 14:12-26)**

The Passover Meal was intended to remind the Jews of their deliverance from oppression in Egypt. The Passover Meal that Jesus and his disciples ate would have taken this form:

1. When all family and guests have arrived, the head of the feast (or the host) would give thanks.
2. The guests would drink the first glass of wine.
3. All guests would wash their hands.
4. The meal would be delivered to the table. It would consist of roasted lamb, unleavened bread, bitter herbs, and a dipping sauce.
5. Guests would dip a portion of bitter herbs into the sauce, and eat it.
6. The head of the feast would teach the children about the meaning of Passover.
7. The guests would be reminded to remember what God had done to deliver them from Egypt. The parts of the meal (lamb, unleavened bread, bitter herbs) would be used as reminders.
8. The guests would drink the second glass of wine.
9. The head of the feast would break a loaf of unleavened bread and give thanks.

10. The guests would eat some of the lamb.
11. The guests would dip bread and bitter herbs into the sauce, and eat it.
12. The guests would drink the third glass of wine, called the cup of blessing.
13. The guests would sing Psalms 115-118.
14. The guests would drink the fourth glass of wine to conclude the meal.

During this meal, Jesus tells the disciples that one of them will betray him. What might they have felt when Jesus said this? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Christians today have an event that we call “communion” or “the Lord’s Supper” because of this meal that Jesus shared with his followers. Just as the Passover Meal was to help the Jews remember God delivering them, the Lord’s Supper is to help us remember. Luke and Paul tell us that the “Lord’s Supper” is to remind us of Jesus: “do this in remembrance of me.” What do you recall that we are to remember? (See 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 if you need assistance.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 11:23-34 provides teaching on the Lord’s Supper. If you are interested in learning more about it, that would be a good place to start your study!

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Continue reading Mark chapter 14 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 28 – Mark 14:27-42

### Jesus Predicts (Mark 14:27-31)

Jesus has some good news and some bad news. He tells the disciples the bad news, and then says “but”. He doesn’t leave them with only the bad news.

What is the bad news? \_\_\_\_\_

But what is the good news? \_\_\_\_\_

Just a short time before, Jesus had told his 12 disciples that one of them would betray him. Now he is telling them that they will all “fall away”. How might the disciples have felt when hearing this news?

\_\_\_\_\_ Confused

\_\_\_\_\_ Sad

\_\_\_\_\_ Angry

\_\_\_\_\_ Content

\_\_\_\_\_ Happy

\_\_\_\_\_ Disbelieving

\_\_\_\_\_ Determined

\_\_\_\_\_ Stunned

\_\_\_\_\_

Read Zechariah 13:7. This Old Testament prophet is writing about future events. Jesus quotes from Zechariah, letting the disciples know clearly that they are the subject of Zechariah’s prophecy. Jesus also clarifies for us what “fall away” means. The disciples will be scattered, like sheep without a shepherd when the wolf attacks.

Jesus didn’t just give them the bad news, though. He also gave them some good news in verse 28. He reminds them of what he has been talking about (“after I have risen”) and promises that they will all be together again. Even though they still didn’t understand, Jesus encouraged them about the future. Based upon how Jesus treated the disciples here, what can we learn about dealing with others? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Peter declares his loyalty to Jesus, however, in doing so, he contradicts Jesus. Jesus has said that they will all fall away; Peter has said that he won’t. Who would you believe?

\_\_\_\_\_ God

\_\_\_\_\_ Peter

While we may admire Peter’s loyalty and zeal, we also recognize that it was foolish for Peter to put his opinion of his abilities above God’s knowledge. That is, even though Jesus warned Peter what would happen, Peter refused to believe it because he was sure he could do better.

Do we ever do the same? Are there warnings that Scripture gives that we ignore because we think we can handle it? If so, then we are being foolish just like Peter.

### Jesus Prays (Mark 14:32-42)

Which three disciples did Jesus take with him? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Mark 5:37. Which three disciples did Jesus take with him to the home of Jairus, where he would restore Jairus’ daughter to life? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Mark 9:2. Which three disciples did Jesus take with him up the high mountain, where Jesus was transfigured? \_\_\_\_\_

Even though Jesus had 12 special disciples and several other followers, he chose these three (Peter, James and John) to join him for special events. Jesus was a rabbi, a teacher. These three students may have received extra attention.

- Did Jesus have “favorites”?
- What does this tell you about your relationships?
  - Can you be closer to some friends than others?
  - Are there times when it is OK to exclude others?
  - Is it OK to treat people differently as long as you love them?

How was Jesus feeling at this time of his ministry?

vs. 33: \_\_\_\_\_ vs. 33: \_\_\_\_\_

vs. 34: \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus recognized his need and responded by praying. He addressed God as *Abba*, which is a term of endearment closer to meaning “daddy” than “father”. This reveals to us the close relationship that Jesus the Son has with God the Father.

Jesus prayed for at least an hour (when was the last time that you prayed about something for an hour?) and then returned to Peter, James and John. He had instructed them to keep watch, but he found them \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus then warns them about falling into temptation, and gives them an antidote. To avoid some temptation, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

How would you describe Jesus' attitude after he had prayed? (Read verse 41 and 42) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus is God, yet even he spent much time in prayer. If prayer was so important to Jesus, how important should it be to us?

List some of the benefits of prayer, both that we have learned today and from other Scripture.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe a marriage if the husband and wife never talked to each other? How would you describe a Christian that never talks with God?

## Homework

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Is prayer an important and customary part of your life, or is it something that you remember every now and then? If it's not important and customary, admit that to God and ask for His help.
3. Finish reading Mark chapter 14 and start reading chapter 15 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 29 – Mark 14:43-72

### Jesus Is Betrayed (Mark 14:43-50)

The religious leaders sent Judas and a crowd of thugs (what else would you call them?) to get Jesus. Since they were “armed with swords and clubs”, what kind of resistance from Jesus were they likely expecting?

---

Judas came along to pick Jesus out of the crowd. He could have identified him in many ways:

- |                          |                             |                          |             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | point him out               | <input type="checkbox"/> | talk to him |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | identify him by his clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____       |

Instead, Judas decided to identify Jesus by \_\_\_\_\_. The kiss was a sign of friendship; what does this method reveal about Judas? \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew records the same event, but with additional details. Read Matthew 26:49-50. How did Jesus address Judas? \_\_\_\_\_. What does this reveal about Jesus and his character? \_\_\_\_\_

Mark writes that one of the disciples responded with violence. Mark doesn't tell us who the disciple was, but John does. Read John 18:10. Who cut off the servant's ear? \_\_\_\_\_

Remember that Peter had recently promised Jesus that he would not desert him, that he would follow him even to death (see Mark 14:31). When faced with a crowd of armed thugs, how did Peter respond?

- |                          |           |                          |               |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | bravely   | <input type="checkbox"/> | fearfully     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | violently | <input type="checkbox"/> | deliberately  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | calmly    | <input type="checkbox"/> | spontaneously |

If Jesus had wanted to fight and escape, do you think that:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Peter would have been ready to fight with him and for him, or |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Peter would have abandoned Jesus.                             |

(Peter must not have been a very good fighter, because he missed his target and merely cut off his ear. Jesus had compassion even on this thug-in-the-crowd. Read Luke 22:50-51 to find out what happened.)

Jesus could have escaped from these thugs. What are some ways he could have escaped?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Allowed his disciples to fight.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Called angels to his defense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Commanded the weather to strike the crowd with lightning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Called down fire and brimstone from heaven.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Struck the crowd with blindness.

Jesus didn't do that though. Instead, he went quietly along with them. What reason did Jesus give for his response? \_\_\_\_\_

What does this reveal about the character of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Jesus' followers do after Jesus told them that he was not going to resist? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Better to Get Away Naked than Not At All? (Mark 14:51-52)**

None of the other gospel writers include this short tidbit in their description. Apparently, a young man (not one of the 12 disciples) knew what was happening, was following Jesus, and watching to see what would happen. When he was discovered, the crowd grabbed him, apparently by his clothes. He left them with his clothes and ran away naked.

Mark doesn't tell us who this young man was. What are your guesses?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Remember what we know about Mark from our previous studies:

- Mark was not one of the 12 disciples.
- Mark was young when invited to travel with Paul and Barnabas.
- His mother had a home in Jerusalem.

Why might Mark have chosen to include this strange event in his account of the betrayal of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

### The Jewish Trial (Mark 14:53-65)

Jesus was immediately taken to a group of Jewish religious leaders, where a “trial” was held. Many false accusations were made against Jesus, but he did not defend himself. Why?

- He didn’t need to; the false accusers contradicted each other.
- He was focused more on telling the truth than arguing about lies (see Mark 14:62).
- He did not want to resist the will of God by resisting these men.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Read Mark 14:61-64. Jesus was ultimately condemned by these religious leaders for telling the truth.

What is the truth? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think? Had Jesus already given ample evidence that this was true?

- Yes.
- No.

### What about Peter? (Mark 14:66-72)

What had Jesus told Peter that Peter would do? See Mark 14:30. \_\_\_\_\_

Did Peter believe it?

- Yes.
- No.

What did Peter do? \_\_\_\_\_

When Jesus tell us something about ourselves (through the Bible), what should we do?

- Believe it.
- Ignore it.

### Homework

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Is prayer an important and customary part of your life, or is it something that you remember every now and then? If it’s not important and customary, admit that to God and ask for His help.
3. Finish reading Mark chapter 15 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 30 – Mark 15

### Introduction

The Jewish religious leaders found Jesus guilty of blasphemy, since Jesus claimed to be the Christ. However, these religious leaders didn't have the authority to put a criminal to death. Only the Romans had the authority to execute criminals. In order to have Jesus executed by the Romans, he must also be guilty of some crime against Rome. Not just any crime, such as jaywalking or illegally parking his donkey, would do. They needed something serious.

The religious leaders thought Jesus guilty of blasphemy, but the Romans considered blasphemy a religious offense, not a crime against Rome. Not only was blasphemy not punishable by death, but it wasn't a punishable "crime" at all. The Jewish religious leaders would need to come up with something else.

Pilate was a Roman, and the Roman governor of the area. Pilate had the authority to serve as Jesus' judge – he could proclaim him to be innocent and set him free, or pronounce him guilty of some crime and punish him. Pilate, therefore, was the key to the religious leaders plan to get rid of Jesus.

### The Civil Trial (Mark 15:1-15)

The religious leaders accused him of many things; Luke records the accusations with more details. Read Luke 23:2. What did the religious accuse Jesus of?

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

Only one accusation seemed to stand out to Pilate. Based on his question in verse Mark 15:2, what accusation was Pilate concerned about? \_\_\_\_\_

If Jesus declared himself to be the King of the Jews, then he might be a threat against the power of Caesar. This put Pilate in a pickle. If word got back to Rome that he had in his hands a man who might cause problems, and then he didn't do anything about it, Pilate knew that he might get in trouble. However, from his actions, it's clear that Pilate wasn't immediately willing to give in to the Jews. In fact, Pilate tried to save Jesus by:

1. Offering to set Jesus free according to the custom, and
2. Having Jesus flogged (in John's account of these events, we learn that Pilate asked the crowd again what to do with Jesus after he had been flogged; the crowd still wanted him crucified. See John 19.)

In the end, however, Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified. What was the reason given in verse 15?

\_\_\_\_\_

Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent and did not deserve death. However, he condemned him to death because of pressure from the crowd.

Are you even influenced by “the crowd” to make wrong decisions, say the wrong thing, or do the wrong thing? What can you do to minimize the influence that a crowd has on you?

### **Abused by Men (Mark 15:15-32)**

List the ways that Jesus was abused by men.

1. vs 15, Jesus was flogged.
2. vs 17: \_\_\_\_\_
3. vs 17-18: \_\_\_\_\_
4. vs 19: \_\_\_\_\_
5. vs 19: \_\_\_\_\_
6. vs 19: \_\_\_\_\_
7. vs 20: \_\_\_\_\_
8. vs 24: \_\_\_\_\_
9. vs 24: \_\_\_\_\_
10. vs 29-30: \_\_\_\_\_
11. vs 31-32: \_\_\_\_\_
12. vs 32: \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

Could Jesus have prevented all of these abuses?      YES      NO

What does the fact that Jesus could have prevented his arrest, abuse, and crucifixion teach you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who does Mark identify as the man that carried the cross of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

Mark identifies him not by his father's name (that is, not as Simon son of James) as would have been customary, but instead by the names of his sons, Alexander and Rufus. Why might Mark have included this detail? Paul refers to a Christian named Rufus in Romans 16:13. Perhaps this Rufus was the same son of Simon that carried Jesus' cross. If so, perhaps Simon came to believe in Jesus because of what he saw that day when he carried the cross.

### **The Death of Jesus (Mark 15:33-41)**

Mark records two miracles that occurred when Jesus died.

1. vs. 38: \_\_\_\_\_
2. vs. 39: \_\_\_\_\_

The veil in the temple separated the people from the presence of God. When the veil was torn from top to bottom, it symbolized that this separation was no longer needed. Individuals could come directly to God without needing a priest to intercede for them.

What is significant about the Centurion declaring that Jesus was the Son of God? This soldier had probably seen many executions, but something about this one caused him to confess that Jesus was who he said. Even the hardest heart can be changed by Jesus.

### **The Burial of Jesus (Mark 15:42-47)**

At a time when Jesus' closest disciples were nowhere to be found, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent citizen, went \_\_\_\_\_ to Pilate to request permission to bury Jesus. What does this tell you about Joseph?

This burial was intended to be temporary, because the body had not been prepared with spices as was customary. A temporary burial was necessary because there wasn't time because a Sabbath was about to begin. Since a temporary burial was necessary, it was going to be necessary for some one to return to the grave of Jesus within a few days. Otherwise, Jesus may have been buried and no one would have visited his tomb. And we know that when they did return to his tomb, they found it empty. Isn't it neat how something so seemingly insignificant – the fact that the burial would be temporary – played a part in God's plan by making it necessary for Jesus' followers to return to the grave so that they could discover that he had risen?!

## **Facts and Definitions**

**Flogging** (Also called scourging.) Flogging was a method of punishment employed by the Romans. The persons clothes were stripped off, then his hand tied above his head. The whip (sometimes called a “cat of nine tails”) was made of several pieces of leather with pieces of bone and lead embedded near the ends of the leather strips. Two men, one on each side of the criminal, did the flogging. The Jews limited the number of hits (also called “stripes”) that a person could receive, usually to no more than thirty-nine. The Romans had no limit. Flogging ripped out chunks of flesh and often left the bones of the victim exposed. Some criminals did not survive flogging. (*Holman New Testament Commentary on Mark*, page 256)

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Read Mark chapter 16 from your Bible and from *The Message of Hope*.

## Lesson 31 – Mark 16

### Introduction

Some mystery surrounds Mark 16. The oldest copies of the Greek manuscripts of this book do not contain verses 9 through 20, suggesting that these verses may not have been written by Mark. However, it seems odd that Mark would end his gospel account with verse 8 (“Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.”) That doesn’t seem like a natural ending to the story of the life of Jesus. Bible scholars have several theories about the end of this book.

1. It ends with the verses as shown in your Bible.
2. Mark ended the story with verse 8. The additional verses were added at a later date.
3. Mark wrote through verse 8 and wrote a different ending, but that ending was lost. The additional verses were added at a later date, and were based upon what the apostles were known to have done (Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake, but did not die or even get sick. Other apostles healed people as Jesus had done.)

I don’t know which of these is more likely, and am satisfied to label the ending of Mark as a bit of a mystery. This last lesson on Mark will focus on the core message of this chapter: the resurrection of Jesus.

### He has risen! He is not here. (Mark 16:1-7)

Which three women witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus? (Mark 15:40)

4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Which three women came to his tomb to prepare his body for burial? (Mark 16:1)

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

What do you think? Did Jesus need to roll the stone away in order to get out of the tomb? YES NO

The women were worried about how they were going to get into the tomb, but the tomb was already open when they arrived. Was the stone rolled back so that:

- \_\_\_\_ Jesus could get out of the tomb  
\_\_\_\_ The women (and others) could get into the tomb to see that Jesus wasn’t there  
\_\_\_\_ Both

What were the disciples busy doing afterwards?

Acts 4:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 4:33 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 17:18 \_\_\_\_\_

Why is the resurrection important?

Romans 10:9 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 6:1-8 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 15:12-14 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 6:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

The writer of Hebrews teaches us that the resurrection is an “elementary teaching” about Christ. That is, it is one of the basics. It’s not some hard-to-understand teaching that only the super-Christians can understand.

Paul, when writing the letter to the Christians in Rome, teaches us that the resurrection is central to the gospel message. We acknowledge who Jesus is (Jesus is Lord) and what God did (raised Jesus from the dead back to life). These are two simple statements, but the implications are deep. For instance, if we believe that Jesus is Lord, then that will affect how we live our lives. If God raised Jesus from the dead, then we are reminded that Jesus died for our sins. This next week, think about the other implications of these two statements.

## **Homework**

1. Choose one thing that you learned in this lesson and share that with your family.
2. Review all of the lessons on Mark. What two or three things stand out to you the most?

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

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

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

## **Additional Resources**

**Congratulations! You've completed the study! If you found this study helpful and enjoyable, you may be interested in our other resources. Additional Bible-related resources are available at our Web site:**

**[www.thefourwheelers.com](http://www.thefourwheelers.com)**