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Speaker:	Date:

The Wols



Mark 1:1-20

Before you begin wite the Lord into this yourney of Stily with you...

1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

⁴ John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

¹² The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

¹⁶ Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." ¹⁸ And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

Isaiah 40:9-10

² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

Study Dustions

Chapter 1 is set in the desert alongside the River Jordan where a revival is taking place. John, last of the Old Testament prophets, is preaching to huge crowds of people. Everything about John screams "*Prophet!*", from his camel hair shirt and locust diet, to his thunderous confrontational voice calling the people to return to God.

1. Mark opens by saying that his good news is all about a person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Unlike the other gospels, Mark's account begins with Jesus' encounter with John the Baptist, "John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." In this passage what similarities does Mark present between Jesus and John the Baptist?

2. Mark describes the baptism of Jesus in verses 9-11. What are the visual and verbal seals God gives to convey his approval? How does this allow all three parts of the Godhead/Trinity to be present?

3. The Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness. What does this reveal about the role of the Spirit in Jesus' life? In our lives?

- 4. What is the "good news" (gospel) presented in verses 14 15? How is the prophesy from Isaiah 40:9-10 being fulfilled?
- 5. In verses 16 20, Jesus calls his first disciples to be fishers of men, and these men make radical decisions to leave their families and jobs to follow Jesus. What are some things we may be called to leave behind when we choose to follow Jesus?

Speaker:	Date:

Talk Moles



Repent,	
Prepare,	
A Holy space,	
Listen,	
Be Still,	
The Spirit awaits	

Prayer Requests

Friend:	Request:	How can I encourage:
		
		Encouragement ideas: letter in the mail,
		phone call, plan to walk together, send a text



And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. ²² And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴ "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷ And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸ And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

²⁹ And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. ³¹ And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, ³⁷ and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you." ³⁸ And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out." ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

⁴⁰ And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." ⁴¹ Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean." ⁴² And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them." ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.

The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp.

Leviticus 13:45-46

Take care, in a case of leprous disease, to be very careful to do according to all that the Levitical priest shall direct you. As I commanded them, so you shall be careful to do.

Deuteronomy 24:8

Study Duestions

Before you begin, circle the ways Jesus acts with tenderness and power in the passage.

1. Jesus begins his ministry on a Sabbath by teaching in a synagogue. We know that Jesus is God's Son and reflects the Father. What do Jesus' actions in this passage show us about God's character?

2. Look at the reactions of the people around Jesus. For example, we see amazement, the spreading of news, people bringing the sick and demonic to Jesus. And more specifically, we see Peter's mother-in-law serving, the disciples giving a thinly veiled rebuke, the leper begging. What do all these reactions show us about ourselves? To whom do you relate?

3. To better understand the life of a leper in Jesus' time, read Leviticus 13: 45-46, Leviticus 14:1-32, and Deuteronomy 24:8. With this Old Testament background, what impresses you about a leper's circumstances? Now re-read Mark 1:40-44. What do you think the leper who approached Jesus was thinking and feeling?

4. Why do you think Jesus commanded silence from the demons and from the healed leper? Were his reasons the same in each case or different? How did the responses of the demons and the leper differ?

5. Do you share Jesus' sense of the need for prayer and prolonged communication with the Father? Do you feel challenged or convicted by his example? How can we develop a greater closeness with the Lord?

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Talk Moles



Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16



Friend:	Request:	How can I encourage:
		



Mark 2:1-22

 $2 : \! 1$ And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. ³ And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— 11 "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." ¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

Psalm 103:2-6

¹³ He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to him, and he was teaching them. ¹⁴ And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.

¹⁵ And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷ And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

¹⁸ Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁹ And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. ²¹ No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. ²² And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins."

Study Dustions

The disobedience of the leper in our previous passage forced Jesus to leave Capernaum for some time. When he returns, people pack inside and outside a home where Jesus is staying to hear him teach. Mark paints a picture of Jesus as he heals bodies and hearts of the needy while responding to controversy and emerging hostility from religious leaders.

1. Observing Jesus' actions, what character traits emerge in this passage? What do they show us about the character of God?

2. Consider the many kinds of people Jesus encounters in the passage: the paralytic and his caregivers, Levi and his friends, casual observers, and critics. To whom do you relate? What do you learn about yourself (good or bad) from them and their reactions to Jesus?

3. As Jesus teaches about fasting, he highlights a contrast or incompatibility between two spiritual attitudes. What is he comparing? How do the examples of a fabric patch and wineskins illustrate it?

4. Examine your own heart as you consider the attitudes of the Jewish leaders and Pharisees toward other people and toward Jesus. Do you find similar attitudes in yourself? Do you sense a need to change? What solutions does the passage give you?

Speaker:	Date:

Talk Moles



The One God who spins wide worlds into orbit
Runs to the weary, the worn and the weak.
The same gentle hands that hold me when I'm broken
Conquered death to bring me victory.



Friend:	Request:	How can I encourage:
		
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		□
		
		□



2.23 One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴ And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" ²⁵ And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: ²⁶ how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" ²⁷ And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

3:1 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. ² And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. ³ And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." ⁴ And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. ⁵ And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

⁷ Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea ⁸ and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him. ⁹ And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him, ¹⁰ for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him. ¹¹ And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." ¹² And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers..."

Ruth 2:2-3

And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 23:22

Study Duestions

Jesus encounters the Pharisees at a pivotal moment in scripture. As they question him and his disciples' choices, arguing over keeping the Sabbath law, Jesus claims the Son of Man has power to overrule the laws of the Sabbath. And if that is the case, then who does that make Jesus? Here, his actions declare him, Jesus, Son of God.

1. The Pharisees are once again calling out the disciples for breaking the law. What are the two issues being addressed in verses 23-24?

2. Read Leviticus 23:22 and Ruth 2:2-3. Describe the provisional law God put in place for the alien, orphan, and widow. How does it portray the heart of God?

3. Jesus rebukes the Pharisees with a story from 1 Samuel, where another godly man, David, did something forbidden by law. What is Jesus' response in verse 27? Compare the importance of rules and regulations versus human need in God's economy.

4. In Jesus' second encounter with the Pharisees in this passage, their hardened hearts look intently for a way to indict him. What does Jesus ask them as he prepares to heal the man's withered hand? Contrast the healing with verse 6. Who actually broke the Sabbath law?

5. The scripture here paints a clear picture of the heart of God and the heart of man. Ask the Lord to show you ways that you place personal rules and regulations above the needs of those God has called you to love and care for. How does the heart of your heavenly Father encourage you to see human need first?

Speaker:	Date:

Talk Moles



Prayer Requests

Friend:	Request:	How can I encourage:
		



Mark 3:13-35

3:13 And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. ¹⁴ And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach ¹⁵ and have authority to cast out demons. ¹⁶ He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); ¹⁷ James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); ¹⁸ Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

²⁰ Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons." ²³ And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. ²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

²⁸ "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin" — ³⁰ for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

³¹ And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. ³² And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." ³³ And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" ³⁴ And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."

Study Dustions

In the last reading, word spread of Jesus' miraculous healings. Crowds multiplied with people seeking just one touch, hoping for freedom from their bondage to disease. Even unclean spirits collapsed at the sight of him, proclaiming, "You are the Son of God!" Now, Jesus calls his chosen disciples to take the Good News to the world and declares that his "family" are those who truly believe in him.

- 1. Describe the scene in verses 13-19. Where are they? How many did Jesus appoint as his chosen? Why is that significant? What did he appoint them to do in verses 14-15?
- 2. What is the significance of "being with him" in verse 14? How important was their intimate contact with him in bearing witness of him? How are you "being with him" during this season of your life?

3. What do you know about the disciples Jesus chose? What surprises you? How does this encourage your faith?

4. As the crowds increase, Jesus' family is concerned that he will say something to embarrass himself and consequently themselves (verses 31-35). Where do Jesus' loyalties lie? Was this a sacrifice on his part? What encouragement does he give those who are willing to follow him without reservation?

5. This section of scripture closes with Jesus clearly asserting his power and authority. List the areas of your life 1) where you trust him and 2) where you struggle to trust him. Give thanks for areas where God has given you the grace to trust. Pray for faith and endurance in those areas where you do not. Know that God has proven his deep love for you in the midst of pain and failure. You are dearly loved.

Speaker:	Date:

Talk Moles



What does following Jesus look like? Take some time to reflect on how following him looks in your life.

Player Reguests

Friend:	Request:	How can I encourage:
		
		
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Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. ² And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³ "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵ Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸ And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." ⁹ And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

¹⁰ And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, ¹² so that "'they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.""

¹³ And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. ¹⁶ And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. ¹⁸ And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹ but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. ²⁰ But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

²¹ And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? ²² For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." ²⁴ And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. ²⁵ For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

²⁶ And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. ²⁷ He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. ²⁸ The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. ²⁹ But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

³⁰ And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? ³¹ It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, ³² yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

 33 With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. 34 He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

⁸ And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." ⁹ And he said, "Go, and say to this people:

"Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' 10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

Isaiah 6:8-10

Study Dustions

We again find Jesus to be a masterful storyteller, and woven through his stories are hidden secrets revealed for those whose hearts are willing to "listen!" In this passage, we find Jesus weaving kingdom truths into the horticultural norm of his day. These truths fall onto a range of heart conditions.

1. Do you find Jesus' parables illuminating or challenging? Think about what makes this format helpful or frustrating.

2. Read Isaiah 6:8-10. In Mark 4:12, Jesus quotes this passage to explain his use of parables. What does this tell us about how Jesus expected the Gospel to be received or understood?

3. Consider the parable of the sower (verses 1-9) with the parable of the growing seed (verses 26-29) and the parable of the mustard seed (verses 30-32). What do these three stories teach you about the impact of God's word on human hearts?

4. In verses 24 and 25, Jesus cautions his listeners. What is he warning them against, and what are the consequences he lays out for not heeding his warning?

5. Reflecting on your own response to the gospel, are there areas of your heart where you would describe the soil of your heart as hard, rocky, or full of weeds? What are some ways we can prepare the soil of our hearts to be soft recipients of the gospel?

Speaker:	Date:

Talk Moles



Prayer Requests

Friend:	Request:	How can I encourage:
		
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Mark 4:35-5:20

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." ³⁶ And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. ³⁸ But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹ And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹ And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

5:1 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. ² And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³ He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴ for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶ And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷ And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." 8 For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" 9 And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." ¹⁰ And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, ¹² and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." ¹³ So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

¹⁴ The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵ And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ¹⁶ And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. ¹⁷ And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. ¹⁸ As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. ¹⁹ And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

²⁸ Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. ²⁹ He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. ³⁰ Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven. ³¹ Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man!

Psalm 107:28-31

Study Dustions

After a long day of teaching, Jesus asks the disciples to take him to the opposite side of the Sea of Galilee. Exhausted, Jesus falls asleep on a cushion in the stern of the boat. As Lord of all, Jesus is never asleep in our storms, yet we often fail to see him on the throne when storms prevail around us. Let's consider our storms and where we place our Sovereign Lord in the midst of them.

- 1. How is the calming of the storm different than other miracles that Jesus has performed so far? How is it the same?
- 2. The disciples' doubts about Jesus lead to their fear. What are they doubting? Can you think of a time when you doubted Jesus?
- 3. The boat lands on the other side of the lake. When Jesus steps onto the shore he encounters a man with profound needs. What is the town's attitude toward this man? Have you ever been in a situation where you or people you observed acted in this way toward someone? Describe what you remember. How does Jesus' attitude contrast with the townspeople?
- 4. During the healing, Jesus gives permission for the evil spirits to enter a herd of nearby pigs. Why doesn't he simply banish the evil spirits? What does this allow the disciples and townspeople to observe about Jesus?

5. In both instances, when Jesus calms the storm and casts the demons into the herd, Mark tells us that the disciples and the townspeople were afraid. Are these two examples the same type of fear or different? How? What kind of fear, if any, do you experience when confronted with the work of God?

Speaker:	Date:

Talk Moles



Fatherlike he tends and spares us
Well our feeble frame he knows
In his hand he gently bears us
Rescues us from all our foes.
H.F. Lyte, 1834

Player Requests

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 $5^{\circ}21$ And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. ²² Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet ²³ and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." ²⁴ And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. ²⁵ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, ²⁶ and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷ She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸ For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." ²⁹ And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. ³⁰ And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" ³¹ And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'" ³² And he looked around to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

³⁵ While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" ³⁶ But overhearing ^[a] what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." ³⁷ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus ^[b] saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. ⁴³ And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

"If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her menstrual impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness. As in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean. 26 Every bed on which she lies, all the days of her discharge, shall be to her as the bed of her impurity. And everything on which she sits shall be unclean, as in the uncleanness of her menstrual impurity. 27 And whoever touches these things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. 28 But if she is cleansed of her discharge, she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. 29 And on the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and bring them to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting. ³⁰ And the priest shall use one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for her unclean discharge.

Study Duestions

In this passage Mark uses a 'split-screen' technique to tell a story. As Sinclair Ferguson describes it, Mark "introduces one event, and then, to convey the sense of the passing of time, he describes a second incident." Picture Jesus, surrounded by worried disciples in the press of a needy turbulent crowd. Jesus is the one constant.

1. Read Leviticus 15:25-30.	Given the laws on impurity, describe the life of the woman who suffered bleeding for
twelve years.	

2.	The woman simply tou	ched Jesus' clothes and expected to be healed.	Why did Jesus insist on knowing who
	touched his garment?	Why was she fearful to come to Jesus directly?	

3. How might Jairus have fel	t when Jesus stopped to me	eet the need of the	woman in the crowd?	Could the fact that
Jesus stopped have had a	a beneficial impact on Jairus	s? If so, what impa	act might that be?	

4. We can only imagine the father's feelings when he was told that his daughter had died. What does Jesus tell him? How does Jairus demonstrate faith in Jesus?

5. Jesus' interactions with the woman and with Jairus must have changed them profoundly, in unforgettable ways. How has Jesus changed you through challenging situations in your life? Share an example with your group.

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Talk Moles



Do you ever wonder if Jesus can truly care for you in the midst of your up and down life? Remember what Jesus says about himself:

"His heart is gentle and lowly. In Him you will find rest." Matthew 11:29



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G: He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ² And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. ⁴ And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." ⁵ And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶ And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

⁷ And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸ He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts— ⁹ but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. ¹⁰ And he said to them, "Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. ¹¹ And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." ¹² So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. ¹³ And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

¹⁴ King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." ¹⁵ But others said, "He is Elijah." And others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." ¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." ¹⁷ For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her. ¹⁸ For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, ²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

²¹ But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. ²² For when Herodias's daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. And the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you." ²³ And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom." ²⁴ And she went out and said to her mother, "For what should I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." ²⁵ And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." ²⁶ And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. ²⁷ And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison ²⁸ and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Study Dustions

1. The opening verses in Mark 6 describe the rejection of Jesus by those in his hometown of Nazareth. The text says that they "took offense" at Jesus' teaching and that he "marveled/wondered at their unbelief". He confronts them in verse 4. Is there any aspect of this story that resonates with you either as a believer in your family or perhaps when one of your relatives was speaking of Christ before you became a Christian?

2. Jesus sends out his disciples on their first short term mission trip. They were sent out to do as Jesus would have done, to reflect their Master and his message. Review Mark 6:7-15 and list out what you learn about the lifestyle of dependence that Jesus required of them.

3. The disciples were given authority over "unclean spirits" and the text says that demons were cast out and many who were sick were healed. Imagine being an onlooker to these miracles as they were happening. Are you fearful? Amazed? Skeptical? Why?

4. Jesus tells the disciples to "shake off the dust that is on your feet" as a testimony against any village that would not accept them and their teaching. This was not a sign of judgement but a public way of acknowledging that they were rejecting God's message, the gospel. How would you apply this today with family, neighbors or coworkers who oppose your faith in Jesus? How does humility and grace impact your response?

5. Mark wrote that King Herod was aware of the miraculous ministry of Jesus and his disciples and shares the historical account of how King Herod's "people pleasing" led to John's murder (see Mark 6:26). Read the entire account in Mark 6:14-29 and note what you learn from Herod's story about the consequences of unbelief and a reluctance to turn from sin.

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Talk Moles



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10

Mark 6:30-56



6:30 The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³² And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. ³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. ³⁵ And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. ³⁶ Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." ³⁷ But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" 38 And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." ³⁹ Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. ⁴¹ And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² And they all ate and were satisfied. ⁴³ And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. ⁴⁴ And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, ⁵⁰ for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." ⁵¹ And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, ⁵² for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. ⁵⁴ And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him ⁵⁵ and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. ² And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. 3 Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. ⁵ Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him. Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" 6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. 11 Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." 13 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. 14 When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" ¹⁵ Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

John 6:1-15



1. When the exhausted disciples return from their ministry trip (verses 7-13), Jesus calls them away to a "desolate place" to rest. When they arrive there they discover crowds of needy people awaiting them. How does Jesus react? How might the disciples have reacted? (Consider how you feel after an exhausting day on the jobwhether in the home or outside the home—to be confronted by someone else's needs.)					
2. Read John 6:	1-15. Here is another ac	count of the miracle of the	e multiplication of the br	ead and fish. Fill in the ch	nart below with what you learn.
	Words of disciples	Actions of disciples	Words of Jesus	Actions of Jesus	Response of crowd
Mk 6:35-44					
John 6:1-15					
-	·			e to pray. What are you no	oticing so far in Mark about e needs of others?
that the disciples	s just 'didn't get it' about v				ot be afraid." Verse 52 tells us r? In what way does Jesus'
	lark 6, we have seen seven who is Jesus in your life?		Jesus as he shows who	o he is to the disciples and	d to needy crowds. After study-



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"He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.

Then they were glad that the waters were quiet,

and he brought them to their desired haven."

Psalm 107:29-30



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11

Mark 7:1-23



Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, ² they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³ (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders, ⁴ and when they come from the market-place, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.) ⁵ And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" ⁶ And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me. teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

⁸ You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

 9 And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' 11 But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban"' (that is, given to God)— 12 then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, 13 thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

¹⁴ And he called the people to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him." ¹⁷ And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸ And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹ since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) ²⁰ And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men.

Isaiah 29:13

Study Dustions

1. As in Chapter 3, the Pharisees from Jerusalem are challenging Jesus again. What motivates the Pharisees and teachers of the law to point out that Jesus' disciples do not ceremoniously wash their hands before eating? To what authority are they showing their allegiance?

2. List some of the other traditions the Pharisees and Jews observe. How does their emphasis on observing these traditions affect their view of Jesus and his disciples? Are these traditions Biblical commands?

3. In verse 6-7 Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13. From these verses and verse 8-9, what is his main concern? Consider if there are "worldly" things or traditions you may be unknowingly holding onto more tightly than God's word and share with your group if you feel led.

4. After speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus then speaks directly to the crowd and later to his disciples regarding what makes someone unclean. What does Jesus say is the source of being unclean?

5. In verses 20-23, Jesus lists some of the evils that originate in our hearts. The year 2020 has been tough. Reflect on what's been going on in your heart this year and ask Jesus to help where you are struggling.

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Mark 7:24-37



And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. ²⁵ But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophoenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ And he said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." ²⁸ But she answered him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." ²⁹ And he said to her, "For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter." ³⁰ And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

³¹ Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³² And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³ And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. ³⁴ And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." ³⁵ And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷ And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 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.

Isaiah 35:5-6



Jesus and his disciples walk outside of the borders of Israel to the city of Tyre, in what is now modern day Lebanon, and would have been considered historical enemy territory. The person Jesus meets there is both a woman and a gentile. Furthermore, it's not her son but her daughter who needs help, a situation beneath the dignity of any self respecting rabbi. Look at the ways that Jesus loves without prejudice, and how he honors those with faith in the Son of God.

1.	Reflect on the interactions and tone of recent passages we have studied. Why would Jesus want to keep his travel to Tyre a secret at this time?
2.	In verses 27-29, Jesus and the Syrophoenician woman have an unusual exchange. It almost appears as if Jesus is brushing her request aside. When examining Jesus' reply, some theologians believe he was searching out this woman's faith. What does the woman's response reveal about her belief in Jesus?
3.	Despite Jesus' seemingly strange reply, the woman (a lowly member of society), continues to beg Jesus for a miracle on her daughter's behalf (an even more lowly member of society). Reflect on what we have read so far of the miracles of Jesus. What may she have heard that caused her to persist?
4.	As you look at the desperate boldness of the Syrophoenician woman, can you feel God challenging your heart to persist with similar boldness? Will you seek the mercy, healing and miraculous love of Jesus in your life, undeterred? What burden can you lay at his feet today?
5.	Next, Jesus and his disciples make their way back to the Sea of Galilee. An excited group of people bring their deaf and mute friend to be healed. What are three ways Jesus shows insight and compassion toward this man who has lived a life of absolute silence?



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13

Mark 8:1-30



8°1 In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, ² "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. ³ And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." ⁴ And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?" ⁵ And he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." ⁶ And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. ⁷ And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. ⁸ And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. ⁹ And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away. ¹⁰ And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

¹¹ The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. ¹² And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." ¹³ And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side.

¹⁴ Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵ And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." ¹⁶ And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. ¹⁷ And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? ¹⁸ Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." ²⁰ "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." ²¹ And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

²² And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. ²³ And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" ²⁴ And he looked up and said, "I see people, but they look like trees, walking." ²⁵ Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. ²⁶ And he sent him to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village."

²⁷ And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" ²⁸ And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." ³⁰ And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Phillip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

John 14:6-9

Study Dustions

1. In the story of the feeding the four thousand, Jesus gently teaches the disciples that compassion as a feeling is not enough; it must be accompanied by action. The disciples see only the obstacles that prevent them from acting. In what areas of your life do you think God is calling you to see past the obstacles in order to display his compassion for others?

2. In verse 8, the four thousand "ate and were satisfied." What does this story, and specifically this verse, reveal about God's provision?

3. In verse 16, the disciples discuss their lack of bread and Jesus reminds them of his provision in the past. In what ways do you not trust God's provision for the future? What "bread" do you worry about?

4. Read John 14:6-9 and think about the events of our lesson in Mark. What does this week's passage in Mark reveal about the character of God? Consider Jesus' interaction with the crowds, the disciples, and the Pharisees.

5. In verse 24, we see Jesus beautifully and gradually heal the blind man. At first, he sees dimly. After a second touch from Jesus, his sight is fully restored. This could be a metaphor for our walk with Christ. We don't fully see or understand everything about him the moment we become Christians. Ask the Lord to help you trust him timing as he heals your heart. Consider what you can ask the Lord to help you to see or understand more clearly.

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Jesus is winter, bread and light.

In Him we are satisfied.

In Him we find our rest.



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14

Mark 8:31-9:13



8:31 And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

³⁴ And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

9:1 And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."

² And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³ and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ And Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁶ For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷ And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." ⁸ And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.

⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean. ¹¹ And they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" ¹² And he said to them, "Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? ¹³ But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him."



The question has been asked since the beginning of Mark, "Who do men say that I am? Who do you say that I am?" Jesus, the Son of God, now attempts to erase any questions the disciples and his followers may have about his purpose and presence among them, and clearly addresses his nearing suffering, death, and resurrection. Watch how Peter's pride inhibits his faith in the words of the man he has chosen to follow, and be awake to the Lord's call on your life to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow him.

	ter's pride inhibits his faith in the words of the man he has chosen to follow, and be awake to the Lord's call on your to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow him.
1.	Re-read verse 33. In what ways does Satan try to distract or tempt you to set your mind on things of man instead of God?
2.	In verse 34, Jesus says that someone who wishes to follow him needs to "deny himself and take up his cross." What do you think this means? In what areas is the Lord calling you to surrender your decisions, desires, and hopes, big and small, to him?
3.	In verse 38, Jesus warns those who are "ashamed" of him and his word. While ashamed is a strong word, John Piper writes that the opposite of shame here is pride, admiration, lack of embarrassment, and loving to be identified with Christ. Are there—areas in which you struggle to be proud of your faith?
4.	What do you think the appearance and subsequent disappearance of Moses and Elijah during the transfiguration on the mountain suggest about Jesus' life and death?
5.	Jesus tells his disciples in verse 12 that "it is written that the Son of Man should suffer many things and be treated with contempt." What does it say about the nature of God that this suffering was necessary in order to restore us to him?



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"If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."

Mark 8:34



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15

Mark 9:14-37



9:14 And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes arguing with them. ¹⁵ And immediately all the crowd, when they saw him, were greatly amazed and ran up to him and greeted him. ¹⁶ And he asked them, "What are you arguing about with them?" ¹⁷ And someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. ¹⁸ And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." ¹⁹ And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." ²⁰ And they brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. ²¹ And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. ²² And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." ²³ And Jesus said to him, "'If you can'! All things are possible for one who believes." ²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" ²⁵ And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." ²⁶ And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. ²⁸ And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" ²⁹ And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but praver."

³⁰ They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, ³¹ for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." ³² But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

³³ And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" ³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. ³⁵ And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶ And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me."

Study Dustions

- Peter, James, and John just returned from a miraculous mountain top experience with Jesus. It is so hard to come back down to the valley, back to everyday life after intimate times with the Lord. Please share one of your own "mountain top" experiences and how it encouraged and empowered you to live back in the "valley"?
 What is the situation that Jesus encounters as he descends the mountain (verses 14-18)? Why are the scribes and the disciples arguing? How is this an opportunity for the religious leaders to humiliate the disciples and discredit Jesus?
 A desperate father is seeking healing for his son. The young boy is at the center of the argument. Why does Jesus respond as he does in verse 19?
- 4. Jesus tells the father to bring the boy to him. Now face to face with Jesus, he admits, "I believe, help me overcome my unbelief." Jesus sees the father's incomplete faith. Even so, how does Jesus respond? In what ways is Jesus' response to the father an encouragement to you?

5. As they continue on the road, Jesus hears the disciples arguing. What were they discussing? Contrast the world's idea of greatness and success with that of Jesus' definition of greatness. Why do you think Jesus used a little child to illustrate His point?

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Our culture says, "Seeing is believing." We believe in what we can measure and touch. Jesus says, "Believing is seeing."



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16

Mark 9:38-10:16



9:38 John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." ³⁹ But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. ⁴⁰ For the one who is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward.

⁴² "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. ⁴³ And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' ⁴⁹ For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

10:1 And he left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again. And again, as was his custom, he taught them.

² And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" ³ He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" ⁴ They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." ⁵ And Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. ⁶ But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' ⁷ 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, ⁸ and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. ⁹ What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

¹⁰ And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. ¹¹ And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, ¹² and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

¹³ And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." ¹⁶ And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. ² And large crowds followed him, and he healed them there. ³ And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" 4 He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." 7 They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?" 8 He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."10 The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry." 11 But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men. and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."

Matthew 19:1-12



1.	How can we apply the truth of verse 40 to the present-day reality of numerous Christian denominations? What steps can we take to focus more on the unity of our core beliefs so that we can share the gospel together?
2.	What does it mean to minister "in Jesus' name?" What does it reveal about the disciples' hearts that they didn't want others outside their group to heal/serve in Jesus' name?
3.	Read Mark 10:13-16. Once again, the disciples' world view was out of line with Jesus' first hand view of God's kingdom. They were turning away parents seeking a blessing from Jesus on their children. Jesus said, "The kingdom belongs to such as these very children." How do we receive the kingdom of God like a child?
4.	Refer to both Mark 10:1-12 and Matthew 19:1-12. What was God's intention for marriage from the beginning? How do you interpret Jesus' response that Moses permitted them to write a certificate of divorce because of the hardness of their hearts? How can God use the brokenness in these situations to demonstrate his love and presence in every situation?
5.	Spend some time in prayer asking God to show you any habits, pleasures, or relationships that may need to be "cut off" in order for you to be fully obedient to His will.



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Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant.

Philippians 2:5



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17

Mark 10:17-45



10:17 And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁸ And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother." ²⁰ And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." ²¹ And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." ²² Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

²³ And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁴ And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁶ And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." ²⁸ Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." ²⁹ Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, ³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. ³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

³² And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, ³³ saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise."

³⁵ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." ³⁶ And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" ³⁷ And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." ³⁸ Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" ³⁹ And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." ⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. ⁴² And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

Matthew 22:37

Study Dustions

On the road to Jerusalem, a young man runs up to Jesus, falls to his knees and asks him what he needs to do to inherit eternal life. Mark tells us the man was rich. Luke adds that he was a ruler. The occasion becomes a teaching moment. A conversation with Jesus leads the young man and us to God's supernatural standard and matchless grace for his people.

- 1. Read Mark 10:17-22. What might prompt the young man to approach Jesus in the manner he does and to ask this particular question? Jesus answers by naming commandments that involve living in godly relationships with people. What is revealed by the rich young ruler's response in verse 20?
- 2. Jesus knows the rich young man and loves him deeply. Even so, in verse 21, Jesus points out what is lacking in the young man's heart. How is the first commandment (Deuteronomy 6:5 or Matthew 22:37) pivotal to Jesus' response?
- 3. Also in verse 21, Jesus answers the rich young ruler's first question. What will he gain if he follows Jesus' instructions? In Mark 8:35, Jesus says, "Take up your cross and follow me." How does taking up your cross impact your priorities?

4. What warning does Jesus repeat and illustrate in verses 23-25? Consider Jesus' statement, "with men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible." In what ways do you believe this and in what ways do you struggle to believe this?

5. What do the disciples request in verse 37 and how does this plea expose their assumptions and their heart condition? With what kingdom principle in verses 42-45 does Jesus ground them and help his disciples understand the cost of their commitment?

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18

Mark 10:46-11:25



And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside.

And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. ³ If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" ⁴ And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. ⁵ And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" ⁶ And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. ⁷ And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. ⁸ And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. ⁹ And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"

When I would gather them, declares the LORD, there are no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree; even the leaves are withered, and what I gave them has passed away from them.

Jeremiah 8:13

¹¹ And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

¹² On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ And he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

¹⁵ And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. ¹⁶ And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. ¹⁷ And he was teaching them and saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." ¹⁸ And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. ¹⁹ And when evening came they went out of the city.

²⁰ As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. ²¹ And Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." ²² And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. ²³ Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵ And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

The Cospel of Merk 90



Jericho is the last stop on Jesus' road to Jerusalem. The disciple group travels with a large crowd of pilgrims headed for the Passover festival. Cranky and impatient for the long walk to end, the crowd has no time to stop for a blind beggar. "Be quiet!" they growl as Bartimaeus cries out, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

1.	Read Mark 10:46-52. How does Bartimaeus resemble the children who approached Jesus earlier (Mark 10:13-16)? Name a person we've met in Mark who contrasts sharply with both the children and Bartimaeus. Why does this person come to mind?
2.	Reflect on Jesus' question to Bartimaeus. "What do you want me to do for you?" If Jesus stood in front of you, looked into your eyes and asked that very question, how would you respond?
3.	The King of Kings looked at the blind beggar, saw his faith and restored his sight. In what other ways did the encounter with Jesus change the man's life?
4.	After a night's rest with friends in Bethany, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Sunday and then cleansed the temple on Monday. In both settings, how does the attitude of the crowd and authorities contrast with Jesus' attitude (Mark 11:7-10 and 15-18)?
5.	What fruit do you long to bear for the Lord? In what ways is Jesus' teaching in Mark 11:20-25 a challenge and comfort during barren seasons?



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I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.

~John Newton {Amazing Grace}

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Mask 11:27-12:27

11.27 And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, ²⁸ and they said to him, "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?" ²⁹ Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ³⁰ Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me." ³¹ And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ³² But shall we say, 'From man'?"—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. ³³ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

12:1 And he began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country. When the season came, he sent a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again he sent to them another servant, and hey struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and him they killed. And so with many others: some they beat, and some they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, They will respect my son. But those tenants said to one another, This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours. And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. Have you not read this Scripture:

"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; ¹¹this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

 12 And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and went away.

¹³ And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk. ¹⁴ And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" ¹⁵ But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." ¹⁶ And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." ¹⁷ Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him.

¹⁸ And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked him a question, saying, ¹⁹ "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁰ There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring. ²¹ And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise. ²² And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died. ²³ In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife."

My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut a wine press as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.

Isaiah 5:1-2

The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the LORD's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Psalm 118:22-23

The Cospel of Misk 95



Mark recounts a series of conflicts between Jesus and religious leaders in the temple. Traps are laid to catch the Galilean teacher. More remarkable than the clever traps themselves are Jesus' responses as he attempts to reveal himself to men who want to condemn rather than understand him. The first story hinges on Jesus' authority. The leaders are outraged. What right does he have to heal on the Sabbath, clear the temple court of commerce, and forgive sins?

1.	. How does Jesus respond to the question of his authority in 11:27-33? W	Vhat is Jesus implying when he asks the chief
	priests, teachers, and elders about John's baptism?	

2.	The parable of the vineyard in	n 12:1-12 is often compared witl	h Jesus cursing t	he fig tree	on his way	from Bethany to
	Jerusalem in Mark 11:12-14.	What theme is similar in both the	ne event and the	parable?		

3.	What kind of a	person is the owne	r of the vineyard?	What is revealed abo	out his character as	the story unfolds?
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4. In this parable, the owner sent many servant messengers to the tenants. Name some of the messengers God has sent to you in your life. How have you responded?

5. Read Mark 12:13-17. The next trap is set by a group of Herodians and Pharisees who join forces against a common enemy, Jesus. Sinclair Ferguson writes about this encounter in the following way:

* "The man who is devoted to God does not make an issue of his political freedom the number one priority of his life. He knows that he can serve God freely in his heart, under the most oppressive of regimes."

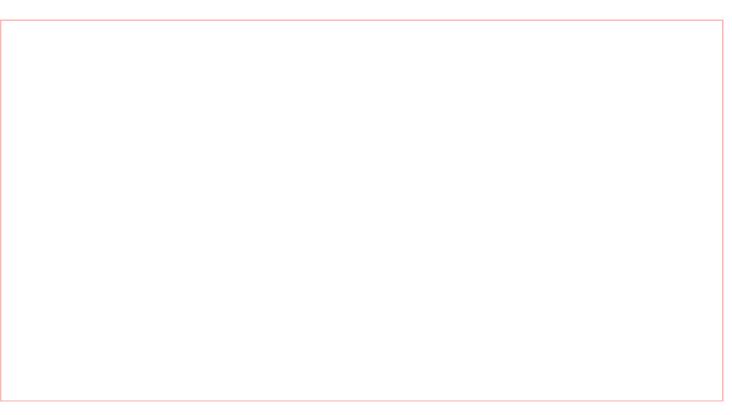
Is this true? Under what circumstances might Christians not accept the status quo?

Talk Moles

Speaker:

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Mask 12:28-44

20

12:28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" ²⁹ Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." ³² And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. ³³ And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.

Psalm 110:1-5

³⁵ And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? ³⁶ David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared,

[&]quot;The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet."

 $^{^{}m 37}$ David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?" And the great throng heard him gladly.

³⁸ And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces ³⁹ and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁰ who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

⁴¹ And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. ⁴³ And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. ⁴⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."



The battle of difficult questions continues between the teachers of the law and Jesus. The religious and political leaders just can't trap him, and exchange after exchange reveals the hearts of his questioners.

1	. What have we learned so far about the teachers of the law? What do you think this man's motives are for asking the question in verse 28?
2.	Jesus' answer reveals both our highest priority and also God's high standard for us. What was he trying to communicate to this man?
3.	Why is it that "no one dared ask him any more questions after that," as it says in verse 34? Why do we sometimes stop asking things of God in prayer?
4.	Look at Psalm 110:1-5. Jesus references this prophecy about the Messiah in verses 35-37 and contrasts it with othe prophecies about the Messiah being a descendant of David. Why is this such a significant question? What does it emphasize?
5.	In verses 38-40, Jesus comes down hard on the teachers of the law. What were the root sins he saw in their actions?



Personal Reflections				

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21

Mask 13:1-37

13:1 And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

³ And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?" ⁵ And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. ⁷ And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.

⁹ "But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. ¹⁰ And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. ¹¹ And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. ¹² And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. ¹³ And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

¹⁴ "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁵ Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, ¹⁶ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. ¹⁷ And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! ¹⁸ Pray that it may not happen in winter. ¹⁹ For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. ²⁰ And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days. ²¹ And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. ²² For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. ²³ But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

²⁴ "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸ "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³² "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. ³⁵ Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—
³⁶ lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."



Jesus had been teaching at the magnificent temple in Jerusalem. This was where God's presence lived among his people in the distant past, where now the only thing Jesus finds to commend is the devotion of a lowly widow who puts all she has into the offering. Standing with his disciples Jesus speaks of the future, the end of the temple and events preceding his return.

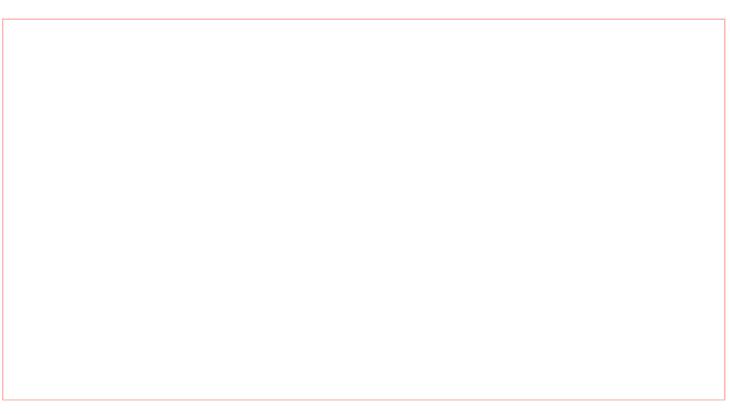
ret	urn.
1.	Read Mark 13:1-13. List the things Jesus says will characterize the world before his return. How do we see these things in the world today? What does Jesus say to help keep us from becoming anxious about these things (verses 7, 10, 11, 13)?
2.	In verse 5 and 21-22, Jesus warns his followers to be alert for false messiahs. Is this warning still relevant for us? Who/what are the false messiahs, hopes and promises of our day?
3.	In verses 28-31, Jesus tells a parable about a fig tree. Jesus likens his second coming to new growth on a fig tree. This sprouting points to the summer that is to come. Name some of the glories that are to come when Jesus returns.
4.	In verse 33 Jesus commands us to "be on guard, keep awake." Jesus could return at any moment. How can we, as the Church, have an attitude of watchfulness for "when the master of the house will come?" How can you, as an individual, make sure you are prepared?
5.	If you know lesus was going to return in two months, how would life change now? What things would be loss
υ.	If you knew Jesus was going to return in two months, how would life change now? What things would be less important and what things would be more important? Make a commitment to make those changes now.

Talk Moles

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Mask 14:1-31

22

14:1 It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, ² for they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people."

³ And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. ⁴ There were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment wasted like that? ⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they scolded her. ⁶ But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. ⁹ And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. ¹¹ And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

¹² And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" ¹³ And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' ¹⁵ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us." ¹⁶ And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." ¹⁹ They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, "Is it I?" ²⁰ He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. ²¹ For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."

²² And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. ²⁴ And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

²⁶And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' ²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." ²⁹ Peter said to him, "Even though they all fall away, I will not." ³⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." ³¹ But he said emphatically, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." And they all said the same.

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them. and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, "saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Jeremiah 31:31-34



Stepping back from prophecies of the future and into the stark reality of the present, Mark begins the closing account of betrayal and Jesus' final path to the cross. The word takes us into the intimate Last Supper Jesus shares with his disciples, a foot washing, a meal, and one last hymn sung. As the evening grows dark, Jesus gives them the promise of his covenant, even with the tension of betrayal lingering in the air.

	*The teachers of the law and the Pharisees
	*The woman
	*Judas
2.	The woman in verses 3-9 was willing to give her most valuable possession for Jesus, and Jesus gave his very life fo us. What are some things that you struggle to give to God?
3.	In verses 12-15, what does Jesus tell his disciples to do in preparation for the Passover?
4.	How did Jesus explain the meaning of the bread and the cup in verses 22 and 23? In verse 24 Jesus says, "my bloo of the covenant." Read about the same covenant promise in Jeremiah 31:31-34. What do these verses mean to you'
5.	Re-read verses 18-21 and 27-31. Jesus speaks to his disciples about betrayal and denial. All of them desire to be loyal to Jesus. Like the disciples, we all fall short in our efforts to follow Jesus. What biblical truths encourage you even when you fail?







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23

Mask 14:32-65

And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. ³⁴ And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." ³⁵ And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." ³⁷ And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹ And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰ And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. ⁴¹ And he came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."

⁴³ And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard." ⁴⁵ And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him. ⁴⁶ And they laid hands on him and seized him. ⁴⁷ But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. ⁴⁸ And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled." ⁵⁰ And they all left him and fled.

 51 And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, 52 but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.

⁵³ And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. 54 And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. 55 Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. ⁵⁶ For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷ And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, ⁵⁸ "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands." ⁵⁹ Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. ⁶⁰ And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" 61 But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" 62 And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." ⁶³ And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need? ⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death. ⁶⁵ And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophesy!" And the guards received him with blows.

⁴¹ And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." ⁴³ And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. 44 And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Luke 22:41-44

¹³And I saw in the night visions:

'And behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:13-14



The hour is at hand. And before Jesus enters the hands of his betrayer, he comes to his Father in prayer. His friends cannot stay awake with him. His desire for deep companionship with them is overshadowed by their lack of understanding of who he is and what is before him. We get a first hand look in to the depth of intimacy Jesus shares with the father alone as he sets the example for us that it is only with our Father that we can be fully known and fully heard. Let's walk through the garden and uncover the places in our hearts that need to be brought to the Lord on our knees.

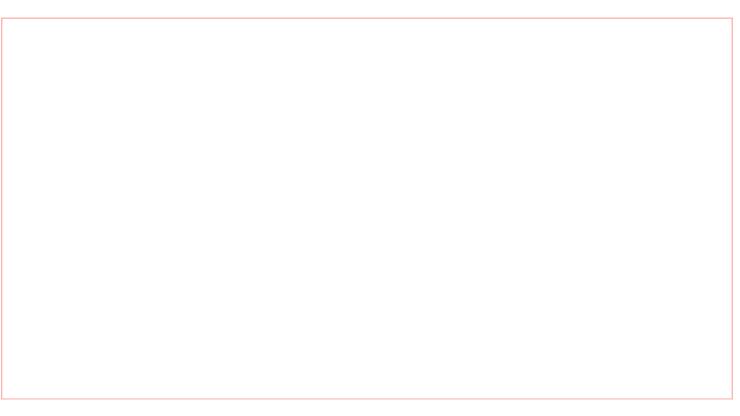
ample for us that it is only with our Father that we can be fully known and fully heard. Let's walk through the garden and uncover the places in our hearts that need to be brought to the Lord on our knees.
1. In Mark 14:32-42, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. How does Mark describe Jesus here? What does God teach us about prayer in this passage?
2. Read Luke 22:41-44. How does God answer Jesus' prayer here and in Mark 14:36? How has or is God giving you strength to endure a difficult or painful time in your life?
3. Jesus tells his disciples, "My soul is very sorrowful even to death" as he goes to pray in the garden. What is Jesus' ultimate desire as he prays? What does Jesus' reverence for the Father teach us about himself and his relationship with the Father?
4. In verses 43-50, Jesus is betrayed with a kiss by one of his closest friends and seized by a mob in a rapidly unfolding and chaotic event. What do his demeanor and his words teach us about his character?
5. When the high priest asks Jesus if he is "the Christ, the Son of the Blessed", Jesus answers him referencing Daniel 7:13-14. Who do you say he is?

Talk Moles

Speaker:

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Mask 14:66-15:32

24

14°66 And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, ⁶⁷ and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus." ⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you mean." And he went out into the gateway and the rooster crowed. ⁶⁹ And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." ⁷⁰ But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." ⁷¹ But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know this man of whom you speak." ⁷² And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

 $15^{\circ}1$ And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. ² And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." ³ And the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." ⁵ But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

⁶ Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. ⁷ And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. ⁸ And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. ⁹ And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰ For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. ¹² And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" ¹³ And they cried out again, "Crucify him." ¹⁴ And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." ¹⁵ So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

¹⁶ And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. ¹⁷ And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

²¹ And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. ²² And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). ²³ And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. ²⁵ And it was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶ And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷ And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹ So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.



Jesus is brought before the council, unfairly accused and unjustly beaten. As he stands in our place of accusation and condemnation, we are moved to awe and wonder at his never ending love for his children. Watch the heart of the gospel unfold as Jesus endures our deserved wrath and abandonment, and substitutes his life for ours, his beloved. Open your heart to him as you consider your own denial of the Son of God and his restoring heart of reconciliation for you.

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- 2. Compare and contrast Jesus' response to the high priest in Mark 14:60 and 15:2-5 with Peter's response to the servant girl in verses 14:66-72.
- 3. Jesus is mocked by a battalion of guards in Mark 15:16-20 even as legions of angels could have been called to save him. Why did Jesus subject himself to the mockery of the soldiers? What does this reveal about Jesus being fully God and fully man?
- 4. Identify the various forms of suffering Jesus has already faced since his betrayal. Beginning in Mark 15:22, we read that he is being led to Golgotha to be crucified. What does Jesus' suffering say about the Triune God and his love for you?
- 5. Read Isaiah 53 (see page 129) and take some time to be quiet with the Lord as you also read Mark 15:24-32. Ask God to help you live in the truth that your transgressions have been paid for. How does God's forgiveness effect the way you live and your interactions with others?



Personal Reflections			

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25

Mask 15:33-16:8

15:33 And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ³⁵ And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "Behold, he is calling Elijah." ³⁶ And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." ³⁷ And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

⁴⁰ There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹ When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

⁴² And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. ⁴⁵ And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. ⁴⁶ And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴ And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶ And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸ And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

But he who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Romans 8:32-34

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

Psalm 22:1-3



Our passage this week opens on three hours of darkness as Jesus hangs on the cross. Three days of thick darkness was the last plague suffered by the Egyptians before the angel of death took their first born sons. Now darkness precedes the holy exodus of God's own son. Enter in, examine your heart, and respond to the Son of God who promises light for your darkness.

- 1. Read Psalm 22. Why do you think these words were on Jesus' lips as he died? What does it mean that his father forsook him?
- 2. Read Mark 15:33-16:8. Here is an account of eyewitnesses to the death of Jesus Christ. Fill in the chart below. Include observations of the women disciples at the tomb.

Observer(s)	Saw	Felt	Responded
Bystander			
Centurion			
Women at the cross			
Women at the tomb			

- 3. Mark reports that a group of Jesus' women disciples were present throughout the harrowing events in this passage. What these women saw formed the basis of early Christian confessions of faith. Who were they? What, if anything about them, astonishes you?
- 4. Both Joseph of Arimathea and Pilate made the most important decision they would ever make during the last hours of Jesus' life. There was no going back. There was no middle ground. Contrast the actions and faith of Joseph with those of Pilate.

5. Isaiah the prophet lived 740 years before Christ. Refer to Isaiah 53 on page 129. Underline/highlight examples where this passage in Isaiah appears to be fulfilled in the events of Jesus' suffering.

Talk Moles

Speaker:

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Personal Reflections

Jesus, Son) of GodYou are h	oly		
Retu	rn to the reason Mark wrote his go		ick through the gospel and note	



Friend:	Request:	How can I encourage:
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Isaiah 53

¹Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground;
 he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.
 ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
 and as one from whom men hide their faces

he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?
 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.
⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.
⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many,

and makes intercession for the transgressors.

PASSAGE THAT SPOKE TO ME:



SPEAKER QUOTE THAT SPOKE TO ME:

SMALL GROUP MEMORY:

SHARED THOUGHTS TO REMEMBER:





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