

If you are part of a "Mark Study Group", bring your insights and questions each week to share with your group.

Study Guide Abbreviations

| cf | compare |
|----|------------------|
| ff | following verses |
| V | verse |
| VV | verses |

During the next several weeks, we will be studying the gospel of Mark. Mark is the shortest of the four gospels and also probably the first written. We'll begin by scanning the book as a whole, seeking to gain an overview of the picture of our Lord Jesus presented by Mark. More detailed study guides will follow, but this week commit yourself to reading through the book. The following schedule is a suggestion. Feel free to alter it.

| Monday | Mark 1-3 | |
|-----------|------------|----|
| Tuesday | Mark 4-6 | |
| Wednesday | Mark 7-9 | 13 |
| Thursday | Mark 10-12 | |
| Friday | Mark 13-14 | |
| Saturday | Mark 15-16 | |
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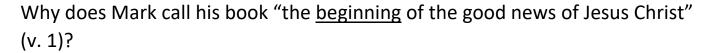
Answer these questions:

- 1. What do you learn about Jesus?
- 2. What is His Kingdom?
- 3. How do I live as a citizen of His Kingdom?

Sermon Sunday, January 27, 2019 – Mark 1:14-15

Each week contains up to 5 sections of reading. For each section, read the passage 2 or 3 times and then consider the questions/comments offered, designed simply to stimulate your own thinking. Always conclude by asking God, your Lord and King, what He is saying to you personally.

Mark 1:1-11



John prepared people for the coming of Jesus (vv. 2-8). What is a necessary prerequisite to accepting Him (v. 8)?

In these verses, what is revealed about Jesus?

Mark 1:12-15

Mark gives a very brief account of the temptation of Jesus (vv. 12-13; more detail can be found in Matthew and Luke). The emphasis is on the conflict as a whole.

Who is the enemy (v. 13)?

Who stood with Jesus to help Him (vv. 12-13)?

How does this apply to temptation you face?

Now Jesus begins His ministry proper (vv. 14-15). He came to proclaim "the good news of God" (v. 14).

What is that "good news" (v. 15)?

What is the Kingdom of God and in what way is it "at hand" (v. 15)?

What is the necessary response to the message (v. 15)?

- Have you done this?
- How can you actively "believe" today?

Mark 1:16-28

Verses 16-20 visualize for us what it really means to "repent and believe in the Gospel." The needed response is more than affirmation to certain beliefs, rather it is attachment to a Person.

What did these 4 men do (vv. 18, 20)?

What must following Him involve for you?

Now we catch a glimpse of the presence of the Kingdom.

What evidence is given of the power of the Kingdom (and the King)?

vv. 21-22

vv. 23-26

What stands out to the people (vv. 22, 27)?

If Jesus is One with "authority", how must you respond to Him?

Mark 1:29-39

| What do you think motivated Jesus' | healing of Simon's mother-in-law (vv. 29- |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 31)? | |

What effect do you suppose this had on Peter?

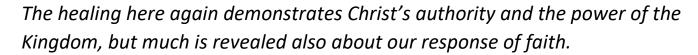
Through both this healing and the others which followed (vv. 32-34), what power/authority is again being evidenced (cf. v. 15)?

Demands were high and potentially great (vv. 33-37), but what remained a high priority for Jesus (v. 34)?

If this was important for Jesus, how much more for you! When do you make time to be with God?

Things were going well in Capernaum (vv. 21-37). It would make sense to continue there. But Jesus moved on (v. 38). Is there some comfortable and rather safe area in your life from which, perhaps, God would have you "go somewhere else"?

Mark 1:40-45



What did this leper already believe about Jesus as he spoke (v. 40)?

What can we be sure is at the heart of our Lord (v. 41)?

In addition, what was this man willing to submit to?

Faith involves believing in God's ability and love, but <u>also</u> submission to His <u>authority</u> over our lives (recall the stress on Jesus' authority already in this chapter).

As you trust God in daily life, does your faith include submission to His authority?

Sermon Sunday, February 3, 2019 – Mark 2:13-17

| Mark | 2:1 | -12 |
|------|-----|-----|
|------|-----|-----|

| Our faith and His authority are again the focus in these verses. What do you learn about faith here? |
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| We've seen that Jesus' authority extends over demonic forces and physical illness. But where else does it reach (vv. 5-10)? |
| Consider the implication of what the scribes say (v. 7) and what Jesus proves in verse 10. Who is Jesus? |
| WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY: |

Mark 2:13-22

Mark 2:23-3:6

| The Pharisees' brand of "righteousness" is again illustrated in the two incidents in today's verses. What was their chief concern (2:24; 3:2)? |
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| It is so easy to become more concerned with our own actions themselves rather than the One we are to please. What were the Pharisees missing? |
| What is Jesus saying about what really matters in God's eyes (2:27; 3:4)? |
| What does this say about the alternative to faith? |
| WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY: |

Mark 3:7-19

One reason for Jesus' withdrawal from that area was the growing opposition of the Jewish leaders (illustrated by series of conflicts in chapters 2 & 3). But His withdrawal did nothing to stop His popularity with the people (vv. 7-8). So intense was the crowd that He had to use a boat to be able to continue preaching (v. 9).

It is at this point that Jesus selects the Twelve (vv. 13-19). Several points stand out:

What made the decision (i.e., did Jesus simply take any volunteer, vv. 13-14)?

What implications does this have for leadership among God's people?

For what purpose – why were they chosen (vv. 14-15)?

What is the significance of "being with Him"?

Finally, note the diversity of these men (vv. 16-19; you might check a commentary or other study aid as to their identities and occupations). Who was able to unify such a mixed group?

Who can bring unity today?

Mark 3:20-35

| In today's reading, we see again the reaction of some to Jesus. How were the crowds reacting (v. 20)? |
|---|
| What was the impression of His relatives (v. 21)? |
| What was the religious leader's judgment (v. 22)? |
| How does Jesus defend Himself (vv. 23-30)? |
| According to Jesus, what relationship counts most (vv. 31-35)? |
| How does this impact your relationships? |
| |
| WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY: |

Sermon Sunday, February 10, 2019 – Mark 4:35-41

Mark 4:1-9

| Here is a very familiar parable of Jesus, one which He will explain to His |
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| disciples (tomorrow's reading in vv. 10-20). For today, focus on what the |
| crowd heard and forget that there is an explanation coming. Jesus states that |
| it is critical to listen closely (3:9) not merely with the ears, but with the heart. |

List the types of ground and the results that followed: 1. 2. 3.

4.

What should have been understood by the crowd?

By the disciples?

By you?

Mark 4:10-20

Now we are given a glimpse into Jesus' private time with His disciples and the explanation of the parable they were given. Keep in mind that this includes a larger group than merely the Twelve (v. 10).

Ponder verses 11-13. The "mystery" of God's Kingdom is revealed to those who will follow Him. The parables, meant to stir people to consider more deeply the truth of the Kingdom, will effectively hide the message for those unwilling to truly listen. It is in this light that the meaning of this parable is explained: we must listen and respond carefully to the Word sown:

Does the quality of the seed differ at all?

What limits or allows life from the seed?

How do you respond to God's Word?

Mark 4:21-34

The words of verse 21 may sound familiar for Jesus used this illustration of not hiding light often to teach various truths. In Matthew 5:14-16, it was to urge His disciples (and us?) not to keep the "good news" to ourselves. But here the context is different and, thus, so is His point. He is saying something about the nature of parables and what it means to "listen" (vv. 3, 9, 11-13, 24-25).

As you now consider the context, what is Jesus saying in verses 21-25?

In verses 26-29?

And in verses 30-32?

Don't miss verses 33-34 which summarize how Jesus taught and its correlation to how people listened. If Jesus speaks to you "as you are able to hear it", how much is He speaking?

Mark 4:35-41

Finally, breaking free of the ceaseless throngs, Jesus was alone with His disciples on the sea of Galilee (vv. 35-36). When the storm arose, how did the disciples interpret His sleep (v. 38)?

When storms arise in your life and God is not visibly active, how do you interpret His apparent silence?

Jesus calmed the storm (v. 39). In doing this, who does He shows Himself to be (cf. v. 41)?

The disciples had had more than enough evidence of Jesus' ability to protect them (consider His acts of power in just these first four chapters), thus Jesus' comments in verse 40. Pause today to remember His mighty acts in <u>YOUR</u> life. As you face the storm today, Who stands at your side?

Sermon Sunday, February 17, 2019 - Mark 5:1-20

Mark 5:1-20

The battle between the power of God's Kingdom and that of demonic forces is seen in this account, the price being a man's life. The conflict is intense as you see the destructive power of Satan (vv. 3-5), but then the overruling power of Jesus (vv. 6-13). Pause to praise God for His power over Satan and his forces, and our own brokenness, as well! (vv. 1-20)

But the focus of the story lies in the reaction of the local people. How did they react (vv. 15, 17)

They were told all about the man and the swine (v. 16). Which seems to have mattered most to them?

Consider this question posed by I. Howard Marshall: "Do you have any vested interests that would be disturbed if Jesus was working powerfully in and around your life?"

Mark 5:21-43

Jairus is evidence that not <u>all</u> the religious leaders were opposed to Jesus. He came to Jesus, out of love for his little girl, with faith in His healing power (vv. 22-23). Jesus reveals His compassion as He goes with Jairus, despite the demands of the pressing crowd (v. 24). He is <u>just</u> as attentive to your personal needs today!

On the way, an unusual healing occurs (vv. 25-34). This woman sought to tap Jesus' power without personal contact. But true faith in Christ is no mechanical or superstitious process. It requires a personal meeting with Jesus. Of this Jesus makes certain by bringing the woman into the open where He reaches out to her in love (vv. 30-34).

Consider your own life in light of this woman's example. Have you ever tried to trigger God's power in your life without really dealing face to face with Him?

The events of vv. 25-34 may have been confusing to Jairus in that it was a delay while his little girl lay dying. Yet it may have come providentially to strengthen his faith before the news of his daughter's death came (v. 35).

Have you faced confusing turns of events that both helped and hindered faith in God?

Jesus "overheard" the news and immediately sought to encourage Jairus. He calls for faith, even when it seems too late (v. 36). Before our Lord Jesus, even death is revocable. No situation is beyond His reach.

Notice that He excludes the doubters and includes only those who were trusting Him (even if they couldn't imagine His raising the dead). Faith does not necessarily mean you are convinced that He will or even can do something. It is essentially trusting Him even when your situation seems "too late". Are you trusting Him, even when it seems beyond hope?

WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 6:1-13

As Jesus returned home to Nazareth where he grew up (v. 3, cf. Matthew 2:23), He met with a rather harsh reception. Three words describe their reaction "astonished" (v. 2), "offense" (v. 3), and "unbelief" (v. 6).

In what ways are these the opposite of true faith?

Familiarity <u>can</u> breed contempt. And it is possible after knowing Christ for an extended time to begin taking Him for granted. To do this severely limits His working in our lives (v. 5).

Could you be slipping into this sort of "unbelief" (v. 6)?

As Jesus' fame had grown, so had the readiness of the Twelve to represent Him (v. 7). It is encouraging to see that though they would fail Him in the future, they were of service now. God does not wait until we're perfect to serve Him. Have you been holding back?

As they went, Whose authority did they carry (v. 7)?

How about you?

On this particular trip, they were to travel light (vv. 8-9). Why do you think Jesus had the Twelve do this?

What application might this have in your life (bear in mind these were specific instructions for a specific situation and may or may not have broader application)?

The action described in verse 11 was the practice of pious Jews as they left Gentile territory. For the disciples to do it was a reminder to Jews that they were acting like Gentiles in rejecting the message. It was important for people to be confronted with the fact of their own <u>disbelief</u>. Why is it important to help someone face up to the fact that to <u>not</u> choose Jesus is, in fact, to reject Him?

Is the call to repentance part of the Good News you share (v. 12)?

Mark 6:14-29

In these verses, we are given a glimpse of Herod, who ruled over Galilee and its environs. He had heard of Jesus' reputation and had adopted one popular opinion that Jesus was really John the Baptist returned from the dead.

Why might Herod draw this conclusion (vv. 16-17)?

What is admirable about John (v. 18)?

Does this have application to you?

Consider Herod and his response/lack of response to this man of God, John:

What positive response do you see in Herod (v. 20)?

What is it not enough?

What did he allow to stand in the way of fully responding to God's message through John (vv. 20, 26)?

As non-believers hear the Gospel, how might they be like Herod?

How as a believer, might you from time to time respond as did Herod?

Mark 6:30-44

There is so much to be gained from these verses. First, we'll consider the "incidentals" of this passage, then look at the feeding of the 5,000 itself. The apostles "reported to Him" (v. 30). They were accountable to Jesus. How should there be accountability among us as believers?

Jesus was faced with the demands and needs of so many (v. 31b). But He did not allow the hectic pace to dictate what He should do (vv. 31-32). He never used the excuse "not enough time" for neglecting what truly mattered. How do you allow the urgent to crowd out the important?

Jesus' plans (v. 32) were thwarted by a needy crowd (vv. 33-34). Was He rigid or flexible at this point (v. 34b)?

What motivated His actions (v. 34)?

Do you see people as an interruption or recognize their needs?

Did Jesus forget His initial plan (v. 46)?

How does His example apply to your plans?

Sermon Sunday, February 24, 2019 – Mark 7:1-23

Mark 6:30-44

It grew late and there was a practical problem of food and shelter for this huge crowd. The disciples make a quite reasonable suggestion (vv. 35-36), but Jesus has other ideas (v. 37). As God guides you through life, are you willing to follow, whether it seems reasonable or not?

Why would Jesus put the burden on the disciples? What is He forcing them to see about themselves (vv. 37-38)?

Who then takes charge (notice the word "commanded" in verse 39)?

Why do you suppose (beyond practical reasons) Jesus kept the disciples involved (vv. 41-43)?

What should the crowd have learned?

What should the disciples have learned (cf. 8:17-21)?

Is there significance in the 12 baskets (a term similar to our "knapsack" left over?

Mark 6:45-57

When He finally dismisses the crowd, what is of most importance to Jesus (v. 46)?

Do you ever let prayer get crowded out of your day?

Jesus may have literally seen His disciples struggling against the sea, or He may have seen them in prayer. Either way, He saw their need and responded out of His concern for them (v. 48). He had earlier confronted them with their helplessness (vv. 37-38). This is now emphasized again in verses 47-48 as He was absent from them.

What made the difference (v. 51)?

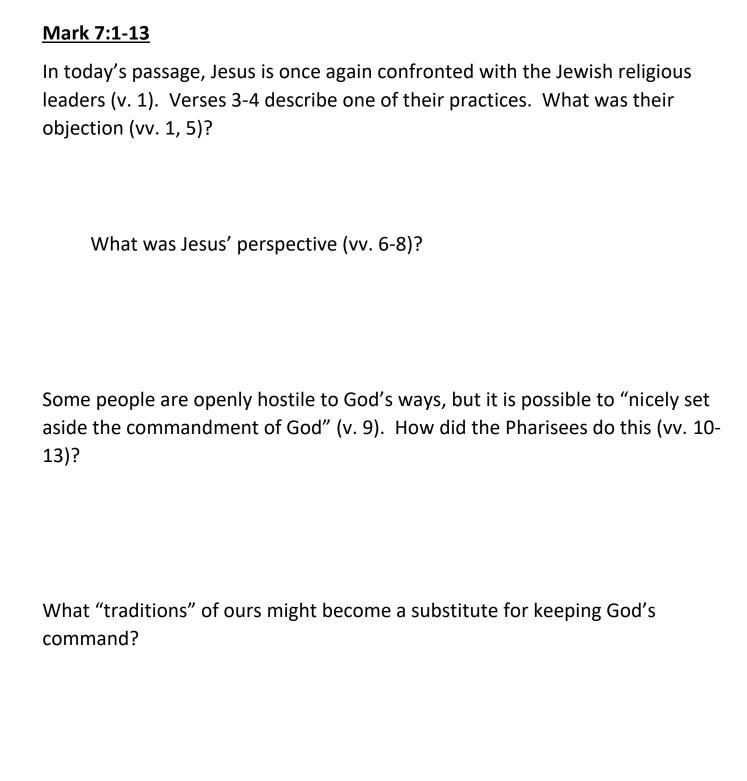
What is available when Jesus is present (v. 50b)?

Consider this: Does Jesus need to get in your boat?

Verses 53-56 describe not only what occurred as they reached the shore, but also provide a summary of where things stood at this point in Jesus' ministry (especially v. 56). Read verses 53-56 and then reflect back on verses 51-52. There was great visible response to Jesus. But what, both in the disciples and in the crowd, is missing?

What more did they need to recognize about Jesus?

How might you, at times, respond to Jesus in this superficial way?



Mark 7:14-23

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| With the conversation of verses 1-13 in mind, what is really the essential difference between keeping man's traditions and God's commands? |
| Jesus gives a parable in verses 14-15 (explained in vv. 18-23) to clarify where the Pharisees had gone wrong. What is His point? |
| How does this relate to the difference between the traditions of men and the command of God (cf. v. 13)? |
| Are there some issues that you have stressed that are really external and therefore less important in God's eyes (vv. 18-19)? |
| Are there some internal matters (vv. 20-23) that you have been ignoring? |
| WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY: |

Mark 7:24-37

Jesus' popularity at this point was such that though He specifically sought out solitude, He could not find it (v. 24). But as always, He continued to reach out in love (cf. 6:34). How do you respond when your personal needs are left unmet?

As 20th century Americans, Jesus' conversation with this Gentile woman seems harsh (v. 25 ff.). Bear in mind that the comparison of Jews and Gentiles to children and dogs was a common saying in that day and that Jesus softens the normal "dogs" to "little dogs" or "house dogs". Also, He does not exclude the Gentiles, but rather stresses the Jews are "first" (v. 27; cf. Romans 1:16).

We must also understand these verses in their context. Jesus had just been undercutting much of the Jewish traditions that set them apart as having an exclusive claim on God (vv. 1-23). Jesus may well be saying this traditional proverb (v. 27) ironically, so as to lead her to faith. This is in fact what happens as the woman responds immediately (vv. 23-30).

Verses 31-37 describe another healing. What do these two healings show you about Jesus?

Verse 37 reveals the underlying significance of this healing as the observers allude to Isaiah 35:5 ff. which prophesies the coming of the Kingdom. If this is being fulfilled, what does this say about Jesus' identity?