

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.



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.

God, your Lord and King, what He is saying to you personally.
Mark 1:1-11
Why does Mark call his book "the <u>beginning</u> of the good news of Jesus Christ" (v. 1)?
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?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

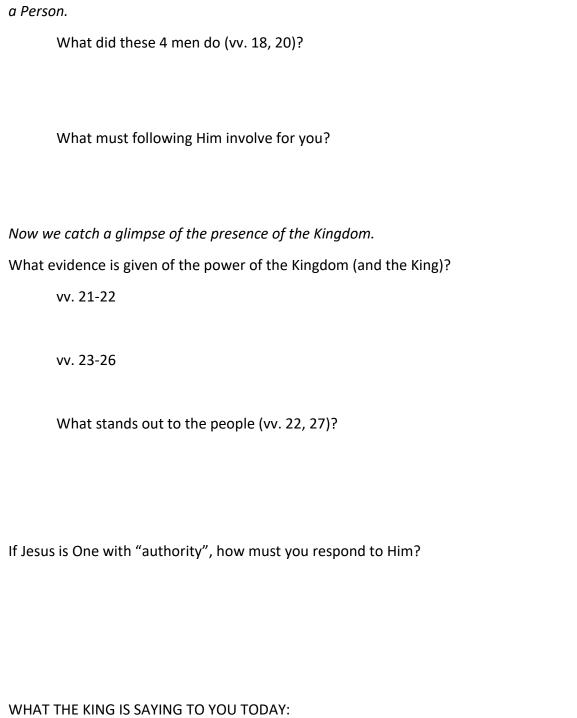
Mark 1:12-15

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.



Mark 1:29-39

Mark 1.23-33
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"?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 1:40-45

The healing here again demonstrates Christ's authority and the power of the Kingdom, but much is revealed also about our response of faith.
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> ove 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?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

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?
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

In what ways does the call of Levi (also known as Matthew) parallel that of the four fishermen (Mark 1:16-20)?
Why is Levi somewhat unlikely as a disciple?
Why is it also likely that these others "were following Him" (v. 15)?
What is Jesus' point in verse 17?
What sort of righteousness were the Pharisees concerned with in verses 18-22?
What does verse 17 say about true faith in Christ and true righteousness?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

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)?
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 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.

 1. 2. 3. 4. 	ist the types of ground and the results that followed:
3.	
	·.
4.	i.
4.	
	.
What should have been understood by the crowd?	Vhat should have been understood by the crowd?
By the disciples?	By the disciples?
By you?	By you?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:	VHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 4:10-20

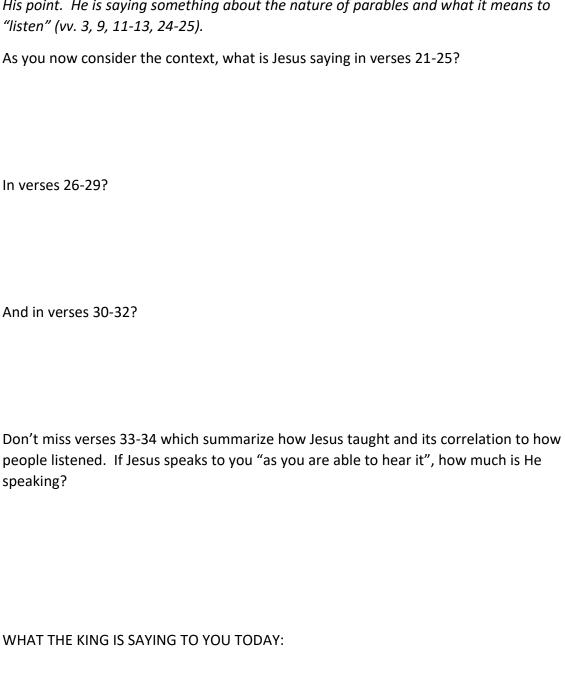
Now we are given a glimpse into Jesus' private time with His disciples and the explanation of the parable they were given. Keep in mind that this includes a larger group than merely the Twelve (v. 10).

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:

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?	
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:	

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).



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 YOUR life. As you face the storm today, Who stands at your side?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

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

Mark 5:1-20

15, 17)

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.

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 not 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 <u>not</u> 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. 27) As God guidos you through life, are you willing to follow, whether it some

reasonable or not?
Why would Jesus put the burden on the disciples? What is He forcing them to see abouthemselves (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 7:1-13

In today's passage, Jesus is once again confronted with the Jewish religious leaders (v. 1). Verses 3-4 describe one of their practices. What was their objection (vv. 1, 5)?
What was Jesus' perspective (vv. 6-8)?
Some people are openly hostile to God's ways, but it is possible to "nicely set aside the commandment of God" (v. 9). How did the Pharisees do this (vv. 10-13)?
What "traditions" of ours might become a substitute for keeping God's command?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 7:14-23

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?

Sermon Sunday, March 3, 2019 - Mark 8:27-38

Mark 8:1-10

Here again Jesus feeds the multitude in a miraculous fashion (recall 6:34-44). What again motivated Him (v. 2)?

Contrast Jesus' response (vv. 2-3) with that of the disciples (v. 4). When you are met with the overwhelming needs of others, do you see the need or just the hassle it would involve?

You would think something would have clicked with the disciples ("I've seen Him do this before with 5,000, so maybe He can do it again with 4,000!"), but somehow it hadn't sunk in. Do you ever find yourself asking the same questions of God (compare v. 4 with 6:35-37)?

Pause to consider the struggles/questions/doubts you are facing today. Have you faced them before?

Has God met these challenges before?

How, specifically?

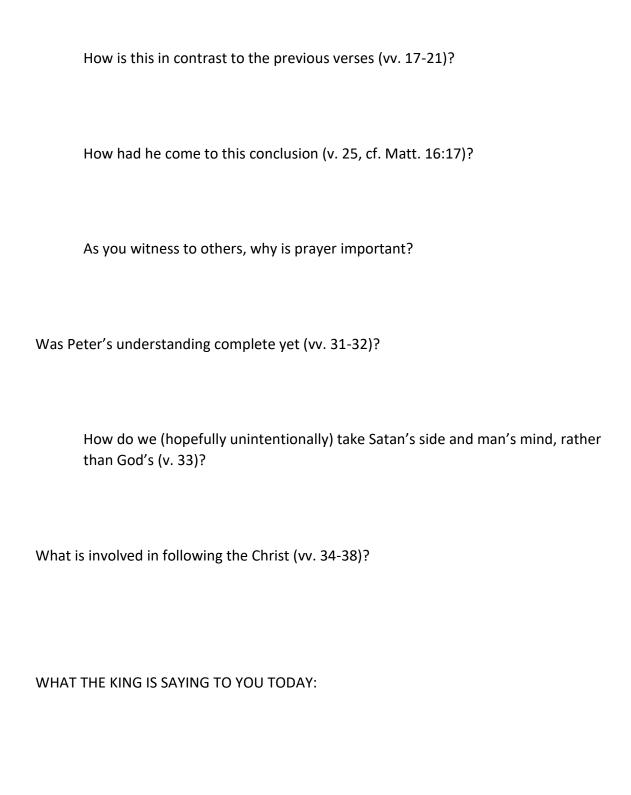
How can this affect your outlook in this present struggle?

Mark 8:11-26

These verses say much about faith and the fact that the choice not to believe may well be based on unwillingness, not inability (i.e., lack of evidence). The Pharisees were demanding a sign (a miraculous evidence to validate Jesus' claims). What signs had they already seen?

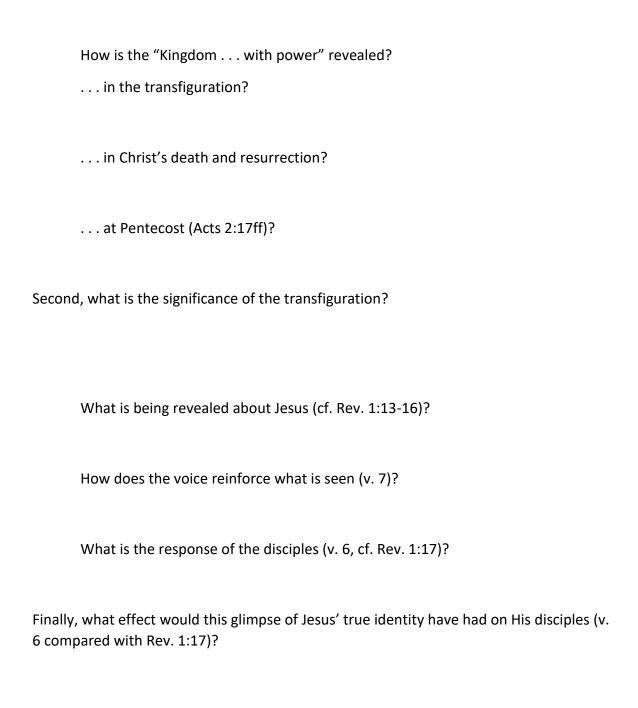
Chapter 1
Chapter 2
Chapter 3
Chapter 4
Chapter 5
Chapter 6
Chapter 7
Chapter 8
Were they honestly open or were their minds already made up (v. 12)?
Today, when is it legitimate to ask for "evidence" and when is it a mere smokescreen?

As they left, Jesus warned His disciples against this sort of lack of faith (v. 15). What was preoccupying the disciples (vv. 14, 16)?
How were the disciples also failing to believe (vv. 17-21)?
How does the miracle of vv. 22-26 illustrate what needed to happen in the disciples (v. 18)? (How about you?)
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:
Mark 8:27-38
These verses point in a way to the crux of the entire book: "Who do you say that I am?" What were the various opinions about Jesus (v. 28)?
These verses point in a way to the crux of the entire book: "Who do you say that I am?"
These verses point in a way to the crux of the entire book: "Who do you say that I am?" What were the various opinions about Jesus (v. 28)?
These verses point in a way to the crux of the entire book: "Who do you say that I am?" What were the various opinions about Jesus (v. 28)? Why did Jesus demand to know what they themselves thought of Him (v. 29)?



Mark 9:1-13

These verses describe the transfiguration of Jesus and several questions arise. First, how was the promise of verse 1 fulfilled?



How would it give them courage through the difficulties ahead (vv. 12-13)?

God occasionally gives us glimpses of His glory (whether through His Word or His actions our lives). How can these times encourage us through the days of darkness and difficulty (cf. 8:34-38)?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:
Mark 9:14-29
What a contrast in these verses before and after Jesus' arrival. What was the immediate problem (vv. 14-18)?
What was the underlying problem, preventing a solution (v. 19)?
Consider the father. How would you describe his initial attitude (v. 18b, "I <u>told</u> them to ")?
How does this sort of mindset deter faith?
How did he change (vv. 22-24)?
Verse 24 is crucial. Eaith is not as much certainty of holief as it is completeness of

dependence.

Sermon Sunday, March 10, 2019 - Mark 9:14-29

Mark 9:14-29

Reread these verses again, but now with an eye on the disciples. We've seen the arrogant impatience of the father that demands things of God (v. 18) that, out of his helplessness (v. 22), grew into weak, but genuine faith (v. 24). But what of the disciples? Had they been able to cast out demons before (v. 6:7)?

Why had they failed now (vv. 28-29)?

Note that the words "and fasting" (v. 29) are probably not original. The issue here is not extra religious rituals, but prayer itself. They simply forgot to pray! How easy it is to gain confidence out of past victories and have that confidence undercut faith, rather than build it. We become confident in ourselves rather than dependent on God. Perhaps our unanswered prayers remain unanswered because they never truly became prayer: only words, not words reflecting dependence on God alone. Ask yourself today:

Is my confidence the result of faith in God or mere self-confidence?

Have my prayers reflected true dependence on God?

Mark 9:30-37

With verse 30, we s	ee a clear shift in the	focus of Jesus' min	istry, as He intentionally
avoids the crowds.	Why does He do this	(v. 31a, note "for"	or "because")?

When is it appropriate to narrow the focus of ministry, whether your own personal ministry, or the church's?

Jesus again tells the disciples of His coming death and resurrection (v. 31). But what was their response (v. 32)? Why?

Jesus didn't give up on them, despite their lack of understanding, and He doesn't give up on us! Is there someone that perhaps you are tempted to give up on?

Verse 33 shows that as they avoided talk of His death (v. 32), they began to discuss their own status (v. 34). What is Jesus' first point about true greatness (v. 34)?

What is the point of verses 36-37?

In whom will you "receive" Jesus today?

Mark 9:38-50

We have no clue as to the identity of the person mentioned in verse 38, but what is Jesus' opinion (vv. 39-40)?

How should this affect our view of other Christians/churches/ministries with whom we might differ?

What is our responsibility to "little ones" (v. 42), those who are young, whether chronologically or spiritually, or who are simply weak and fragile?

Take an honest look: how might you have unintentionally made it easier for someone to trip than to make progress?

Verses 48-48 underline the seriousness of sin. It's so easy to take sin lightly, but what would Jesus say?

The sayings of verses 49-50 seem to be grouped here because of the key word, "salt", though the point is different in each. Verse 49 uses the imagery of a refiner's fire (cf. Matt. 3:2) and may refer to the purifying effect or trials and persecution. Are you ready to be "salted"?

Verse 50 speaks of our effect as Christians on others, having a preserving and savoring effect. Why would our quarrelling compromise our saltiness (note the last phrase)?

Mark 10:1-12

There is much to consider here: First, how we view God's Word to us. Note the contrast – Jesus asked what Scripture "commands" (v. 3) – the Pharisees, what it "permitted" (v. 4). They were looking for loopholes, for ways to technically comply, but in the least restrictive manner. We can view God's Word as we would the tax code – something to be endured and obeyed, but in the least way possible. Or we can take it as the Word of Life, compliance with which ensures wholeness and true satisfaction.

Do you seek to obey what He commands or get away with what He permits?

Now what does Jesus teach about marriage and divorce? First, Jesus' focus is on the "command", i.e., God's intent for marriage. What does God want it to be (vv. 6-9)?

Why does God allow divorce (vv. 4-5)?

Even then, when is it permitted (never commanded) by God (see Matt. 19:9)?

A pastoral word: If you are struggling in this area, whether hurting in a painful marriage (don't buy the enemy's lie of quick relief through divorce – it's a delusion), or the betrayal of your spouses' unfaithfulness, or trying to put the pieces back together after the shattering of divorce – DON'T GO IT ALONE. There are people who care, and people who can help. Don't withdraw. Seek God's grace through His people. Call someone. God wants you to make it!

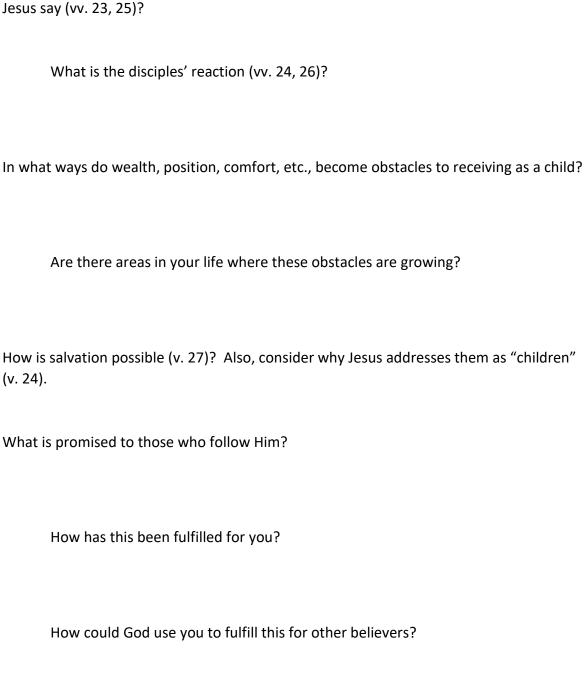
Sermon Sunday, March 17, 2019 – Mark 10:13-31

Mark 10:13-22

Jesus with the children (vv. 13-16): it is a scene that brings a smile to the face, the tender love of Jesus. What does it say about gaining entry to God's Kingdom (vv. 14-15)?
In what ways do you act too "grown up"?
In what specific ways could you deal with life more as a child?
Now read verses 17-22 concerning the rich young man, keeping in mind what Jesus has said about receiving the Kingdom. How was he acting too grown up?
How did this get in the way?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 10:23-31

We've seen the choice this man made. Now we have Jesus' comments. In the ancient world, and in our day as well, it was (is) commonly held that success and prosperity in this life were (are) marks of God's blessing, thus ensuring eternal blessing. But what does Jesus say (vy. 23, 25)?



Mark 10:32-45

Amazement and fear was the reaction as Jesus headed toward Jerusalem (v. 32) for His followers knew the opposition that awaited (beginning as early as 3:6). Indeed, their fears found confirmation in Jesus' prophecy of what lay ahead (vv. 33-34).

But in light of the request of James and John (vv. 34-37), have the disciples really understood Jesus' role as Messiah (cf. 8:31, 9:31-37)?

In what way is it impossible for Jesus' followers to share His "cup" and "baptism" (v. 39, the question in Greek expects a "no" answer, cf. v. 45)?

But in what way do we share in His sufferings (v. 39, cf. 1 Peter 4:13)?

The disciples have only superficially grasped both Jesus' task and their own as His followers. What did Jesus come to do (v. 45)?

What are we to do?

Who will you serve this week?

Mark 10:46-52

Bartimaeus knew he had a need that Jesus could meet and let nothing stand in the way. He gives one more lesson in Mark's gospel concerning real faith, for Jesus states "your faith has made you well" (v. 52). Thus, by watching Bartimaeus, we get a glimpse of faith in action. Read these verses and then consider the following questions about his faith (and yours):

in action. Read these verses and then consider the following questions about his faith (and yours):
How was his initial cry (v. 47) an expression of faith?
How did his persistence (v. 48) reflect faith?
Bartimaeus responded immediately to Jesus' invitation (v. 50). What does this reveal about faith?
In answering Jesus, how did he demonstrate faith (v. 51, contrast John 5:6ff)?
What is the ongoing evidence of faith (v. 52b)?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

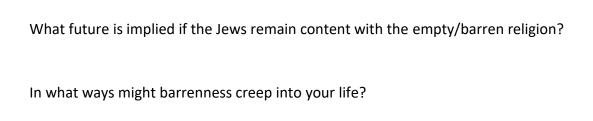
Mark 11:1-11

Sermon Sunday, March 24, 2019 - Mark 12:28-34

Mark 11:12-33

This event of Jesus cursing the fig tree might seem strange, especially when we're told that "it was not the season for figs" (v. 13). But we must realize that Jesus is teaching (notice the emphasis on "His disciples were listening", v. 14). It is what we might call an acted parable – almost an object lesson. Note, too, that between the cursing of the fig tree (vv. 12-14) and its results (vv. 19-21), the cleansing of the temple is described.

How does the barrenness of the fig tree illustrate the barrenness of what was happening in the temple (v. 17)?



We've already considered the meaning of this "acted parable", but the disciples are also struck at the sheer authority of Jesus: He spoke to the tree (v. 14) and it withered (vv. 20-21). Jesus takes this opportunity to teach His disciples. What is His main point (v. 22)?

How do the following verses amplify this thought?
v. 23

v. 24 v. 25

v. 26 (this is not in the earliest manuscripts. It was probably borrowed later from the parallel passage in Matthew 6:15 – but it's still true, whether from Mark or Matthew).

Jesus was always ready to teach those who were truly teachable: wanting to respond from the heart. And so He teaches His disciples concerning His authority and its heavenly origin (vv. 22-26). But when questioned by the Jewish leaders (vv. 27-28), He was not so straightforward (vv. 29-33). Why?

What was different in the questioning of the disciples and the Jewish leaders?

In your heart, is there a readiness to respond to authority from Heaven?

WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 12:1-12

Recall that Jesus is dealing with a delegation of religious leaders (11:27), as well as the crowd that had gathered to listen (12:12). Jesus tells a parable of a vineyard. Let's consider each element of the parable.

Who/what is the vineyard (they would have understood it in light of Old Testament imagery, e.g., Is. 5:7)?

Who are the vine growers (v. 12)?

Who are the servants sent by the owner (cf. Matt. 23:27)?

Who is the "beloved son" (v. 6)?

How are verses 10-11 fulfilled in Jesus?

What are the consequences of rejecting Him (v. 9)? In what ways can we, as believers, resist God's Word to us? WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY: Mark 12:13-17 Another group of Jewish leaders seek to trap Jesus in today's reading. (Incidentally, the Pharisees and Herodians were normally hostile political enemies. But hatred forms strange alliances!) The trap being set (vv. 13-15) was designed to force Jesus to incur the wrath of either the people (who hated Roman rule, especially in this form of taxation) or the Romans (by sounding like a subversive revolutionary). What does Jesus detect about His inquisitors (vv. 14-15)? How does He answer (vv. 15-17)? What lasting application does this have for us as citizens in America? Jesus could have stopped with paying Caesar his due, but He adds "and to God the things that are God's" (v 17). What would this include? (Consider, if we owe government that which bears its image, i.e., coinage, what bears God's image that is thus owed to Him?)

Mark 12:18-27

We've seen the chief priests/scribes/elders (11:27) and the Pharisees/ Herodians (12:13) attack Jesus. Now one other party of Jewish leaders tries its hand. The Sadducees did not believe in resurrection. They held to the authority of the Torah, the five books of Moses, to the exclusion of the rest of the Old Testament. In that resurrection is not mentioned explicitly there, they rejected it. But from where does Jesus draw His argument (v. 26)?

What Jesus says about marriage may seem hard (v. 25), but if in marriage we have the opportunity to know the closest of fellowship on this earth, what does this imply about the depth of life in heaven?

Sometimes people only find what they want to find in Scripture! Jesus cites two mistakes the Pharisees had made. What had they missed (v. 24)?

How might you discount:

God's Word?

God's power?

Mark 12:28-37

Mark 12:28-37
In the midst of all these hypocritical attacks on Jesus, one man finally comes forth with a sincere inquiry (v. 28). What is Jesus' answer (vv. 29-31)?
In what way are these two commands greater than all others (vv. 32-33)?
In what way do they <u>include</u> all other commandments?
Jesus stated that this man was <u>near</u> the Kingdom, though not yet in. He still needed to respond to Jesus Himself as Messiah. This Jesus deals with His own identity and the tooshallow expectations the people had of the promised Messiah. They expected Messiah to be the descendent of David (v. 35), but Jesus challenged them with the truth that Messiah was more than just a man. What does verse 36 imply about Jesus as the Messiah?
How do we, at times, limit Who Jesus is?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Sermon Sunday, March 31, 2019 – Mark 13

Mark 12:38-44

These verses contrast true love for God with the mere appearance of it
What were the failings of these scribes (vv. 38-40)?
How can pride corrupt good religious habits?
How does this widow show a pure love for God?
How do you respond to God merely "out of surplus" (v. 44)?
How can you "put in all you own, your whole livelihood" (v. 44)?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 13:1-8

The building of the Temple impressed the disciples (v. 1), but Jesus predicted the Temple's destruction (v. 2), fulfilled in 70 A.D. by the Roman armies. Jesus was thinking not only of its physical destruction, but also the theological implications that the sacrifices and all else associated with the Temple were no longer valid. Why was this true (cf. Heb. 9:11ff)?

The disciples asked privately when these events would occur, associating the fall of the Temple with the end of the age (vv. 3-4; cf. Matt. 24:3). Jesus' answer touches on both the events of 70 A.D. and those final days yet to come, for Jerusalem's destruction prefigures in many ways the final days. What is one threat facing God's people (v. 6)?

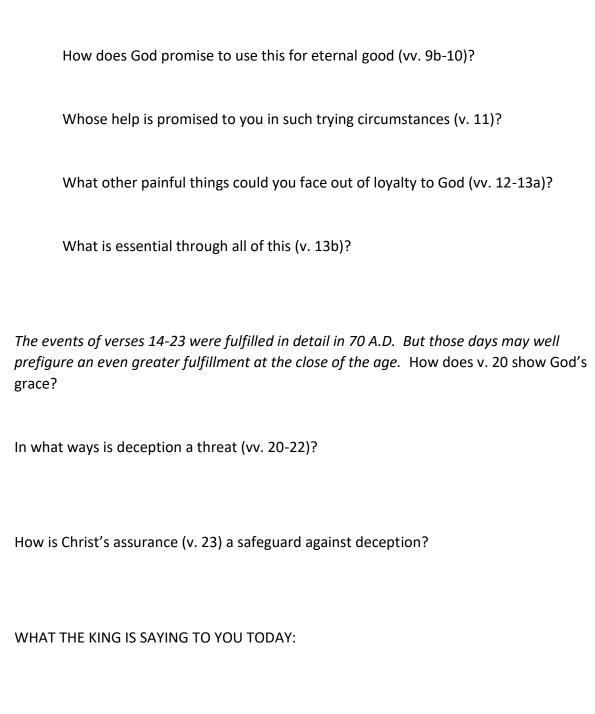
According to verses 7-8, what else will happen before the end of the age (and how have these already seen fulfillment)?

War and other tragedies might seem to indicate that everything is out of control, but these manifestations of a sinful mankind are not beyond our God's control: "these events must take place" (v. 7). God is at work, bringing history to its conclusion. These events are called "birth pangs" (v. 8): not senseless pain, but pain that anticipates purpose.

Because God is at work, how can we face such events (v. 7)?

Mark 13:9-23

We need not fear as human events go awry (v. 7).	But that is not to say we are immune.
What might you face as God's child (v. 9)?	



Mark 13:24-37

The events of these verses point clearly to the end	of the age.	What a glorious appearin	g
$of \ our \ Lord \ Jesus, \ as \ even \ the \ heavens \ are \ shaken.$	What will	be seen about Jesus on the	at
day (v. 26) that was not visible during His earthly r	ministry?		

For what other reason will our Lord return (v. 27)? Having described His return, Jesus now draws practical applications for His followers (including us!) What is the lesson of the fig tree (vv. 28-28)? Are Jesus' words dependable (v. 31)? If so, how should we handle our doubts and lack of knowledge concerning His return (v. 32)? If v. 1 0 is true, what should we be busy doing? What is to be our attitude as we await His coming (vv. 33-37)? How does this translate into daily priorities and activities?

Sermon Sunday, April 7, 2019 – Mark 14 – 15:20

Mark 14:1-11

Read through these verses at least 3 times and then consider the stark contrast in attitudes toward Jesus. How would you sum up the response of:

The Jewish leaders (vv.1-2, 11)?
"Some" in Bethany (vv. 4-5)?
This woman (vv. 3, 6-9)?
How might you, at times, act like the "indignant some" in Bethany?
What is one way that you, like the woman, can show this costly devotion to Jesus?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 14:12-21

These final hours with His disciples were of the highest priority to Jesus (He shared so much with them – see this chapter, as well as John 13-17). And He was unwilling for a premature arrest to cut this time short. Thus, secrecy in the celebration of the Passover was imperative. Verses 13-15 may describe Jesus' supernatural knowledge or simply prior arrangements cloaked in secrecy to avoid the Jews. It's important to see that though men were plotting evil, seeking an "opportune time" (v. 11), their efforts only succeeded as God allowed (see Acts 2:23). God overrules the strategy of evil and uses it for His purposes! This is true in world history and in your personal life.

When have you seen God overrule and use bad things for good?

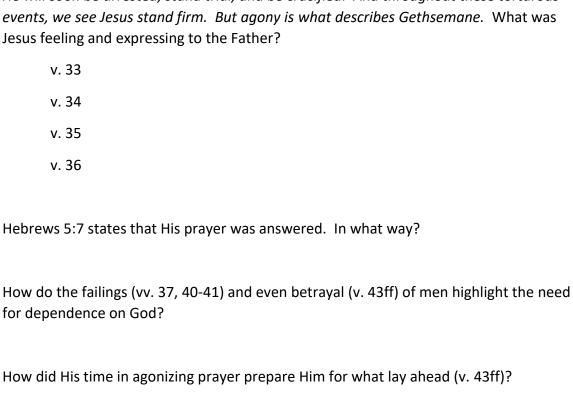
God's overruling of evil is seen again in Judas' decision to betray Jesus (v. 21). God's sovereignty and men's responsibility are both here, neither compromised by the other. But focus on the love of Jesus in the face of betrayal – betrayal by one of His intimate associates; table fellowship (v. 20) was a sign of closeness and deep trust. You've not betrayed Him as did Judas, but consider how He has loved you in the face of your failings.

Mark 14:22-31

In the Passover meal, the Jews remembered God's deliverance of Israel from their slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12). In the midst of this meal, Jesus instituted a new remembrance. How does His sacrifice parallel that of the Old Testament exodus?
How does the Lord's Supper remind us of His sacrifice (vv. 22-24)?
How does it also point to hope (v. 25)?
Jesus has spoken of the betrayer, but now He points to the coming desertion of the other disciples (vv. 27-29) and even denial of a relationship with Him (vv. 30-31). But the Lord loved these disloyal deserters enough to die for them (and for us, too). Peter meant well (vv. 29, 31) but promised more than he could deliver. How did Jesus treat Him after His resurrection (cf. Jn. 21:15ff)?
How will He respond to you when you've failed?
Have you need of specific repentance today?

Mark 14:32-52

He will soon be arrested, stand trial, and be crucified. And throughout these torturous events, we see Jesus stand firm. But agony is what describes Gethsemane. What was Jesus feeling and expressing to the Father?



From Jesus' example, what can you learn about how to pray?

Verses 51-52 add nothing to the main story, but may well refer to John Mark, the author, and, if so, indicate an eyewitness account.

Mark 14:53-72

Jesus is "led away", seemingly helpless in His captor's hands (v. 53). But Who was really in control (v. 36, cf. Jn. 7:30)?

When you feel helpless, at the mercy of others and circumstances are beyond your control, where can you find hope?

Here is human authority at its worst: the decision to kill Jesus had already been made (cf. 14:1), they now had merely to manufacture grounds for doing so (vv. 55-61, they couldn't even coordinate their liars). Jesus had consistently hidden His identity as the Messiah. But He now affirms it unequivocally (v. 62). He is immediately condemned as a blasphemer (as He should be if indeed He was not the Messiah). But what possibility have the Jews not even considered?

How does this illustrate the response of many today?

Now consider Peter (vv. 66-72):

Why did he deny Jesus?

What was in in his heart (v. 72)?

What followed later (cf. Jn. 21:15f)?

Sermon Sunday, April 14, 2019 – Mark 15:21-47

Mark 15:1-20

A formal convocation of the Sanhedrin was called to officially condemn Jesus (the previous meeting was actually illegal) and then, He was sent on to the Romans. Only they had the right of execution. Thus, Pilate now must decide Jesus' fate (though recall Whose greater hand is at work, cf. Jn. 19:11).

hand is at work, cf. Jn. 19:11).
What does Pilate think of Jesus?
What decided his actions (v. 15)?
How does this factor sway people (including you) in harmful ways?
Pause simply to read verses 16-20 several times, reflecting on Jesus' true identity and his treatment by those He created.
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 15:21-47

And so Jesus is crucified. Mark describes His execution with bare simplicity, the intensity of the tragedy speaking for itself. Read through these verses more than once, allowing their significance to sink in. What strikes you most about your dying Savior?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Mark 15:21-47

Reread through these verses again. What was the response of:
The crowd (vv. 29-30)
The Jews (vv. 31-32)
The Centurion (v. 39)
The women (vv. 40-41, 47)
Joseph (vv. 43-46)
Why do people differ so much in their reaction to Jesus?
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

Sermon Sunday, April 21, 2019 (Resurrection Sunday) – Mark 16

Mark 16:1-8

Begin by considering the women.	Mark had earlier described them as those who "used to
follow Him" – during His ministry,	at the cross and now to the tomb (15:40-41, 16:1).

What can you learn about following Jesus from these women?

As they approached the tomb, a problem occurred to them: the stone (v. 3). Who handled this obstacle before they even realized (v. 4)?

They were worried about a physical obstacle (v. 3). How did God surpass their expectations (v. 6)?

Verse 8 (which concludes the gospel of Mark proper – see notes in the margin of your Bible) ends on a note of fear ("trembling", astonishment", "afraid"). What realization about Christ's full identity had brought this holy fear (cf. Prov. 1:7)?

Mark 16:9-20

These final verses are not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts of the New Testament
and most likely were not a par to fthe original gospel of Mark. Yet what they contain is a
reliable summary of some of the resurrection appearances of our Lord, drawn from the
other gospels. Notice the picture of the disciples. Was it easy for them to believe?

other gospels. Notice the picture of the disciples. Was it easy for them to believe?
v. 11
v. 13
v. 14
What task was given to the disciples?
Think specifically: How can you do this in your personal setting?
Why is the ascension of Jesus important (v. 19)?
Verse 10 is exciting! Jesus may be gone physically, but He is as active as ever through us Jesus wants to "work with" you, right where you are!
WHAT THE KING IS SAYING TO YOU TODAY:

The Gospel of Mark

Reread the Gospel of Mark beginning at Chapter 1 through the end. Once again, answer these questions:
What have you learned about Jesus?
What is His Kingdom?
How can you live as a citizen of His Kingdom?
Finally, consider this question: How do your answers today differ from your answers in Week 1?
WHAT IS THE KING SAYING TO YOU TODAY: