

## **Table of Contents (tap to go to study)**

<b>John the Baptist Prepares the Way - Mark 1:1-8 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus - Mark 1:9-13 ...</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The Calling of the First Disciples - Mark 1:14-20 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit - Mark 1:21-28 .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Jesus Heals Many - Mark 1:29-34 .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place - Mark 1:35-39 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>A Man With Leprosy - Mark 1:40-45 .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Jesus Heals a Paralytic - Mark 2:1-12 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>The Calling of Levi - Mark 2:13-17 .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Jesus Questioned About Fasting - Mark 2:18-22 .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Lord of the Sabbath - Mark 2:23-3:6 .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Crowds Follow Jesus - Mark 3:7-12 .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>The Appointing of the Twelve Apostles - Mark 3:13-19 .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Jesus and Beelzebub - Mark 3:20-30 .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Jesus' Mother and Brothers - Mark 3:31-35 .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>The Parable of the Sower - Mark 4:1-20 .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>A Lamp on a Stand - Mark 4:21-25 .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>The Parable of the Growing Seed - Mark 4:26-29 .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>The Parable of the Mustard Seed - Mark 4:30-34 .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Jesus Calms the Storm - Mark 4:35-41 .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>The Healing of a Demon-possessed Man - Mark 5:1-20 .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman - Mark 5:21-43 .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>A Prophet Without Honor - Mark 6:1-6 .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Jesus Sends Out the Twelve - Mark 6:7-13 .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>John the Baptist Beheaded - Mark 6:14-29 .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand - Mark 6:30-44 .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Jesus Walks on the Water - Mark 6:45-56 .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Clean and Unclean - Mark 7:1-23 .....</b>	<b>36</b>

<b>The Faith of a Syrophenician Woman - Mark 7:24-30 .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>The Healing of a Deaf and Mute Man - Mark 7:31-37 ..</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand - Mark 8:1-13 .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>The Yeast of the Pharisees and Herod - Mark 8:14-21 .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>The Healing of a Blind Man at Bethsaida - Mark 8:22-26 .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Peter's Confession of Christ - Mark 8:27-30 .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Jesus Predicts His Death - Mark 8:31-9:1 .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>The Transfiguration - Mark 9:2-13 .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>The Healing of a Boy With an Evil Spirit - Mark 9:14-32 .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Who Is the Greatest? - Mark 9:33-37 .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Whoever Is Not Against Us Is for Us - Mark 9:38-41 ..</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Causing to Sin - Mark 9:42-50 .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Divorce - Mark 10:1-12 .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>The Little Children and Jesus - Mark 10:13-16 .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>The Rich Young Man - Mark 10:17-31 .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Jesus Again Predicts His Death - Mark 10:32-34 .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>The Request of James and John - Mark 10:35-45 .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight - Mark 10:46-52 .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>The Triumphal Entry - Mark 11:1-11 .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Jesus Clears the Temple - Mark 11:12-19 .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>The Withered Fig Tree - Mark 11:20-26 .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>The Authority of Jesus Questioned - Mark 11:27-33 ..</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>The Parable of the Tenants - Mark 12:1-12 .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Paying Taxes to Caesar - Mark 12:13-17 .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Marriage at the Resurrection - Mark 12:18-27 .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>The Greatest Commandment - Mark 12:28-34 .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Whose Son Is the Christ? - Mark 12:35-40 .....</b>	<b>65</b>

<b>The Widow's Offering - Mark 12:41-44 .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Signs of the End of the Age - Mark 13:1-31 .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>The Day and Hour Unknown - Mark 13:32-37 .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Jesus Anointed at Bethany - Mark 14:1-11 .....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>The Lord's Supper - Mark 14:12-26 .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial - Mark 14:27-31 .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Gethsemane - Mark 14:32-42 .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Jesus Arrested - Mark 14:43-52 .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Before the Sanhedrin - Mark 14:53-65 .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Peter Disowns Jesus - Mark 14:66-72 .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Jesus Before Pilate - Mark 15:1-15 .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>The Soldiers Mock Jesus - Mark 15:16-20 .....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>The Crucifixion - Mark 15:21-32 .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>The Death of Jesus - Mark 15:33-41 .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>The Burial of Jesus - Mark 15:42-47 .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>The Resurrection - Mark 16:1-20 .....</b>	<b>84</b>

# John the Baptist Prepares the Way - Mark 1:1-8

*Topics:* Gospel, Humility, Preparation, Prophecy, Repentance, Witnessing

## Open It

- \* 1. How would you prepare for a home visit from your boss or another important person?
- 2. Why is it important to prepare for the coming of an influential person?
- 3. What attitudes do most ordinary people have about “very important persons”?

## Explore It

- 4. What do Mark’s first words tell us about his Gospel? (1:1)
- 5. Who was John the Baptist? (1:2-3)
- \* 6. Who sent the messenger? Why? (1:2-3)
- 7. How was Isaiah’s prophecy fulfilled? (1:4)
- \* 8. What were the two aspects of John’s ministry? (1:4)
- 9. What reasons to be baptized did John give the people? (1:4)
- 10. What had to happen before John could baptize a person? (1:5)
- 11. When John said, “After me will come one more powerful than I,” to whom was he referring? (1:7)
- 12. What was John’s attitude toward Jesus? (1:7)
- \* 13. What was the theme of John’s message? (1:7-8)
- 14. How did Jesus’ baptism differ from John’s? (1:8)

## Get It

- 15. What is your reaction to the fact that Isaiah’s prophecy was fulfilled?
- 16. In what ways can we allow the Holy Spirit to work through us?
- 17. How can Jesus’ gift of the Holy Spirit make a difference in our lives?
- \* 18. What does the message of Jesus offer to people?
- 19. What usually prevents us from being Christ’s witnesses?
- 20. How can a person’s witness reflect humility and respect for Jesus?
- 21. How can we ensure that our lives focus attention on Christ, and not on ourselves?
- \* 22. In what ways can you prepare others for Christ?

## Apply It

- \* 23. What step could you take this week toward becoming a better witness for Christ?
- 24. With whom can you share God’s promise of forgiveness of sins? How?
- 25. How can you encourage other Christians to be witnesses for Christ?

# The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus - Mark 1:9-13

*Topics:* Affirmation, Angels, Approval, Heaven, Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, Satan, Temptation, Testing

## Open It

1. How do people typically show approval of others?
2. When was a time you were affirmed by others?
3. What is one form of recognition you received growing up, whether at school, at home, or from friends?
- \* 4. What does the word “temptation” bring to mind?

## Explore It

5. Who baptized Jesus? Why? (1:9)
6. Why was this event significant? (1:9)
7. What does Jesus’ baptism tell us about His character? (1:10)
8. What happened after Jesus was baptized? (1:10)
9. How were the three persons of the Trinity present in this event? (1:10-11)
10. To whom was the voice from heaven speaking? (1:11)
11. What did the voice from heaven say about Jesus? (1:11)
- \* 12. What happened right after Jesus’ baptism? (1:12)
13. Who sent Jesus into the desert for forty days? Why? (1:12-13)
- \* 14. What happened to Jesus in the desert? (1:13)
15. Under what conditions was Jesus tempted? (1:13)
- \* 16. What role did angels play in this event? (1:13)

## Get It

17. How should we respond to Jesus’ example of baptism?
18. In what ways can we imitate Jesus’ attitude of humility and submission?
19. What implications does Jesus’ experience of temptation have for the temptations we face?
20. What difference does it make to you that the Holy Spirit allows you to be tempted?
21. What might God be trying to teach you through tempting situations?
22. How does it affect you to know that Satan is a force behind temptation?
- \* 23. What temptations are difficult for you to resist?
- \* 24. How can we depend more on the power of God to help us resist temptation?

## Apply It

- \* 25. What concrete steps can you take this week to resist temptation?
26. How can you remind yourself that Jesus understands the temptations you experience, and that He can help you resist them?

## The Calling of the First Disciples - Mark 1:14-20

*Topics:* Believe, Family, Follow, Giving Up, Good News, Gospel, Invitation, Obedience, Sacrifice

### Open It

- \* 1. What kind of invitations do you enjoy receiving? Why?
- 2. For what kinds of relationships are people willing to sacrifice their own needs?
- 3. When are you most willing to set aside your own needs for another person's needs?

### Explore It

- 4. Why did Jesus go to Galilee? (1:14)
- 5. What did Jesus do in Galilee? (1:14)
- 6. How were the two parts of Jesus' message connected? (1:15)
- \* 7. How did Jesus want people to respond to the fact that the kingdom of God was near? (1:15)
- \* 8. What did Jesus tell the people they must do besides believe His good news? (1:15)
- 9. Whom did Jesus call to be His followers? (1:16, 19)
- \* 10. How did Jesus get people to follow Him? (1:17)
- 11. What does it mean to be "fishers of men"? (1:17)
- 12. How did Simon and Andrew respond to Jesus' call? (1:17)
- 13. What sacrifice did James and John make to follow Jesus? (1:20)

### Get It

- \* 14. What does Christ expect us to give up to follow Him?
- 15. What are you willing to give up in order to follow Christ?
- 16. What does it mean for a person to sacrifice personal achievements, friends, or even family for the sake of Christ?
- 17. What does Jesus ask all of us to do?
- \* 18. What can you learn from the disciples' response to Jesus' call?
- 19. How can you obey Christ's commands more faithfully?
- 20. What prevents you from following Jesus wholeheartedly?
- 21. What action is necessary to eliminate these hindrances from your life with Christ?

### Apply It

- 22. What specific attitude or action should you give up now as an act of following Christ?
- \* 23. How can you follow Jesus this week?

## Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit - Mark 1:21-28

*Topics:* Demons, Healing, Miracles, Serving, Sickness

### Open It

1. What makes a person a good teacher?
- \* 2. What are some examples of power and authority?
3. What words describe people who have authority?
4. Why do we often feel small around people of power and authority?

### Explore It

5. What do Jesus' actions tell us about his beliefs regarding the Sabbath? (1:21)
- \* 6. Why were the people amazed at Jesus' teaching? (1:22)
7. What kinds of teachers were the people accustomed to that caused them to be amazed by Jesus' teaching? (1:22)
8. Why did the man in the synagogue cry out to Jesus? (1:23-24)
9. What did the evil spirit say to Jesus? (1:24)
- \* 10. What do the evil spirit's words tell us about Christ? (1:24)
11. How did Jesus respond to the man possessed by the evil spirit? (1:25-26)
12. How did the evil spirit respond to Jesus' command to leave the man? (1:26)
13. What occurred in the synagogue after Jesus cast out the demon? (1:27)
14. Why did the people describe Jesus' teaching as "new"? (1:27)
15. Why were the people so excited about Jesus? (1:27)
- \* 16. Why did the news about Jesus spread so quickly over the region? (1:27-28)

### Get It

17. How does Jesus' teaching differ from the teaching we are used to today?
18. Why should we share the news of Jesus' power and authority with other people?
- \* 19. What does this story tell us about evil spirits and Jesus' power?
20. According to Jesus, how should Christians respond to people controlled by sin?
21. What authority does Jesus have over other areas of life?
22. What makes us fearful of claiming Jesus' power over Satan's footholds in our lives?
23. What is wrong with doubting Jesus' power?
24. How can we show confidence in Christ's power over illness?
25. How can we allow Jesus' power and authority to work in our lives?
26. What specific areas of your life need the transforming power of Jesus?
- \* 27. What area of your life do you need to place under Jesus' power and authority?

### Apply It

- \* 28. What is one way you can show submission to Christ's authority in your life throughout this week?
29. What personal need or problem will you ask Jesus, through prayer, to heal this week?
30. What could you do this week for someone who is sick or discouraged?

## Jesus Heals Many - Mark 1:29-34

*Topics:* Authority, Demons, Healing, Miracles, Power, Teaching

### Open It

1. Why is it sometimes difficult to help people who are sick?
- \* 2. What happens to your attitude when you get sick with a bad cold or the flu?

### Explore It

- \* 3. What did Jesus do with His companions after teaching in the synagogue? (1:29)
4. What problem did Jesus encounter in this situation? (1:30)
5. Why did the men tell Jesus about Simon's mother-in-law? (1:30)
- \* 6. How did Jesus respond to the problem He was faced with? (1:31)
7. Why did Jesus use personal contact to heal the woman of her fever? (1:31)
8. What was the woman's immediate response to Jesus healing her? (1:31)
9. What do the actions of the woman tell us about her? (1:31)
10. When did the crowds of people come to Jesus? (1:32)
11. How might Jesus have felt at this time, considering he had spent the day at the synagogue teaching and healing? (1:32)
12. What attracted people to Jesus in this setting? (1:32)
- \* 13. What was Jesus' response to the crowds of sick and demon-possessed people? (1:34)
14. Why did Jesus not allow the demons to speak? (1:34)

### Get It

15. How do you feel about serving your family at home after a long, hard day?
- \* 16. What does this story tell us our attitude should be toward helping people?
17. Why should we follow the disciples' example of bringing our problems to Jesus?
18. What can we expect Jesus' response will be to our problems?
19. Why is personal contact important in serving the needs of people?
20. Following the example of the woman in the story, what should we do when others serve or help us?
- \* 21. What excuses do we use to neglect serving other people?
22. What difference should it make in our lives that Jesus has the power to heal the sick and deliver the demon-possessed?

### Apply It

23. What specific area of your life do you need to turn over to Jesus for His healing touch?
- \* 24. What concrete step can you take to serve or help someone else this week?



# Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place - Mark 1:35-39

*Topics:* Alone, Demons, Ministry, Prayer, Preparation, Purpose, Sacrifice, Solitude

## Open It

- \* 1. What do you like or dislike about being alone?
- 2. What does our society think of loners?
- 3. What is most difficult to you about praying?

## Explore It

- 4. What did Jesus do? When? (1:35)
- 5. How did Jesus begin this particular day? (1:35)
- 6. When did Jesus go out to pray? (1:35)
- \* 7. Where did Jesus go, and why did he go there? (1:35)
- 8. What did Jesus consider important? (1:35-39)
- 9. What did Simon and his companions do when Jesus went to pray alone? (1:36-37)
- \* 10. Why wasn't Jesus able to pray alone? (1:37)
- \* 11. What did Jesus plan to do after He was finished praying? (1:38)
- 12. What attitude did Jesus have toward the people who demanded his time? (1:38)
- 13. Which of Jesus' tasks did He consider most important: preaching, healing, or casting out demons? (1:38)
- 14. What motivated Jesus to go to the nearby village? (1:38)

## Get It

- 15. In light of this passage, how do you think Jesus knew His life purpose so clearly?
- 16. Why do you think Jesus had to spend so much time in prayer if He was the Son of God?
- \* 17. How should we follow Christ's example of praying?
- 18. What is the benefit of getting up before dawn to spend time with the Lord in prayer?
- \* 19. What area of need does Jesus' example of prayer reveal to you?
- 20. What should be your response to other believers who are committed to prayer?
- 21. How do you think you would have responded if you had been the one to find Jesus praying?
- 22. What can you learn about your own responsibility to serve from Jesus' attitude toward the people who demanded His time?
- 23. How can you order the parts of your life to reflect the priorities Jesus had?
- 24. What one area of your spiritual life do you think the Lord wants you to develop or concentrate on the most right now?
- 25. What role do you think solitude should have in the Christian life?

## Apply It

- 26. Following Jesus' example, what can you do this week to spend more quality time with the Lord in prayer?
- \* 27. When and where can you pray on a regular basis this week?
- 28. What can you do to increase your consistency in prayer over the next month?

## A Man With Leprosy - Mark 1:40-45

*Topics:* Compassion, Disobedience, Faith, Healing, Sacrifice, Sickness

### Open It

- \* 1. What childhood memories do you have of a peer being ridiculed or rejected?
- 2. Who are some of the “untouchables” in our society?
- 3. What are some illnesses that people often fear getting?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What do the man’s words to Jesus tell us about his attitude or spiritual condition? (1:40)
- 5. What evidence do we see that the sick man in this story was desperate? (1:40)
- \* 6. Why did Jesus heal the man who came to Him? (1:41)
- 7. How did Jesus heal the leper in this story? (1:41)
- 8. What do Jesus’ specific actions in this episode tell us about His character? (1:41)
- \* 9. What happened to the leper? (1:42)
- 10. What specific instructions did Jesus give to the leper after He had healed him? (1:44)
- 11. Why did Jesus want the leper to go to a priest? (1:44)
- 12. Why did Jesus urge the leper to tell no one he was cured? (1:45)
- 13. How did the leper respond to all that had happened to him? (1:45)
- 14. What was the result of the leper’s actions? (1:45)

### Get It

- \* 15. Who are the outcasts or untouchables in today’s world?
- \* 16. In what ways can Christians serve or help people who have great need?
- 17. When has the Lord ever healed you either physically or emotionally?
- 18. How have you responded to the Lord’s healing in your life?
- 19. How would you react if you saw another person miraculously healed by the Lord?
- 20. Looking at the leper’s example, what attitude do you think is crucial to receive healing from the Lord?
- 21. Why do you think God sometimes heals people miraculously yet at other times chooses not to?
- 22. What does this passage tell you about Christ and His attitude toward our pain and suffering?
- 23. When have you ever done the opposite of what you knew Jesus would have wanted you to do?
- 24. How can disobedience cost us?
- 25. What is one area of your life in which you need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing from God?

### Apply It

- \* 26. To what person in your church or community could you reach out this week? How?
- 27. What concrete action can you take this week to trust Jesus with your areas of need?

## Jesus Heals a Paralytic - Mark 2:1-12

*Topics:* Authority, Blasphemy, Faith, Forgiveness, Friendship, God, Healing, Miracles, Sickness, Sin

### Open It

1. What would you think of a person who claimed to be something he or she was not?
- \* 2. What do you think would be most difficult about being paralyzed?

### Explore It

3. Where did the events of this story take place? (2:1-2)
4. What exactly was Jesus doing when the events of this story took place? (2:2)
- \* 5. What dilemma did the paralytic man and his friends face? (2:2-4)
6. What do the details of the story tell you about the paralytic man, his friends, and Jesus' reputation? (2:3-4)
7. How did the paralytic man's friends solve the dilemma that they faced? (2:4)
8. How did the paralytic man's friends get Jesus' attention? (2:4-5)
9. How did Jesus evaluate the faith of the paralytic man and his friends? (2:5)
- \* 10. What motivated Jesus to respond to the paralytic man's plight? (2:5)
11. Why did the Pharisees accuse Jesus of blasphemy? (2:6-7)
12. How did Jesus respond to the thoughts of the Pharisees? (2:8-9)
13. How did Jesus show that He had authority to forgive sins? (2:9)
14. What did Jesus mean by "Son of Man"? (2:10)
- \* 15. Why did Jesus heal the paralytic man? (2:10-12)
16. Until now, Jesus had been preaching but not performing miracles; why did He heal this particular man? (2:10-12)

### Get It

17. Why do you think Jesus chose to forgive the man's sins before healing him physically?
18. Which is it easier for us to do—forgive others or care for them when they're sick?
19. How is God's viewpoint different from ours regarding the forgiveness of sins?
- \* 20. What connection is there between a person's faith and God's working in his or her life?
21. What does God require or not require to forgive us of our sins?
22. How would you compare Jesus' response in this story to the Pharisees' attitudes?
23. What does this story tell you is the difference between true spirituality and counterfeit spirituality?
24. What is one paralysis in your life from which you want Jesus to release you?
- \* 25. What problems, needs, or weaknesses in your life are there that God can use?

### Apply It

- \* 26. What specific steps can you take this week to show faith in Christ?
27. What broken area of your life will you ask God to heal?
28. Following the example of the paralytic man's friends, how could you go out of your way to help another believer who is experiencing pain or suffering?

## The Calling of Levi - Mark 2:13-17

*Topics:* Call, Evangelism, Follow, Judging Others, Legalism, Ministry

### Open It

- \* 1. What feelings or attitudes do most people have about the Internal Revenue Service?
- 2. When do you remember playing “follow the leader” as a kid?
- 3. Who are some controversial leaders that you know of? Why are they controversial?

### Explore It

- 4. In what setting did the events of this story take place? (2:13)
- \* 5. What was Levi’s status among his neighbors? (2:14)
- 6. What did Jesus want when He spoke to Levi? (2:14)
- 7. What was Levi’s response to Jesus’ words? (2:14)
- 8. What did Levi stand to lose by leaving his work to follow Jesus? (2:14)
- \* 9. Why is it significant that Jesus went to Levi’s house for dinner? (2:14-15)
- 10. Who were the other dinner guests at Levi’s house when Jesus had dinner with him? (2:15)
- 11. How did the Pharisees respond to Jesus’ actions? (2:16)
- 12. What was Jesus’ response to the Pharisees? (2:17)
- \* 13. What was it about Jesus’ life-style and attitude that made the Pharisees so uncomfortable? (2:15-17)

### Get It

- \* 14. Why do you think Jesus chose to ask Levi to be one of His followers?
- 15. Who would be the equivalent of a tax collector in our society?
- 16. What do you think Jesus’ disciples thought when He went to Levi’s house?
- 17. What do you think bystanders and other strangers thought of Jesus at this point?
- 18. Why do you think that people of ill repute were so attracted to Jesus?
- 19. How do churches tend to treat people like tax collectors?
- 20. Judging from this passage, how does God want to relate to us?
- 21. How should we view ourselves if we decide to respond to Christ’s call?
- \* 22. How should we treat the outcasts of our society?
- 23. How do you personally need to respond to Jesus’ call on your life?
- 24. What can you learn from Levi’s example in this story?
- 25. What does this passage teach you about the best way to tell others about Christ?
- 26. When have you ever acted the same way that the Pharisees did in this story?
- 27. How can you follow Jesus’ example of associating with people of low reputation?

### Apply It

- \* 28. In what specific way can you honor or recognize a person of “lower status” this week?
- 29. What can you do to listen to Christ as He calls you?

## Jesus Questioned About Fasting - Mark 2:18-22

*Topics:* Celebration, Fasting, Legalism, Obedience, Questions, Spiritual Disciplines

### Open It

1. What do you like most and least about weddings?
- \* 2. What is the longest amount of time you ever went without food? When?
3. If Jesus came to evaluate your church, how do you think He might want to change it?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What dilemma puzzled the people who came to Jesus? (2:18)
5. Why did the people come to Jesus? (2:18)
6. What did John's disciples and the Pharisees have in common? (2:18)
7. Looking at Jesus and the Pharisees in this story, how were their attitudes different? (2:18-22)
8. How did Jesus respond to the question that was put to Him? (2:19)
9. To whom was Jesus referring when He spoke of the "guests" and the "bridegroom"? (2:19)
10. Why did Jesus suddenly start speaking about a wedding feast? (2:19-20)
- \* 11. How did Jesus' story of the wedding feast answer the people's question about why His disciples did not fast? (2:19-20)
- \* 12. Why did Jesus tell two short stories? (2:21-22)
13. What do the old garment and the old wineskins stand for? (2:21-22)
14. What do the patch of the unshrunk cloth and the new wine stand for? (2:21-22)
15. What are "new wineskins," and why are they needed? (2:22)

### Get It

- \* 16. How were Jesus' and the Pharisees' views of piety different?
17. Why do you think Jesus used a wedding feast to illustrate following Him?
18. What new insights into what it means to be a Christian does this story give you?
19. What does this passage teach you about the role fasting should play in your own spiritual life?
- \* 20. How do you need to change your attitudes or actions regarding the spiritual disciplines such as fasting and praying?
21. When has your attitude ever been similar to that of the Pharisees in this story?
22. How can we guard against mere rule-keeping when it comes to spiritual disciplines such as fasting?
23. What difference could the message of this passage make in the procedures and beliefs of your local church?

### Apply It

- \* 24. What steps can you take this week to practice a spiritual discipline (fasting, prayer, Bible study, meditation, solitude, simplicity, etc.)?
25. Where and how could you learn more about fasting and prayer over the next few weeks?

## Lord of the Sabbath - Mark 2:23-3:6

*Topics:* Healing, Hypocrisy, Judging Others, Law, Legalism, Obedience, Rest

### Open It

- \* 1. How do you prefer to use your weekends?
- 2. What do you understand to be the difference between “the letter of the law” and “the spirit of the law”?

### Explore It

- 3. What is the setting of the story, and why is it significant? (2:23)
- \* 4. What did the disciples do that outraged the Pharisees? (2:24)
- 5. Why did the Pharisees confront Jesus about the actions of His disciples? (2:24)
- \* 6. What was Jesus’ response to the Pharisees’ charges? (2:25-27)
- \* 7. According to Jesus, why were the disciples of both David and Jesus justified in breaking the Sabbath? (2:25-27)
- 8. Why did Jesus say He was “Lord even of the Sabbath”? (2:28)
- 9. What happened after the confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees? (3:1)
- 10. Why were some of the Pharisees watching Jesus so closely? (3:2)
- 11. What was notable about the way Jesus performed this miracle? (3:3)
- 12. To whom did Jesus address a provocative question about “the Sabbath”? (3:4)
- 13. What was it about the Pharisees that so distressed Jesus? (3:5)
- 14. What significance do you see in the fact that the Pharisees were willing to plot with their enemies, the Herodians, to kill Jesus? (3:6)
- 15. What do Jesus’ actions in this story tell you about His concerns? (2:23-3:6)

### Get It

- 16. Why do you think Jesus healed the man publicly?
- 17. How was Jesus’ spirituality different from that of the Pharisees?
- 18. Where have you seen rules-only spirituality in the church today?
- 19. In what areas do you think your church might be following the “letter of the law” rather than the “spirit of the law”?
- 20. How should we respond to suggestions that it only matters how closely we keep the letter of the law?
- \* 21. When have you ever experienced a time when the requirements of your Christian faith seemed to conflict with a human need?
- \* 22. What should we do when a requirement of the faith seems to conflict with a human need?
- 23. In what areas of your faith do you tend to be too beholden to rules or traditions?
- 24. What are your responsibilities on the Sabbath?
- 25. What is Jesus’ attitude toward the Sabbath?
- 26. In what ways can we copy Jesus’ example in how He used the Sabbath?
- 27. What difference does it make that “the Sabbath was made for man”?

### Apply It

- \* 28. In what settings are you able to “do good and save life”? How?
- 29. What can you do this week to reflect God’s design for the Sabbath?
- 30. What can you use as a reminder to guard against a concern only for the letter of the law?

## Crowds Follow Jesus - Mark 3:7-12

*Topics:* Demons, Follow, God, Healing, Ministry, Miracles, Sickness

### Open It

1. What is a story of miraculous healing that you have heard?
- \* 2. What is it like to be lost in a huge crowd (such as in a store, airport, or stadium)?
3. How is it possible to feel lost or lonely in a massive crowd of people?

### Explore It

4. What is the setting of this story? (3:7)
- \* 5. Why did Jesus want to leave? (3:7)
6. Why did such large crowds follow Jesus? (3:7-8)
7. Where did the crowds come from? (3:7-8)
8. What was unusual about the crowds that came to see Jesus? (3:7-8)
- \* 9. Why were the crowds so interested in following Jesus? (3:7-12)
10. What do the details of this story tell us about Jesus' popularity? (3:7-12)
- \* 11. What do the details of this story tell us about Jesus' priorities? (3:7-12)
12. What did Jesus tell His disciples to get? Why? (3:9)
13. What had been happening among the crowd that day? (3:10)
14. How were the crowds approaching Jesus with their needs? (3:10)
15. How did the evil spirits respond to Jesus when they saw Him? Why? (3:11)
16. What warning did Jesus issue? (3:12)

### Get It

17. For what reasons do you follow Jesus?
18. How can you personally be involved in letting other people know what it is like to follow Jesus?
19. What do you learn from this passage about Jesus' attitude toward His ministry?
- \* 20. What area of your life (physical, emotional, or spiritual) needs to be healed by Jesus?
21. What difference should it make in our lives that even evil spirits fall down and recognize Jesus for who He really is?
22. What can we learn from this passage about resisting the devil?
- \* 23. How would it make a difference in your spiritual life if you had more confidence in Christ's power and authority?
24. How can we show confidence in Christ's power and authority?
25. What attitude or tendency hinders you from following Jesus?

### Apply It

26. What physical, emotional, or other hurt will you ask God to heal?
- \* 27. What need can you bring to Jesus? How could you do so?
28. What concrete action can you take this week in imitation of Jesus' priority of helping people?

## The Appointing of the Twelve Apostles - Mark 3:13-19

*Topics:* Authority, Call, Choices, Demons, Evangelism, Follow, Leadership, Ministry, Teamwork, Witnessing

### Open It

- \* 1. By what criteria do you choose your friends?
- 2. What qualities do you think are important in a friend?
- 3. What qualities do you think are important for a person who is a leader in the church?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What is the setting of this story? (3:13)
- 5. How did the apostles respond to Jesus' call? (3:13)
- 6. Why did Jesus choose His disciples? (3:14)
- 7. What did Jesus want His apostles to do with their time? (3:14-15)
- \* 8. What did Jesus expect of the men He designated apostles? (3:14-15)
- 9. Who would send out the apostles and give them authority to drive out demons? (3:14-15)
- 10. What sort of declaration was Jesus making to His enemies by choosing and commissioning the Twelve? (3:14-15)
- 11. What did Jesus do with some of His followers and not others? (3:16-19)
- 12. What unusual men did Jesus choose? (3:16-19)
- \* 13. What was unusual about some of the men Jesus chose? (3:16-19)

### Get It

- 14. What criteria do you think Jesus used to choose His apostles?
- 15. Why do you think Jesus wanted the apostles to spend time with Him?
- 16. What can we learn from Jesus' example of choosing apostles to be with Him and to help Him?
- 17. What does the fact that Jesus chose as apostles both Simon the Zealot, a political extremist, and Matthew the tax collector, a traitor working for the occupying government, tell us about the kingdom of God?
- 18. How has the call of Jesus Christ in your life changed your attitude toward people with whom you previously would not have associated?
- 19. Why do you think Jesus assigned new names to some of the apostles and not to all of them?
- 20. What do you think the men themselves thought about their opportunity to be one of Christ's disciples?
- 21. What attitudes or actions do you feel still need to be changed in your life to more fully obey Christ's call to follow Him?
- \* 22. What difference does it make to you that Jesus chose imperfect people to share in His ministry?
- 23. What specific role do you think God has given you to fill in this world?
- 24. How can we determine how best to serve God with our particular gifts and abilities?
- 25. What do you think the leadership of your church could learn from the way Jesus chose His twelve followers?
- 26. How can you personally become more involved in teaching and helping others serve Jesus?
- \* 27. From what other more mature believers can you learn?

### Apply It

- \* 28. What would be your first step toward learning from a more mature believer in your church?
- 29. In what ways can you depend on others to carry the weight of God's work at this time in your life?
- 30. What specific steps can you take this week to help one other person use in God's service a skill that God has given him or her?





## Jesus and Beelzebub - Mark 3:20-30

*Topics:* Blasphemy, Church, Demons, Divisions, Forgiveness, Holy Spirit, Sacrifice, Satan, Sin, Unity

### Open It

- \* 1. In your experience, when has faithfulness to a cause or person led to conflict with others?
- 2. In what situations or settings can unity be important?

### Explore It

- 3. What was the problem at the onset of this story? (3:20)
- 4. Who tried to solve Jesus' dilemma? Why? (3:21)
- \* 5. What did Jesus' family think of Him? (3:21)
- 6. Where had Jesus' detractors come from? (3:21-22)
- \* 7. Besides Jesus' own family, who else found fault with Him? (3:22)
- 8. How did the teachers of the law try to explain Jesus' behavior? (3:22)
- \* 9. How did Jesus refute His opponents' accusation that He was possessed by the devil? (3:23-27)
- 10. What does Jesus' speech about a "kingdom divided" tell us about the kingdom of God? (3:24-26)
- 11. Who was the "strong man" of whom Jesus spoke? (3:27)
- 12. Who was the "robber"? (3:27)
- 13. What was the "blasphemy of the Holy Spirit" of which Jesus spoke? (3:29-30)
- 14. Why is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit uniquely worthy of divine judgment? (3:29-30)

### Get It

- 15. Why do you think Jesus' family thought He was "out of his mind"?
- 16. In light of this passage, what do we fight against?
- 17. Why do you think Jesus chose to speak to His audience in parables?
- 18. What difference does it make in your life to know that Jesus has authority over all the evil powers of this world?
- 19. What is the true significance of Jesus' ministry of casting out demons?
- \* 20. Why is unity among Christians so important?
- 21. In what ways can we strengthen the unity of the church?
- \* 22. In what ways can you strengthen your local fellowship or church?
- 23. What can a believer do to guard against disunity in the church?
- 24. What can we do to avoid committing the "unforgivable sin"?
- 25. When, if ever, have you been thought of as "out of your mind" by other people because of your efforts to live a Christian life?
- 26. How should Christians respond to conflict with other people, both non-Christians and believers, in light of Jesus' example?
- 27. What has following Jesus cost you?

### Apply It

- 28. What can you do over the next few days to restore a relationship that strains your unity with other Christians?
- \* 29. What is one step you can take this week to strengthen the unity of your local church?

## Jesus' Mother and Brothers - Mark 3:31-35

*Topics:* Family, God's Will, Loyalty, Obedience, Parents, Relationships, Sacrifice

### Open It

- \* 1. What is one of your favorite childhood memories of your mother?
- 2. With whom do you feel a kindred spirit? Why?
- 3. What did you and your siblings fight about when you were in elementary school?

### Explore It

- 4. What was the setting of this story? (3:31-32)
- \* 5. Who wanted to see Jesus? Why? (3:31-32)
- 6. Why did Jesus' mother and brothers go to a particular house? (3:31-32)
- 7. How did Jesus' family summon Him? (3:31-32)
- 8. Who told Jesus of His family's request? (3:32)
- \* 9. What rhetorical question did Jesus ask? Why? (3:33)
- \* 10. How did Jesus respond to the request by His mother and brothers? (3:33-34)
- 11. Whom did Jesus designate as His "family"? (3:34)
- 12. What unique name is given to "whoever does God's will"? (3:35)
- 13. When did Jesus' mother and brothers get to see Him? (3:33-35)

### Get It

- 14. How do you think Jesus' mother and brothers responded to His actions in this story?
- 15. What feelings do you think Jesus had toward His family?
- 16. How do you interpret Jesus' actions toward His family?
- 17. What does this account tell you about Jesus' priorities?
- \* 18. In what way does doing God's will make a person Christ's brother or sister?
- 19. How has your commitment to Christ affected your relationship with your family?
- \* 20. Why is it important for us to place even our families under the rule and place of Christ?
- 21. In light of this passage, how should Christians relate to one another?
- 22. How should you relate to members of your family who are not Christians?
- 23. When has your commitment to Christ caused conflict in your family?
- 24. How do you think God wants you to respond to conflict situations in your family?
- 25. How can a person be sure to be included in the family of God?
- 26. What do Jesus' actions in this episode tell you about what your priorities in life should be?

### Apply It

- \* 27. What could you do or say to help your family understand your faith in Christ?
- 28. In what areas of your work should your behavior reflect a greater kinship with Christ? How?
- 29. What can you do each day to cultivate a kindred spirit with Christ?

## The Parable of the Sower - Mark 4:1-20

*Topics:* Desires, Gospel, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Perseverance, Spiritual Growth, Teaching, Wealth, Witnessing, Worry

### Open It

1. What illustration would you use to explain your job?
2. What three words would you use to describe your spiritual life?
- \* 3. What do you do to keep your house plants alive?

### Explore It

4. Where does this story take place? (4:1)
5. How did Jesus start to teach the crowds? (4:2)
6. When did Jesus use parables instead of saying directly what He meant? (4:2)
- \* 7. What are the four scenes described in this parable? (4:3-10)
8. How did those closest to Jesus respond to the parable He told? (4:10)
9. In what way did Jesus limit His explanation of the parable? (4:11-12)
10. What problem did this exchange bring up? (4:13)
- \* 11. To what was Jesus referring when He said, "The farmer sows the word"? (4:14)
12. What did Jesus want us to understand about God from this parable? (4:14-20)
- \* 13. What are some obstacles that prevent people from accepting the gospel or hanging on to their faith? (4:15-19)
14. What happens to those who hear the truth about Christ and accept it? (4:20)

### Get It

15. Why do you think Jesus considered Isaiah's words relevant to His preaching about the kingdom of God?
16. Knowing that most of the men in the crowd were farmers and Jesus used an illustration from farming, why did many in the audience not understand His message?
17. Why do you think Jesus explained the "secret" only to his disciples and not to the crowds in general?
18. When and where do we need to listen carefully?
19. To what area of your life does this parable speak?
20. What kind of soil do you think represents you?
21. How will you respond to the coming of the kingdom of God?
22. What can you do—and not do—to make the message "take root" when you teach or tell others about Christ?
23. How does Satan "take away the word" before it has a chance to take root?
- \* 24. What troubles or persecutions cause believers to fall away?
25. What do you think your church can do to help people be better hearers?
26. What can we do to make sure the messages of God's Word take root and grow in us?
- \* 27. How can you make sure that the worries of life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the other desires of the world will not choke the life out of your Christian walk?
28. What is the first step in obeying what we already know to be God's will?
29. What can you do to increase your fruit as a Christian?

### Apply It

30. What is one step you can take to guard against the desires of the world that threaten your devotion to Christ?
- \* 31. In what area of your life do you need to start listening to God?
32. What is one biblical truth that you want to cultivate in your life each day this week?



## A Lamp on a Stand - Mark 4:21-25

*Topics:* Accountability, Fairness, Listening, Obedience, Responsibility, Truth

### Open It

1. What kinds of lights do you have in your home?
- \* 2. What is one thing you feel you can do well?
3. How do most of your coworkers measure wealth?

### Explore It

4. With what observation did Jesus open His illustration? (4:21)
5. What did Jesus say would be ridiculous? Why? (4:21)
6. Whom or what does the lamp in this parable represent? (4:21)
7. What did Jesus mean by saying, “whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed”? (4:22)
8. What will happen to what is secret and hidden? (4:22)
9. Who did Jesus want this message to reach? (4:23)
- \* 10. Why did Jesus warn us to “consider carefully” what we hear? (4:24)
11. How did Jesus end His parable? (4:24-25)
12. Who will be given more? Why? (4:24-25)
13. Who will have things taken from them? Why? (4:24-25)
- \* 14. What will happen to those who use or put into practice what God has measured out to them? (4:24-25)
- \* 15. What will happen to those who neglect or misuse the truth God has already revealed to them? (4:24-25)

### Get It

16. What is the meaning of this parable?
17. When have you ever tried to hide or conceal what you know God “meant to be brought out into the open”?
18. When Jesus said that those who have been given more, what exactly did He mean?
19. How would you rewrite this parable to fit our modern-day culture, yet get the same message across?
20. How do you think the people listening to Jesus’ teaching responded to this parable?
21. How can we consider more carefully what we hear?
22. How would you describe the “measure” that has been given to you?
- \* 23. What responsibility do you have before God in light of the truth or knowledge God has already revealed to you?
- \* 24. In what ways do you think God expects more or less of you than others?
25. In light of this passage, how can Christians expect to grow spiritually?
26. Why do you think some believers remain immature Christians for a long time?
27. What does this passage teach us about being examples?
28. What does this passage teach us about telling others about Christ?

### Apply It

- \* 29. What is one specific word of Jesus (a promise, truth, or command) that you can consciously remind yourself of throughout this next week?
30. What is involved in fulfilling the areas of responsibility you have?

# The Parable of the Growing Seed - Mark 4:26-29

*Topics:* Gospel, Growth, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Power, Productivity

## Open It

1. What short phrase or cliché would you use to describe this country?
2. What experiences have you had with growing plants from seeds?
- \* 3. What does it take for plants to grow, and where do you get the things you need?

## Explore It

4. What did Jesus want the people to understand about the kingdom of God? (4:26)
5. What role did the man in the parable play? (4:26-27)
- \* 6. What do the man and the seed in the parable represent? (4:26-29)
7. What does this parable reveal about Jesus' concerns? (4:26-29)
8. How did the seed in the parable sprout and grow? (4:27)
9. What was the growth process like for the seed? (4:28)
10. How did the seed grow? (4:28)
- \* 11. How did the man get the seed to grow? (4:28)
12. At what point did the man get involved in the plant's growth after he planted it? (4:29)
- \* 13. To what does the phrase "the harvest is come" refer? (4:29)

## Get It

14. Why do you think Jesus told parables to explain the kingdom of God to the crowds of people?
15. The Jews of Jesus' day expected God's kingdom to come physically and politically. How does this compare with the description Jesus gave in this parable?
16. What encouragement can believers glean from this parable regarding their own spiritual growth?
- \* 17. How does this parable help you better understand what the kingdom of God is like?
18. How does it make you feel to know that the message of Christ contains a mysterious power in itself?
- \* 19. How does the message of this parable help believers evangelize and teach?
20. What should our response be to the fact that one day "the harvest will come"?
21. What have you learned about your own spiritual walk with the Lord from this parable?
22. What can you do in your life, and in the lives of others, to create conditions where the Word of God will grow?

## Apply It

- \* 23. What specific steps can you take to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to change others when you tell them about Christ?
24. What is one way you can spread God's Word this week to help God's kingdom grow?

# The Parable of the Mustard Seed - Mark 4:30-34

*Topics:* Example, Greatness, Growth, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Productivity, Teaching, Understanding

## Open It

1. If Jesus Christ had been sent to earth during our generation, how do you think He would have chosen to tell us His message?
- \* 2. What are some examples of something small that grows into something big?

## Explore It

3. What did Jesus use to explain the kingdom of God? (4:30)
4. In what ways is this parable different from the previous one Jesus told? (4:30-31)
- \* 5. How is the kingdom of God like a mustard seed? (4:32)
6. What is the kingdom of God like? (4:31)
7. What does the mustard seed represent in this parable? (4:31)
8. What do you think this parable meant to Jesus' original audience? (4:31)
9. How could the beginning of the kingdom of God be compared to such a small, insignificant seed? (4:31)
- \* 10. What promise is given in this parable? (4:31-32)
- \* 11. Why did Jesus use the smallest seed known to the Galilean farmers in His audience as the example in this parable? (4:31-32)
12. How did Jesus teach the crowds? (4:33-34)
13. How did Jesus teach His disciples? (4:33-34)
14. How did Jesus' approach to teaching the crowds differ from the way He taught His disciples? (4:33-34)
15. What did Jesus do for His disciples to ensure that they learned from His parables? (4:34)
16. How did Jesus make sure His disciples understood His teaching? (4:34)

## Get It

17. How might this parable have encouraged Christians being persecuted by the Roman state?
18. Why do you think Jesus spoke only in parables to the crowds at this point in His ministry?
- \* 19. What does this parable tell us about trying to persuade others to believe in Christ?
20. How can you apply the principle of this parable to your situation in life right now?
21. In what ways does this parable encourage you to persist in your faith?
22. Why do you think God chose to introduce His kingdom through a controversial man with a handful of obscure followers?
23. To what extent do you think you should model your style of evangelism after Jesus' example?
- \* 24. What does this parable teach you about sharing the message of Christ with your non-Christian friends?
25. What difference can it make in your everyday life that Jesus' kingdom will prevail over the sin and corruption of this world?

## Apply It

- \* 26. How can you get involved this week in spreading the Good News and participating in the growth of the kingdom of God?
27. What word or message from the Bible can you share with someone else? How?
28. Who is one person with whom you could share the promise of the kingdom of God?



## Jesus Calms the Storm - Mark 4:35-41

*Topics:* Doubt, Faith, Fear, Miracles, Nature, Obedience, Power, Trust

### Open It

1. What do you usually feel like doing after a long, hard day of work?
2. When was the last time you felt out of control?
- \* 3. How do you tend to handle stress—thrive, panic, seek out distractions, procrastinate, etc.?

### Explore It

4. When did the events of this story take place? (4:35)
- \* 5. Where did Jesus and His disciples go? How? (4:35-36)
6. Why did the disciples take Jesus along “just as He was”? (4:36)
7. What emergency situation arose? (4:37)
- \* 8. Why were the disciples surprised with Jesus? (4:37-38)
9. What was Jesus doing during a violent storm? (4:38)
10. How was Jesus coping with the storm that threatened Him and His men? (4:38)
11. What is significant about the disciples’ questioning Jesus by asking, “Don’t you care if we drown?” (4:38)
12. How would you compare Jesus’ behavior during this crisis with that of His disciples? (4:38)
13. How did Jesus solve the dilemma He and His disciples were facing? (4:39)
- \* 14. Why did Jesus rebuke His disciples? (4:40)
15. What was the answer to the rhetorical question that the disciples asked? (4:41)
16. What did the disciples learn about Jesus from this event? (4:39-41)

### Get It

17. How do you think Jesus felt after long days of teaching the people, responding to His opponents, and healing the sick?
18. Where do you think Jesus found the strength to maintain such an exhausting level of ministry?
19. When have you ever felt as the disciples did—distressed at events out of control?
20. What have been some of the “storms” in your personal life?
- \* 21. What “storms” or difficulties are you going through right now?
22. How has God helped you handle your fears and frustrations during difficult times?
23. In what specific ways has God shown His care and love for you?
24. What difference does it make to you that Jesus has authority over all the powers and forces of our world?
25. In what area of your life is your faith lacking?
- \* 26. How can you trust more completely in the power and authority of Jesus?
27. What miraculous work would you like Jesus to do in your life? How could you ask Him?
28. In what specific area of your life do you need more faith in God?

### Apply It

- \* 29. How can you trust God this upcoming week with situations that get out of control or seem hopeless?
30. What do you want to remember the next time your life seems out of control?
31. When could you pray regularly this week for the needs in your life?

# The Healing of a Demon-possessed Man - Mark 5:1-20

*Topics:* Demons, Doubt, Fear, Healing, Miracles, Power, Witnessing

## Open It

1. When was the last time you had such wonderful news that you could not wait to tell someone about it?
2. What do people today think of the devil and demons?
- \* 3. What makes people resistant to talking about God or religion?

## Explore It

4. Where did the events of this story take place? (5:1)
5. To what Gentile (non-Jewish) area did Jesus and His disciples go? How? (5:1)
6. Who went out to meet Jesus? (5:2)
7. What was the man's life like before he met Jesus? (5:3-5)
8. How had the townspeople coped with the demon-possessed man Jesus met? (5:4)
- \* 9. Why was the man Jesus met chained up? (5:4-5)
10. How did the demon-possessed man react to Jesus? (5:6-7)
11. Why were the demons so terrified of Jesus? (5:7)
12. How did Jesus treat the man He met? (5:8-20)
- \* 13. What did Jesus do to help the demon-possessed man? (5:8-20)
14. What do Jesus' actions tell us about His character? (5:8-20)
15. What did the demons beg of Jesus? (5:10)
16. What happened when the demons asked to go into the pigs? (5:11-13)
17. How did news of this event spread? (5:14-16)
18. What was the man's life like after Jesus ordered the demons out of him? (5:15-20)
19. What did the Gerasene people think of Jesus' gracious action on the man's behalf? (5:17)
20. Where did the man whom Jesus had helped want to go? (5:18)
- \* 21. What request did Jesus deny? Why? (5:18-19)
22. How did the man respond to Jesus' instructions? (5:19-20)

## Get It

23. The Gerasene people opposed Jesus even though He helped them; why do people sometimes oppose Christians today?
24. What are some ways that Satan tries to keep Christians from sharing the message of Christ with others?
25. Over what areas of our lives does Jesus have power and authority?
26. What are some concrete ways we can turn over control of our lives to Christ?
27. What does God want to deliver us from?
28. If you had been in the same situation as the Gerasene people, how would you have reacted to Jesus' healing of the demon-possessed man?
- \* 29. When and where do you tend to receive opposition to talking about God or religion?
- \* 30. What can we do to overcome resistance to the message of Christ?
31. What sometimes causes us to oppose what God wants?
32. What does Jesus' treatment of the man in this story tell us about his care for people?
33. How does the man's actions after Jesus delivered him from demon-possession serve as an example to us?
34. When has the Lord delivered you from a sickness or difficulty in your life? How did you react?
35. How can we show gratitude to God for what He has given us?
36. With whom do you think you should share the good news of Jesus?

## **Apply It**

- \* 37. What can you do this week to bring the message of Christ to a friend or coworker?
- 38. What is one area of your life that you can ask God to heal?
- 39. How can you say thank you to God for the way He has worked in your life?

## A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman - Mark 5:21-43

**Topics:** Believe, Death, Faith, Fear, Healing, Miracles, Sickness, Suffering

### Open It

- \* 1. How did your mother take care of you when you were sick?
- 2. When has the Lord ever healed you or someone you knew?
- 3. What are some common fears people have?

### Explore It

- \* 4. Who was Jairus, and why did he want to see Jesus? (5:22-23)
- 5. Who wanted to see Jesus? Why? (5:22-23)
- 6. What was Jairus' attitude toward Jesus? (5:23)
- 7. How would you compare the faith of Jairus with the faith of the woman in the story? (5:23, 28)
- 8. What did Jesus do for Jairus? (5:24)
- 9. What was the plight of the woman in this story? (5:25-26)
- 10. How was the bleeding woman healed? (5:25-29)
- 11. Why did the woman touch Jesus' clothing? (5:27-28)
- 12. What happened when the woman touched Jesus' cloak? (5:29)
- 13. What was Jesus' immediate response to the woman's action? (5:30-32)
- 14. Why did Jesus suddenly stop walking? (5:30-32)
- 15. Why could the disciples not understand Jesus' action? (5:31)
- 16. Why did the woman fall down? (5:33)
- 17. Of what was the woman afraid? (5:33)
- 18. How did Jesus' reply give the woman comfort and reassurance? (5:34)
- 19. What happened while Jesus was still speaking to the woman? (5:35)
- \* 20. Whom did Jesus tell not to be afraid and to "just believe"? Why? (5:35-36)
- 21. Who were the only people who went with Jesus to Jairus' home? Why? (5:37-38)
- 22. What did Jesus mean when He said, "The child is not dead but asleep"? (5:39)
- 23. How did people react when Jesus expressed confidence that the dead girl would be all right? (5:40)
- \* 24. Who witnessed the girl being raised from the dead by Jesus? (5:40-42)
- 25. What were Jesus' final instructions? (5:43)

### Get It

- 26. What connection is there between a person's faith and whether God heals him or her of a sickness?
- 27. How does Jesus' treatment of the sick woman and Jairus offer comfort to us today?
- 28. Why do you think the bleeding woman was afraid to admit she was the one who had touched Jesus?
- 29. When have you ever felt afraid of God, like the woman who touched Jesus?
- 30. In what way is it good for a person to be afraid of God?
- 31. In what way do we need to feel that God is approachable?
- \* 32. In what situations do you need God's help?
- 33. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' character?
- 34. In what situation in your life do you need to heed Jesus' words, "Don't be afraid, just believe"?
- 35. Why do you think Jesus urged people not to spread the news of the girl's healing?
- 36. How do you hope God will work in the situations that cause you fear?
- \* 37. What attitude or action do you need to change in your own life in light of the fact that Jesus is willing to respond miraculously to our needs?

## **Apply It**

38. What is one fear that you can ask the Lord to help you face this week?
- \* 39. With what concrete action can you show your faith in the Lord this week?

## A Prophet Without Honor - Mark 6:1-6

*Topics:* Doubt, Faith, Family, Home, Honor, Miracles, Rejection, Unbelievers

### Open It

1. Do you think it's easier to talk about your faith with a stranger, a family member, or a close friend? Why?
2. What does the cliché "Familiarity breeds contempt" mean?
- \* 3. What is one piece of advice your parents gave you that you ignored growing up?

### Explore It

4. Who went to his hometown? With whom? (6:1)
5. What did Jesus do when He returned to His hometown? (6:2)
6. Why were the people of Nazareth amazed by Jesus? (6:2)
- \* 7. Why did the people of Nazareth react negatively to Jesus' visit? (6:2-3)
8. Why did the people of Nazareth talk among themselves about Jesus' family background? (6:3)
- \* 9. What did Jesus say to the people who scoffed at Him? (6:4)
10. What did Jesus do in Nazareth? (6:5)
- \* 11. What prevented Jesus from doing more than a few miracles in Nazareth? (6:5-6)
12. At what was Jesus amazed? Why? (6:6)
13. How did the response to Jesus in Nazareth compare to the response in the other regions Jesus had visited? (6:6)

### Get It

14. How have your family or close friends responded to your faith?
15. What does this story tell us is one cost of following Christ?
16. What can we learn from this story about the cost of following Christ?
17. What can we do to prevent ourselves from having the same lack of faith that the people in Nazareth had?
18. In what ways do you think we prevent Jesus from working miraculously in our own lives?
19. In what area of your life would you like the Lord to give you more faith?
20. How could your local church step out in faith, believing that the Lord rewards those who trust Him?
- \* 21. What prevents us from listening to the people we know well?
- \* 22. How can we make ourselves more open to the insights of parents, siblings, or others who are close to us?

### Apply It

23. In what way could you share the message of Christ with a family member or friend this week?
24. With what specific step could you turn over one area of your life to the Lord as an act of faith in Him?
- \* 25. In what matter could you seek the counsel of a family member or close friend? When?

## Jesus Sends Out the Twelve - Mark 6:7-13

*Topics:* Authority, Demons, Faith, Healing, Ministry, Money, Repentance, Sacrifice, Teamwork

### Open It

- \* 1. In what ways have you ever had to depend on others for some of your needs?
- 2. What does society tell us about depending on others?
- 3. When have you been able to give support to another person who was having problems?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What task did Jesus give the disciples? (6:7)
- 5. What do Jesus' actions tell us about His attitude toward His men? (6:7)
- 6. How did Jesus send out the disciples? (6:7)
- \* 7. How did Jesus equip the disciples for their job? (6:7-11)
- 8. What specific instructions did Jesus give the Twelve? (6:8-11)
- \* 9. How did Jesus want His men to travel? (6:8-11)
- 10. Who was to provide the food and money for the disciples? (6:8)
- 11. What was the central focus of the mission of the Twelve? (6:7, 13)
- 12. What were the disciples to do if anyone would not welcome them? Why? (6:11)
- 13. What did Jesus mean by saying, ". . . as a testimony against them"? (6:11)
- 14. What does this episode tell us about why Jesus came to earth? (6:12-13)

### Get It

- 15. How do you think the disciples felt about Jesus sending them on their assigned task?
- 16. Why do you think Jesus told His men to pack lightly?
- 17. How can you know whether God is directing you to do a specific task?
- 18. How do you feel when you receive a challenging opportunity like the one Jesus gave the disciples?
- \* 19. How has God equipped you for serving Him?
- \* 20. How can you apply Jesus' advice to your Christian witness at work?
- 21. How should you react to people who do not respond to the message of Christ?
- 22. What does this passage teach about our responsibility to those who minister full-time?
- 23. In what ways have you fallen short of what Jesus teaches in this passage?
- 24. What can you do to ensure your life is reflecting the same message that Jesus taught when He was on the earth?
- 25. How can you equip yourself for Christian service?

### Apply It

- 26. What can you do this week to show support for someone who ministers full-time?
- \* 27. To whom can you take the message of Christ this week? How?

## John the Baptist Beheaded - Mark 6:14-29

*Topics:* Doubt, Holiness, Lust, Murder, Persecution, Power, Sacrifice, Sin

### Open It

- \* 1. Who do your friends and acquaintances think Jesus is?
- 2. What do most people believe about miracles and the supernatural?
- 3. In what sense do you think it is or is not harder to believe in miracles today than it was in New Testament times?

### Explore It

- 4. How did Herod hear about Jesus' miracles? (6:14)
- 5. What were people saying about Jesus? Why? (6:14-16)
- \* 6. What do Herod's actions throughout this episode say about the way sin operates in a person's life? (6:14-29)
- 7. What was it about Jesus that kept most people from believing that He was the Messiah? (6:14-16)
- 8. What did Herod think of Jesus? (6:16)
- \* 9. Why had Herod arrested and imprisoned John the Baptist? (6:17-18)
- 10. What had John told Herod that caused Herodias to hold a grudge against John? (6:18-19)
- 11. How was John's condemnation of Herod's adulterous marriage related to the central message of John's preaching? (6:18)
- 12. Why did Herod fear and protect John? (6:20)
- 13. What did Mark mean when he wrote, "Finally the opportune time came"? (6:21)
- \* 14. What happened at the party described in this passage? (6:21-28)
- 15. What caused Herod to offer Herodias's daughter almost anything she wanted? (6:22-23)
- 16. Why did Herod make a foolish promise? (6:22-23)
- 17. What resulted from Herod's foolish promise? (6:24-25)
- 18. How did Herod respond to the girl's request? (6:26-28)
- 19. What became of John? (6:29)

### Get It

- 20. What false ideas about Jesus do people entertain today?
- 21. How should we as Christians respond to others who malign the name of Christ?
- 22. When has it been difficult for you to confront someone about sin, as it was for John to confront Herod?
- 23. What responsibility do Christians have to confront non-believers with their sin and to tell them of the remedy that Christ offers?
- \* 24. What can we learn from Herod's negative example about preventing sin from "snowballing" or getting out of control?
- \* 25. How do you think Christians can keep one another accountable?
- 26. How can you guard against holding a grudge against another person?
- 27. Herod knew John to be a righteous and holy man; how do you think people view you?
- 28. How can we guard against making foolish promises?
- 29. What do you need to change in your life to have a stronger witness for Christ?

### Apply It

- 30. Whom do you need to confront sometime soon? How can you?
- \* 31. What concrete action can you take to prevent a certain area of sin in your personal life from controlling you? When?



## Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand - Mark 6:30-44

*Topics:* Compassion, Doubt, Faith, Miracles, Quiet, Rest, Teaching, Thankfulness

### Open It

1. What was a time when you had to do something that you thought was impossible? What happened?
- \* 2. What is your idea of a feast?

### Explore It

3. What did the apostles do upon returning from their trip? (6:30)
4. Why did Jesus want to go away with the disciples to a quiet place? (6:31-32)
5. What prevented Jesus and His disciples from getting some rest and relaxation? (6:33)
6. How did Jesus respond to the crowds of people waiting to see Him? (6:34)
7. What does Jesus' reaction to the crowds tell you about His character and mission? (6:34)
8. What problem did the disciples notice? (6:35-36)
- \* 9. What problem did the disciples bring to Jesus? Why? (6:35-36)
10. What solution did the disciples suggest to the problem they faced? (6:36)
- \* 11. What did Jesus think of the disciples' suggestion? (6:37)
- \* 12. What did the disciples think of Jesus' solution? (6:37)
13. What does the disciples' reaction to Jesus tell us about them? (6:37)
14. What unique plan did Jesus come up with? (6:38-41)
15. How much food did Jesus provide? (6:42-44)
16. What did Jesus' disciples do with the leftovers? (6:43)
17. How many people did this event directly affect? (6:44)

### Get It

- \* 18. What do you think Jesus wanted to teach His disciples through this miracle?
- \* 19. What do you think Jesus' disciples learned through this experience?
20. Why do you think Jesus provided much more than enough food for the people, then had the surplus carefully collected?
21. Why do you think God tells us to do things that seem to be impossible?
22. What do you think Jesus wants to teach you through this miracle?
23. When have you felt it necessary to take some time to be alone with the Lord?
24. When is it good to take time out to rest? Why?
25. What can we learn and apply to our own lives from Jesus' attitude toward helping people?
26. How can we expand our expectations of what God can do through us?
27. What is one "impossible situation" that you are now facing?
28. In what way can we show faith in God in the "impossible situations" of our everyday lives?
29. For what person in your life do you need to have compassion?
30. How do you think you should react when God tells you to do something that you are sure is beyond your ability?
31. What does this story teach us about being caretakers of what God has given us?
32. What is one possession or ability that you need to give to the Lord so that He can use it for His glory?
33. In what area of your life do you need to have more faith in God?

### Apply It

34. In what specific way can you show compassion to another person this next week?
35. How can you show your willingness to give what you have back to God?

\* 36. What can you do this week to increase your confidence in God?

# Jesus Walks on the Water - Mark 6:45-56

*Topics:* Courage, Faith, Fear, Healing, Miracles, Nature, Prayer, Sickness

## Open It

1. When is the last time you remember being in a terrible storm?
- \* 2. What is one lesson you had to learn the hard way?

## Explore It

3. When did Jesus make His disciples go on ahead of Him? (6:45)
4. How did Jesus and the disciples get separated? (6:45-47)
5. What did Jesus do while He was alone? (6:46)
6. What problem were the disciples having? (6:48)
7. How did Jesus respond to the disciples' needs? (6:48)
8. How did the disciples react when they saw Jesus walk on the water? (6:49)
- \* 9. When did the disciples cry out? Why? (6:49-50)
10. What difference did it make that the disciples' hearts were hardened? (6:49-52)
- \* 11. Why were the disciples "completely amazed"? (6:51-52)
12. What is significant about the wind dying down? (6:51)
- \* 13. What had the disciples failed to understand? (6:52)
14. Where did Jesus and His disciples finally land? (6:53)
15. What did Jesus do after He and the disciples had crossed over the lake? (6:54-56)
16. How did the crowds respond to Jesus when He came to their villages? (6:56)
17. What difference did it make that the crowds welcomed Jesus? (6:56)
18. What does the fact that "all who touched Jesus were healed" tell us about the people's attitude? (6:56)

## Get It

19. Why do you think Jesus, who was the Son of God, spent time in prayer?
20. Why do you think Jesus chose to walk on the water to get to the disciples' boat?
21. How do you think you would have reacted if you had been with the disciples that night?
- \* 22. What did the disciples have to learn the hard way?
23. When has God done something for you that was completely amazing to you? What was it?
24. How did you respond the last time you sensed God's work in your life?
25. Why do you think we are sometimes so surprised by God's goodness to us?
26. How can we follow Jesus' example of prayer?
27. How should you follow Jesus' example in this story of taking time out for prayer?
28. When have you been terrified, as the disciples were in this story?
29. How can Christ calm our fears or help us when we are afraid?
30. What difference does it make that Jesus has the power to control the forces of nature?
31. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
- \* 32. What does this story tell us about human nature?
33. What can we learn from Jesus' commitment to help people and teach them?
34. In light of this story, how can you increase your faith in Jesus?

## Apply It

35. How can you discipline yourself this week to spend time in undistracted prayer each day?
36. What specific fear or anxiety do you need to turn over to the Lord and entrust to Him?
- \* 37. How can you make yourself sensitive to the lessons God wants to teach you this week?

## Clean and Unclean - Mark 7:1-23

**Topics:** Attitude, Evil, Heart, Honor, Hypocrisy, Integrity, Parents, Rules, Teaching

### Open It

1. What are some of the traditions in your church?
2. When did you first learn to wash your hands before eating?
- \* 3. What are some of your favorite traditions?

### Explore It

4. Who was gathered around Jesus? (7:1)
5. What did the Pharisees and teachers of the law notice? (7:1-2)
6. How were the practices of Jesus' disciples different from those of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law? (7:2-4)
- \* 7. What were the Pharisees and teachers of the law concerned about? Why? (7:2-5)
8. Why were the Pharisees and teachers of the law concerned about what Jesus' disciples were doing? (7:3-4)
9. What did the Pharisees ask Jesus? (7:5)
10. How did Jesus avoid answering the Pharisees' question directly? (7:6)
- \* 11. What were the Pharisees doing wrong? (7:6-8)
12. Of what did Jesus accuse the Pharisees? (7:6-13)
13. How were the Pharisees being hypocritical in this instance? (7:9)
14. What example did Jesus give to prove His accusations against the Pharisees? (7:10-12)
15. How did Jesus use the Law of Moses? (7:10-19)
- \* 16. How did Jesus place tradition in proper perspective? (7:10-19)
17. How did the Pharisees' use of "unclean" differ from Jesus'? (7:14-23)
18. How did Jesus explain the parable to His disciples? (7:18-23)
19. What actually makes a person "unclean"? (7:20-23)

### Get It

- \* 20. What's wrong with "holding on to the traditions of men"?
- \* 21. What did Jesus want His audience to do?
22. In what ways are Christians today hypocritical?
23. What church traditions either can or do stand in the way of non-believers becoming interested in Christianity?
24. What traditions do you hold on to that can go against the commands of God?
25. What can we do to place traditions—especially religious traditions—in proper perspective?
26. In what ways do you think it is possible to worship the Lord in vain?
27. From the list of "unclean" things that come from within a person's heart (greed, deceit, envy, etc.), which attitude or action do you need to work on eliminating from your life?
28. How can we be sure we are "clean" in God's sight?
29. What can we do to work toward being clean in God's sight?
30. What practices in your local church do you think might be distracting people's attention from the central concerns of the faith?
31. How can you guard against practicing the type of tradition-bound, external religion that Jesus condemned?

### Apply It

- \* 32. What can you do to honor the commands of God above your traditions?
33. What is one practice that you can eliminate or modify to help you focus on the teaching of Jesus?

34. What is one step you can take to guard against hypocrisy?

## The Faith of a Syrophenician Woman - Mark 7:24-30

*Topics:* Courage, Demons, Faith, Gospel, Humility, Priorities, Rationalizing

### Open It

- \* 1. When was a time when you felt like an outsider?
- 2. Why do you think some Christians lose or give up their faith in God?

### Explore It

- 3. What did Jesus try to keep secret? How? (7:24)
- 4. Why did a certain woman want to see Jesus? (7:25)
- 5. What did the woman do when she saw Jesus? Why? (7:25)
- \* 6. Who came to see Jesus? Why? (7:25-26)
- 7. What was this woman's background? (7:26)
- 8. What did the woman in the story want from Jesus? (7:26)
- 9. How did Jesus respond to this woman? (7:27)
- 10. To whom was Jesus referring when He spoke of children? (7:27)
- 11. What did this woman call Jesus? (7:28)
- 12. How did the woman appeal Jesus' decision not to help her? (7:28)
- 13. What made the woman so persistent? (7:28)
- \* 14. Why was Jesus impressed with the woman? (7:28-29)
- \* 15. What happened to the woman and her daughter? (7:30)

### Get It

- \* 16. What was exemplary about the woman who came to see Jesus?
- 17. Why do you think Mark included this episode in his Gospel?
- 18. Why would you or wouldn't you have gone to see Jesus if you had been in the same situation as this woman?
- 19. What have you "begged" Jesus to do for you in the past? How did He answer?
- 20. How would you compare your level of faith with that of the woman in this story?
- 21. In what ways has Jesus rewarded you for your faith?
- 22. What difference does it make in your life that Jesus has the power and authority over all the evil forces of the world?
- \* 23. What about the woman's attitude can we apply to our prayer life?
- 24. No two of Jesus' healings were exactly alike; how should our witness for Christ be tailored to each situation and person?
- 25. How can you be personal and sensitive in the way you meet the needs of those around you?

### Apply It

- 26. What is one area of your life that you will commit to the Lord in faith today?
- \* 27. What concrete step can you take to show your faith in the Lord and your dependence on His power?

# The Healing of a Deaf and Mute Man - Mark 7:31-37

*Topics:* Faith, Healing, Instructions, Mercy, Miracles, Thankfulness, Witnessing

## Open It

- \* 1. What do you think it would be like to be deaf or unable to speak?
- 2. What attitudes does our society have toward disabled people?
- 3. How do most ordinary folks treat people who have disabilities?

## Explore It

- 4. Where did the events of this story take place? (7:31)
- \* 5. Who was brought to Jesus? Why? (7:32)
- 6. What attitude did the people have toward Jesus? (7:32)
- 7. What did Jesus do for the man who was deaf and could hardly speak? (7:33-36)
- 8. What method did Jesus use to heal the man who came to Him? (7:33-36)
- \* 9. What did Jesus do so that the man would know it was Jesus who helped him? (7:33-36)
- 10. What happened to the deaf man? (7:35)
- 11. How was the deaf man's life changed because of Jesus? (7:35-37)
- \* 12. What command of Jesus got the opposite effect He intended? (7:36)
- 13. How did the people react to Jesus and His miraculous power? (7:36-37)
- 14. What difference did this miracle make in the lives of the people who witnessed it? (7:36-37)
- 15. Why couldn't the people stop talking about Jesus? (7:37)

## Get It

- 16. Whom do you know who has experienced the healing of Jesus in his or her life?
- 17. How do people respond to Jesus' miraculous work in their lives?
- 18. What can you learn from the people's attitude toward Jesus in this story?
- 19. In what area of your life do you need God's healing power?
- 20. How can you increase your faith in God?
- \* 21. How has God helped you in a way that met your personal, unique needs, as He did for the man in this story?
- \* 22. How can we tailor the way we reach out to each person?
- 23. What difference does it make in your everyday life that Jesus has all power and authority over the world?
- 24. Whom could you tell about the goodness of God in your life?

## Apply It

- 25. What is one area of your life that you can commit to the Lord and trust Him to work through?
- 26. What can you do this next week to show your thanks to God for His work in your life?
- 27. How can you trust God with your needs?
- \* 28. What can you do to reach out to someone in need this week?

## Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand - Mark 8:1-13

*Topics:* Abundance, Doubt, Faith, Ministry, Miracles, Needs, Questions, Teaching, Thankfulness

### Open It

1. When was a time someone showed compassion to you?
2. Why is it sometimes difficult to accept help or sympathy from others?
- \* 3. How does it make you feel to receive support or help from others?

### Explore It

- \* 4. Why did Jesus call the disciples to Him? (8:1-3)
5. How did Jesus feel toward the crowd of people that had gathered? (8:2)
6. How long had the crowd in this story been gathered? Why? (8:2)
7. Why couldn't Jesus just send the people to their homes for food? (8:3)
8. What did Jesus' disciples think of the crowd's dilemma? (8:4)
- \* 9. How did Jesus involve His disciples in this problem? (8:5-8)
10. What did Jesus do with the seven loaves and few small fish that the disciples had found? (8:6)
- \* 11. How much food went uneaten? (8:8)
12. What did Jesus do after He had fed the crowd? (8:9-10)
13. Who came to see Jesus? Why? (8:11)
14. How did the Pharisees plan to "test" Jesus? (8:11)
15. Why did Jesus "sigh deeply"? (8:12)
16. What announcement did Jesus make to the generation of His day? (8:12)
17. What did Jesus think of His visitors? (8:12-13)

### Get It

- \* 18. What can we learn from Jesus' attitude and actions toward the crowds that followed Him?
- \* 19. How can you become a more compassionate person?
20. When have you consciously trusted the Lord for food or another essential of life?
21. What did it feel like to have to trust the Lord to supply your basic needs?
22. In what ways has God provided for the needs of you and your family?
23. How does God's work in the past encourage you to trust Him with your future?
24. How can you show your thankfulness to God for the way He takes care of you?
25. When was a time you tried to test the Lord as the Pharisees did? What happened?
26. What kinds of people today have the same attitude the Pharisees did?
27. Why do people demand signs from God?
28. Why does God refuse to give us signs or proof of His existence and presence?

### Apply It

- \* 29. To whom can you show compassion? How and when?
30. In what one area of your life will you ask God to work miraculously this week?
31. How can you trust God this week to supply your needs?
32. For what difficult problem will you depend on God? How?



# The Yeast of the Pharisees and Herod - Mark 8:14-21

*Topics:* Criticism, Evil, Forget, Heart, Miracles, Remembering

## Open It

1. When was a time you misunderstood what someone said or did? What resulted?
2. What is one negative example from which you have learned?
- \* 3. In what ways do many adults grow hardened as they get older?

## Explore It

4. What had the disciples forgotten on their trip? (8:14)
5. When did Jesus start talking about the Pharisees? (8:15)
- \* 6. What did Jesus warn His disciples against? (8:15)
7. How did the disciples misunderstand Jesus' warning? (8:16)
8. What was Christ's explanation for why the disciples could not understand what He meant? (8:17-18)
- \* 9. Why couldn't the disciples understand what Jesus said? (8:17-18)
10. What would have enabled the disciples to understand Jesus better? (8:17-18)
- \* 11. Why was Jesus amazed at His disciples? (8:17-21)
12. Why did Jesus remind the disciples about the miracles of feeding the crowds? (8:19)
13. How did Jesus try to get through to His disciples? (8:18-20)
14. Of what miracles did Jesus remind the disciples? Why? (8:19-20)

## Get It

15. What did Jesus want His disciples to learn from the Pharisees and Herod?
16. When have you ever misunderstood what the Bible said about a certain topic or idea?
- \* 17. What passages or ideas from the Bible have you struggled to understand?
- \* 18. How can we guard against misinterpreting or ignoring the Scriptures?
19. When has your heart been "hardened" to God's message?
20. When has your heart been "hardened" to the voice of the Holy Spirit?
21. How can you be more sensitive to God's will for you?
22. If Jesus had been speaking directly to us, what negative example might He have warned us to learn from?
23. If Jesus had been speaking to you personally, what negative example might He have warned you to watch out for?
24. How can you separate yourself from the corruption of the world and yet still be an effective witness for Christ?

## Apply It

25. What miracles of Christ, negative examples, or object lessons can you use as reminders of Christ's proper place in your life?
- \* 26. What is one step you can take to soften your heart toward God this week?
27. What is one specific command of Christ's that you want to apply to your life this week?
28. What can you do to steer clear of the evil and corruption in your workplace, community, or home life?

## The Healing of a Blind Man at Bethsaida - Mark 8:22-26

*Topics:* Blindness, Guidance, Healing, Prayer, Restoration, Separation

### Open It

- \* 1. When have you experienced a time when God answered a prayer only partially?
- 2. Why do you think God would not answer prayer as we hope?
- 3. How do you respond when God answers your prayers completely?

### Explore It

- 4. Where did the events of this story take place? (8:22)
- \* 5. What did the people do about the blind man's condition? (8:22)
- 6. Where did Jesus perform this miracle? (8:23)
- 7. How did Jesus get the blind man out of the village? (8:23)
- \* 8. How did Jesus heal the blind man? (8:23-25)
- 9. How did Jesus treat the blind man differently from the many other people He had healed? (8:23-26)
- 10. What do we learn about Jesus' character from the way He treated the blind man? (8:23-26)
- 11. What is unique about this healing compared to every other healing Mark recorded in his Gospel? (8:23-26)
- 12. What did the blind man see after the first touch from Jesus? (8:24)
- 13. What occurred after Jesus touched the blind man a second time? (8:25)
- \* 14. What did Jesus urge the man to do after he was healed? (8:26)

### Get It

- 15. Why do you think Jesus returned to Bethsaida?
- 16. Why do you think the people begged Jesus to heal the blind man?
- 17. What connection do you think there is between this gradual healing and the disciples' slowness to understand who Jesus was?
- 18. Why do you think Jesus healed people in so many unique ways?
- 19. What difference does it make to you that God views us all as unique individuals and treats us according to our own needs?
- 20. How should Jesus' actions and attitudes in this story affect the way you represent Christ to others?
- 21. When has your "sight" been clouded by circumstances in your life?
- 22. How has God opened your eyes in a difficult situation?
- \* 23. Whom do you know who has been changed by Jesus but now needs a "second touch" in his or her life?
- \* 24. How could you help a person you know who needs a "second touch" from Jesus?
- 25. What have you learned from this passage about Jesus' attitude toward people?
- 26. How can you show thanks to the Lord for His personal interest in you as an individual?

### Apply It

- \* 27. What can you do this week for someone in need?
- 28. What is one area of your life in which you can pray for God's healing?
- 29. How do you want to respond the next time the Lord answers prayer in an unexpected way?

## Peter's Confession of Christ - Mark 8:27-30

*Topics:* Beliefs, Choices, Confession, Convictions, Faith, Jesus Christ, Peer Pressure

### Open It

1. Where do you tend to experience the pressure of a larger group?
- \* 2. When have you ever succumbed to group pressure when you knew you should not have?

### Explore It

3. Where did this episode take place? (8:27)
- \* 4. What did Jesus ask His disciples? (8:27)
- \* 5. What did people theorize about Jesus? (8:27-28)
6. How did the disciples respond to Jesus' question? (8:28)
7. How had people connected Jesus with Elijah, John the Baptist, and other prophets? (8:28)
8. How did Jesus make this discussion personal? (8:29)
- \* 9. How did the disciples answer Jesus' question? (8:29)
10. Who did Peter say Jesus was? (8:29)
11. Who spoke for the whole group of disciples? (8:29)
12. What was Peter's declaration of faith? (8:29)
13. What warning did Jesus give His disciples? (8:30)

### Get It

14. Why do you think Jesus asked about His identity at this particular point?
15. Why would people think that Jesus was John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the other prophets?
16. Why do you think Jesus asked the two questions in the order He did?
17. Why would Jesus warn the disciples not to tell anyone that He was the Messiah?
- \* 18. Who do you say Jesus is?
19. How do your beliefs go against the flow of the majority in our world?
20. What is it like to stand up against the views of the crowd?
21. How does the knowledge that one day everyone will know that Christ is Lord affect your attitude about the pressure you feel from the world?
- \* 22. Why is it important for a Christian not to hide his or her faith in Christ?
23. How can we stand up for what is right in the face of pressure from others to compromise?
24. What can we learn from Peter's example?
25. How do your beliefs in Jesus Christ affect your everyday life?

### Apply It

- \* 26. How can you state your faith in Christ's Lordship?
27. Whom should you tell this week about your faith in Christ?
28. What specific area of your life do you need to submit to the Lordship of Christ? How?

## Jesus Predicts His Death - Mark 8:31-9:1

*Topics:* Denial, Disagreements, Eternal Life, Gospel, Preparation, Rewards, Sacrifice, Second Coming, Suffering, Temptation

### Open It

- \* 1. In what ways has your life been different from what you expected?
- 2. How do unrealistic expectations block people from following Christ?

### EXPLORE

- 3. Who referred to Himself as the “Son of Man”? (8:31)
- 4. What did Jesus teach the disciples? (8:31)
- 5. How did Jesus speak about what would happen to Him? (8:32)
- 6. Why did Peter rebuke Jesus? (8:32)
- 7. How was what Jesus predicted different from what Peter expected? (8:32)
- 8. What surprised Peter? (8:32)
- \* 9. Who rebuked whom? Why? (8:32-33)
- 10. What did Jesus say to Peter in response to his rebuke? (8:33)
- 11. Why did Jesus rebuke Peter? (8:33)
- 12. Why did Jesus speak harshly with Peter? (8:33)
- \* 13. In what way did Peter have in mind the “things of man” as opposed to the “things of God”? (8:33)
- 14. What was wrong with Peter’s thinking? (8:33)
- 15. What did Jesus do after rebuking Peter? (8:34)
- \* 16. What did Jesus want His disciples to do? (8:34-35)
- 17. Why did Jesus say, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me”? (8:34-38)
- 18. How did Jesus refer to the people to whom He was speaking? (8:38)
- 19. How will Jesus come back to earth? (8:38)
- 20. What promise was given to Jesus’ audience? (9:1)

### Get It

- 21. When have you ever doubted the words of Jesus?
- 22. In what ways has Christ rebuked you in the past?
- \* 23. Why does Christ ask us to “deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow” Him?
- 24. What does it mean to deny yourself?
- 25. What does it mean to take up your cross?
- 26. What does it mean to follow Christ?
- 27. In what way can a person both save his life and lose it at the same time?
- 28. What did Jesus mean when He said, “Some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power”? (9:1)
- 29. How do you usually respond to the Lord’s correction or discipline in your life?
- \* 30. How can we make sure we “have in mind the things of God”?
- 31. What do you think Christ wants you to give up for the sake of the gospel?
- 32. What does it mean to be ashamed of Christ?
- 33. In what ways does Satan tempt us to do the opposite of what Christ wants for us?

### Apply It

- \* 34. What attitude or practice do you need to change in obedience to Christ?
- 35. What specific steps can you take to listen closely to Christ this week?

# The Transfiguration - Mark 9:2-13

*Topics:* Holiness, Obedience, Prophecy, Representatives, Witnessing, Worship

## Open It

1. When were you last speechless?
- \* 2. How do people react when they watch fireworks? Why?

## Explore It

3. Where did Jesus take Peter, James, and John? (9:2)
4. Whom did Jesus take with Him to the mountain? (9:2)
- \* 5. What happened to Jesus on the mountain? (9:3)
6. Who appeared with Jesus in the transfiguration? (9:4)
7. What was significant about the people who appeared to Jesus? (9:4)
8. How did Peter respond to the transfiguration of Jesus? (9:5)
9. Why did Peter want to put up three shelters? (9:5)
10. Why were the disciples frightened when they saw Jesus? (9:6)
11. How did God appear to Jesus and the others? (9:7)
- \* 12. What did God say to the disciples? (9:7)
- \* 13. What did God want the disciples to do? (9:7)
14. What did the disciples see after the cloud vanished? (9:7-8)
15. What orders did Jesus give the disciples? (9:9)
16. How did Peter, James, and John respond to Jesus' order? (9:10)
17. What caught the "elite three" off guard and became the topic of discussion as they headed down the mountain? (9:10)
18. Why did the disciples ask Jesus about Elijah? (9:11)
19. About whom was Jesus speaking when He said, "Elijah has come"? (9:12-13)

## Get It

20. Why do you think Jesus chose only three of His disciples to witness His transfiguration?
21. How do you think this account would encourage an audience of Christians being harassed and threatened?
22. What encouragement does this passage give you?
- \* 23. How do you think you would have reacted if Jesus had chosen you to witness His transfiguration?
24. When has a spiritual experience caused you to be speechless or frightened?
- \* 25. What is implied by God's command that we listen to Jesus?
26. What can we learn from this account about the relationship between God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ?

## Apply It

27. What specific word or command of Jesus can you obey more carefully this week? How?
- \* 28. What can you do over the next week to become more sensitive to God's voice (whether from His Word or His Spirit)?

## The Healing of a Boy With an Evil Spirit - Mark 9:14-32

*Topics:* Believe, Demons, Discipline, Doubt, Faith, Healing, Prayer, Unbelievers

### Open It

- \* 1. When was the last time you felt inadequate to do a job you had to do?
- 2. In what situation have you done something that you thought was impossible?

### Explore It

- 3. What was the setting of the events in this story? (9:14)
- 4. How did the people react when they saw Jesus? (9:15)
- 5. What did Jesus ask the crowd and the teachers of the law? (9:16)
- 6. What were the people arguing about? (9:17)
- 7. What had the evil spirit done to the boy it possessed? (9:17-18)
- \* 8. Why were the disciples unable to cast the demon out of the boy? (9:19)
- \* 9. How did Jesus feel at this point? (9:19)
- 10. What was the evil spirit's response to Jesus? (9:20)
- 11. What was the boy's life like before Jesus healed him? (9:21-22)
- \* 12. How were prayer and faith related in this situation? (9:22-23)
- 13. What problem did the father need to overcome? (9:24)
- 14. When did Jesus cast the demon out? (9:25-26)
- 15. How did Jesus treat the demon-possessed boy? (9:24-27)
- 16. What necessary step had the disciples failed to take in this situation? (9:28-29)
- 17. Why did Jesus want to avoid the crowds of people? (9:30-31)
- 18. What news did Jesus repeat privately to the disciples? (9:31)
- 19. What frightened the disciples? (9:31-32)

### Get It

- 20. How do you think Jesus felt about His disciples in this situation?
- 21. How should we pray when we feel inadequate?
- 22. In what ways do you think we are an "unbelieving generation" like the people of Jesus' day?
- 23. What difference does it make that "everything is possible for him who believes"?
- 24. In what area of your life do you struggle with doubt?
- 25. What can we learn from the father's example in this story?
- 26. How has God helped you overcome your unbelief in the past?
- \* 27. In what areas of life do you think we fail to see success because we do not pray?
- \* 28. How can you become more dedicated to prayer?

### Apply It

- \* 29. About what in your life will you pray every day this week? When?
- 30. What concrete action can you take today to show a commitment to prayer?

## Who Is the Greatest? - Mark 9:33-37

*Topics:* Arguments, Greatness, Humility, Pride, Sacrifice, Serving, Status

### Open It

1. What makes a person look prestigious or “respectable” in our society?
- \* 2. Whom do you consider to be a great person? Why?

### Explore It

3. What did Jesus ask the disciples when they got to Capernaum? (9:33)
4. Why did the disciples suddenly stop talking? (9:33-34)
- \* 5. How did Jesus get His disciples’ attention? (9:33-34)
6. What does the disciples’ argument tell you about their understanding of who Jesus was and why He had come? (9:33-34)
7. Why were the disciples embarrassed to answer Jesus’ question? (9:34)
- \* 8. How did Jesus explain what it means to be great? (9:35)
9. What kind of person tries to be a servant? (9:35)
- \* 10. How did Jesus illustrate His point? (9:36)
11. What did Jesus say about children? (9:37)
12. How is it possible to welcome God? (9:37)

### Get It

- \* 13. What does it mean to be a servant of all?
14. What does it mean to welcome someone in Jesus’ name?
15. What does it mean to be great in God’s eyes?
16. How can a person become great in God’s eyes?
17. Why do you think Jesus used a child to illustrate His point?
18. How can you welcome someone in Jesus’ name?
19. What sorts of issues cause ill will among Christians today?
20. How do we strive to be the “greatest”?
- \* 21. How can you become a “servant of all” in your everyday actions and attitudes?
22. What does this passage tell us about Jesus’ attitude toward children and other weaker members of society?
23. How should we treat people of “lower status”?
24. What attitude change do you want to make in light of the principles you discovered in this passage?

### Apply It

- \* 25. What is one concrete way you can serve another person this week?
26. In what specific situation can you consciously choose to be a servant for Christ’s sake sometime this next week?

## Whoever Is Not Against Us Is for Us - Mark 9:38-41

*Topics:* Arguments, Believers, Demons, Divisions, Jealousy, Judging Others, Ministry, Miracles, Pride, Rewards, Unity

### Open It

- \* 1. What do people argue about in your family?
- 2. What happens to a team of workers when members become jealous and use power plays against each other?
- 3. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of church denominations?

### Explore It

- 4. Who told Jesus about the dilemma facing the disciples? (9:38)
- 5. How did John refer to Jesus and how was that significant? (9:38)
- \* 6. What issue concerned the disciples? (9:38)
- 7. Why did the disciples try to stop a man from driving out demons? (9:38)
- \* 8. What attitudes did the disciples have in this situation? (9:38)
- \* 9. How did Jesus respond to the disciples' question? (9:40)
- 10. Why did Jesus not mind others, who were not part of His group of disciples, performing miracles in His name? (9:40)
- 11. What attitude did Jesus want the disciples to have? (9:41)
- 12. How will God treat those who do good in Christ's name? (9:41)
- 13. What principle was Jesus trying to teach the disciples? (9:39-41)

### Get It

- 14. What jealousies and power struggles do you see in the church today?
- \* 15. Over what issues do we tend to be divided as believers?
- \* 16. How does Christ want us to respond to others who minister in His name, even if they do not come from the same group or background as we do?
- 17. How do you think God views the various denominations and separate societies that the Christian church has divided into?
- 18. How can we become more unified as a body of believers?
- 19. How can you ensure that you are serving in the name of Christ and not allowing wrong motives to steal any of the glory that belongs to Christ?
- 20. What ministry do you think God might be leading you to get involved in?
- 21. What do you think we could do as churches and denominations to lay aside our differences and put up a united front to the world?
- 22. What can churches do to support those who are not against them?

### Apply It

- 23. What step can you take this week to help another person in Christ's name?
- \* 24. What can you do to support someone who does good and is "not against you"?



## Causing to Sin - Mark 9:42-50

*Topics:* Accountability, Believers, Example, Hell, Judgment, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Peace, Sin, Temptation

### Open It

- \* 1. What are your favorite seasonings?
- 2. What is pleasant and unpleasant about salt?
- 3. What do you believe are the marks of maturity?

### Explore It

- 4. To whom did Jesus refer when He spoke of “little ones”? (9:42)
- 5. What behavior did Jesus condemn? (9:42)
- 6. What figure of speech did Jesus use to show how serious His point was? (9:42-47)
- \* 7. What was Jesus’ attitude toward sin? (9:43-47)
- 8. What does this passage teach about the kingdom of God? (9:43-47)
- \* 9. Why did Jesus use extreme examples in this context? (9:43-48)
- 10. How did Jesus use figurative language to get His message across? (9:43-48)
- 11. How did Jesus describe hell? (9:48-49)
- 12. What did Jesus mean when He said, “Everyone will be salted with fire”? (9:49)
- \* 13. When Jesus talked about “salt,” to what exactly was He referring? (9:50)
- 14. Why is “saltiness” necessary in a Christian’s life? (9:50)
- 15. With what final instruction did Jesus conclude? (9:50)
- 16. How do Jesus’ final words relate to the rest of the passage? (9:50)

### Get It

- 17. Who are the “little ones” in our society?
- 18. What do our hands, feet, and eyes represent?
- 19. How can a person’s hand, foot, or eye cause him or her to sin?
- \* 20. How do you think a Christian can cause others to sin?
- \* 21. In what ways is causing another person to sin worse than sinning yourself?
- 22. What should be our attitude toward sin?
- 23. How do you plan to apply to your life the principles Jesus taught about avoiding sin?
- 24. What specific steps can a Christian take to avoid sin?
- 25. What could a church do as a group to apply these principles?
- 26. How can this passage motivate us to share our faith with unbelievers?
- 27. What do you need to do to add some “salt” to your witness?
- 28. What can we do to create peace among believers?

### Apply It

- \* 29. What concrete action can you take this week to avoid a sin that you have struggled with in the recent past?
- 30. What can you do this week to make your witness for Christ clearer to the unbelievers around you?

## Divorce - Mark 10:1-12

*Topics:* Adultery, Creation, Law, Marriage, New Covenant, Separation, Teaching

### Open It

- \* 1. What do you think makes a marriage strong and lasting?
- 2. How do the people you work with view people with struggling or failed marriages?

### Explore It

- 3. Where did this episode take place? (10:1)
- 4. What does this passage say about Christ's attitude toward His ministry? (10:1)
- \* 5. Why did the Pharisees go to see Jesus? (10:2)
- 6. How did the Pharisees try to trick Jesus? (10:2)
- 7. How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees' question? (10:3)
- 8. Why do you think Jesus brought Moses into this discussion? (10:3)
- 9. What did Moses allow in the area of divorce? (10:4)
- \* 10. How did Jesus explain Moses' instructions? (10:5)
- 11. What do we learn about the Pharisees from Jesus' explanation of Moses' words? (10:5)
- 12. How did Jesus explain the relationship between the Law and the will of God? (10:5-9)
- 13. How did Jesus lend authority to His words? (10:6-9)
- \* 14. What was God's original plan for marriage before sin entered the picture? (10:6-9)
- 15. What is the meaning of "they are no longer two, but one"? (10:8)
- 16. What overriding principle did Jesus want us to follow? (10:9)
- 17. Why did this topic come up a second time that day? (10:10)
- 18. What specific instructions did Jesus give regarding divorce? (10:11-12)
- 19. How did Jesus protect women with His instructions? (10:11-12)

### Get It

- 20. How do you think the Pharisees expected to trick Jesus?
- 21. What do we learn about human nature from Jesus' answer to the Pharisees' question?
- 22. Why do you think Jesus referred back to the "beginning of creation" in this debate?
- 23. How could a person separate "what God has joined together"?
- 24. Why do you think the disciples asked Jesus about their question privately?
- 25. How should we view people with struggling or failed marriages?
- \* 26. How can the church help people with struggling or failed marriages?
- 27. How can the church help its members strengthen and even save their marriages?
- 28. Why do you think so many marriages fail?
- \* 29. What can you do to strengthen your own marriage or encourage a couple who is experiencing difficulty in this area?
- 30. What attitude should we have toward marriage?
- 31. How should a Christian's understanding of marriage differ from that of the popular image?
- 32. How can a strong Christian marriage be an effective witness to unbelievers?

### Apply It

- 33. What is one specific step you can take this week to show respect for the sanctity of marriage?
- \* 34. For what couple can you pray every day this week?

## The Little Children and Jesus - Mark 10:13-16

*Topics:* Assumptions, Blessing, Children, Humility, Inadequacy, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Salvation

### Open It

- \* 1. What's the best thing about being a child?
- 2. How should children be treated differently from adults?
- 3. In what ways do children think differently than adults?

### Explore It

- 4. Why were people bringing their children to Jesus? (10:13)
- 5. How did the disciples react to this situation? (10:13)
- \* 6. How was Jesus different from the disciples? (10:13-16)
- 7. What about Jesus surprised the disciples in this situation? (10:13-16)
- 8. How did Jesus respond to the disciples sending the children away? (10:14)
- 9. What do Jesus' actions tell us about His attitude toward children? (10:14)
- \* 10. What did Jesus want His disciples to do? (10:14)
- 11. Why did Jesus want the children to come to Him? (10:14)
- 12. What unique connection do children have to the kingdom of God? (10:14)
- 13. What can we learn from children about the kingdom of God? (10:15)
- 14. How did Jesus want people to respond to Him? (10:15)
- \* 15. How did Jesus treat the children He met? (10:16)

### Get It

- 16. What does it mean that "the kingdom of God belongs to such as" little children?
- 17. What does it mean to receive the kingdom of God like a little child?
- \* 18. What about the behavior of children does God want us to copy?
- \* 19. How can we have the same attitude toward God that children had toward Jesus?
- 20. How should we treat children?
- 21. How do you think your church needs to change the way it treats children?
- 22. How can we receive the kingdom of God "like a little child"?
- 23. What does Jesus' display of emotion in this account tell you about Him?
- 24. In what specific ways do you need to change your attitude toward God?

### Apply It

- 25. What concrete steps can you take this week to imitate Christ's love and compassion for children?
- \* 26. In what concrete way can you depend on God in your day-to-day affairs?

# The Rich Young Man - Mark 10:17-31

**Topics:** Basics of the Faith, Eternal Life, Gospel, Heaven, Impossible, Obedience, Possessions, Rejection, Rewards, Sacrifice, Salvation, Wealth

## Open It

- \* 1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being wealthy?
- 2. Why do you think most people want to be rich?

## Explore It

- 3. What was the attitude of the wealthy man as he came to Jesus? (10:17)
- \* 4. What did the man want Jesus to explain to him? (10:17)
- 5. Why did Jesus say to the man, “No one is good, except God alone”? (10:18)
- \* 6. How did Jesus explain the way to inherit eternal life? (10:19-21)
- 7. How did the rich man respond to Jesus? (10:20)
- 8. What does the rich man’s answer to Jesus tell us about his spiritual state? (10:20)
- 9. What attitude did Jesus have toward the rich man? (10:21)
- 10. What was difficult about the instruction that Jesus gave the young man? (10:21-22)
- 11. In what way would selling all of his earthly possessions give the wealthy man “treasure in heaven”? (10:21)
- \* 12. Why could the man not obey Christ’s instructions? (10:22)
- 13. What did Jesus mean when He said, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God”? (10:24-25)
- 14. When the disciples were astonished and dismayed at Jesus’ words, how did He encourage them? (10:26-27)
- 15. How did Peter respond to this situation? (10:28)
- 16. With what promise did Jesus conclude His teaching in this passage? (10:29-31)

## Get It

- 17. Why do you think Jesus demanded such a tall order from this man?
- \* 18. In what way can money stop us from doing what God wants?
- 19. How can wealth interfere with a person’s Christian faith?
- 20. What have you ever sacrificed for the sake of following Christ?
- 21. What interferes with your walk with the Lord?
- \* 22. How do you think God wants you to use the material wealth He has given you?
- 23. How can we prevent ourselves from allowing wealth to interfere with our Christianity?
- 24. What can you learn about Jesus from His actions in this story?
- 25. What can we learn through the negative example of the rich young man in this episode?
- 26. What makes it difficult for a rich person to be saved?
- 27. What makes it difficult for anyone, rich or poor, to enter the kingdom of God?
- 28. What can you give to the poor? How?
- \* 29. What practical steps can we take to insure that we place value on eternal things and not merely on material things?

## Apply It

- \* 30. What can you sell or give away in the near future to reflect a concern for God’s kingdom over things?
- 31. What is one distraction you can set aside from your routine this week to help you concentrate more on devotion to Christ?

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

*Topics:* Death, Emotions, Fear, Leadership, Promises, Prophecy, Resurrection, Suffering

### Open It

1. Why do we avoid talking about death in everyday conversation?
- \* 2. What attitudes do people in our society have about dying?
3. When have you had to deal with the death of someone close to you?

### Explore It

4. Where does this story take place? (10:32)
5. What emotions were displayed by the disciples? (10:32)
- \* 6. Why was there such a range of strong emotions on this trip? (10:32)
- \* 7. What important news did Jesus tell the Twelve once again about what would happen to Him? (10:32-33)
8. What did Jesus say about the “Son of Man”? (10:33)
9. How did Jesus refer to Himself? (10:33)
10. When Jesus predicted His death and resurrection this third time, what else did He say would happen? (10:33-34)
- \* 11. How did Jesus say He would die? (10:33-34)
12. How would Jesus be treated at the time of His death? (10:33-34)
13. Who was going to torture and kill Jesus? (10:33-34)

### Get It

14. Why do you think Jesus was “leading the way”?
15. Why do you think Jesus told His disciples that He would be mocked and tortured?
16. How do you think the disciples responded to what Jesus told them?
17. What prevented some followers of Jesus from understanding that He was predicting His death and resurrection?
18. What do Jesus’ actions in this account tell us about the relationship He wants to have with us?
19. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
20. What can we learn from the disciples in this event?
- \* 21. When has God ever led you down a road which you felt uncomfortable or frightened about?
22. How have you experienced God’s leading in times of uncertainty?
- \* 23. How can you trust God more fully to lead you through difficult circumstances in the future?
24. What difference does it make to you that Jesus correctly predicted everything that happened to Him?
25. Why did Christ willingly go to Jerusalem when He knew the pain and humiliation He would experience there?

### Apply It

- \* 26. What is one difficult situation that you need Jesus to lead you through this upcoming week?
27. How can you place your trust in Christ each day rather than in your own abilities?

## The Request of James and John - Mark 10:35-45

*Topics:* Authority, Greed, Heaven, Jealousy, Power, Sacrifice, Serving, Status, Suffering

### Open It

1. What issues do people often argue about?
- \* 2. In what way does society pressure us to seek status and power?

### Explore It

3. What was the relationship between James, John, and Jesus? (10:35)
4. With what attitude did James and John confront Jesus? (10:35)
- \* 5. What did James and John want from Jesus? (10:37)
6. What did James and John's request reflect about their character? (10:37)
- \* 7. How did Jesus answer James and John's request? (10:38-40)
8. What were the "baptism" and "cup" of which Jesus spoke? (10:38-39)
9. What figure of speech did Jesus use in speaking with James and John? (10:38-39)
- \* 10. How did Jesus explain to James and John the impossibility of granting what they had requested? (10:39-40)
11. Who will grant the seats to Christ's right and left in glory? (10:40)
- \* 12. How did the other disciples react to James and John's request? (10:41)
13. What did Jesus warn all His disciples about? (10:42-43)
14. What value did Jesus place on serving? (10:42-45)
15. What value did Jesus place on status? (10:42-45)
16. How did Jesus advise the disciples regarding greatness? (10:43-44)
17. What did Jesus mean when He said He "did not come to be served, but to serve"? (10:45)

### Get It

18. Why was Jesus unwilling to do what James and John asked for?
19. Why were the other disciples angry at James and John?
20. What sort of unreasonable requests do we sometimes make of God? Why do we?
21. In what way does God protect us from our foolish requests?
- \* 22. In what ways do we vie for power and authority?
23. How does Jesus want us to handle power and authority?
24. How do Jesus' words to James and John change your attitude about power and authority?
25. How can you adopt Christ's example as your own?
- \* 26. How can you become a servant of others?
27. How do you need to change your attitude or actions in light of Jesus' words about serving?
28. Jesus, the Son of God, left us a perfect example of humility and service to others. What does this imply for us?
29. How should you respond to Jesus' giving His life as a ransom for you?

### Apply It

- \* 30. What specific act of service could you do this week for someone else?
31. What steps can you take to guard yourself against an attitude of selfishness or greed?

## Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight - Mark 10:46-52

*Topics:* Blindness, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Persistence, Prayer

### Open It

- \* 1. When has persistence paid off for you?
- 2. In what circumstances might it not be good to be persistent?

### Explore It

- 3. Where did the events of this story take place? (10:46)
- 4. Where was the blind man sitting when Jesus passed by? (10:46)
- 5. What was significant about the way the blind man addressed Jesus? (10:47-48)
- \* 6. Why did the people rebuke the blind man? (10:48)
- \* 7. How did the blind man respond to the criticism from the crowd? (10:48)
- 8. What do the blind man's actions tell you about his character and his attitude toward Jesus? (10:48)
- \* 9. How did the crowds of people treat Bartimaeus after they found out Jesus had called for him? (10:49)
- 10. How did Bartimaeus react when Jesus called him? (10:50)
- 11. How did Jesus help Bartimaeus? (10:51)
- 12. How did Bartimaeus respond to Jesus' question? (10:51)
- 13. How did the blind man's actions reveal to Jesus that he had faith? (10:52)
- 14. What did Bartimaeus do after Jesus had healed him? (10:52)

### Get It

- 15. What do you think motivated the blind man to call out for Jesus?
- 16. Why do you think Jesus singled out Bartimaeus for healing among the many needy people He must have encountered along the way?
- \* 17. When have you persistently prayed for one particular request? What happened?
- 18. What role does persistence play in prayer?
- \* 19. What does it mean to be persistent in prayer?
- 20. What specifically can you learn from Bartimaeus's example?
- 21. What connection is there between a person's faith and whether God answers their prayer?
- 22. What does this passage tell you about Jesus' attitude toward hurting people?
- 23. How does Jesus' actions in this account encourage you to get more involved in helping others?

### Apply It

- \* 24. What is one request that you will commit yourself to pray for regularly this week?
- 25. How is it possible for a Christian to increase his or her faith?

## The Triumphal Entry - Mark 11:1-11

*Topics:* Blessing, Humility, Instructions, Jesus Christ, Obedience, Praise

### Open It

1. What is enjoyable about watching parades?
2. What would you like or dislike about actually participating in a big parade?
- \* 3. What kinds of events or occasions do we celebrate with parades?

### Explore It

4. Where did the events of this story take place? (11:1)
5. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do? (11:2)
- \* 6. What did Jesus ask the disciples to do? (11:2-3)
- \* 7. How did the disciples' experience match with what Jesus said? (11:4-7)
8. What did the people in the village do when the disciples asked to take their colt? (11:6)
9. What did Jesus do with the colt? (11:7)
10. How did Jesus enter Jerusalem? (11:7-11)
- \* 11. Why did the people spread cloaks and branches on the road for Jesus? (11:8-10)
12. What was the atmosphere of the crowd when Jesus rode into Jerusalem? (11:8-10)
13. What did the people shout when Jesus entered the city? (11:9)
14. What does the reaction of the crowd tell us about how they interpreted Jesus' entry into Jerusalem? (11:9-10)
15. Why do you think Jesus went to the temple first but then went out to Bethany with His disciples? (11:11)
16. Why didn't Jesus stay in Jerusalem? (11:11)

### Get It

- \* 17. What do you think the disciples thought about what Jesus asked them to do?
18. Why do you think the people in the village let the disciples take their colt?
19. What did Jesus communicate to the crowds by riding a donkey into Jerusalem?
20. Why do you think Jesus went to the temple first but then went out to Bethany with His disciples?
- \* 21. When has God told you to do something that you thought was unusual or difficult to justify?
22. How should we imitate the disciples' example?
23. Why do you think God does not always reveal His intentions or long-range plans for us when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances?
24. What should we do when we do not understand what God is trying to accomplish in us and through us?
25. What can we learn from the attitudes of the people who followed Jesus into Jerusalem?
26. How can we express our praise to the Lord?

### Apply It

27. What could you do this week to celebrate what Jesus has done for you?
- \* 28. How should you react the next time a situation arises that you don't understand?



## Jesus Clears the Temple - Mark 11:12-19

*Topics:* Anger, Dishonesty, Emotions, Fruit, Money, Prayer, Worship

### Open It

- \* 1. If you could change one thing about your church, what would it be?
- 2. How well do you think your church fulfills its purpose?
- 3. Over what are you most likely to lose your temper?

### Explore It

- 4. Where did the events of this story take place? (11:12)
- 5. Where did Jesus go? Why? (11:12-13)
- \* 6. Why did the fig tree have no fruit? (11:13)
- \* 7. What did Jesus do to the fig tree? Why? (11:13-14)
- 8. How did this event differ from every other miracle Jesus performed? (11:13-14)
- \* 9. What do both the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple tell us about Jesus' attitude toward the people of Israel? (11:13-17)
- 10. What happened when Jesus entered the temple area in Jerusalem? (11:15-18)
- 11. Whose authority was Jesus challenging when He drove the money changers from the temple area? (11:17)
- 12. What was Jesus saying about His own authority? (11:17)
- 13. Why was Jesus so upset about the "marketplace" atmosphere in the temple? (11:17)
- 14. How did the crowds and the religious leaders react to Jesus' actions in the temple? (11:18)

### Get It

- 15. Why do you think Jesus cursed the fig tree?
- 16. How do you think the disciples reacted to hearing Jesus curse a fig tree?
- \* 17. The fig tree had leaves but no fruit; what is one area of your life that looks good, but isn't producing what God wants?
- \* 18. How can you grow and become more productive in one of your weak areas?
- 19. What difference does it make to you that Jesus showed anger?
- 20. What practices in the church today do you think hinder non-Christians from coming to Christ?
- 21. Where is God's temple today?
- 22. How should we treat God's temple?
- 23. How do you need to change your attitudes or actions when worshiping?

### Apply It

- \* 24. What specific steps can you take this week to concentrate on a weak area of your spiritual life, aiming to bear fruit for the Lord?
- 25. How can you show respect for God's temple?

## The Withered Fig Tree - Mark 11:20-26

*Topics:* Answers, Doubt, Faith, Forgiveness, Prayer, Relationships, Resentment

### Open It

1. Why do people hold grudges?
- \* 2. Why is it easy to hold grudges?
3. How do you think holding a grudge would affect your relationship with your best friend?

### Explore It

4. What happened when the disciples saw the fig tree withered along the road? (11:20)
5. How did Peter react to what he saw? (11:21)
- \* 6. How did Jesus use a seemingly insignificant event as an opportunity to teach the disciples? (11:22)
- \* 7. On what do answers to prayer depend? (11:22-25)
8. What truth did Jesus illustrate with the withered fig tree? (11:23-24)
9. What elements did Jesus single out of this object lesson regarding a strong prayer life? (11:23-25)
10. What promise did Jesus offer about receiving answers to prayers? (11:24)
11. How can a person be sure God has forgiven his or her sins? (11:24)
12. What can stand in the way of God's forgiveness? (11:25)
- \* 13. How can holding a grudge affect the way God answers prayer? (11:25)
14. How is some unanswered prayer accounted for? (11:25)

### Get It

15. Why does Jesus tie God's forgiveness of us with our forgiveness of others?
16. What does this passage say about the relationship between faith and forgiveness?
17. What should we be willing to do to resolve conflicts between ourselves and others?
- \* 18. Why is it necessary to forgive others for what they have done?
- \* 19. When is it difficult for you to forgive others?
20. What will happen if you refuse to forgive others?
21. In what ways has this passage challenged you to reexamine your faith and your prayer life?
22. When have you experienced frustrations or doubts in your prayer life?
23. How can God be both sovereign and bound to grant every prayer request we lay before Him?
24. For what other reasons besides grudges do our prayers go unanswered?

### Apply It

25. What is one specific request that you want to commit yourself to pray for regularly this week?
- \* 26. What can you do today to let go of a grudge or feeling of offense?

# The Authority of Jesus Questioned - Mark 11:27-33

*Topics:* Authority, Conflict, Doubt, Fear, Heaven, Power, Questions

## Open It

- \* 1. Who are some authorities or experts who influence public opinion (such as media, politicians, religious leaders, etc.)?
- 2. What are some examples of authority?
- 3. In what ways should a Christian's values differ from those of "the experts"?

## Explore It

- 4. Where did the events of this story take place? (11:27)
- \* 5. Who confronted Jesus? Why? (11:27-28)
- 6. What were "these things" to which the religious leaders referred? (11:28)
- 7. How did the religious leaders challenge Jesus' authority? (11:28)
- 8. What do Jesus' actions tell you about His attitude toward the religious leaders of His day? (11:28-33)
- \* 9. How did Jesus answer the challenge put to Him? (11:29-33)
- 10. What condition did Jesus place on answering the challenge put to Him? (11:29)
- 11. How did Jesus challenge his accusers to stand up for the truth? (11:30-32)
- 12. How did Jesus expose his accusers' true motives? (11:30-32)
- 13. Why was Jesus' question so difficult for the religious leaders to answer? (11:29-32)
- 14. How did the religious leaders respond to Jesus' question? (11:33)
- \* 15. How did Jesus silence His critics? (11:33)

## Get It

- 16. What were the priorities of the chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders who confronted Jesus?
- 17. What do you think prompted the religious leaders to question Jesus about His authority?
- 18. Why do you think Jesus decided not to answer the religious leaders directly, but instead posed another question in response?
- 19. By whose authority did Jesus clear the temple?
- 20. Why do you think Jesus did not want to reveal to the religious leaders the source of His authority?
- \* 21. In what ways do human authorities challenge God's authority?
- \* 22. How can we ensure that we follow God's authority rather than the "authorities" who challenge His Word?
- 23. When have you ever questioned God's authority in your life?
- 24. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' attitude toward people who reject His authority?
- 25. What could you learn from Jesus' example in this episode about dealing with people who try to trick or discredit Christians?
- 26. When is it most difficult to submit to God's authority?
- 27. How can we find the strength to rely completely on God's authoritative Word rather than trust in our own abilities?
- 28. What does God do for us when we completely turn over to Him the areas of our lives that we have tried to manage on our own?

## Apply It

- \* 29. What specific steps can you take this week to obey God's authority in one area of your life?
- 30. How should you respond the next time someone challenges you for doing what God has told you to do?

## The Parable of the Tenants - Mark 12:1-12

*Topics:* Criticism, Dishonesty, Greed, Mediator, Murder, Possessions, Prophecy, Punishment

### Open It

- \* 1. When have you ever been cheated out of something that was rightfully yours?
- 2. What was your reaction to a time when you were cheated?

### Explore It

- 3. How did Jesus get across His point in this situation? (12:1)
- 4. To whom was Jesus speaking? (12:1)
- 5. Why did the man in the parable plant a vineyard? (12:1)
- 6. What happened to the man's vineyard while he was away on a journey? (12:1)
- \* 7. Whom do the farmer, servants, and son in the parable represent? (12:1-6)
- \* 8. Why did the owner of the vineyard send so many servants to the tenants looking after the vineyard? (12:2-5)
- 9. Who was the last person the owner sent to his vineyard? (12:6)
- 10. How did the tenants want to cheat the son? (12:7)
- \* 11. How did the tenants treat the owner's son? Why? (12:7-8)
- 12. What would be the response of the vineyard owner when he discovered how the tenants treated his son? (12:9)
- 13. What is the significance in Jesus saying that He will fulfill Psalm 118:22-23? (12:10-11)
- 14. How did the religious leaders respond to the parable Jesus told? (12:12)

### Get It

- 15. What is the meaning of this parable?
- 16. Who are God's messengers?
- 17. How has God delivered His message to us today?
- \* 18. In what ways is it possible to mistreat the messengers or message God has sent us?
- 19. How does God want us to treat His message?
- 20. When have you ever been mistreated because of your faith in Christ?
- \* 21. How can we show respect for the message God has given us?
- 22. How does Jesus' example encourage you to respond when you are faced with difficult circumstances?
- 23. How can you be a better steward of the spiritual responsibility God has given you?
- 24. What can we expect the Lord to do if we try to rob Him of what is rightfully His?
- 25. How does this passage encourage you to use your gifts and abilities for the Lord's glory?

### Apply It

- 26. What is one area of your life that you are holding back from the Lord for fear that He may ask too much of you?
- 27. What step can you take this week to commit yourself completely to the Lord?
- \* 28. What can you do every day this week out of respect for God's Word?

## Paying Taxes to Caesar - Mark 12:13-17

*Topics:* Authority, Deceit, Government, Hypocrisy, Money, Peer Pressure, Truth

### Open It

- \* 1. What does it mean to you to be patriotic?
- 2. What feelings do you have about your home country?
- 3. What do you believe is fair or unfair about having to pay taxes?

### Explore It

- 4. Who sent the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus? (12:13)
- 5. Who made a special trip to see Jesus? Why? (12:13)
- 6. What were the Pharisees and Herodians trying to accomplish with their visit to Jesus? (12:13)
- \* 7. How did the religious leaders try to trick Jesus? (12:13-15)
- 8. How did the religious leaders flatter Jesus? (12:14)
- 9. How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees and Herodians? (12:15)
- 10. In what way were the religious leaders guilty of hypocrisy? (12:15)
- \* 11. What did Jesus ask the religious leaders to bring Him? Why? (12:15-17)
- \* 12. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's"? (12:17)
- 13. How did the religious leaders react to Jesus' words? (12:17)
- 14. How successful were the religious leaders in trapping Jesus? (12:17)

### Get It

- 15. Why do you think the religious leaders complimented Jesus on His integrity and commitment to the truth before they asked their trick question?
- 16. Why do you think the religious leaders were so amazed at Jesus?
- 17. What does this passage reveal about Jesus' attitude toward hypocritical behavior?
- 18. In what way do we flatter people?
- 19. What is good or bad about flattery?
- 20. What does it take to speak the truth and avoid using flattery with people?
- 21. What does this story teach about being patriotic to your country?
- 22. What should we do when a civil law goes against God's law?
- 23. Whom do you know who has felt a clash between a civil law and God's law? What happened?
- 24. What did Jesus want the Pharisees and Herodians to do?
- \* 25. What values was Jesus communicating with His answer to the Pharisees' question?
- \* 26. What belongs to God that we should give back to Him?
- 27. What do you think you have held back from the Lord (such as an ability, a possession, or block of time)?
- 28. What is one thing or area of your life that you have withheld from the Lord but want to give back to Him?
- 29. Which is more difficult for you, letting go of what won't last or giving your life to God? Why?
- 30. Whom do you know who is not swayed by others?
- 31. What can you do to become more like Christ?

### Apply It

- \* 32. What is a prayer you can use to give to God what belongs to Him?
- 33. In what ways can you stand up for the truth in your place of work this week?

## Marriage at the Resurrection - Mark 12:18-27

*Topics:* Angels, Death, Disagreements, Faith, Life, Marriage, Power, Questions, Resurrection

### Open It

- \* 1. What misconceptions do people often have about God?
- 2. How could a person's misunderstanding of God's character influence his or her attitude toward Christianity?
- 3. What is one thing you have learned about God that you did not understand when you were a child?

### Explore It

- \* 4. Who were the Sadducees, and what did they want from Jesus? (12:18)
- 5. What unique belief did the Sadducees have? (12:18)
- 6. How did the Sadducees address Jesus? (12:19)
- 7. What instruction of Moses did the Sadducees cite to support their theology about the Resurrection? (12:19)
- 8. What complicated scenario did the Sadducees develop to get Jesus' opinion about the Resurrection? (12:20-23)
- 9. What was the basic principle underlying the Sadducees' question? (12:23)
- 10. How did Jesus respond to the Sadducees' question? (12:24-27)
- \* 11. In what way were the Sadducees "in error"? (12:24-27)
- \* 12. What was wrong with the Sadducees' viewpoint? (12:24-27)
- 13. How will life in heaven differ from life on earth? (12:25)
- 14. What did God say to Moses "in the account of the bush"? (12:26)
- 15. How is God's description of His own character relevant to this discussion with the Sadducees? (12:26)
- 16. How did Jesus lend authority to His response to the Sadducees? (12:26)
- 17. What did Jesus mean when He referred to God as "not the God of the dead, but of the living"? (12:27)
- 18. How did Jesus show the Sadducees that the dead are raised? (12:26-27)

### Get It

- 19. Why did Jesus refer to the book of Moses in His response to the Sadducees?
- 20. How do you think the Sadducees reacted to Jesus' stern rebuke in this passage?
- \* 21. In what ways do you think Christians today misinterpret what the Scriptures actually say?
- \* 22. How can we guard against reading into Scripture what we want it to say?
- 23. What specifically can you do to prevent yourself from being as "badly mistaken" about what Jesus taught as the Sadducees were?
- 24. Over what issues do religious leaders disagree today?
- 25. How can we know who is right when we hear conflicting opinions about God or theology?
- 26. Do you think you "know the Scriptures" and "the power of God" in your life, and if not, what can you do to mature in these areas of your Christian walk?
- 27. What can you learn from the Sadducees' negative example in this episode?
- 28. What difference does it make to you that God "is not the God of the dead, but of the living"?
- 29. How could you benefit from the insight of another believer?

### Apply It

- \* 30. What concrete action would you be willing to take this week to get to know the Scriptures better?
- 31. How could you make a conscious effort to learn from those who are more informed about the

Scriptures and wiser than you?

32. How can you learn more about the Scriptures this week?

# The Greatest Commandment - Mark 12:28-34

*Topics:* Commitment, Devotion, God, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Love, Neighbor, Priorities, Sacrifice

## Open It

- \* 1. What do you remember about your very first next-door neighbor?
- 2. What responsibility do you feel toward your neighbors?
- 3. In what ways do you think Christians should treat their neighbors differently from the way non-Christians do?

## Explore It

- 4. Why did the teacher of the law come over to speak to Jesus? (12:28)
- \* 5. What significant question did the teacher of the law pose to Jesus? (12:28)
- \* 6. How did Jesus respond to the man's question? (12:29-31)
- 7. How did Jesus use Scripture in answering the question put to Him? (12:29-31)
- 8. What did Jesus say was the second most important commandment? (12:31)
- 9. How did the teacher of the law respond to Jesus' answer? (12:32)
- \* 10. How did the man speaking with Jesus show that He understood God's heart? (12:32-34)
- 11. What does God value more highly than sacrifices and offerings? (12:33)
- 12. How did Jesus evaluate the teacher's response to Him? (12:34)
- 13. What did Jesus mean when He said to the teacher, "You are not far from the kingdom of God"? (12-34)
- 14. How did the surrounding crowd react to this conversation? (12:34)

## Get It

- 15. What do you think motivated the teacher of the law to question Jesus?
- 16. Why do you think Jesus quoted Scripture to answer the question instead of replying with His own words?
- 17. How familiar do you think this passage Jesus quoted was to the teacher of the law?
- 18. Why do you think the teacher added a note about offerings and sacrifices to what Jesus had said?
- 19. Why do you think other people were too scared to ask Jesus questions after this conversation?
- 20. What does Jesus' treatment of this teacher of the law tell you about His own character and view of people?
- \* 21. What do "offerings and sacrifices" have to do with the greatest commandment?
- \* 22. What does it mean to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?
- 23. What do you think it means to "love your neighbor as yourself"?
- 24. How can we practice the greatest commandment in everyday life?
- 25. What modern-day religious practices would be like the burnt offerings and sacrifices to which the teacher of the law referred?
- 26. Why is wholehearted love for the Lord more important than outward actions that Christians practice today?
- 27. How does a person's love for God manifest itself in everyday life?

## Apply It

- 28. What specific steps can you take this week to deepen your relationship with the Lord and demonstrate your love for Him?
- \* 29. Who is one neighbor to whom you can show your love in a practical way this week? How?



## Whose Son Is the Christ? - Mark 12:35-40

**Topics:** Authority, Holy Spirit, Honor, Jesus Christ, Pride, Punishment, Self-centeredness, Self-righteousness, Status, Teaching

### Open It

1. How would you describe a good teacher?
2. What good teachers (whether school teachers, Sunday School teachers, pastors, parents, or others) have influenced you? How?
- \* 3. If you wanted to be noticed for being an especially good worker at your job, how would you go about doing it?

### Explore It

4. Where was Jesus teaching? (12:35)
5. What question did Jesus ask of His audience? (12:35)
6. What was significant about the passage Jesus quoted? (12:36)
7. In what way was the Holy Spirit involved in this account? (12:36)
8. What did Jesus point out from one of David's psalms? (12:36-37)
9. To whom was David referring in the Scripture Jesus quoted? (12:36)
10. What point was Jesus making by quoting David's words? (12:36)
11. How did the crowd respond to Jesus' teaching? (12:37)
12. How are the two parts of Jesus' teaching in this passage related? (12:35-40)
13. About whom did Jesus warn the crowds? (12:38)
- \* 14. Why did Jesus condemn the teachers of the law? (12:38-39)
- \* 15. What did the teachers of the law betray about themselves through their actions? (12:38-39)
16. How did the teachers of the law "devour widow's houses"? (12:40)
17. For what did Jesus condemn the teachers of the law? (12:40)
- \* 18. What did Jesus say would happen to the teachers of the law? (12:40)

### Get It

19. What difference does it make to you to know that the biblical writers were "speaking by the Holy Spirit" when they wrote the Scriptures?
20. What can you learn about the power and authority of the Messiah from Jesus' teaching in this passage?
- \* 21. What do Christians do that is like the actions of the teachers of the law described in this passage (such as walking around in flowing robes, being greeted in the marketplace, having the most important seats at the synagogues and places of honor at banquets)?
22. How do we let pride and self-seeking attitudes interfere with our Christian witness?
23. What is one specific way that you have let pride into your life?
- \* 24. What can we do to avoid being showy about our faith?
25. Who are the less fortunate people in our society who are vulnerable to exploitation, as were the widows in New Testament times?
26. What can churches do to guard against taking advantage of vulnerable people?
27. What specifically has the Lord convicted you of through Jesus' teaching in this passage?

### Apply It

- \* 28. What step can you take this week to pray, go to church, and do other spiritual devotions only out of a desire to please God?
29. What small act of kindness could you show to a less fortunate believer in your church this week?

## The Widow's Offering - Mark 12:41-44

*Topics:* Attitude, Generosity, Gifts, Giving Up, Money, Motives, Poor, Sacrifice, Tithing, Wealth

### Open It

1. In what ways are outward appearances misleading?
2. When was the last time you found out the true identity of an impostor or person who pretended to be something he or she was not?
- \* 3. What does it mean to be poor?

### Explore It

4. Where did the events of this story take place? (12:41)
5. Where did Jesus sit? (12:41)
6. What did Jesus see from where He sat near the temple? (12:41)
7. What did the "rich people" do at the temple treasury? (12:41)
8. What do the "rich people's" actions tell us about their motivation for giving? (12:41)
- \* 9. What did the "poor widow" give to the treasury? (12:42)
- \* 10. Why did Jesus call His disciples when He saw the widow put in her offering? (12:43)
- \* 11. How did Jesus compare the actions of the wealthy people to the actions of the poor woman? (12:43-44)
12. Why did the large amounts of money given by the rich people not impress Jesus? (12:44)
13. Why was the widow's gift so significant in Jesus' eyes? (12:44)

### Get It

14. Why do you think Jesus purposely sat near the temple treasury?
15. What central principle did Jesus focus on in this story?
- \* 16. How does God evaluate a person's giving?
17. What place does a person's motivation and attitude have in their giving to the Lord, according to Jesus' teaching in this passage?
18. How does Jesus evaluate your giving?
- \* 19. In what ways can we give to God?
20. Why do you think God wants us to give sacrificially?
21. What has been your attitude toward giving your money to the Lord?
22. When have you ever simply given out of your wealth instead of giving sacrificially to the Lord?
23. How do you need to change your attitude about giving?
24. What else does God want from us besides our material wealth?
25. What attitude should we have about giving of ourselves to the Lord?

### Apply It

26. What specific steps are you willing to take this week to give sacrificially to the Lord, of either your material wealth or your abilities and time?
- \* 27. How can you ensure that your attitude and motivation is right when you give to the Lord this week?

## Signs of the End of the Age - Mark 13:1-31

*Topics:* Family, Future, Gospel, Holy Spirit, Last Days, Persecution, Perseverance, Prophecy, Second Coming, War, Worry

### Open It

1. What have you read or been taught about the Second Coming of Christ?
- \* 2. Where do you see yourself ten years from now?
3. What do you find confusing or difficult to understand about what the Bible says about the future?

### Explore It

4. How did Jesus use the conversation of His disciples as an opportunity to teach? (13:1-2)
5. What did Jesus mean when He said the temple stones will be “thrown down”? (13:2)
- \* 6. What did Jesus’ disciples ask Him privately on the Mount of Olives? (13:3-4)
- \* 7. How did Jesus respond to His disciples’ question? (13:5-8)
8. What was Jesus’ main reason for telling His disciples what signs would precede the end of the age? (13:5)
9. How do we know Jesus was talking about a time still to come and not merely the fall of Jerusalem that took place in A.D. 70? (13:6-30)
10. Why did Jesus tell His disciples not to be alarmed when they would hear of wars? (13:7)
11. What must happen before Christ returns? (13:10)
12. How did Jesus tell His followers to act when they were arrested for their faith? (13:11)
13. What did Jesus tell His followers to do to be assured of eternal life? (13:12-13)
14. Where will “the elect” be during the “days of distress”? (12:19-20)
- \* 15. What will be the greatest temptation during the “days of distress”? (13:21-23)
16. What do Christ’s words “if that were possible” mean? (13:22)
17. What events will happen right before the Second Coming of Christ? (13:24-25)
18. What will Christ’s return be like? (13:26-27)
19. What did Jesus want us to learn from the blossoming of a fig tree? (13:28-29)
20. What did Jesus say we could count on happening? (13:29-30)

### Get It

21. Why do you think Jesus told His disciples not to worry about what to say whenever they were arrested for their faith?
22. Why do you think Jesus has told us “everything ahead of time” about His return and the end times?
- \* 23. What signs from this passage do you think have already been fulfilled?
24. What can we do to make Christ’s return closer?
25. How can we be involved in spreading the gospel to all nations?
26. How can a person be sure he or she is saved and will inherit eternal life?
27. How can we be on our guard against false Christs and false prophets who perform signs and miracles to deceive us?
28. How does the promise of the Holy Spirit’s active presence encourage you to follow Christ through difficult times?
- \* 29. What can we do to avoid being deceived by false teachings about God or spiritual matters?

### Apply It

- \* 30. What can you read or do this week to strengthen your hold on the truth about Christ?
31. What concrete action can you take to become more actively involved in telling others about Christ?

# The Day and Hour Unknown - Mark 13:32-37

*Topics:* Angels, Ignorance, Jesus Christ, Knowledge, Perseverance, Tasks, Waiting

## Open It

1. What is it like to wait for a guest who has not told you exactly when he or she will arrive?
- \* 2. Why is it so difficult to wait patiently for an exciting event (such as an upcoming party, vacation, or Christmas)?
3. How would you act differently if the exact time of an exciting upcoming event was unknown to you?

## Explore It

4. To what “day” was Christ referring? (13:32)
5. Why didn’t Christ tell us the exact time when He would return to earth? (13:32)
6. In what way did Jesus live by faith and obedience to the Father? (13:32)
- \* 7. What will Jesus’ return be like? How? (13:34)
8. What example did Jesus use to explain what His return to earth will be like? (13:34)
9. Who are the servants to which Christ referred? (13:34)
- \* 10. What should the “servants” do to occupy their time while they wait for the owner’s return? (13:34)
11. Who is the “owner of the house” in Jesus’ story? (13:34-35)
12. What conclusion did Jesus draw from the fact that the day of His return is secret? (13:35)
13. What might happen if the “owner of the house” returned suddenly and the servants were not watching carefully? (13:36)
- \* 14. What did Jesus want us to do? (13:37)

## Get It

15. Why do you think Jesus felt that being on guard was such an important point to emphasize to His disciples?
16. How does this passage emphasize the fact that even Jesus had to live by faith and obedience to the Father?
17. How can we follow Christ’s example of living in complete faith and obedience to the Father?
18. How does Jesus’ teaching in this passage relate to the previous section?
19. What task do you think God has given you until His return?
20. How do you think the disciples would have responded if Jesus had told them He would not return for at least another 2,000 years?
21. How might a detailed outline of future events be a hindrance, instead of a help, to our faith in God?
22. In light of Jesus’ words, how should we respond to those who try to set dates for the Second Coming of Christ?
23. How should we occupy our time as we wait for Christ to return?
- \* 24. What tends to distract us from living for Christ?
- \* 25. In what way do we need to be on guard until Christ returns?
26. Against what do we need to watch out?
27. What practical effect should the warnings of Jesus regarding His return have in your life?

## Apply It

- \* 28. How can you “keep watch” in your day-to-day activities at work?
29. What distractions might you be able to set aside from your life? How?
30. What is one pursuit you want to add to your routine in light of this passage?



## Jesus Anointed at Bethany - Mark 14:1-11

*Topics:* Beauty, Criticism, Devotion, Giving Up, Gospel, Judging Others, Love, Money, Poor, Preparation, Sacrifice

### Open It

- \* 1. When have you ever been criticized for doing something good?
- 2. What do you think motivates parents to sacrifice for their children?
- 3. What is one sacrifice you made for someone else?

### Explore It

- 4. When and where did the events of this story take place? (14:1-3)
- 5. Why did the Jewish leaders not want to arrest Jesus during the Feast of Unleavened Bread? (14:2)
- 6. What attitude did many of the common people have toward Jesus? (14:2)
- \* 7. What amazing thing did a woman do while Jesus was visiting Bethany? Where? (14:3)
- \* 8. What reaction did the woman's actions get? Why? (14:4-5)
- 9. What caused some people with Jesus to become indignant? (14:4-5)
- 10. What does this incident tell us about some people's understanding of who Jesus was and why He had come? (14:4-6)
- \* 11. Whom did Jesus rebuke? Why? (14:6)
- 12. How did Jesus evaluate the behavior of the woman who poured out the perfume? (14:6)
- 13. What did Jesus predict? (14:9)
- 14. What did Judas do? (14:10-11)
- 15. How did Judas betray Jesus? (14:10-11)
- 16. How did the chief priests react to Judas's visit? Why? (14:10-11)

### Get It

- \* 17. Why do you think the woman sacrificed so much perfume?
- 18. How would you have reacted if you had witnessed the woman pouring out a full year's wages' worth of perfume on someone's head?
- 19. In what way can a person betray Jesus?
- 20. What do you think might motivate a person to give up on Jesus, as Judas did?
- 21. When are Christians tempted to give up on their faith?
- 22. For what reasons do people reject Christ?
- \* 23. What can we learn about values from the woman in this story?
- 24. How can we demonstrate our devotion to Christ?
- 25. How should we deal with the criticism and scorn of unbelievers?
- 26. How should you respond when others rebuke or harshly criticize your actions?
- 27. How does Jesus want us to treat the poor?
- 28. What tends to distract you from being fully devoted to Christ?
- 29. What kinds of sacrifices can a person make for God?
- 30. What sacrifice do you think God wants you to make for the sake of the gospel?

### Apply It

- \* 31. What is one way you can show your devotion to Christ above all other things, people, or ambitions in your life? When?
- 32. What is one step you could take this week toward helping the poor in a practical way?

## The Lord's Supper - Mark 14:12-26

**Topics:** Deceit, Emotions, Judgment, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Lord's Supper, Preparation, Prophecy, Remembering, Sacrifice

### Open It

- \* 1. What is one ceremony or observance that is important to you?
- 2. How does your church celebrate the Lord's Supper?

### Explore It

- 3. When did the events of this story take place? (14:12)
- 4. What did Jesus' disciples ask Him? (14:12)
- 5. How did Jesus make the arrangements for the Passover meal? (14:13)
- 6. Whom did Jesus send to make the arrangements for the Passover meal? (14:13)
- 7. What specific instructions did Jesus give the disciples He sent out? (14:13-15)
- 8. How did Jesus' predictions compare to what the disciples actually found when they got into the city? (14:16)
- 9. What was the reaction of the disciples to Jesus' prediction of His betrayal? (14:19)
- 10. How did Jesus specify who would betray Him? (14:20-21)
- \* 11. The central emphasis of the Passover meal was traditionally the sacrificial lamb; where did Jesus place His emphasis? (14:22-24)
- \* 12. What important announcement did Jesus make? (14:25)
- \* 13. How did Jesus and the disciples conclude their Passover meal? (14:26)

### Get It

- 14. Why do you think Jesus made arrangements for the Passover meal in such a secretive manner?
- 15. Why do you think Jesus told His disciples that one of them would betray Him?
- 16. How does the fulfillment of Jesus' predictions in this account encourage you to trust Him?
- 17. When have you had opportunity to trust God with your future?
- 18. Why do you think God seldom chooses to reveal the future to us?
- 19. What does the account of Judas's betrayal of Jesus tell us about God's sovereignty?
- 20. What does the account of Judas's betrayal of Jesus tell us about our accountability to God?
- 21. What causes Christians to betray or reject Christ after following Him for a while?
- \* 22. What can we learn about the practice of Communion through this passage?
- \* 23. Why is Communion or the Lord's Supper important?
- 24. How does God want us to use the Lord's Supper?
- 25. How does the old covenant God made with Israel compare or differ with the new covenant He has made through the blood of Jesus Christ?
- 26. What difference should it make in your everyday life that Jesus sacrificed His body and blood for your eternal salvation?

### Apply It

- \* 27. What are two or three steps you can take to prepare for the next time you celebrate the Lord's Supper?
- 28. What do you want to remember the next time you take the Lord's Supper?
- 29. How can you say thank you to Jesus each day this week for the suffering He endured for you?
- 30. How can you trust Christ with the circumstances you do not yet understand?

## Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial - Mark 14:27-31

*Topics:* Death, Denial, Determination, Faith, Fear, Forsake, Prophecy, Rejection

### Open It

1. What is one fact about the future you wish you knew?
2. What is one part of your past you wish you could do over?
- \* 3. What is one institution, person, or organization to which you have felt loyal over the years? Why?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What did Jesus reveal to His disciples? (14:27)
5. How would Jesus' prediction fulfill Scripture? (14:27)
6. What did Jesus quote? Why? (14:27)
7. To what "shepherd" and "sheep" did Jesus refer? Why? (14:27)
8. What information did Jesus give the disciples? (14:28)
- \* 9. How did Peter respond to Christ's words? (14:29)
10. What was Peter's state of mind when Jesus predicted that the disciples would betray Him? (14:29)
- \* 11. What did Jesus say about Peter's loyalty? (14:30)
12. What was the reaction when Jesus said that Peter would disown Him? (14:31)
13. What did Peter claim? (14:31)
14. What do the disciples' reactions tell us about them? (14:31)

### Get It

15. What does the verse that Jesus quoted mean: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered"?
16. Why do you think Jesus sometimes chose to reveal to His disciples what would happen in the future and at other times left them in the dark?
17. Why do you think Jesus told Peter that he was not as faithful a friend as he assumed?
18. What is the benefit in knowing we are vulnerable to failure?
19. Why do you think Peter boasted of his loyalty to Christ?
20. In what ways do Christians declare their loyalty to Christ?
21. Why do some Christians fall away from following Christ?
- \* 22. What specific area of your life most tests your loyalty to Christ?
23. What can we do to strengthen our commitment to Christ?
- \* 24. What exactly can we do to stay committed to Jesus in the face of testing or suffering?
25. What role does accountability play in helping Christians remain loyal to Christ?
26. How should you react if another believer falls away from his or her faith?
27. What difference does it make that all of Jesus' predictions about the future came true?
28. What can we learn from this passage about Jesus' character and attitude?

### Apply It

29. In what way can you show your dependence on God for the strength to follow Christ?
- \* 30. What can you do over the next week to renew and strengthen your faith in Christ?



## Gethsemane - Mark 14:32-42

*Topics:* Depression, Despair, Giving Up, Pain, Prayer, Solitude, Sorrow

### Open It

- \* 1. How have your friends helped you through difficult times in your life?
- 2. What is it like to have a friend let you down when you really need support?
- 3. Who has been a faithful friend to you during difficult times in your life?

### Explore It

- 4. Where did the events of this story take place? (14:32)
- 5. What did Jesus tell the disciples to do? (14:32)
- 6. Who did Jesus take with him to pray? (14:33)
- \* 7. What emotions was Jesus feeling? (14:33-34)
- 8. What do Jesus' actions at this time tell us about His character? (14:33-34)
- 9. Why was Jesus so distressed and troubled? (14:33-34)
- 10. What did Jesus do in response to His deep sorrow? (14:35-36)
- 11. What "hour" did Jesus pray to "pass from Him"? (14:35-36)
- 12. What does Jesus' prayer tell us about His relationship to God the Father? (14:36)
- \* 13. What distressed Jesus when He returned to His disciples? (14:37)
- 14. What did Jesus find when He returned to the disciples who were keeping watch? (14:37)
- 15. How did Jesus instruct the disciples to prevent themselves from falling into temptation? (14:38)
- \* 16. Why did the disciples have so much trouble praying with Jesus? (14:38)
- 17. How did Jesus explain the difference between the spirit and the body? (14:38)
- 18. What caused the disciples to be speechless when Christ returned to them the second time? (14:40)
- 19. When did Jesus stop praying? (14:41-42)
- 20. What caused Jesus to stop praying? (14:41-42)

### Explore It

- 21. Why do you think Jesus chose three disciples to pray with Him?
- 22. What does the fact that God did not grant Jesus' request teach us about prayer?
- 23. If Mark's readers were Roman Christians undergoing persecution, what would this section of his Gospel say to them?
- 24. How does this passage encourage you to react when you feel distressed or troubled?
- 25. What about Christ's humanity can we learn from this event in His life?
- 26. What difference does it make that Jesus experienced such despair and pain firsthand?
- 27. What can we learn about prayer from Jesus' example?
- 28. When do you need to pray?
- \* 29. Why didn't the disciples watch and pray with Jesus as He asked them to?
- 30. What was the difference between the disciples' intentions and their actions?
- \* 31. What stops us from helping people in need?
- 32. What human weaknesses make it hard for us to do what God wants?
- 33. How should you pray when you must face a difficult or painful task?
- 34. How can we trust God with our extremely difficult circumstances?
- 35. What does it mean to "watch and pray"?
- 36. How can we prevent ourselves from falling into temptation?

### Apply It

- 37. Who is someone you can ask to help you overcome a weakness?
- 38. What needs of others will you commit yourself to pray for during this next week?

\* 39. How can you support a friend or relative facing a difficult task this week?

## Jesus Arrested - Mark 14:43-52

*Topics:* Armor, Fear, Friendship, Hypocrisy, Persecution, Rebellion

### Open It

1. When have you ever been blamed for something you did not do?
- \* 2. What is one friendship you once had that went sour?
3. What does it feel like to be wrongly accused?

### Explore It

4. Who was Judas? (14:43-44)
5. Who accompanied Judas to Gethsemane? Why? (14:43-44)
6. How did the religious leaders treat Jesus? (14:43-46)
7. Why did the religious leaders bring a large, armed force to arrest Jesus? (14:43-48)
8. What signal had Judas prearranged with the armed leaders to identify Jesus? (14:44)
9. How did Judas greet Jesus? Why? (14:44-45)
10. In what way were Judas's actions contradictory? (14:44-45)
11. How did one of Jesus' disciples (we know from John 18:10 that it was Peter) react to the arrest of Jesus? (14:47)
- \* 12. How did Jesus respond to the sight of the armed men? (14:48-49)
13. How was Jesus' response to this situation different from that of His followers? (14:48-50)
14. What had to happen? (14:49)
- \* 15. Who fled the scene? When? (14:50-52)
- \* 16. What is significant about the fact that all of Jesus' followers deserted Him? (14:50-52)

### Get It

17. What do we know about Judas from this passage?
18. What kind of person was Judas?
19. In what way was Judas hypocritical?
20. In what way is Judas a negative example to all of us?
21. In what ways are we like Judas in the way we treat Jesus?
22. What do Peter's actions tell us about his character and his understanding of Jesus?
23. How do you think Jesus must have felt about the fact that His disciples deserted him?
- \* 24. Why did Jesus' disciples desert Him?
25. When are you most tempted to compromise your commitment to Christ?
- \* 26. How can we prepare for times when our dedication to Christ is tested?
27. How can we guard against saying one thing and doing another?
28. How does Jesus' perseverance in this situation encourage you to endure your difficult circumstances?
29. What can we learn about Jesus' character from His actions?
30. When have you ever felt that all of your friends deserted you?
31. What difference does it make to you that Jesus was deserted by all of His friends?
32. How can you lean on Jesus when you go through very distressing and frightening experiences?

### Apply It

- \* 33. What can you do now to prepare for times when your dedication to Christ is tested at work, at home, or around neighbors?
34. What friend can you support through a difficult situation? How?

## Before the Sanhedrin - Mark 14:53-65

*Topics:* Blasphemy, Confession, Death, Evidence, Fear, Messiah, Persecution, Punishment, Silence, Testing, Witnessing

### Open It

- \* 1. When was the last time you were misunderstood or misinterpreted?
- 2. What do you think is good or bad about capital punishment?

### Explore It

- 3. Before whom did Jesus have to stand trial? (14:53)
- 4. Who followed Jesus as He was being led away? How? (14:54)
- \* 5. What did the men of the Sanhedrin want to do to Jesus? Why? (14:55)
- 6. Why did the Sanhedrin have such a difficult time convicting Jesus? (14:55-59)
- \* 7. What testimony did some witnesses bring against Jesus? (14:57-58)
- 8. How did the high priest try to get Jesus to answer the questions put to Him? (14:60)
- \* 9. What was Jesus' response to all the accusations against Him? (14:61)
- 10. How did Jesus use silence during all the testimony against Him? (14:61)
- 11. What did the high priest finally do in an attempt to speed up the trial? (14:61)
- 12. When did Jesus choose to speak? (14:62)
- 13. What did Jesus tell the Sanhedrin? (14:62)
- 14. Why did the high priest respond with such shock to Jesus' testimony? (14:63-64)
- 15. What did the Sanhedrin consider blasphemy? (14:64)
- 16. To what punishment did the Sanhedrin sentence Jesus? Why? (14:64)
- 17. How did the people in the courtroom abuse Jesus after He was sentenced to death? (14:65)

### Get It

- 18. Why do you think Peter followed Jesus "at a distance"?
- 19. What emotions do you think Peter felt as he was following Jesus?
- 20. When have you ever felt that circumstances had gone beyond your control?
- 21. What should we do when circumstances are beyond our control?
- \* 22. How do you think Jesus felt during His trial? Why?
- 23. Why do you think Jesus chose to remain silent throughout the initial testimony against Him?
- 24. What can we learn about dealing with stress and fear from Jesus' example?
- \* 25. What can we learn about dealing with false accusations from Jesus' example?
- 26. What difference does it make to you that Jesus will one day return?
- 27. What do we learn about Jesus from this trial?
- 28. How can we live our lives blamelessly as Jesus did?

### Apply It

- \* 29. How do you want to react the next time you are falsely accused or tricked?
- 30. What specific steps can you take this week to entrust your circumstances to God?

## Peter Disowns Jesus - Mark 14:66-72

*Topics:* Deceit, Dishonesty, Embarrassment, Fear, Jesus Christ, Rejection, Relationships, Sorrow, Witnessing

### Open It

1. What subjects do most people try to avoid in polite company? Why?
- \* 2. What is one fact about you that most people don't know?

### Explore It

3. Where did the events of this story take place? (14:66)
4. What was Peter doing at this critical time? (14:66)
5. How do we know Peter was concerned for Jesus? (14:66)
6. What was the servant girl's opinion of Jesus? (14:66-69)
- \* 7. How did Peter's denial of Christ happen? (14:66-72)
8. Who confronted Peter about his association with Jesus? (14:67)
9. How did Peter respond to the servant girl's questioning? (14:68, 70)
10. Why did Peter move "out into the entryway"? (14:68)
11. Who else besides the servant girl confronted Peter? Why? (14:70)
- \* 12. Who in the courtyard was curious and insistent about finding out who Jesus' followers were? (14:66-70)
13. How did Peter respond to the third question about whether he was a follower of Christ? (14:71)
14. Why did Peter cry? (14:72)
15. What reminded Peter of Jesus' words to Him earlier? (14:72)
- \* 16. How did Peter react when he realized what he had done? (14:72)

### Get It

17. What does this story tell us about Peter?
18. Why do you think Peter denied knowing Christ?
19. What does this story tell us about human nature?
20. What does this story tell you about you?
21. What different kinds of reactions have you received when you have told others about your faith in Christ?
22. Why are Christians sometimes afraid to identify themselves as believers in Christ?
23. Why are Christians sometimes afraid to tell non-Christian friends about Christ?
- \* 24. In what sorts of situations are you sometimes uncomfortable or fearful about identifying with Christ or Christianity?
25. What can we learn about the cost of being Christ's disciple from this passage?
26. How do other people's attitudes toward Christ affect your willingness to talk about your Christian faith?
- \* 27. How can you affirm your faith in Christ in situations where others may be indifferent or hostile to it?

### Apply It

- \* 28. In what situation or context will you consciously identify with Christ publicly this week? How?
29. What person do you need to tell of your faith in Christ? When can you?

# Jesus Before Pilate - Mark 15:1-15

*Topics:* Compromise, Envy, Injustice, Judgment, Leadership, Peer Pressure, Reputation

## Open It

1. In what situations have you felt the power of a group?
2. When have you ever been influenced by the opinions of a group?
- \* 3. What sort of reputation did you have in high school?

## Explore It

4. When did the members of the Sanhedrin decide what to do with Jesus? (15:1)
5. What did all the religious leaders decide to do with Jesus? (15:1)
6. What did the Sanhedrin do with Jesus after deciding He was guilty? (15:1)
7. About what did Pilate question Jesus? (15:2)
8. How did Jesus respond to the Sanhedrin and Pilate? (15:2)
- \* 9. What prompted Pilate to goad Jesus about defending Himself? (15:3-4)
10. What amazed Pilate? (15:3-5)
- \* 11. How did Jesus react to the accusations raised against Him by the chief priests? (15:5)
12. What did Pilate think of Jesus? (15:5)
13. Who was Barabbas and what role did he play in this situation? (15:6-8)
14. What did the crowd ask Pilate to do for them? (15:8, 13)
15. Why did Pilate try to have Jesus released instead of Barabbas? How? (15:9-10)
16. Why did Pilate's attempt to release Jesus fail? (15:11-15)
17. What reason did the crowd give Pilate to crucify Jesus? (15:14)
18. How did the crowd influence Pilate's decision? (15:15)
- \* 19. What finally happened to Jesus? Why? (15:15)

## Get It

20. Of those involved in trying and sentencing Jesus, who do you think bore the greater responsibility: the religious leaders or Pilate? Why?
21. Why do you think the Sanhedrin handed Jesus over to Pilate?
22. How did Jesus' enemies use lies and false accusations against Him?
23. How did Jesus' enemies manipulate public opinion against Him?
24. Why was Pilate amazed by Jesus' behavior?
25. Why do you think Pilate did what the crowd wanted?
26. When have you ever done something because the crowd pressured you to do it?
27. Why is group pressure so powerful?
28. What is difficult about standing up to the crowd?
29. Where do you often feel pressured by others to go against your Christian beliefs?
30. How can we remember to respond properly when pressured by the crowd?
31. Why didn't Jesus defend Himself?
- \* 32. When is it unimportant to defend ourselves or our actions?
33. What is difficult about being unpopular or disliked by a group?
34. Why is it so difficult to trust God with our reputation?
- \* 35. In what way can you entrust your reputation to God?

## Apply It

- \* 36. What reminder can you use this week to entrust your reputation to God each day?
37. What is one step you can take this week to strengthen your conviction against pressure from coworkers, friends, or family?



## The Soldiers Mock Jesus - Mark 15:16-20

*Topics:* Criticism, Endurance, Humiliation, Pain, Persecution, Sacrifice, Suffering

### Open It

1. How have your friends encouraged you during difficult times in your life?
- \* 2. What kids do you remember being mocked or put down when you were in elementary school?
3. What do you think it would be like to go through a painful experience without the support of your friends or family?

### Explore It

4. Where did the soldiers take Jesus after His trial with Pilate? (15:16)
5. Who was present there in the palace? (15:16)
6. Once Jesus had been tried, convicted, and sentenced, who mocked and struck Him? (15:16-20)
7. What kind of suffering did Jesus undergo even before being crucified? (15:16-20)
- \* 8. What did the soldiers do to Jesus? (15:17-20)
9. Why did the soldiers put a purple robe and a crown on Jesus? (15:17)
- \* 10. What did the soldiers say in mockery of Jesus? (15:18)
- \* 11. Why did the soldiers fall on their knees before Jesus? (15:19)
12. How did the soldiers hurt Jesus? (15:17-20)
13. What do the soldiers' actions tell us about their understanding of who Jesus really was? (15:17-20)

### Get It

14. What do you think the soldiers had heard about Jesus?
15. How do you think the soldiers' actions affected Jesus emotionally?
- \* 16. What difference does it make that Jesus endured harsh ridicule and pain for our sake?
17. When have you been ridiculed for being a Christian?
18. How does it feel to be mocked by others?
- \* 19. How should we respond when others mock our faith?
20. How can we show our appreciation to Jesus for enduring such humiliation for us?
21. What can we learn from Jesus about how to deal with pain and suffering?
22. Why does God allow us to suffer?
23. For what Christians who are suffering for their faith can you pray?

### Apply It

- \* 24. What should be your response if you are criticized for your faith this week?
25. What could you say or do to encourage another believer who is suffering for his or her faith?



## The Crucifixion - Mark 15:21-32

*Topics:* Atonement, Endurance, Giving Up, Insults, Jesus Christ, Pain, Sacrifice, Salvation, Suffering, Temptation

### Open It

1. What is one of your favorite symbols? Why?
- \* 2. What do people mean when they say that someone “did not die in vain”?
3. When you see a cross in or on a church building, what usually comes to mind?

### Explore It

4. Who was Simon of Cyrene? (15:21)
5. What role did Simon of Cyrene play in Jesus’ life? (15:21)
- \* 6. Why did Jesus not carry the cross Himself? (15:21)
7. What did the soldiers offer Jesus once they reached the place where He would be crucified? (15:23)
8. What offer of help did Jesus refuse? (15:23)
9. What did the soldiers do with Jesus’ clothes? (15:24)
10. What was significant about the notice that was placed on the cross above Jesus? (15:26)
11. Who was crucified with Jesus? (15:27)
- \* 12. How did the people insult Jesus when He was on the cross? (15:29-30)
13. What did the teachers of the law say about Jesus while He was dying? How? (15:31-32)
- \* 14. What challenge did Jesus ignore? (15:31-32)

### Get It

15. Why do you think Jesus refused to accept a drink that could deaden His pain?
- \* 16. What kind of suffering did Jesus endure for us?
17. What emotions do you think Jesus felt as He was led away and crucified?
18. Simon’s encounter with Jesus was very unusual; how did you first “encounter Christ”?
19. When have you ever experienced apparently “random” events in your life, that upon later reflection showed God’s sovereign will being worked out in you?
20. How can you thank the Lord for the hidden ways He works in your life?
21. Jesus was closely identified with criminals during His death; what significance does this have to you?
22. How would your life be different if Jesus had taken up the challenge of the religious leaders and come down off the cross?
23. What emotions do you feel when you think about the crucifixion of Christ?
24. Why is this tragic story about Christ called “good news”?
25. What has Christ’s sacrifice accomplished for you?
26. What did Jesus do for every person with His death on the cross?
- \* 27. What did Jesus do for you with His death on the cross?

### Apply It

- \* 28. What is one way you can say thank you to Jesus for paying for your sins?
29. With what one person can you share the good news of Christ’s sacrifice? How?

# The Death of Jesus - Mark 15:33-41

**Topics:** Believe, Death, Forsake, Jesus Christ, Loneliness, Miracles, Reconciliation, Sacrifice, Suffering

## Open It

- \* 1. At what time in your life have you felt most lonely?
- 2. What is your first recollection of dealing with the death of a pet or grandparent?

## Explore It

- 3. What unusual occurrence took place as Jesus was dying? (15:33)
- \* 4. What did Jesus say “at the ninth hour”? (15:34)
- 5. What do Jesus’ words at the ninth hour reveal about how He was feeling right before He died? (15:34)
- \* 6. What did Jesus mean when He said that God had “forsaken” Him? (15:34)
- \* 7. How did the bystanders misunderstand what Jesus was going through? (15:35)
- 8. What offer of help did Jesus receive? (15:36)
- 9. What does the fact that Jesus twice cried out in a loud voice tell us about the way He died? (15:34, 37)
- 10. What happened right after Jesus’ death? (15:38)
- 11. How did the centurion react to Jesus’ crucifixion and death? (15:39)
- 12. What caused the centurion to believe in Jesus? (15:39)
- 13. Who watched Christ’s crucifixion from a distance? Why? (15:40-41)

## Get It

- 14. What do you think motivated one man to offer Jesus a drink of wine vinegar?
- 15. What does it mean that the curtain of the temple tore?
- 16. What did the tearing of the temple curtain symbolize?
- 17. What difference does Jesus’ death make in your life?
- 18. What did Jesus’ words on the cross mean?
- \* 19. What kind of isolation did Jesus experience in His death on the cross?
- 20. How can we draw encouragement from the loneliness Jesus endured?
- \* 21. In what way can following Christ or doing what God wants be a lonely experience?
- 22. How does it make you feel to know that Christ endured such intense suffering for your salvation?
- 23. What significance is there for you in the fact that a Roman soldier recognized the great truth that even the religious leaders could not see?
- 24. How has your study of this passage changed your perception of Jesus?
- 25. In what way is every person indebted to Christ?

## Apply It

- 26. What can you do as a reminder of what Christ did for you?
- \* 27. When might you have to face loneliness as a part of following Christ this week?

## The Burial of Jesus - Mark 15:42-47

*Topics:* Body, Courage, Humanness, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Love, Respect, Risk, Status

### Open It

1. How might you comfort a person grieving over the death of a loved one?
2. What is most comforting to you when you are feeling upset?
- \* 3. Who is the most courageous person you know?

### Explore It

4. When did the events described in this passage take place? (15:42)
- \* 5. Who was Joseph? (15:43)
6. What kind of person took it upon himself to bury Jesus' body? (15:43)
7. What was significant about the fact that Joseph asked for Jesus' body? (15:43)
8. What kind of man was Joseph of Arimathea? (15:43)
9. What was courageous about what Joseph did? (15:43)
- \* 10. What risks did Joseph take in approaching Pilate? (15:43)
- \* 11. What do Joseph's actions tell us about his own understanding of Jesus? (15:43-46)
12. What took Pilate by surprise? (15:44)
13. How did Pilate respond to Joseph's request? (15:45)
14. What did Joseph do to Jesus' body? (15:46)
15. Who witnessed Jesus' burial? (15:47)

### Get It

16. Why do you think Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus had died?
17. Why do you think Mark mentioned that two women saw where Jesus was buried?
18. What was exemplary about Joseph?
19. What was courageous about what Joseph did?
- \* 20. What did Joseph risk in burying Jesus' body?
21. What do you risk in being a follower of Christ?
- \* 22. In what situations might doing the right thing require courage?
23. How did Joseph's position and status conflict with his actions?
24. In what way does being a Christian go against what people expect of you?
25. How can we follow Joseph's example?

### Apply It

- \* 26. What step of courage can you take in serving God this week?
27. What person or reminder can help you draw courage to do what God wants?

## The Resurrection - Mark 16:1-20

*Topics:* Believe, Criticism, Doubt, Faith, Fear, Gospel, Heaven, Joy, Life, Miracles, Resurrection, Witnessing

### Open It

1. What is the most extraordinary event you have ever witnessed?
2. What does the saying mean, "Truth is stranger than fiction"?
- \* 3. What is one piece of news you heard today?
4. From whom do you like to hear regularly?

### Explore It

5. Why did the women go to Jesus' tomb? (16:1)
6. What question was at the back of the women's minds as they traveled to the tomb? (16:2)
- \* 7. What did the women see when they got to the tomb? (16:4)
8. Who was the "young man" in the tomb? (16:5)
9. How did the women react to the man dressed in white? (16:6, 8)
- \* 10. What did the angel tell the women to do? (16:6-7)
11. To whom did the angel want the women to tell his message? (16:7)
- \* 12. Why did the women flee from the tomb and not tell anyone what they had witnessed? (16:8)
13. To whom did the resurrected Jesus appear first? (16:9)
14. How did Jesus' disciples respond each time someone told them that He had risen from the dead? (16:11-12)
15. Why did Jesus rebuke the disciples when He first saw them? (16:14)
16. What instructions did Jesus give to His followers? (16:15-18)
17. What happened to Jesus after He was taken up into heaven? (16:19)
18. What did the disciples do after Jesus had left earth to return to heaven? (16:20)

### Get It

19. Why do you think the resurrected Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene?
20. What would you have thought and felt if you had entered Jesus' empty tomb?
21. What can we learn from this passage about the importance of baptism?
22. What is at stake when a person first hears about Christ?
23. What difference has the ascended Lord made in your life this past year?
24. In what ways has your view of Jesus Christ changed as a result of studying this part of Mark's Gospel?
- \* 25. What is the responsibility of every Christian in fulfilling Christ's command to tell others about Him?
- \* 26. What do you see as your personal role in helping spread the news about Christ?
27. How does the Lord "confirm His word" through Christians today?
28. What causes us to have a lack of faith in God or a "stubborn refusal to believe"?
29. What does it mean to have faith in God?
30. How do you celebrate Easter?

### Apply It

31. What is one concrete step of faith you can take this week in your life at work, among your family, or in your personal life?
- \* 32. What can you do this week to obey Christ's command to "preach the good news to all creation"?
33. How can you honor the resurrected Christ next Easter?