

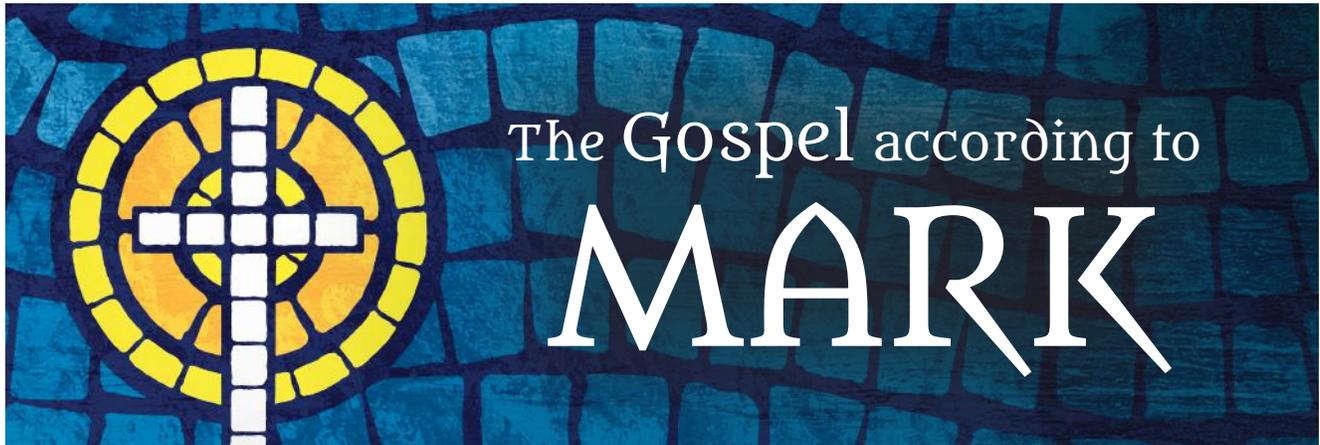
The Gospel according to

# MARK



The CROWN &  
CROSS of Christ

PART 1



Study written by  
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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*  
Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

Mark begins his book with these words: *The beginning of the **gospel** of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.* **Gospel** means good news. Mark tells that the Old Testament Prophets (1:2-3), John the Baptist (1:7), and God himself (1:11) affirm the beginning of this *gospel of Jesus Christ*. As we study Mark 1, we'll learn more about what they each say about Jesus.

Read Mark 1:1-13

1. Who does Mark tell us Jesus is in verse 1? The Greek word "Christ" and the Hebrew word "Messiah" mean "anointed one." What does "anointed one" mean and what meaning does this add to Jesus's identity?
  
2. In Mark 1:2-3, Mark reminds us of the words of Old Testament Prophets Isaiah and Malachi. Read Isaiah 40:1-11 and Malachi 3:1-2. How was their prophesy fulfilled in Mark 1:4-8 and what do they tell us about Jesus? How do these prophesies help us better understand the gospel of the Kingdom of God? (In the introduction to this study, we learn why understanding the context of Israel's story is important as we read the gospels. Take a look at the introduction to learn more.)

3. What is John's message? How does that relate with Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3? (Compare Exodus 23:20 and 2 Kings 1:8.)

4. As we read verses 9-11, we learn some important details about the baptism of Jesus. Write down these details. (Who was there, where were they, what did they see, what did they hear, who spoke, how did nature respond?)

5. **Optional: Take a deeper dive into the Trinity:** Think more about who is involved in the events that take place in these verses and the role they played. Where else in scripture do we see the Trinity at work? (You might start with Gen 1:2 and John 17:4-5.)

As you meditate on the verses in Question 7 and other verses, make a list below of what you have learned about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What characterizes the way they interact with one another? What do they say about each other?

Characteristics of the Interactions between God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit:

How does what you learned encourage you? Challenge you?

One of the truths that we begin to see as we consider the interactions of the Father, Son, and Spirit is that they glorify each other. They each put the other at the center, finding ways to exalt, honor, and serve each other. In his book, *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis describes the Trinity in this way "in Christianity God is not a static thing ... but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of dance." (175 Lewis Pte Ltd, 1996).

Taking this thought a little further, Tim Keller, in *King's Cross* (8-9), says this, "Instead of self-centeredness, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are characterized in their very essence by *mutually self-giving love*. No person in the Trinity insists that the others revolve around him; rather each of them voluntarily circles and orbits around the others. If this is the ultimate reality, if this is what the God who made the universe is like, then this truth bristles and explodes with life-shaping, glorious implications for us. *If this world was made by a triune God, relationships of love are what life is really all about.*"

6. As he transitions from Jesus's baptism to the beginning of his ministry here on earth, Mark describes an interaction between Satan and Jesus in verses 12-13. What is Satan's goal? Why is it significant they are in the wilderness?

7. **Optional: Take a deeper dive: Who is Satan?** Reflect on the temptation of Jesus. Satan is not a symbol, but a real being. What do the following verses tell us about Satan?

Ezekiel 28:14-17

John 8:44

Ephesians 2:1-3

1 Peter 5:8-9

Revelation 20:1-6

8. Luke's gospel gives a parallel account to the story found in Mark. What does Luke tell us in 4:1-13 about the weapon Jesus uses to fight this battle?

9. Was Jesus left alone to fight this battle? Who was with him (see verse 12)? What is the significance of wild animals (verse 15)?

10. Several significant accounts are recorded in Mark 1:1-14. Take a few minutes to summarize these accounts. Think about why Mark begin his Gospel in this way.

As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus's kingship do you see in this lesson?

## LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

11. What is the gospel message that John the Baptist proclaimed? Who in your life needs to hear this gospel right now?

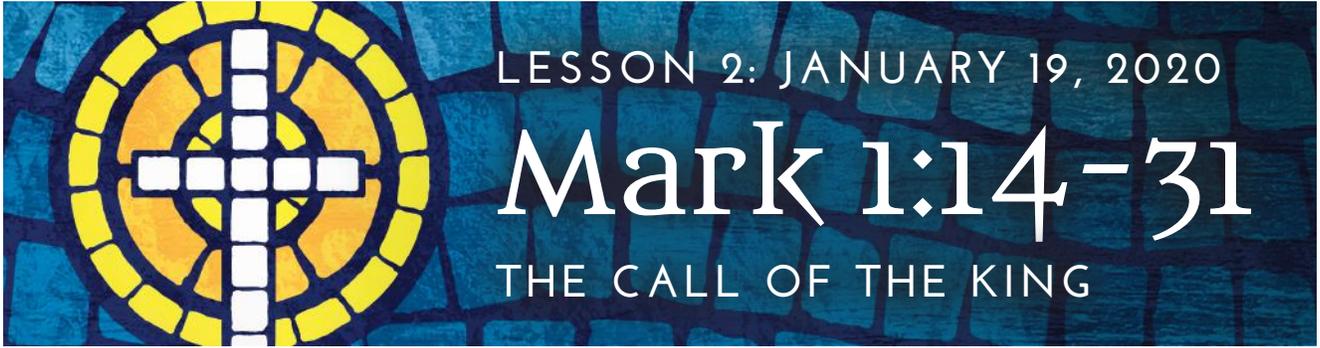
12. Where are we in the story?

*Take heart: Our triune God shows us a relationship built on love and he invites us into this life with Him. Take a moment to praise Him for who he is and thank him for his love. How might you extend the love God has shown you to others?*

13. As men and women who are made in the image of God, how are we to relate to those around us, both inside and outside of the church? What does this actually *look like* in your life?

14. In what ways do Satan's lies still try to deceive us today? What truth do we find in God's Word that combats the lies of the evil one (see Ephesians 6:11-16)? Think of some tools that you might add to your *arsenal of truth* that you can use in this battle.

How does speaking God's truth to ourselves and others impact the way we fight (or live in) the battle?



LESSON 2: JANUARY 19, 2020

Mark 1:14-31

THE CALL OF THE KING

*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes



3. Jesus says "the kingdom of God is at hand." A key word in this statement is *kingdom*. What is Jesus talking about here?

Whose kingdom?

What did Jesus want his listeners to understand?

What do these verses add to your understanding of kingdom?

Psalms 103:19

Matthew 28:18

Luke 1:30-33

John 18:36-37

Acts 17:7

Revelation 15:3

Acts 1:6-8

4. Another key word in Jesus's commands is **repent**. Why does Jesus command his listeners to repent? What is he asking them (us) to do? (Hint: how does this relate to the messenger who prepares the way in 1:2-4?)

5. Jesus says "**repent** and **believe**." To **repent** is to turn away from our sin, but it's not enough to just turn away. Jesus wants us to turn toward something. He wants us to **believe**, to *turn toward the gospel* and acknowledge that the gospel is true. To understand this better, we need to define **gospel**. Read the verses and watch the videos referenced below as you answer the question *What is the gospel?*

1 Corinthians 1:17-18 and 15:3-4

Luke 4:16-19 (Isaiah 61)

Acts 10:34-43

Acts 13:13-52

Watch these videos from the Gospel Coalition to help you create a definition of the gospel:  
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/what-is-the-gospel#summary-and-definitions-of-the-gospel>.  
(You may also want to purchase Greg Gilbert's insightful book *What is the Gospel?*)

Write your definition of the gospel here:

Compare your definition of the gospel to the one given in the introduction. What excites you about the gospel? Do you believe it? Do you talk about it?

6. One of the implications of the gospel is that Jesus invites others to take part in proclaiming his good news. In Mark 1:16-19, Mark gives us some information about who Jesus calls to follow him. Who are they? What is their profession?

7. Write down the words that Jesus says to them. What does he command and what does he promise? How do we see that Jesus is the continuation and culmination of Israel's story? (See Jeremiah 16:14-21.)

8. Does Jesus have any expectations for them regarding his call? In other words, what does he expect them to do?

9. How do they respond to Jesus and how long did it take them to respond?

*It's important to note that Jesus is the one who goes to them. Jesus is doing the calling. The disciples are the ones who follow. In the Jewish culture, students chose rabbis. If there was a rabbi that they wanted to study under, they would go to that rabbi and ask to study with them. In Mark's gospel, we see that Jesus is different than a regular rabbi. His authority is greater. Only the ones Jesus calls can have a relationship with him.*

10. Understanding what a disciple is will help us as we learn more about what Jesus has called his disciples to and what it means for those of us who are his disciples. Look up the following verses and record what they teach about being a disciple.

What is a disciple?

Matthew 28:18-20

Matthew 10:16-33

Mark 8:31-38; John 6:40

John 15

Acts 14:21-23

11. Summarize what you have learned about being a disciple of Jesus.

12. In Mark 1:21, Jesus and his newly called disciples go to Capernaum, a fishing town on the north shore of the sea of Galilee. Where did they go when they got there?
13. How does Mark describe Jesus's teaching and how did the people respond in verse 22?
14. Can you think of some reasons why Jesus's teaching was different from the scribes and other teachers in the synagogue?
15. Jesus's teaching greatly disturbed one of the men in the synagogue. Describe the encounter between Jesus and this man in verses 23-27.

As you answer, think about these questions:

*Who did the man say Jesus was?*

*How did he know this about Jesus?*

*What did he ask Jesus?*

*Why did Jesus rebuke him?*

*Why did Jesus tell him to be silent?*

16. Read Mark 1:27-28. What are the people saying about Jesus?

17. Mark 1:29-31 show us another side of Jesus. How does he respond to Simon's mother-in-law? What do you notice about the way he interacts with her? How do we see Jesus's power and authority displayed in these verses?

As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus's kingship do you see in this lesson?

## LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

18. Are you a follower of Christ? a Christ learner? a disciple of Jesus? If so, what implications does this have for your life each day?

*The questions below will guide you in reflect on question #18.*

Have you repented of you sin and do you believe in the gospel?

Do you believe *your* sin can be forgiven?

Do you live by faith in him?

Does this faith shape the way you think about yourself, your family, your career, your finances, your health?

Who is the Spirit prompting you to tell about the gospel of Jesus Christ?

## DISCIPLE-MAKING AT EP CHURCH

In 2019, EP's Church Leadership (Session, Diaconate, Staff) spent time discussing what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Five questions were asked and answered:

1. Why make disciples?
2. What is a disciple?
3. How are disciples made?
4. Who makes disciples?
5. Where are disciples made?

We answered these questions in the form of conviction statements, which you can read below. Every follower of Christ has been called into this disciple-making mission. What does this look like in your life?

## CONVICTION STATEMENTS ABOUT DISCIPLE-MAKING

### **Conviction 1: Why make Disciples?**

God's love, by the power of the Spirit, compels us to make more and more committed followers of Christ, from both inside and outside the church, because God's redemptive goal is to glorify His beloved Son through the people he has rescued and transformed.

### **Conviction 2: What is a disciple?**

A disciple of Jesus Christ is saved by faith, growing in relationship with Christ, and participating in the Great Commission.

### **Conviction 3: How are disciples made?**

Disciples are made by the persevering proclamation of the Word of God by the people of God in prayerful dependence on the Spirit of God.

### **Conviction 4: Who makes disciples?**

Every Christian is a disciple-making disciple.

### **Conviction 5: Where are disciples made?**

Making disciples is at the center of all we do as a church; it also happens in every corner of this present darkness.



*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

In Mark Chapter 1 verses 32-45, we see Jesus becoming more popular and recognized by the people of Galilee. He has shown he has the power to heal the sick, cast out demons, and teach with authority, so they followed him, crowding around him because they wanted him to meet their physical needs or they were curious or maybe they wanted to hear his teaching.

In the midst of all of this, though, Jesus made it a priority to wake up very early in the morning, *while it was still dark*, and go to a desolate place where he could pray (verse 35). Jesus knew the importance of setting aside time to fellowship with the Father.

Do you see how beautiful this is? Don't miss this! Crowds were pressing into Jesus from all sides, hoping and expecting him to meet their needs, yet he made it a priority to get out of bed before the sun was up so that he could spend time with his Father. The relationship between the Father, Son, and Spirit is life-giving, purposeful, and mission-focused. Jesus was strengthened and encouraged by his time with the Father to then go out and accomplish his mission. In Mark 1:38, Jesus said, "Let us go on to the next towns, that *I may preach there also, for that is why I came.*"

Are you intentional about spending time with the Father? How often do you step back from the "crowds pressing into you" to simply find a quiet place and pray? And then, do you go out and tell others about the good news of the gospel? As disciples, or learners, of Jesus, we are called to follow his example.

Read Mark 2:1-12.

1. Mark 2:1 tells us that Jesus had returned home to Capernaum. The crowds were still coming and Jesus was still preaching the word to them. And then something very unusual happened. Use the chart below to capture the events of verses 2-12.

PERSON/GROUP	ACTION	STATEMENTS	REACTION
Crowd (at beginning)			
Friends of Paralytic			
Paralytic			
Jesus			
Leaders			
Crowd (at end)			

2. Use the chart on page 23 to help you answer these questions.
- a. Where did this interaction take place? What might people have seen, heard, felt, smelled, and even tasted?
  
  - b. What was Jesus doing? What was his mission?
  
  - c. Why do you think the paralyzed man came to Jesus? What were his hopes, his thoughts, his longings?
  
  - d. Why couldn't the paralytic and his four friends get near Jesus?
  
  - e. What did they do? *What would actually be involved in cutting an opening in a roof? What does this tell you about the determination of these four men to get their friend in front of Jesus? How might the people in the house be feeling and what might they be thinking as this hole began to appear?*
  
  - f. Why were these men going to so much trouble?
  
  - g. How did Jesus respond? What did he say? Was this the response that the men were hoping for?
  
  - h. What did Jesus know about the hearts of the men who brought the paralytic to him?
  
  - i. Based on all of this, write down a working definition of **faith**.

j. How did the scribes respond to Jesus's response? Did they speak these words out loud?

k. Why were the scribes concerned?

l. In Mark 2: 6-7, we read "Now some of the scribes were sitting there questioning in their hearts, Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Let's look at why they reacted this way.

Write the definition of the word **blaspheme**:

Why did the scribes believe Jesus was blaspheming?

3. Look up the following verses to find about more about *who* has the power to forgive sins.

Exodus 34:6-7

Nehemiah 9:17

Psalms 103:12

Isaiah 43:25

Isaiah 6:7

*Who has the power to forgive sins?*

*What claim was Jesus making when he said, "Son, your sins are forgiven?"*

4. Remember that the scribes were questioning Jesus *in their hearts*; they did not speak their thoughts out loud. These scribes were theologians; they were experts in knowing God's Word. Scriptures such as 1 Chronicles 28:9, Psalm 44:21, Jeremiah 17:10, and Ezekial 11:5 would have been very familiar to them and would have made them question Jesus.

And Jesus *perceived in his spirit* that they were questioning within themselves. How might these scribes have felt when Jesus challenged them on what they were thinking? What did Jesus know about their hearts?

5. What question does Jesus ask them in Mark 2:9? Why does he ask this question and what does this question mean?

6. Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in verse 9. This is the title Jesus most frequently gives to himself and Mark in his narrative develops its meaning. What do we learn about the Son of Man from Daniel 7:13-14? What do you think Jesus is communicating to the people when he calls himself the Son of Man?

"Jesus was very subtle in that he was always opening his identity to those with eyes to see, but he wasn't opening it so blatantly that everybody would come and make him king. He had to steer a very narrow course in disclosing his identity, not just openly saying, "I'm the Messiah, I'm the King of the World. Come and acknowledge me as King." He didn't talk like that.

He was quiet. He was subtle. And he would make claims that were explicit in certain settings and implicit in others. And only when the time was right—mainly when he was on trial for his life, and they said, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the living God?"—did he say, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man coming with great power and glory." So he confessed his open deity right at the point where he knew he would be crucified for it.

So I hope that helps. "Son of Man" has the double meaning of human being and, according to Daniel 7, exalted heavenly one. And Jesus means to communicate both of those."

-John Piper, "Why is Jesus Called 'Son of Man'?" [desiringgod.org](http://desiringgod.org) April 4, 2008

7. When Jesus both forgave the man's sins and healed him, what was he revealing about himself to the people who were watching?

8. How did the paralytic respond to Jesus?

9. How did the crowds respond to Jesus?

10. Write down your response and insights from Mark 2:1-12.





*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER

## RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

After Jesus heals the paralytic, he heads to the sea teaching the crowds that were coming to him. Mark 2:14 records Jesus calling his next disciple, Levi. Just like the other disciples, when Jesus told Levi to “Follow me,” Levi rose and followed him. What kind of man says “follow me” and people follow? Who was Jesus?

In his Gospel, Mark gives us glimpses into Jesus living his life with others. He walks and teaches and finds quiet places to pray alone. He also shares meals with lots of people. “And as he reclined at a table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. (2:15). The people who followed him ate with him.

*And the Pharisees, the religious leaders, were watching.* These men were experts in the laws and traditions of the Jewish culture and were deeply concerned by Jesus’s actions and words. He wasn’t following the rules.

They really didn’t approve of what Jesus was doing so they began asking questions.

“Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (2:16)

“Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast? (2:18)

“Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” (2:24)

The religious leaders challenged Jesus when he said he could forgive sins. *Only God can forgive sins, so this man is blaspheming!* they thought. In Mark 3, Jesus ruffles their feathers a little more as he challenges their understanding of the Sabbath.

1. Read Mark 2:23-3:6. One of the common themes in these verses is the Sabbath. Look up the word *Sabbath* in a Bible dictionary.

***Sabbath:***

2. To gain a deeper understanding of the importance of the Sabbath in the lives of the Jewish people, look up these verses.

Connection between Sabbath and the seventh day of creation: Exodus 20:8-11

Affirmation of Israel's identity: Deuteronomy 5:12-15

Day of worship and rest is a gift: Exodus 31:12-17

The Sabbath was one of things that marked the Jewish people and set them apart from their neighbors. It reminded them that they were God's people.

What have you learned about the significance of the Sabbath in the lives of the Jewish people?

3. How does Jesus respond to the Pharisees when they confront him about his disciples plucking grain, and thus breaking the law on the Sabbath? What is significant about Jesus comparing himself to David? (See Leviticus 24:5-8 and 1 Samuel 21:1-6 for more information about David, Abiathar, and the bread of the Presence.)

4. Explain what Jesus means when he says, "The Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath".

"In the face of this self-righteous religious preoccupation Jesus says, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." He affirms, even celebrates, the original principle of the Sabbath—the need for rest. Yet he squashes the legalism around its observance. He dismantles the whole religious paradigm. And he does it by pointing to his identity. . . . When Jesus says that he is Lord of the Sabbath, he means that he is the Sabbath. He is the source of the deep rest we need. He has come to completely change the way we rest." –Tim Keller, *King's Cross*, 41-42.

5. In Mark 3:1-6, we find Jesus in the synagogue on another Sabbath with the Pharisees watching. Why were the Pharisees watching Jesus?

6. What did the Pharisees ask Jesus and how did he respond?

7. As you reflect on Jesus's response, what do you think he was communicating about the Sabbath?

8. Why do you think Jesus healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath with the Pharisees watching?

9. Describe Jesus's emotions in verse 5.

10. What caused Jesus to grieve?

11. After Jesus healed the man's hand, what did the religious leaders do?

12. Do a little research on the Herodians. Who were they? Why did the Pharisees conspire with them?

13. Read Mark 3:7-12. Where was Jesus? Who was with him? Where were the people from?

14. Why were these great crowds following Jesus?

15. What did the unclean spirits know about Jesus?

16. Why does Jesus order the unclean spirits to stay silent?

17. Summarize the main things you have learned about Jesus in this section of Mark.

## LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

18. In what ways is the church today so focused on following the rules that we fail to support God's restorative and healing work?

19. What steps could you take to observe a regular rhythm of work and rest in your life?

20. Response to this statement:

"You can take all the vacations in the world, but if you don't have the deep rest of the soul, resting in what Jesus did on the cross, you will not truly rest. On the cross Jesus experienced the restlessness of separation from God so that we can have the deep rest of knowing that he loves us and our sins have been forgiven." -Tim Keller, *Kings Cross*, 43

Are you truly resting in Jesus? Do you know his love? Have you stopped trying to prove to God, others, and yourself that you are good enough?

At the end of his great act of Creation, the Lord said, "It is finished," and he could rest. On the cross at the end of his great act of redemption Jesus said, "It is finished"—and we can rest. On the cross Jesus was saying of the work underneath your work—the thing that makes you truly weary, the need to prove yourself because who you are and what you do are never good enough—that it is finished. He lived the life you should have lived, he has died the death you should have died. If you rely on Jesus's finished work, you know that God is satisfied with you. You can be satisfied with life. - Tim Keller, *Kings Cross*, 43

Who in your life needs to hear about this rest? Make a plan to tell them.



LESSON 5: FEBRUARY 9, 2020

Mark 4:1-20

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL

*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

In Mark 1-3, so much happens in the life of Jesus. He begins preaching the word and he calls his disciples. He faces opposition from the religious leaders and rejection and shame from his family. Yet he remains committed to preaching the word. He stays on mission. Chapter 4 begins with the words, "Again he began to teach by the sea." Jesus has a powerful message for his followers to hear.

1. Read Mark 4:1-20. Jesus was teaching them in parables. What is a parable?

2. Summarize the parable in verses 3-9.

3. Notice the words that Jesus speaks at the beginning (verse 3) and ending of this parable (verse 9). Write the words here.

4. Why are these beginning and ending words significant? What did Jesus want his hearers to know?

5. What do you think Jesus meant by, "He who has ears, let him hear"?

6. To help us gain a little more understanding of this parable, we are going to illustrate the seeds and the soil. On the next page, draw a picture of each type of soil and what happens to the seeds that fall on these different soils. The verses corresponding to each soil are in the boxes. Get out your colored pencils and have some fun! Be creative!

## THE FOUR TYPES OF SOIL

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 7

Verse 8

7. Later on, when Jesus and his disciples were alone, the twelve (the disciples) asked Jesus about the parables. They were confused and needed a little help to understand. How did Jesus answer them in verses 10-11?

8. What did his answer mean?

9. Jesus goes on to explain meaning of the parable of the seeds in verses 14-20. What was the sower sowing?

Fill in the chart below with what you learn about each type of soil and what happens to the seed.

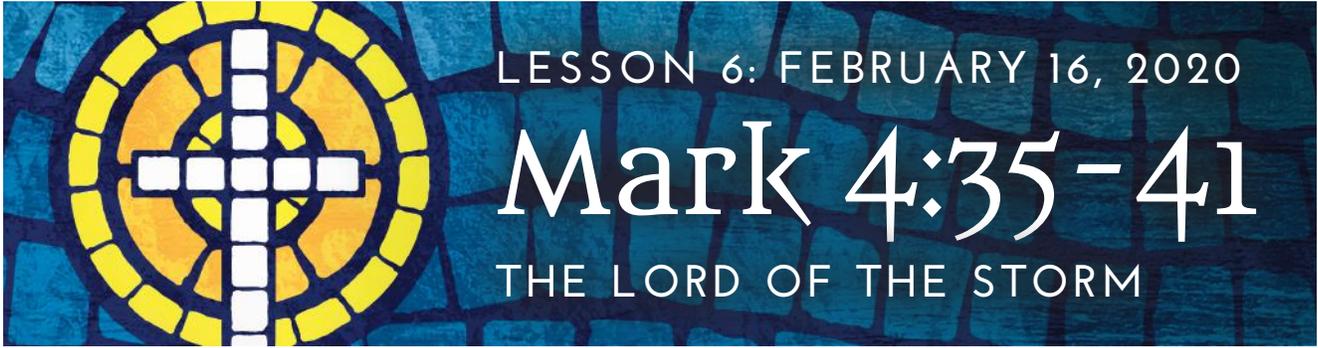
Seed fell along the path (4)	15
Seed fell on rocky soil (5)	16-17
Seed fell on thorns (7)	18-19
Seed fell into good soil (8)	20

As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus's kingship do you see in this lesson?

## LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

10. Kevin DeYoung in his sermon on February 21, 2010, "A Story about Soils," (<https://www.universityreformedchurch.org/sermons/a-story-about-soils/>) connects the four types of soils in this parable to our human hearts. The path in verse 4 refers to an **indifferent heart**, a heart that is not interested in hearing from God or a heart that just doesn't think Christianity is believable. The rocky ground describes a **superficial heart**, one that has no depth, no roots, one that easily withers when life's troubles come. The third soil covered with thorns is a **distracted heart**, a heart that is choked by the worries of life and has put its hope in the deceitful riches of this world. They don't last or give security and they take our eyes off Christ. The seed that falls on rich, fertile soil points to a heart that is **receptive**. A **receptive heart** hears and receives the word of God. It bears fruit and grows and matures in Christ.

Think about your own heart. Which of the descriptors above would you use to describe your heart today?



*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*  
Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read Mark 4:35-41 and answer the following questions. Use your answers to fill in the answers below.

a. What time of day was it?

b. Who was with Jesus?

c. Where were they going?

d. What happened? What were some of the problems?

e. What did the disciples do?

f. What question did they ask Jesus?

g. What did Jesus do?

h. In verse 40, Jesus asked the disciples a question. What is it?

## THE LORD OF THE STORM

Characters:

Setting:

Problem:

Solution:

Response:

2. Why is it surprising that the disciples were so afraid?

3. In verse 38, they wake Jesus up and ask, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" Can you relate to how the disciples felt? Have you ever felt like this: terrified, alone, wondering what God is doing? What are some questions you have asked God when you've gone through the storms of life?

4. Just like the disciples and you and me, the psalmists also felt alone, confused, and afraid. Read the following verses and write down some of the questions the psalmists asked.

a. Psalm 6:2-3

b. Psalm 22:1

c. Psalm 77:7-9

d. Psalm 83:1

5. In what ways is the disciples' question in Mark 4:38 similar to the psalmists' questions?

6. What is amazing about the storm's response to Jesus's command?

7. What does this tell us about Jesus's power?

8. Were their fears diminished after Jesus calmed the storm? How can you tell?

9. What does Jesus's response in verse 40 reveal about the hearts of the disciples? What does he ask them?

10. Jesus saw the fear that existed in the hearts of these men and he wanted them to know that the antidote to *fear* is *faith*. He wanted them to place their *faith* in him. Read the following verses to catch a glimpse of what it looks like to place our *faith* in Jesus.

Deuteronomy 3:1-8

Psalm 18:2

Psalm 91:14-16

Isaiah 43:1

John 14:27

1 Peter 5:6-7

1 Peter 3:14

1 John 4:18

11. Look up the word "faith" in a bible dictionary and return to your working definition of faith in lesson 3, question 2i. (Vine's Bible Dictionary or Biblegateway.com are helpful resources.) Use what you learned from the verses in question 8 and the definition of faith to describe someone who has faith in Jesus.

12. When we look back to the passage in Mark 4, we notice that the disciples are afraid *before* and *after* Jesus calms the storm. In fact, they were more terrified after the sea was calm. Why? What were they beginning to understand about Jesus?

## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

13. Is there an area of your life where Jesus may be asking, "Why are you so afraid"?

14. Are you going through a storm right now? Is there a terrifying storm swirling around your life today? What does Jesus want you to know?

15. How does fear impact our relationships? What does fear make us do to others?

16. What would it look like for you to place your faith, no matter how weak, in Jesus and trust him?  
How would your daily life change?

17. Read 1 Peter 1:3-7. What do these verses tell us about Jesus, the storms of our lives, and faith?

As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus's kingship do you see in this lesson?



*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*  
Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

Jesus had just crossed back over the sea returning from the country of Gerasenes where he had an encounter with a man with a demon. He caused quite a commotion, which ended when the people asked him to leave their region. To learn more about what happened read Mark 5:1-19.

1. Let's look at Mark 5:21-42. Jesus was back home now. Where is he and what is happening around him?
2. In Mark 5:22, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue comes to Jesus and begs him for help. Think about why it was significant and even surprising for Jairus to go to Jesus.



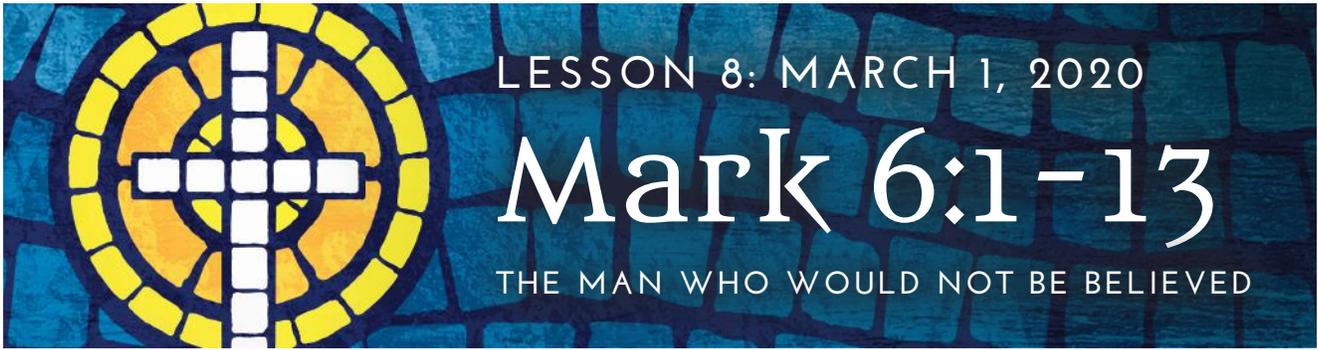
9. Remember that Jesus was on his way to heal Jairus's dying daughter. He didn't really have time to stop and investigate where his power had gone, but he did stop. Also, it took great courage for the woman to come forward and tell Jesus the whole truth. They were in a public place, she was unclean, but willing to take a great risk. Why was this encounter with Jesus so important for the woman? What did Jesus know about her and what did he want her to know?
10. Meanwhile, Jairus must have been gravely concerned about his daughter. How do you think Jairus was thinking while Jesus was interacting with the woman? And how did he feel when he heard the messengers' words, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?"
11. What hope does Jesus give Jairus in verse 36? And what does Jesus tell Jairus to do?

"God's sense of timing will confound ours, no matter what culture we're from. His grace rarely operates according to our schedule. When Jesus looks at Jairus and says, 'Trust me, be patient,' in effect he is looking over Jairus's head at all of us and saying, 'Remember how when I calmed the storm I showed you that my grace and love are compatible with going through storms, though you may not think so? Well, now I'm telling you that my grace and love are compatible with what seem to you to be unconscionable delays.' It's not 'I will not be hurried even though I love you', it's 'I will not be hurried because I love you. I know what I'm doing. And if you try to impose your understanding of schedule and timing on me, you will struggle to feel loved by me.'" -Tim Keller, *King's Cross*, 63.

12. Notice what Jesus does and says when he goes in to see Jairus's daughter. What do his words and actions tell you about him? What did Jairus and his family really need?

As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus's kingship do you see in this lesson?





*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*  
Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

Read Mark 6:1-6.

1. Where was Jesus? Who *followed* him there?
2. On the Sabbath he went to the synagogue to teach and Mark tells us that people were astonished by his teachings. Write down the things people were saying about him and his teaching.

3. Let's look to scripture to answer some of these questions.

Where did this man get his wisdom?

Psalm 19:7

Daniel 2:21-22

Romans 11:33-36

Romans 16:25-27

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16

What is the source and scope of his power?

Matthew 28:18-20

Matthew 11:27

John 1:1-4

John 3:35

John 13:3

John 17:2

Ephesians 1:20-21

Who were his family? Where was he from?

Matthew 1-2/Luke 1-2

Matthew 13:54-56

Galatians 1:19

4. How did the people of his hometown react and respond to Jesus?

5. What was Jesus's response to them?

6. How was Jesus's ministry to his hometown impacted by their unwillingness to accept him?

7. Read Mark 6:7-13. What title would you give this section of Mark?

8. It's interesting to note the action in these verses. Make a list of all the verbs Mark uses.

9. Why do you think Jesus sent them out two by two?

10. What instructions does Jesus give his disciples in verses 8-11? Do you get the sense of urgency in his instructions? What was Jesus trying to communicate to them about the message they were to proclaim?

11. Describe what happened when the disciples *went out*.

As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus's kingship do you see in this lesson?

## LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

A.W. Tozer, in *The Knowledge of the Holy*, wrote these words about God's wisdom in our lives: "To believe actively that our Heavenly Father constantly spreads around us providential circumstances that work for our present good and our everlasting well-being brings to the soul a veritable benediction. Most of us go through life praying a little, planning a little, jockeying for position, hoping but never being quite certain of anything, and always secretly afraid that we will miss the way. This is a tragic waste of truth and never gives rest to the heart.

There is a better way. It is to repudiate our own wisdom and take instead the infinite wisdom of God... God has charged Himself with full responsibility for our eternal happiness and stands ready to take over the management of our lives the moment we turn in faith to Him." (A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 63.)

Take a few moments to reflect on Tozer's words. What does *turning in faith to Him* look like in your life?



LESSON 9: MARCH 8, 2020

Mark 7:14-37

GETTING CLEAN

*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

Lesson 8 ended with Jesus sending the twelve disciples out to proclaim the gospel. People were hearing about Jesus and drawing conclusions about who he was. Some thought he was a prophet; others thought he was John the Baptist raised from the dead. (To find out more about the death of John the Baptist, read Mark 6:21-29). As people continued to question Jesus and wonder about him, Jesus and his disciples continued to travel throughout the region preaching, healing, and performing miracles.

Often Jesus invites the disciples to come away and rest, only to be found by people who had great needs. Mark 6:30-43 recounts Jesus feeding the five thousand. As you read this story, watch how Jesus's heart moves toward the people, even when his immediate desire was to find some rest. In the final verses of Mark 6, we see Jesus walking on water, calming the sea, and healing sick people everywhere he went. Jesus and his disciples continue to face hard situations, engage in challenging conversations with religious leaders, and proclaim the good news about the Kingdom of God everywhere they go. We pick up Jesus's story again in Mark 7:14.

1. Read Mark 7:14-37. Write a title for the three main sections of this passage?

Mark 7:14-23:

Mark 7:24-30:

Mark 7:31-37:

2. What does Jesus say in 7:14? What does he want the people to do?

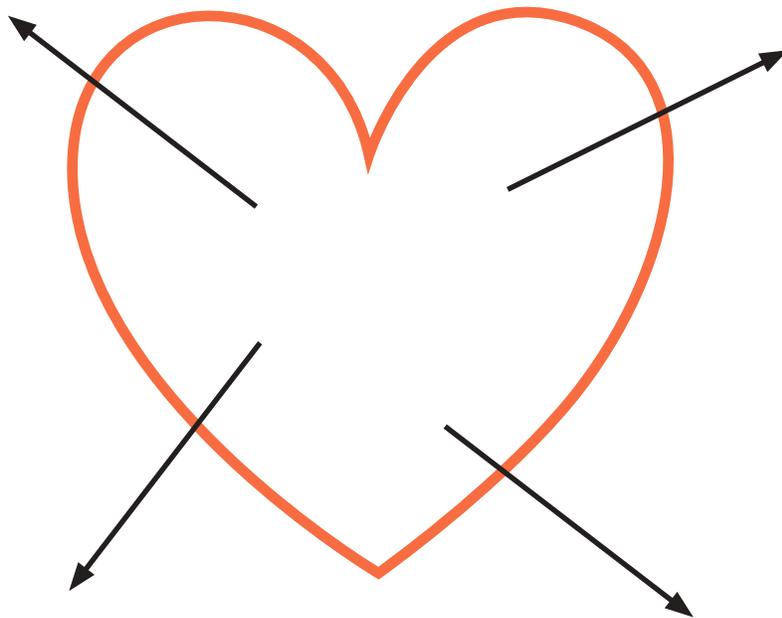
3. Jesus tells them where the source of the stain, the uncleanness (verse 15) comes from. What does he say?

4. How does this challenge the thinking of the religious teachers in Mark 7:5? (Read Mark 7:1-13.)

5. The problem of the religious leaders of Jesus day is the same problem faced by modern day Pharisees. They (we) act as if the key to acceptance with God has to do with our outward appearance. But Jesus says, "No!" The problem is our hearts. Name the evil things that Jesus says come from within man:

It's what comes out of a person that pollutes: obscenities, lusts, thefts, murders, adulteries, greed, depravity, deceptive dealings, carousing, mean looks, slander, arrogance, foolishness—all these are vomit from the heart. There is the source of your pollution (paraphrase of Mark 7:20-23).

Label the heart below with some of the evil things that might be coming out of your heart.



6. We try and try to clean our hearts with outside-in cleaning, but it just does not work. We think if we can make our outsides look good enough, we will be accepted by God. But only Christ can make us clean. Cleansing happens from the inside out, not outside in. If we are followers of Christ, Christ has made our hearts clean.

Read what these verses say about these new, clean hearts.

Ezekiel 11:19

Ezekiel 36:36

Psalms 51:10

Acts 15:9

Hebrews 10:22

7. We are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Isaiah 61:10 and Philippians 3:9 to get a picture of what this looks like. If you have faith in Christ and are trusting in Him alone for your salvation, when God looks at you, he sees the righteousness of Jesus. Use what you learned in the verses in questions 6 and 7 to draw a picture of what God sees when he looks at you.

8. Read Mark 7:24-30 and describe the encounter Jesus has with the Gentile woman.

9. When Jesus answered her in verse 27, he wanted her to know that there was an order in what he was doing. She was a Gentile woman, asking Jesus to cast a demon out of her daughter and by his answer, he told her that she would have to wait. He came first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. How does the woman challenge Jesus? What does she say?

She doesn't take offense; she doesn't stand on her rights. She says, "All right. I may not have a place at the table—but there's more than enough on that table for everyone . . . She is wrestling with Jesus in the most respectful way . . . In Western Cultures we don't have anything like this kind of assertiveness. We only have assertions of our rights. . . But this woman is not doing that at all. This is rightless assertiveness, something we know little about. She's not saying, "Lord, give me what I deserve on the basis of my goodness." She's saying, "Give me what I don't deserve on the basis of your goodness—and I need it now." –Tim Keller, *King's Cross*, pages 88-89

10. The final encounter with Jesus in this chapter occurs in Mark 7:31-37. Read these verses and note how Jesus interacts with the deaf man. What does he do? Why do you think he responds this way to this man?

11. Did you notice what Jesus did in verse 34? He sighed. Other versions used the words “deep sigh”, “moan”, or “groan.” This gives us into a glimpse of how deeply Jesus identifies with this man. The deaf man is isolated and alone. His life has been one of alienation and Jesus identifies with this. Mark uses the Greek word *moglilalos* to refer to the deaf man. The only other place this word is used in the Bible is Isaiah 35:5, so Mark wants us to connect this encounter to what the prophet Isaiah says about the Messiah:

Isaiah 35:4-6 English Standard Version (ESV)

<sup>4</sup>Say to those who have an anxious heart,  
“Be strong; fear not!  
Behold, your God  
will come with vengeance,  
with the recompense of God.  
He will come and save you.”  
<sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
<sup>6</sup>then shall the lame man leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.  
For waters break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;

What does Mark want his readers to understand about who Jesus is and what he came to do?

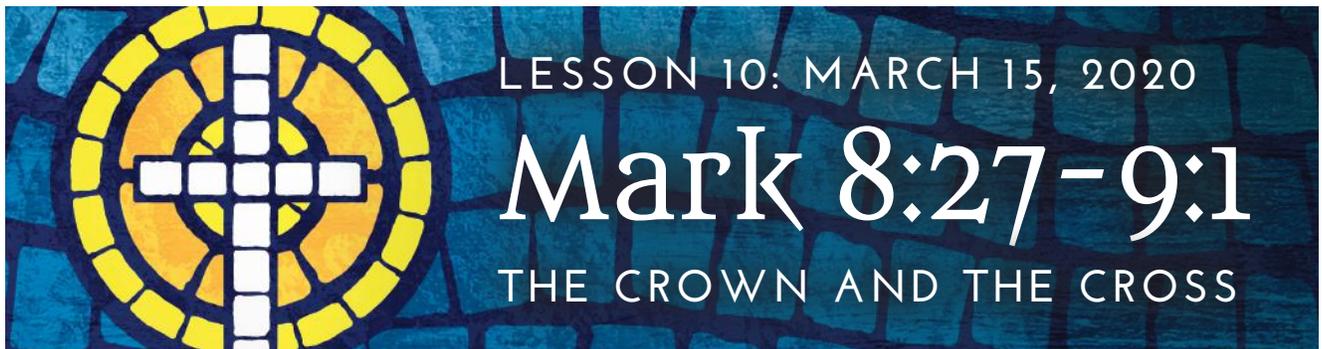
As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus’s kingship do you see in this lesson?

## LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

12. We can fail to let Jesus be our savior in two different ways: either being too proud, being too good, too righteous to need him, or too self-absorbed, thinking that God could never love me. *Which of these views tend to be obstacles that prevent you from accepting Jesus's gift?*

13. In what ways are you trying to make yourself clean from the outside-in?

14. What does Jesus want you to know about his power to cleanse from the inside out?



*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*  
Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

In Mark 1-7 Jesus begins to reveal who he is to his disciples. He speaks with authority, calls himself the Son of Man, heals diseases, calms the sea, walks on water, and casts out demons. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophesy that foretells of a Messiah, a king. Isaiah 35 tells us that God will send a king. This king is Jesus.

Mark 8 is the turning point in the gospel. Jesus begins to reveal his true identity to his disciples. He is a king, yes, but more than that. He is a king who must suffer. A king who is headed to the cross. Jesus predicts his suffering and his death.

Read Mark 8:27-9:1.

1. On one occasion when Jesus and his disciples were walking, he asked his disciples two questions. First, he asked, "Who do people say that I am?" What answer do the disciples give Jesus?

2. Why would the people think of him as a prophet, John the Baptist, or Elijah? What was different about Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What do you think people today would say about Jesus if he was alive today?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. The second question Jesus asked was, "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." Think about Peter's answer. Why would he say this? What are some of the things Peter and the other disciples would have seen Jesus do? What experiences did they have with Jesus? Why might Peter have drawn the conclusion he did?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Matthew 16:16-18 is a parallel passage to Mark 8:27-29. According to Matthew 16, how did Peter know who Jesus was?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Can you think of a reason why Jesus did not want his disciples to tell anyone who he was?

7. In the original text, verses 30 and 31 were not divided by a section title. They were part of the same story. Jesus told his disciples to tell no one about him *and then he began to teach them* more about who he was and what he came to do. The disciples did not fully understand who Jesus was and what he came to do, so Jesus began to teach them more.

Earlier in Mark 8:22-26, we read about Jesus healing a blind man at Bethsaida. Go back and read those verses. What parallels does Mark want us to see between the blind man and the disciples?

8. What is significant about the way in which Jesus heals the blind man in two stages?

9. Read Mark 8:31. What did Jesus tell them he *must* do?

10. In verses 32-33, we see a confrontation between Jesus and Peter. Describe what happened and what was said.

11. Did you notice that just before this, Peter was the star student with the correct answer? He knew that Jesus was the Christ. And then just a few verses later, Jesus rebukes him. When Jesus says get behind me Satan, he is not calling Peter Satan. Rather, he is comparing Peter to Satan. In the wilderness, Satan wanted to divert Jesus from obedience to the Father's will. And Peter was doing the same thing. Peter didn't understand that Jesus came to do the will of the Father, which meant he would suffer, be rejected, be killed, and resurrected. Peter thought that there must be another way. But Jesus knew there was no other way; there is no substitute for the cross. *Why **must** Jesus face suffering and death on a cross?*

Read the following verses to gain a deeper understanding of the power of the Cross.

1 Corinthians 1:17

Ephesians 1:3-10; 13-14

1 Cor 2:2

Phil 2:5-11

Col 2:14

1 Cor 15:54-55

12. In Mark 8:34-9:1, Jesus tells the crowd and his disciples what it means to follow him. Write down the what Jesus asks of his disciples.

13. What does it mean to “take up our cross”? Look at these verses to see the implications of the cross for the way we live.

Romans 15:7

2 Corinthians 8:7-9

Ephesians 4:32-5:2

Ephesians 5:25

1 Peter 2:18-25

1 Peter 4:12-14

As we study Mark 1-8, we will see Jesus as king. What aspects of Jesus’s kingship do you see in this lesson?

## LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

14. Jesus wants his disciples to proclaim him not just as a King, but as a King who must die. What does this mean for the way we tell others about Jesus?
15. What will be the effect of our evangelism if we fail to proclaim the cross of Christ?
16. Why are people ashamed of Jesus's words, both then (vs. 31-38) and now?
17. Think about what attracts you to the Christian faith. Where is your focus when you tell non-Christians about the Christian faith? Do you struggle with being ashamed of the cross of Christ? What might help you to not be ashamed?

*In Jesus Christ on the Cross there is refuge; there is safety; there is shelter;  
and all the power of sin upon our track cannot reach us when we have  
taken shelter under the Cross that atones for our sins.*

- A.C. Dixon

 **renew**



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