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INTRODUCTION

The gospel of Mark introduces us to the life and teachings of Jesus with a fast-paced narrative. It is believed to have been written between 50-65AD. Overlooked for years by biblical scholars because of its brevity, it has gained great significance since its recognition as the first gospel written and as the source material for Matthew and Luke.

John Mark was a Roman citizen whose Christian mother, Mary, lived in Jerusalem and whose cousin Barnabas was Paul's traveling companion. Mark was not one of the twelve disciples but was a follower of Jesus. He was also a close companion of Peter and is believed to have drawn heavily on Peter's preaching in the shaping of his gospel. Some scholars have even suggested that the book could be called "the gospel of Peter as told by Mark".

The book was written to encourage Romans living in a time of great hardship. The early church struggled with internal tension between Jewish and Gentile believers. It also suffered great persecution in which some believers were martyred and others reduced to living in the catacombs. Mark's gospel provides comfort in a presentation of Jesus not only as powerful Son of God but also as compassionate and suffering Servant. Whether readers come to this gospel for the first time or return after many visits, they will be amazed at the grace and power of Jesus Christ who still changes lives.

LESSON ONE: THE GOSPEL OF MARK

OPENING QUESTION: *If you didn't begin the story of your life with the announcement of where and when you were born, how would you begin it? (You might consider a significant event, a core family value, an influential person, a crisis, etc.)*

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Read through the introduction and questions in this week's lesson. Then read through the entire Gospel of Mark (this will take less than one hour) with as few interruptions as possible for an overview. Please avoid the temptation of reading any of your Bible's study notes. As you read be aware that this book was written to encourage a persecuted people.

Note: The following questions have no right or wrong answers so be free in your responses.

1. What impressions do you have after reading Mark?
2. Where did the story begin and why do you think the author started at this point?
3. What stood out to you about Jesus as He was described in Mark?

4. Were there any questions raised in your mind as you read through the gospel?
5. Did you see any ways it would help a person living with danger and persecution?
6. If you were a literary critic, what observations would you make about the style of the book?
7. Are there any personal goals you would like to set for yourself related to your study of Mark?

Memory Verse: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him." *Mark 1:3b*

Prayer Guide: Lord prepare my heart.

LESSON TWO: MARK 1:1-13

OPENING QUESTION: *What's one thing you would like a parent or friend to say about you?*

READ MARK 1:1-13

Note: Mark portrays the initial events of Jesus' ministry on earth. He omits the birth narratives that are given in Matthew and Luke.

Note: The Gospel is "good news" that in Jesus Christ God fulfilled His promises and provided a way of salvation for all.

1. What does Mark's introduction to the Gospel reveal of Jesus? (v.1)
2. What did the Old Testament prophets say would happen to prepare people for Christ's coming?

Malachi 3:1

Isaiah 40:1-11

Note: Isaiah wrote about 700 years before the coming of Jesus. Malachi wrote more than 400 years before His coming.

3. Describe John. What strikes you most in this portrayal of him?
4. What did he preach?
5. How did the crowds respond to John and what did this reveal about their need?

READ PSALM 32

6. What is repentance?

Why is repentance such an important preparation for meeting Jesus?

What verse from Psalm 32 prepares you to meet Jesus?

7. How did the events surrounding Jesus' baptism prepare Him for temptations by Satan in the wilderness? (Mark 1:9-11)
8. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How did Jesus resist temptation?

How does this help you in an area where you need to resist temptation?

9. If your only knowledge of Jesus were the first twelve verses of Mark, what would you know about Him? And what is most compelling for you personally?

Memory Verse: "Blessed are those whose sin does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit." *Psalms* 32:2

Prayer Guide: Gracious God, lead me to repentance.

LESSON THREE: MARK 1:14-2:12

OPENING QUESTION: *When you need time alone, where do you go and what do you do?*

Note: Capernaum, located 20 miles north of Jesus' hometown Nazareth, became the primary place of His ministry.

1. What happened to John following his baptism of Jesus? (see also John 3:22-36)

2. What good news did Jesus proclaim and what response did He ask of people?

3. What "good news" continues to be proclaimed?

Acts 10:34-38

Romans 1:16-17

Colossians 1:19-23

4. How did Jesus gather His first disciples?

Mark 1:16-20

Mark 2:13-14

John 1:35-51

5. What do you think drew these men to Christ?

6. How did they respond to His call to follow? What were they willing to leave behind?

7. Have you responded to Christ's call to follow Him? If so, were there things you needed to leave behind?

Note: "Son of Man" was a Messianic title (Daniel 7:13-14). Jesus referred to Himself this way about eighty times in the gospels.

8. Describe the power of the evil spirit. Why do you think Jesus silenced this proclamation of His identity? (Mark 1:21-28, see also Mark 3:11-12)

9. How did Jesus reveal power greater than that of the evil spirit?

10. Many people sought Jesus. Who were they and what did they want?

11. What do you learn about Jesus as healer from each of these incidents?

Mark 1:29-31

Mark 1:40-45 (see also Leviticus 13:45-46)

Mark 2:1-12

12. What did people do following their healing?

13. What role did family and friends play in these healings?

What role can you play with a friend in need of healing?

14. What did Jesus do very early in the morning and why might such a practice be helpful for you? (Mark 1:35, see also Psalm 5:3)

15. What obstacle did Jesus encounter that morning and how did He respond to it?
How might you overcome your obstacles?

Memory Verse: "Come follow Me and I will make you fishers of men and women." *Mark 1:17*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, help me to follow You.

LESSON FOUR: MARK 2:13-3:30

OPENING QUESTION: *How do you respond to people who are critical of you?*

Note: Pharisees were zealous Jews who saw themselves as superior because of their strict obedience not only to the *Law of Moses* but also to their lengthy interpretations of it.

1. Who opposed Jesus and why do you think this was so?

2. Reflect on the conflicts in this passage:

OBJECTIONS

CHRIST'S TEACHINGS

Mark 2:6-7

Mark 2:15-17

Mark 2:18-20

Mark 2:23-3:6

3. Jesus addressed issues that challenged His audience. What do you believe about each of the following issues and how have your beliefs impacted your lifestyle?

Mark 2:6-7 SIN (see also Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:56-57; 1 John 1:8-9)

Mark 2:15-17 SINNERS (see also Romans 5:7-8; John 3:16-18)

Mark 2:18-20 FASTING (see also Isaiah 58:3-7; Joel 2:12-13; Matthew 6:16-18, Acts 13:2-3; Acts 14:23)

Mark 2:23-28 SABBATH (see also Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13-14)

4. What principles did Jesus emphasize with His metaphors? (Mark 2:19-22)
5. What kept the Pharisees from hearing Jesus? What keeps you from hearing Jesus and what leads you to listen?
6. What motivated the crowds to seek out Jesus? What motivates you?
7. Imagine yourself as part of the crowd around Jesus. Using the entire passage, write down the sights, smells, and sounds that you might have encountered.

Note: *Apostle* means emissary, representative, one sent with the authority of the sender.

8. Who were the twelve appointed as apostles and what were they to do?
9. What did Jesus teach about Satan and what authority does Jesus have over him? (Mark 3:11-12, 3:22-27)
10. What power does Jesus provide for you in the battle against Satan? (see also Ephesians 6:10-18)

Memory Verse: "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." *Mark 2:17b*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, make me whole.

LESSON FIVE: MARK 3:31-4:20

OPENING QUESTION: *Are there any lessons about life you have learned from gardening?*

1. Why had Jesus' family come? (Mark 3:20-21, Luke 2:41-50)

2. How did Jesus respond to His family and what was He really saying in His response? (see also Luke 2:49)

3. Who did Jesus acknowledge as His spiritual family? (see also John 3:16-18, John 1:12-13)

4. What are the blessings of those in the family of Christ?
Ephesians 1:3-14

5. Are there times when your biological family's desires for you conflict with the desires of your spiritual family? What insight is provided in these verses for you?

Note: Parables were usually stories out of ordinary life used to illustrate spiritual or moral truth, sometimes in the form of brief similes, comparisons, analogies or proverbial sayings. Ordinarily they had a single main point and not every detail was meant to have significance. (NIV)

6. Describe the setting for Jesus' teaching in chapter 4.

7. Why do you think Jesus spoke in parables to the crowd? What were such stories meant to stimulate? (Mark 4:9-12, 33-34, Psalm 78:1-4, Acts 28:25-27)
8. If you were a spiritual seeker listening to Jesus' parable of the soils, what would you have heard? What questions might you have asked Jesus?
9. What do each of the following represent?
 - The farmer:
 - The seed:
 - The seed along the path:
 - The seed on the rocky place:
 - The seed on the thorns:
 - The seed on good soil:
10. What kind of reception is "the seed" currently receiving in your life? What poses the greatest threat to your fruitfulness?
11. How can you be more fruitful?
 - Psalm 1
 - Psalm 52:7-9
 - Jeremiah 17:5-8
 - John 15:1-8
12. What are specific changes you could make with God's help this week to improve your fruitfulness?

Memory Verse: Then Jesus said: "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear." *Mark 4:9*

Prayer Guide: Lord, open my ears.

LESSON SIX: MARK 4:21-4:41

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you ever made storm preparations?*

1. Who is the lamp and what is its role? (See also John 8:12, John 12:44-46)

2. Why is it impossible to hide from God?

Psalm 139:7-12

1 Corinthians 4:5

3. What did Christ's lamp parable teach about responding to the truth?
(see also Psalm 119:105)

4. What does the parable of the growing seed reveal of Christ's power? How is the emphasis here different from the parable of the soils?

Note: The *Kingdom of God* was the central teaching of Jesus signifying the rule and reign of Christ.

5. How is a mustard seed like the kingdom of God? What hope does this provide?

6. How did Jesus remove Himself from the crowds and why do you think He needed to?
(vv.35-38)

7. How did the disciples respond to the storm? How do you respond to "storms"?

8. What do you think Jesus would have wanted them to do?
9. What did Jesus say to His disciples and why do you think He spoke this way?
10. How was the fear present in the disciples after the storm different from the fear they had experienced during the storm?
11. Why do you think Jesus allowed the storms then and why does He allow them today?
12. Who is God in the midst of the storms? What allows you to experience His presence?
Psalm 65:5-8

Psalm 107:23-32

Isaiah 51:15-16

Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalm 56:3
13. What are the current “storms” in your life? What hope is there for you in the reminder of God’s presence and power?

Memory Verse: “When I am afraid, I will trust in You.” *Psalm 56:3*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, increase my trust in You.

LESSON SEVEN: MARK 5:1-20

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you ever had the experience of feeling like an outcast?*

1. Describe the man who came to meet Jesus.

2. What did this man do when he saw Jesus?

Note: By calling himself *Legion* the demon suggested that the man was possessed by numerous demons. The Abyss he feared (Luke 8:31) was a place of confinement for evil spirits and Satan. (NIV)

3. Why was the demon so terrified of Jesus? Who did he say Jesus was and why was this significant? (see also Luke 8:30-32)

4. Why do you think Jesus sent the demons into the pigs? (see also Matthew 8:30-31)

5. How did the pigs become a stumbling block to the people? (see also Luke 8:34-37)

6. Contrast the heart condition of the healed man with that of his neighbors. What warning is there in this for you?

7. What did Jesus tell the healed man to do? How would obedience to Jesus radically alter his life?

8. Why do you think Jesus did not take the healed man with Him?

9. How was the demon-possessed man a perfect example of those Christ had come to love and save? How are you a perfect example?

Ezekiel 34:11-16

Mark 2:17

Luke 19:10

1 Timothy 1:12-17

10. Is there an outcast in your life who might be helped by your love and Christ's love?

11. How was Christ's power revealed in this lesson?

12. What difference can His power make in your life this week in a seemingly impossible situation?

Memory Verse: "...Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you." *Mark 5:19*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.

REVIEW LESSON I

1. What verses from our study have meant the most to you?
2. What truth about Jesus has amazed you?
3. What insights have you gained about what it means to follow Jesus?
4. How have you seen God answer prayer?
5. Whose encounter with Jesus has touched you?
6. What did you learn from a parable?
7. What are you grateful for?

LESSON EIGHT: MARK 5:21-43

OPENING QUESTION: *Recall a time recently when you were required to show courage.*

Note: A synagogue ruler was a layman whose responsibilities were administrative and included such things as looking after the building and supervising the worship. (NIV)

1. Describe the plea that Jairus put before Jesus. What did it reveal about this man?
2. What had it meant to be “subject to bleeding” for twelve years? How had this woman suffered? (see also Leviticus 15:25-33, 20:18)
3. How did the woman reveal faith in Jesus? (Mark 5:27-28, 33-34)
4. Why do you think the woman was afraid to admit that she touched Jesus?
5. Why do you think Jesus required the woman to identify herself in that huge crowd? What would she have missed if she’d slipped away unnoticed?

What will you miss if you fail to acknowledge Christ’s healing?

6. Reread Mark 5. What kind of social barriers did Jesus break through?
7. What might Jairus have been thinking and feeling as he waited through the interruption?

8. What words did Jesus use to comfort Jairus when bad news was brought from home?
9. In what difficult situation of your life do you need to hear and believe those words today?
10. How do these verses encourage you to leave fear for faith?

Isaiah 35:3-6

Isaiah 41:9-13

2 Timothy 1:7

Hebrews 11:6

11. Which disciples did Jesus take with Him? What might such an experience have meant for them?
12. Describe the scene at the home of Jairus.
13. Imagine yourself as Jairus, having spent much of a day close to Jesus. What might you believe about Him? How might you see life differently?

Memory Verse: Say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come..."
Isaiah 35:4a

Prayer Guide: Almighty God, replace my fear with faith.

LESSON NINE: MARK 6:1-29

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you ever traveled with very little and learned something by doing that?*

Note: Jesus returned to His own town of Nazareth, accompanied now by His disciples.

1. What responses did Jesus elicit?

Mark 6:2

Mark 6:3

Mark 6:14

Mark 6:15

2. Why did His hometown benefit little from His presence? What warning is there in this for you?
3. Why do you think Jesus sent His disciples out in pairs?
(see also Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 and 2 Corinthians 13:1)
4. What advantages remain today in team ministry? What dangers are avoided?
(see also Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, 2 Corinthians 8:23, 2 Timothy 1:15-18)
5. How have you personally experienced the benefits of serving with others or in what areas of current service might this be helpful?
6. What were the disciples to accomplish?

7. Why do you think they were instructed to travel so lightly?
8. Is there clutter you need to shed to serve God more faithfully?
9. Describe Herod. (see also Matthew 14:1-12, Luke 9:7-9)
10. What was Herod's relationship with John and why?
11. What stand had John taken that led to his death? (see also Leviticus 18:16)
12. How had Jesus predicted His own suffering in connection with John's death?
(read Matthew 17:9-13)
13. What did Herod choose to believe about Jesus? What did he lose by his choice?
(see Luke 23:7-11)
14. What led Herod to make a promise that he wished he didn't have to keep?

What lesson is contained for you in this passage about making promises to others that you regret?

Memory Verse: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If they fall down, they can help each other up. But pity those who fall and have no one to help them up!" *Ecclesiastes 4:9-10*

Prayer Guide: Lord, anoint me anew to represent you.

LESSON TEN: MARK 6:30-56 and 8:1-26

OPENING QUESTION: *Do you remember a meal you provided for others that stands out as an experience of God's grace?*

1. What invitation did Jesus extend to His disciples and why must they have been eager to accept it? (Mark 6:30-31)
2. Do you hear such invitations from the Lord and how do you respond to them?

Read MARK 6:35-44 and MARK 8:1-10

3. How do you think the disciples might have felt when they were greeted by the crowd?
How did this shape their response to the crowd's need?
4. Why did Jesus have compassion for the crowds?
How does His response to them challenge you?
5. What was relinquished in order for Jesus to satisfy the hunger of the people and with what result?

What could you relinquish in order for Jesus to meet the needs of others?

6. What do these feedings reveal about God's generosity?
7. What did Jesus do following the feeding of the five thousand and why do you think He did this? (Mark 6:45-46)

How might such a practice be helpful in your life?

8. How did the disciples spend the night and what must they have struggled with? (Mark 6:45-52)
9. How did Jesus dispel the fear of His disciples? How might you allow His comforting words to dispel your fears?
10. What did the Pharisees request? What did their request reveal about their response to Jesus' miracles? (Mark 8:11-12)
11. What were the disciples concerned about as they crossed the sea? What had they already forgotten that Jesus reminded them of? (Mark 8:14-21)

Read MARK 6:53-56 AND 8:22-26

12. Describe the healing that Jesus brought by touching people.
13. In what way might the people's desire to have physical needs met have deterred them from seeing the true Jesus?

What is deterring you from seeing the true Jesus?

14. As you reflect on these passages, what displays of Christ's divinity are revealed?

Memory Verse: "You give them something to eat." *Mark 6:37a*

Prayer Guide: Generous God, help me to feed others.

LESSON ELEVEN: MARK 7:1-37

OPENING QUESTION: *What rules about cleanliness were you raised with and what impact have they had on you?*

1. What Jewish tradition had been broken by Jesus' disciples?
2. What explanation did Mark give to help his Gentile audience understand the problem this posed for the Pharisees?
3. What was Christ's warning about traditions?
4. Are there any spiritual traditions that have lost their meaning to you and actually hurt your relationship with God?
5. What makes a person unclean?
6. How is it possible to live as "clean" people? (Galatians 5:16-25)
What changes might God be calling you to make?

Note: Jesus traveled into Gentile country seeking opportunity to teach His own disciples apart from crowds and hostile Jewish critics.

7. Describe the woman who came to Jesus. How did she reveal faith in Him?

Note: This is the only time in Mark that Jesus is addressed as “Lord.” (NIV)

8. What point was Jesus making with His harsh-sounding words to the woman?
9. How was salvation made possible for this woman and countless other Gentiles?
(Ephesians 2:11-19)
10. What did Jesus do to restore the deaf man’s hearing? Why do you think He went through a process so different from what He had done with the demon-possessed child?
11. How was Jesus fulfilling what had been prophesied about the coming Messiah?
Isaiah 42:5-9

Isaiah 35:3-10
12. What was the response of the people to the healing?
13. Have you seen something about Jesus or been touched by Him in a way that you can’t stop talking about?

Memory Verse: “Nothing outside you can defile you by going into you. Rather, it is what comes out of you that defiles you.” *Mark 7:15-16*

Prayer Guide: Kind Savior, clean me from the inside out.

LESSON TWELVE: MARK 8:27-9:13

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you ever experienced God's presence in a special way on a mountain or in a wilderness setting?*

1. What questions did Jesus ask His disciples and why do you think He asked them?
2. What did Peter reveal with his answer (see also Matthew 16:15-20) and what would you reveal with yours?
3. What did the Old Testament prophets say about the Messiah? (Mark 8:31-32)

Isaiah 9:6-7

Isaiah 53

Daniel 7:13-14
4. Which aspect of the Messiah did Jesus emphasize for His disciples?
5. Why did Peter rebuke Jesus?
6. Why did Jesus in turn rebuke Peter and what caution do His words provide? (see also Colossians 3:2)
7. What is Christ's job description for disciples? List the requirements with a brief explanation of each. (Mark 8:34-38)
8. What messages in magazines, media and culture conflict with these words of Christ? With such tension, what cost is involved in being a disciple?

9. What assurance did Christ provide His disciples of victory beyond suffering? How do these strengthen your faith today?

1 Corinthians 15:57-58

2 Corinthians 4:16-17

1 Peter 5:10-11

10. What have you lost and what have you gained to follow Christ?

Note: It is generally believed that Jesus went up Mt. Hermon (9200 ft) about 12 miles NE of Caesarea Philippi.

11. Who did Jesus take with Him up the mountain and what might it have meant for them to be with Him? (see also Mark 5:37)

12. What supernatural event occurred on the mountain? How was Christ given glory?

13. What was Peter's response and what response was asked of the disciples?

14. What were the disciples being taught that was difficult to hear?

Mark 8:31-38

Mark 9:9

Mark 9:12

Luke 9:30-31

15. How can you listen well to God?

16. What impact did the transfiguration have on the disciples and the early church?
(see also 2 Peter 1:16-18)

Memory Verse: "What good is it for you to gain the whole world, yet forfeit your soul?"
Mark 8:36

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, guard my heart.

LESSON THIRTEEN: MARK 9:14-9:50

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you ever returned from a time of refreshment or a wonderful vacation to discover a real mess at home?*

1. Describe the scene that greeted Jesus upon His return from the mountain.

2. How had the boy suffered?

3. What did Jesus have to say in this encounter about belief?

4. How did the father express belief? What did he do with his doubt and what personal help does this provide in a current area of need?

5. Why had the disciples failed? What do you think had happened as they responded to the need? (see also Matthew 17:19-21)

6. What did Jesus reveal about His future that His disciples were unable to grasp?

7. What caused His disciples to argue with one another?

8. How did Jesus radically alter the disciples' understanding of greatness?
What can you do this week to become "greater" in God's eyes?
(see also Matthew 18:1-4 and Luke 22:24-26)

9. What intolerance was voiced by the disciples that sometimes continues to impact the church today? (Mark 9:38)

10. Who did Christ say was not to be hindered from ministry? (Mark 9:39-40)

11. What was at the heart of Jesus' warnings to those in ministry?

12. Have you found it necessary to get rid of things in your life in order to avoid sin? Are there things that need to be eliminated now?

13. What do you know about salt that might help you understand how to be salt?

Memory Verse "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all."
 Mark 9:35b

Prayer Guide: Heavenly Father, make me a servant.

LESSON FOURTEEN: MARK 10:1-31

OPENING QUESTION: *What have you learned about faith from a child?*

Note: The Pharisees went to Jesus in Herod's territory. If they could twist Jesus' words and accuse Him of heresy, their ploy would set Him at odds with Herod who had divorced his wife and remarried.

1. With what question did the Pharisees test Jesus and how did Jesus respond?
2. How might He have responded differently to sincere questions about divorce?
3. Why did Jesus say that divorce was allowed by Moses and what did He mean?

Note: The Mosaic law did not institute divorce but sought to minimize its hardship, requiring a formal grievance document. Jewish law did not allow a wife to divorce her husband.

4. What was God's design for marriage? (See also Genesis 1:27 and 2:21-25)
5. What does the Bible say about divorce and what challenge does this present with today's lifestyle?

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

Luke 16:18

1 Corinthians 7:10-16

6. What did Jesus teach about children and do for them?

7. What do you think it means to “receive the kingdom of God like a little child?”
8. Describe the man who came to Jesus. (see also Luke 18:18, Matthew 19:16-22)
9. What was the man seeking and how did he think he would obtain it?
10. How did Jesus feel about the man? (v.21)
11. Why do you think Jesus told this young man to go and sell all he had, when He told others that all they had to do was to believe? (John 3:16-18, Matthew 6:31-33)
12. Why do you think wealth presents an obstacle to faith for many people?

Psalm 73:1-12

Matthew 6:19-24

Luke 12:13-21
13. What obstacle has wealth or the pursuit of it been in your life?
What does God want you to do with the wealth you have?

1 Timothy 6:6-10

1 Timothy 6:17-19
14. What had Peter done, that the young man couldn’t do, and how did Jesus affirm His choice?

Memory Verse: “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” *Mark 10:15*

Prayer Guide: Father, form the likeness of Christ in me.

LESSON FIFTEEN: MARK 10:32-11:35

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you ever followed someone you trusted to a dangerous place?*

Read Mark 10:32-52

1. Where was Jesus heading and why do you think that those who followed Him were fearful and astonished?
2. What information about His death did Jesus add to what He had already revealed in Mark 8:31 and 9:31-32?
3. What redefinition of power did Jesus provide as He responded to James and John's request? (Mark 10:42-45)

As you think about your own life, what danger can you avoid by exercising Christ's kind of power?

Note: The "cup and the baptism" point to the sorrow and suffering that would lead Jesus to the cross.

4. What was Christ's purpose in coming to earth? (v.45)

5. How was Christ's purpose accomplished?

Isaiah 53:4-6

Romans 5:6-8

2 Corinthians 5:21

Hebrews 9:15

6. What steps of faith did Bartimaeus take?

v.47

v.48

v.50

v.51

v.52

How specifically can you follow his example?

Read Mark 11:1-35

7. Describe the sights and sounds that greeted Jesus as He entered Jerusalem.
(see also Luke 19:35-38)

8. How did Jesus fulfill Messianic prophecy?

Zechariah 9:9

Psalms 118:22-26

9. What similar fate awaited both Jerusalem and the fig tree? Why?
(see also Hosea 2:12-13 and 9:9-10)

How did the fig-tree incident validate Christ's power to judge?

Note: Pilgrims coming to the Passover Feast purchased animals needed for sacrifice in the court of the Gentiles, the only part of the temple open for Gentile worship.

10. What was the temple meant to be and what had it become?
(see also Isaiah 56:6-7, Psalm 100, Psalm 5:7)

What warning do you find in this for the Church today?

11. What guidelines for effective prayer did Jesus provide?
(vv.22-25, see also John 15:7 and James 4:3)

In what specific ways can these guidelines help strengthen your prayer life?

12. What did the religious leaders question about Christ's authority? (vv.27-33)

13. Read Romans 11:33-36. What do these verses and Christ's responses to His questioners reveal about His authority and wisdom?

Memory Verse: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many." *Mark 10:45*

Prayer Guide: Savior, be my vision.

LESSON SIXTEEN: MARK 12:1-27

OPENING QUESTION: *How were you raised to treat those in authority?*

1. Who was in the audience as Jesus taught in parables and what was their response to His teaching? (Mark 11:27)

2. What did each of the following represent and what happened to each?
(see also Isaiah 5:1-2, 7)

Owner

Vineyard

Tenants

Servants

Son

3. What was the message of the parable?

4. Who would the vineyard be given to? (Matthew 21:41-43)
What is God's future plan for the Jews? (See Romans 11:1-5, 11-12, 25-26)

5. What additional insight about the "stone" do you find in these verses?

Psalms 118:21-24

Acts 4:11-12

Ephesians 2:19-22

1 Peter 2:4-10

6. Have you allowed Christ to be the *foundation stone* of your life? If so, what difference has that made?

7. What prevented the religious leaders from arresting Jesus at this time?

Note: Herodians were Jews who under normal circumstances despised the orthodox and nationalistic Pharisees. Their support of Rome led them to willingly pay taxes.

8. What is often the purpose of flattery and how do you respond to it?

9. What flattery was used on Jesus and what do you think it was meant to accomplish?

10. What danger did Jesus avoid with His wise answer to their question?

11. What principle did His answer establish? (see also Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-17)

Note: The Sadducees denied the doctrine of the resurrection of the body because they held only the five books of Moses to be sacred Scripture and these contained no clear resurrection teaching.

12. What Jewish law gave rise to the Sadducees' question? (see Deuteronomy 25:5-6)

13. What truth about the resurrection is provided by Christ's reply and how does this give you hope? (see also 1 Corinthians 15:35-55)

Memory Verse: "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." *Mark 12:10b*

Prayer Guide: Gracious Savior, let me build my life on You.

LESSON SEVENTEEN: MARK 12:28-44

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you ever been touched by the generosity of a person who had very little?*

1. Why did the teacher of the law ask Jesus which was the most important commandment?
2. Why do you think Jesus prefaced His response with the *Shema* or the Jewish confession of faith? (Deuteronomy 6:4)

3. Which commandments were most important?

Deuteronomy 6:5

Leviticus 19:18

4. Why do you think these commandments are inseparable? (see 1 John 4:7-21)

5. How can you love your neighbors in the sense that Jesus was talking about?

Matthew 5:43-44

John 15:12-14

Romans 12:9-10

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Colossians 3:12-14

2 John 6

6. What makes it difficult for you to love as Jesus commands? What steps can you take to grow in your love for others?
7. Who did Christ proclaim Himself to be through His question? (vv.35-37, see also Acts 2:29-36)
8. Describe the lifestyle and attitudes of the teachers of the law. (vv.38-40)
Why do these remain tempting as one gains power?
9. What attitudes should characterize your life as you lead others? (see also Mark 10:42-45)
10. Contrast the giving of the rich people and the poor widow.
11. Which of these givers would have impressed others and why?
12. What is to characterize your giving? (see also 2 Corinthians 8:1-7)
13. What is the condition of your heart as you serve God with your time, talents and money?
Is there a difference between what people see and what God sees?

Memory Verse: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength...Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these." *Mark 12:30-31*

Prayer Guide: Heavenly Father, increase my love.

LESSON EIGHTEEN: MARK 13:1-37

OPENING QUESTION: *What advice would you give to those facing opposition for their faith?*

Note: The temple was regarded as an architectural wonder with some of its white marble stones being over 30 feet in length. There was an imposing view of the temple from the Mount of Olives.

1. What are the benefits of being warned about difficulties that lie ahead and what are the dangers?
2. Why do you think Jesus warned His followers about what lay ahead without revealing specific dates when it would happen?
3. How did Jesus respond to His disciples' comments about the temple?

Note: Two major events seemed to be in view throughout Christ's prophecy. The immediate one was the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 and the ultimate event is Christ's return in glory.

Note: The *abomination of desolation* was an expression from the Old Testament book of Daniel (Daniel 11:31). It referred to an idolatrous person or thing that was deeply offensive to Jews.

4. What did Jesus prophesy would happen in the difficult days ahead?
5. What did Christ predict would be the single greatest threat during those days and how were the disciples to protect themselves from it? (vv.22-23)
6. How do you guard yourself against the same threat today? (see also Matthew 24:23-26)

7. What were the disciples to do in order to remain faithful?

v.7

v.11

v.13

v.23

8. Which of Christ's directives do you especially need to heed in your life?

9. What assurance did Christ provide His disciples that God would be with them and at work in the midst of the end-time turmoil?

10. What must happen before the return of Christ? (v.10)

11. How will Christ return? (v.26, see also Daniel 7:13-14, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

12. Do you look forward to Christ's return or is it something you dread? Explain.

13. When are all these things to happen? What warning is there for those who would try to establish end dates or who would ignore Christ's return?

Memory Verse: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away."
Mark 13:31

Prayer Guide: Word of God, teach me.

LESSON NINETEEN: MARK 14:1-31

OPENING QUESTION: *Share a memory of being touched by someone's generosity.*

Note: Over 500,000 Jews gathered in Jerusalem for the seven-day celebration of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

1. What was in the minds of each of these as they came to Jerusalem?

Jewish people: (Deuteronomy 16:1-8, 2 Chronicles 30:21)

Religious leaders: (v.1)

Jesus:

2. Who was the woman and why do you think she chose to anoint Jesus?
(see also John 11:1-2, 31-32, 12:1-8, Luke 10:38-42)

3. How did Jesus commend the woman and why?

4. How did the others respond to the woman and why? (see also John 12:4-6)

5. In what specific way might you demonstrate your love for God this week?

Note: The Passover meal would include unleavened bread, wine, bitter herbs and lamb.

6. Who were the disciples Jesus sent and what preparations were they to make? (see Luke 22:8)
7. What was the significance of the Passover lamb to the Jewish people? (see Exodus 12:1-14)
8. How did Jesus become the Passover Lamb? (see also John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7)

9. What is betrayal and why is it so devastating, especially from a close friend or family member? (see also Job 19:19, Psalm 41:9, Psalm 55:20-21)

10. How did Jesus treat His betrayer? (see also Matthew 26:23-26)

11. What ultimately happened to Judas and why? (see also Matthew 27:1-10, Acts 1:15-20)

12. On the night when He was betrayed, what did Jesus offer His disciples?

13. As you take the Lord's Supper, what are you remembering?
(see also 1 Corinthians 11:23-28, Hebrews 9:14-15,22)

14. **Read Psalm 118.** This Psalm concluded the Passover meal.
What assurance would it have provided Jesus that God would guide Him through His suffering to glory?

What assurance do you receive from this Psalm today?

15. As Jesus and His disciples were on their way to the Mount of Olives, what was His warning and what was His promise? (vv.27-31)

Memory Verse: "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." *1 Corinthians 11:26*

Prayer Guide: My Redeemer, let my life proclaim You.

LESSON TWENTY: MARK 14:32-65

OPENING QUESTION: *Where do you go when your soul is troubled?*

1. Describe Christ's agony in Gethsemane. (see also Luke 22:39-46)
2. What did Jesus ask of His disciples and why?
3. How could obedience in this area make a difference in your life?
4. What was the cup Jesus dreaded? (see also Mark 10:38, Isaiah 53:3-6)
5. What do you learn from Christ's example to help you pray in times of great need?
6. How were Christ's prayers answered? (see also Luke 22:43, Hebrews 5:7-10)
7. How might this passage encourage you in times of suffering? What warning might it provide?
8. What hour had come for Jesus?

9. What was Judas' role in Christ's betrayal?
(see also Matthew 26:14-16, Mark 14:10-11 and Luke 22:3-6)
10. How were Christ's words in Mark 14:27-31 fulfilled and what do you think caused such behavior in the disciples?
11. What perversion of justice do you find in Jesus' trial?
12. With what question did the High Priest himself examine Jesus and what was he really asking?
13. What was blasphemy and what punishment did it require? (see also Leviticus 24:15-16)
14. What did the leaders hear in Jesus' response to cause the charge of blasphemy?
(Mark 14:62, see also Isaiah 44:6, Daniel 7:13, Revelation 1:8)
15. What treatment did Christ's words provoke and why do you think this was so?
(see also John 3:19-21)
16. Read Philippians 2:5-11. How is your understanding of Christ and His sacrifice enlarged?

Memory Verse: "I AM" said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." *Mark 14:62*

Prayer Guide: Mighty God, dispel my darkness with your light.

LESSON TWENTY-ONE: MARK 14:66-15:15

OPENING QUESTION: *Have you had any experience in a court of law to help you appreciate justice and mercy?*

1. Where was Peter during Christ's hearing and why do you think he was there?

2. Who had Peter acknowledged Jesus to be?

Mark 8:29

John 6:68-69

3. What "charges" were brought against Peter and how did he respond to each?

4. What conditions were present to tempt denial?

5. As you reflect on your life, when are you most tempted to deny Christ?
Are there any changes you need to make in order to avoid this?

6. What awakened Peter's conscience and with what result?

7. What charges did the religious leaders bring against Jesus before Pilate?
(see also Luke 23:1-17)

8. What was the difference between Jesus' understanding of what it meant to be "King of the Jews" and that of His persecutors? (see also John 18:29-37)

9. **Read Mark 15:1-15, Matthew 27:11-26, Luke 23:1-25, John 19:1-16.**

Describe Pilate as fully as you can.

What evidence do you find that he wanted to do what was right?

Why did he hand Jesus over to death?

What do you find most disturbing about Pilate? What warning is there in this for you?

10. What power did the crowd exert and how had their cries changed?
(see Mark 11:9-10)

11. Who was Barabbas and what might it have meant that Jesus took His place? What does it mean to you that He takes yours?

Memory Verse: "Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times." *Mark 14:72b*

Prayer Guide: Lord Jesus, deliver me from evil.

LESSON TWENTY-TWO: MARK 15:16-16:20

OPENING QUESTION: *When do you first remember hearing of Christ's death and resurrection in a way that especially touched you?*

1. Describe Christ's suffering.

Who caused it?

What was done to Him?

Mark 15:13-14

Mark 15:15

Mark 15:17-20

Mark 15:24

Mark 15:29-30

Mark 15:31

Mark 15:32

Isaiah 53:5

2. What was accomplished through His suffering and death?
(see also Galatians 3:13-14, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24)
3. What effect does darkness have and what might it have had here?
4. What cry did Mark record and what do you think Jesus expressed through it?
(Psalm 22:1, Isaiah 59:1-2)
5. What was the significance of the temple curtain being torn from top to bottom?
(see also Exodus 26:31-33, Hebrews 9:12, 10:19-23)
6. In what way was the centurion's confession a climax to the Gospel of Mark?
(see also Mark 1:1, 10-11, 8:28-30, 14:62)

7. Where were the women and how had they been involved with Jesus?

8. **Read:** Mark 15:42-47, Matthew 27:57-61, Luke 23:50-56, John 19:38-42, John 3:1-8, 7:45-53
Describe the two men who took care of Jesus' body.

Joseph:

Nicodemus:

Note: The earliest manuscripts do not contain Mark 16:9-20. (NIV)

9. Who were the witnesses to the resurrection?

Mark 16:1-6

Mark 16:9-10, John 20:10-18

Mark 16:12, Luke 24:13-35

Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36-43

10. Why do you think Peter was singled out and what encouragement must this have been for him?

11. Why is the resurrection so important?

John 11:25-26

1 Corinthians 15:12-22

Philippians 3:10-14, 20-21

12. What difference does the resurrection make to you personally?

Memory Verse: Jesus said to them: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." *Mark 16:15*

Prayer Guide: Risen Savior, help me make You known.

REVIEW LESSON II

1. What verses do you most want to take with you from this study?

2. How have you been amazed by Jesus?

3. Which encounter with Jesus has impacted you most and why?

4. How have you grown
 In your prayer life?

 In your ability to live through difficult times?

 In your trust in God's promises?

5. What insights will you take from your study of Christ's miracles, especially of healing?

6. What in your life would you like to change to become more like Jesus?

7. What are you thankful for?