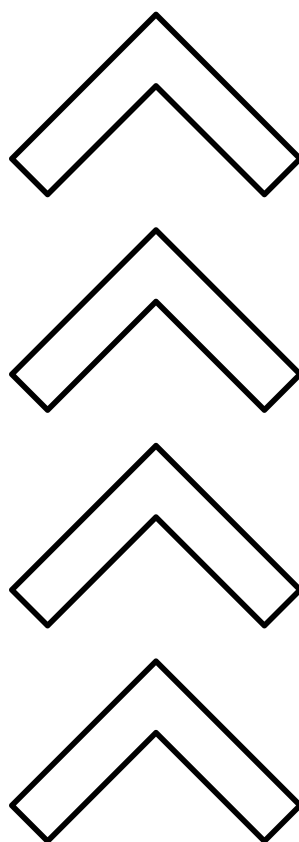


DISCOVERING CHRIST

THE GOSPEL OF MARK



CROSSPOINT BAPTIST CHURCH

THIS CURRICULUM, DISCOVERING CHRIST: THE GOSPEL OF MARK,
IS ADAPTED WITH PERMISSION FROM MATERIALS ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED
BY FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA.

STUDY one

JESUS' IDENTITY – THE SON OF GOD MARK 1

OBJECT

The object of this study is to introduce people to Jesus, especially in His early ministry. This means establishing His identity as the Son of God. Central to this is looking at His authority in many spheres of life.

THE FIRST STUDY

- Four Opening Statements
 - The title of this course is Discovering Christ
 - Jesus Christ is the center of Christianity.
 - The only records of Jesus' life are the four “biographies”—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
 - Over the next few weeks, we will be looking at one of these, the Gospel of Mark.
- Study
 - The GOOD NEWS about Jesus Christ
 - Mark 1:1 - The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
 - The word “gospel” means “good news.” We will see what good news it is that Jesus Christ has come into the world!
- Mark 1:9-11 - *In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 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. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with You I am well pleased.”*
 - This passage tells us that God spoke from heaven about Jesus calling him “my Son” and that He loves him! What does it mean to say the Jesus is the Son of God? The Gospel of Mark is written to help us understand the answer to that question. Jesus Christ's identity is the focus. We will see that it means Jesus is a person with authority— the authority of God, His Father. Let's look at some examples:

Jesus' Authority as a Teacher

Mark 1:21-22 - *And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and was teaching. And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.*

Jesus spoke powerful words about God and humanity, and His teachings were unlike anyone who ever spoke. His words are pure truth and give life.

Jesus' Authority Over Demons

Mark 1:23-28 - *And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, "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." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. 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." And at once His fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.*

Demons are powerful spiritual beings, invisible and active, doing evil. What does it say about Jesus that even they fear Him? He is more powerful than them. Jesus had absolute authority over them, and they feared Him.

Jesus' Authority Over (All) Diseases

Mark 1:29-34 - *And immediately He left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told Him about her. And He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening at sundown they brought to Him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. 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.*

There was no disease Jesus could not heal. His healings were 100% effective, effortless on His part, and instantaneous.

Jesus' Authority Over Nature

Mark 4:36-41 - *And leaving the crowd, they took Him with them in the boat, just as He was. And other boats were with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. 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?" 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. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" 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?"*

Jesus has power and authority over everything. It does what He commands when He commands it. Jesus creates, controls, and maintains His universe (Hebrews 1:3). Abraham Kuyper said, "There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!"

Jesus' Authority Over Death

Mark 5:22-23 - *Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing Him, he fell at His feet 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."*

Mark 5:35-43 - *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?" But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." And He allowed no one to follow Him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. And when He had entered, He said to them "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." 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. Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. And He strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.*

MOST IMPORTANTLY: Jesus' Authority to Forgive Sins (we'll talk about that next time! Mark 2:1-11)

Mark 2:10 - the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

Jesus' compassion for people

Mark 1:40-41 - *And a leper came to Him, imploring Him, and kneeling said to Him, "If you will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, He stretched out His hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean."*

Jesus is a kind, compassionate, tender-hearted King. All His healings were done out of compassion for suffering people. Jesus genuinely cared for hurting people.

Jesus' authority to call us as the King

Mark 1:14-15 - *Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

Mark 1:16-18 - *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. And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed Him.*

This is the point of the whole Gospel of Mark. Jesus calls people to follow Him into the Kingdom of God. They do this by repenting of their sins and believing the good news about Him—His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead—means forgiveness of all sins and eternal life.

SUMMARY: TODAY, WE HAVE SEEN...

- Jesus is the Son of God with great power and great authority;
- His claim to be God in a human body;
- The need to come to a decision about Him.

HOMEWORK

Read Mark, chapters 1-6. Note any passages which they do not understand or which they would like to discuss. There will be a time for discussing these questions at the beginning of next week's study.

NOTES

STUDY TWO

JESUS AND SIN MARK 2

OBJECT

The object of this study is to build upon the previous week and to show that Jesus did not only have authority as a teacher and a healer. The central work of his mission was salvation from sin. So, in order to understand Jesus' mission in the world culminating in his death and resurrection, we have to understand what sin is and how great a threat it is to us eternally. That's the focus of this week's study.

HOMEWORK REVIEW

Members were asked to read Mark chapters 1-6. Ask if they have any questions arising out of this reading or any other questions about some aspect of the Christian faith. Allow some time for the discussion on the passages of Mark. If any additional questions remain, write them down and set up another time to answer them.

FIRST STUDY REVIEW

Go back over the facts of the previous week briefly: Jesus' identity is established as the Son of God. This means He has great authority: authority to teach; authority over demons; authority to heal every disease and sickness He faced; authority over nature (the wind and waves); authority over sin and death (more today and next week!).

THE SECOND STUDY

JESUS THE SAVIOR...SENT TO SAVE US FROM SIN AND DEATH

"Savior" always refers to a great danger. For us to understand why Jesus came into this world, we must understand the great danger of sin and the death penalty connected with it.

Unfortunately, most people have no idea what sin really is in the sight of God.

This study will establish the authority of Jesus to forgive sin, and along with that a clear definition of what sin really is and how much danger our sins have put us in.

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE SIN

Last time, we saw Jesus established as the “Son of God.” This means He has authority: Authority as a teacher; authority over demons; authority to heal all diseases; authority over nature; authority over death; and authority to call us to follow Him as King. Today, we’re going to zero in on Jesus’ authority to forgive all our sins.

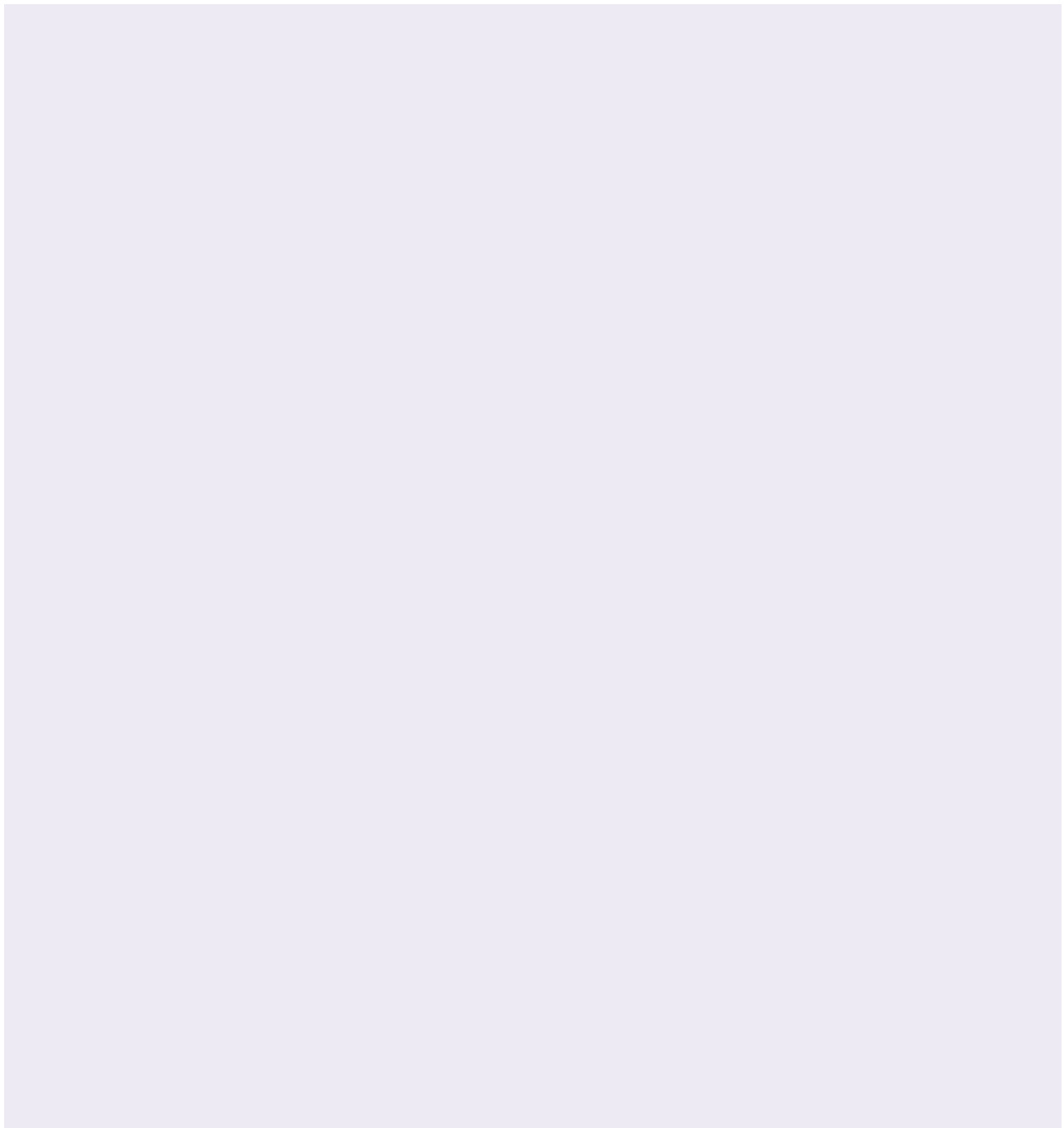
Mark 2:1-12 - And when He returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that He was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And He was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic carried by four men. And when 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. And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 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? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic— “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” 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!”

BUT... WHAT IS SIN? UNDERSTANDING SIN

- **Heart Corruption Leading to Life Defilement**

- Mark 7:20-23 - *“What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”*

- Sin is not merely external, some bad thing you do that gets you into trouble with people if they find out. Sin comes from the heart and makes us unclean in the sight of God.
- What is the “heart”? It is the internal part of you; the part that thinks, feels, chooses, loves. Sin is a heart disease in which we think wrongly, feel wrongly, choose wrongly, and love wrongly in the sight of the God who made us.



- **Breaking God's Commandments**

- Mark 12:28-31 - *[One of them] asked Him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 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.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

- Sin is breaking the commandments of God. There were hundreds of commands in the Bible for the people to follow. Jesus summarized all of these in two great commandments... vertical (love for God) and horizontal (love for other people).

- No one is good! Everyone breaks God's commandments:

- Mark 10:17-19 - *A man ran up and knelt before Him and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. 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.'"*



UNDERSTANDING SIN'S PENALTY: ETERNAL CONDEMNATION IN HELL

Mark 9:43-48 - *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. 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. 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, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'*

There is nothing more terrifying than this. If this is the fate of all sinners unless they receive forgiveness of sins from God, nothing could possibly be more important or valuable than the forgiveness of sins.

SO... HOW VALUABLE IS FORGIVENESS OF SINS?

Mark 8:36-37 - *For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?*

Based on this statement by Jesus, everyone's soul is worth more than the whole world. It would be foolish for anyone to trade his/her eternal soul for any amount of worldly wealth or power or success. This shows the infinite worth of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Christ is willing to give His life to redeem (buy) our souls.

THE BASIS OF FORGIVENESS: FAITH IN JESUS... WHO HAS AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE

Mark 2:5 - *And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."*

Mark 2:7 - *"Who can forgive sins but God alone?"*

Mark 2:10-12 - *But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic — "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out.*

In these verses, it is plain that the basis of forgiveness of sins is faith. God is the only one who has the right to forgive all sins. Jesus as the Son of God has that authority. He forgives sins based on people having faith in Him.

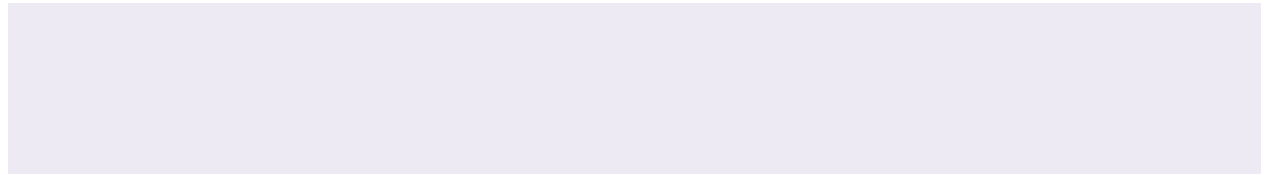
ONCE AGAIN: JESUS' CALL

Mark 1:14-15 - *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."*

Jesus' call in the Gospel of Mark is plain: repent of all sin and believe the good news of forgiveness of sins based on faith in Jesus. If you do that, you will enter the Kingdom of God.

What does "repent" mean? It means to turn away from sin and toward God... like a U-turn when you're driving. Because sin is a heart issue, repentance is something done with the heart. A genuine turn in the heart from all sin and toward God.

What does "believe" mean? In this case, it means to rely on the gospel as absolutely true, and to base your life on it.

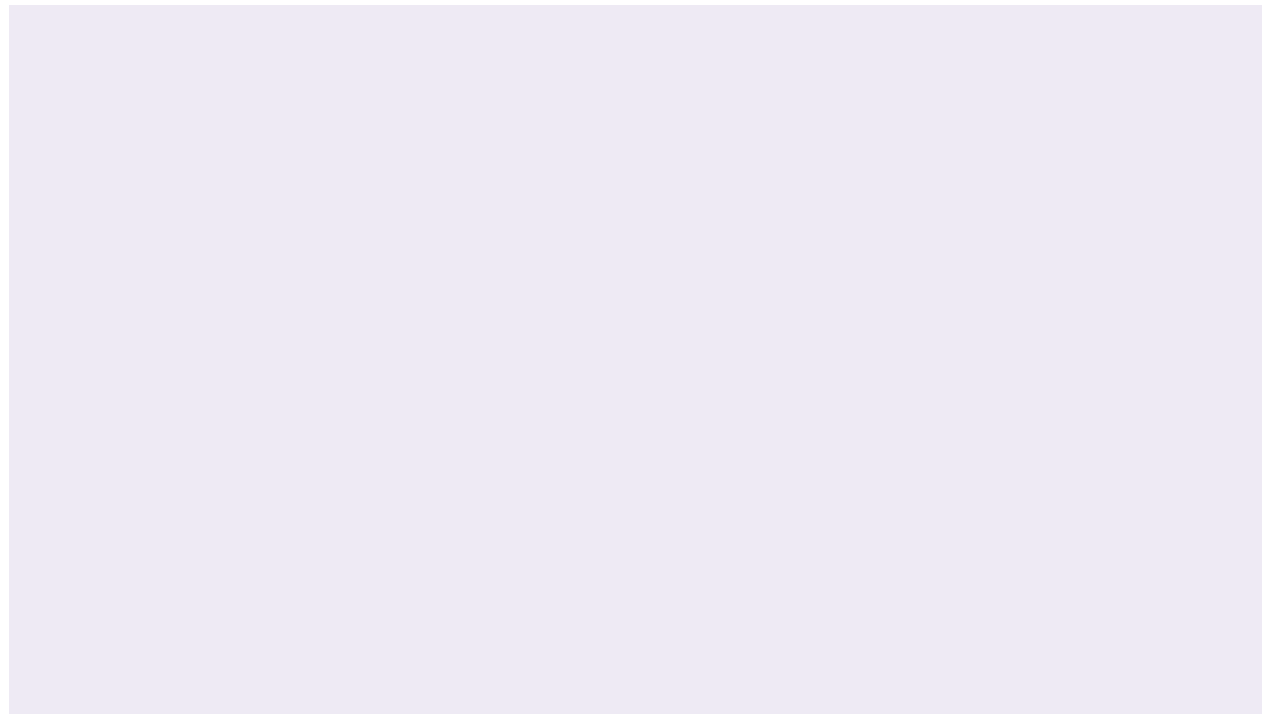


SUMMARY: TODAY, WE HAVE SEEN...

- Jesus has the authority to forgive sin.
- What sin is: heart corruption leading to life defilement; breaking God's commands.
- Sin's penalty: death...physical death but also eternal death in hell.
- How valuable forgiveness of sins is: worth more than all the riches of the world.
- The basis of forgiveness: faith in Christ.

HOMEWORK

Read Mark, chapters 7-11. Note any passages which they do not understand or which they would like to discuss. There will be a time for discussing these questions at the beginning of next week's study.



NOTES

STUDY three

JESUS' DEATH FOR SIN MARK 3

OBJECT

The object of this study is to build upon the previous two weeks and to show that Jesus' authority to forgive sins was based on His mission to die on the cross for our sins. His death was possible because He was fully human, and it was infinitely valuable because of His identity as Son of God.

HOMEWORK REVIEW

Members were asked to read Mark chapters 7-11. Ask if they have any questions arising out of this reading or any other questions about some aspect of the Christian faith. Allow some time for the discussion on the passages of Mark. If any additional questions remain, write them down and set up another time to answer them.

THE FIRST TWO STUDIES

The first week we saw that Jesus is the Son of God, fully human and fully God, with authority to teach and do amazing miracles, including healing every disease and stilling a storm.

Last week we covered Jesus' authority to forgive sins. We saw that sin is a heart issue, flowing from deep inside us, corrupting the way we live our lives. Sin is breaking God's commands, especially the two greatest commandments: love God and love others. Sin's penalty is death, ultimately eternal death in hell. Jesus has authority from God to forgive all sins based on repentance and faith in Him.

THE THIRD STUDY

Jesus did not come merely to be a great teacher or do amazing miracles. His death on the cross in our place paid the death penalty our sins deserved and opened the way for us to have a close relationship with God. Jesus' death and subsequent resurrection are crucial to a basic understanding of the Christian faith.

JESUS PREDICTED HIS OWN DEATH

Mark 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.*

Jesus was not surprised or trapped into His death. He came specifically to die in our place.

THE PURPOSE OF JESUS' DEATH

Mark 10:45 - *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom in the place of many.*

THE FACTS OF JESUS' DEATH

- **Jesus Condemned to Death**

- ...By the Jewish leaders
 - Mark 14:61-64 - *the high priest asked Him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" 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." And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need? You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death*
- ...By Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor
 - Mark 15:15 - *So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.*

- **Jesus Crucified**

- Mark 15:22-27 - *And they brought Him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). And they offered Him wine mixed with myrrh, but He did not take it. And they crucified Him and divided His garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified Him. And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with Him they crucified two robbers, one on His right and one on His left.*
- Mark 15:33-37 - *And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 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?"And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed His last.*

- **Jesus Buried**

- Mark 15:42-47 - *And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 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. Pilate was surprised to hear that He should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether He was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that He was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. 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. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where He was laid.*

THE AFTERMATH OF JESUS' DEATH

- **The Curtain Torn from Top to Bottom**

- Mark 15:38 - *And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.*

- **The Centurion's Statement**

- Mark 15:39 - *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!"*

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JESUS' DEATH

Jesus' death was the most powerfully effective moment in all of human history, changing the eternal destinies of countless millions of people.

So... what does the Gospel of Mark say Jesus' death achieved?

Ransom paid

- Mark 10:45 - *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom in the place of many.*
- The word "ransom" is important. In ancient times, kings or important soldiers who had been captured in battle could be "ransomed," bought back with a price of gold or silver. In the same way slaves could be bought out of slavery by the payment of a price. And those kidnapped by raiders could be ransomed by the payment of a price. This is a picture of what Jesus achieved by His death—buying us out of danger by the payment of a costly price... His death.
- But why were we in such danger? We saw last time that our sins are deep and many, and the Bible makes it plain that sin deserves the death penalty. Essential to our salvation is the idea that the death penalty can be paid by a substitute.
- Jesus said He came to give His life as a ransom in the place of many. The word "in the place of" is vital... it is a substitution of His life for the other; this clearly implies the death penalty. Our sin deserves the payment of a death penalty. Jesus' death on the cross satisfies that.

Access to God

- Mark 15:38 - *And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.*
- When Jesus died, the curtain in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom.
- This curtain separated the Holy Place (where all priests went every day to offer their sacrifices) from the Most Holy Place (where God dwelt above the Ark of the Covenant and where only the High Priest could go and only once a year).
- The curtain represented a barrier between sinful humanity and the holy God.
- Only God had the right to remove this barrier; the fact that the moment Jesus died, the curtain was torn in two from top to bottom shows that God himself has removed that barrier on the basis of Christ's death.
- We now have the ability to come into the presence of God as forgiven people.
HALLELUJAH!

BOOK ILLUSTRATION: THE TRANSFER OF GUILT

Book, held in the left hand, represents the full record of our sins, from the first sin we ever committed to our last. The ceiling high above our heads represents God. The verse cited below (Colossians 2:13-14) speaks of the record of our legal debt in God's sight. Our sins separate us from God. We have a lot of sins written in His perfect record book. The right hand represents Jesus. Jesus had no "book," no record of sins against him. He lived a perfect life. He had a pure heart of love toward God and toward everyone else. He never broke any of God's laws.

While Jesus was on the cross, God took the sins of people in every era of history who would believe in Him and transferred them to Jesus. [Move the book from the left hand to the right.] In this way, Christ became the most sinful man in the history of the world though He Himself had committed no sins. God in His justice had to punish those sins with the death penalty. Christ died in our place to pay that penalty.

That means He paid the death penalty we deserved. So, the empty left hand represents the fact that no sin is left to hinder our relationship with God! We are seen to be pure in His sight.

Two verses sum this up:

Colossians 2:13-14 - *God forgave all our trespasses by cancelling the record of our debt that stood against us with its legal demands.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 - *For our sake he [God] made him [Christ] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Jesus' Call

Mark 1:14-15 - *Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

Jesus is telling us that the time is NOW... the Kingdom of God is here! If we repent of our sins and believe that Christ's death is sufficient to pay for them in the sight of God, we will be forgiven, and we can enter the Kingdom of God where we will live forever.

SUMMARY: TODAY, WE HAVE SEEN...

- Jesus' death is one of the central purposes for His coming to earth.
- Jesus predicted his death, so it was not some unfortunate accident; he intended to die.
- The purpose of Jesus in his death was to give his life as a ransom in the place of many.
- The historical facts of Jesus' death are accurately recorded in the Gospel of Mark.
- The achievements of Jesus' death are infinite: sins forgiven for everyone who repents and believes in him.
- The ransom has been paid in full; we are rescued from the danger of hell.
- The curtain in the Temple being torn open by God shows that he welcomes sinners like us into his holy presence.

HOMEWORK

Read Mark, chapters 12:1-16:8. Note any passages which they do not understand or which they would like to discuss. There will be a time for discussing these questions at the beginning of next week's study.

NOTES

STUDY four

JESUS' RESURRECTION MARK 16

OBJECT

The object of this study is to Jesus' amazing bodily resurrection from the dead. This culminates the three facts which a person must believe in order to be a Christian and saved from sin:

- His person as the Son of God
- His atoning death
- His physical resurrection

HOMEWORK REVIEW

Members were asked to read Mark chapters 12-16. Ask if they have any questions arising out of this reading or any other questions about some aspect of the Christian faith. Allow some time for the discussion on the passages of Mark. If any additional questions remain, write them down and set up another time to answer them.

THE FIRST THREE STUDIES

The first week we saw that Jesus is the Son of God, fully human and fully God, with authority to teach and do amazing miracles, including healing every disease and stilling a storm.

The second week we covered Jesus' authority to forgive sins. We saw that sin is a heart issue, flowing from deep inside us, corrupting the way we live our lives. Sin is breaking God's commands, especially the two greatest commandments: love God and love others. Sin's penalty is death, ultimately eternal death in hell. Jesus has authority from God to forgive all sins based on repentance and faith in him.

Last week, we discussed Jesus' death on the cross as a ransom in our place for our sins. We saw that his death resulted in the curtain in the Temple being torn in two by God, signifying that sinners were now welcome into his holy presence because of the death of his Son.

THE FOURTH STUDY

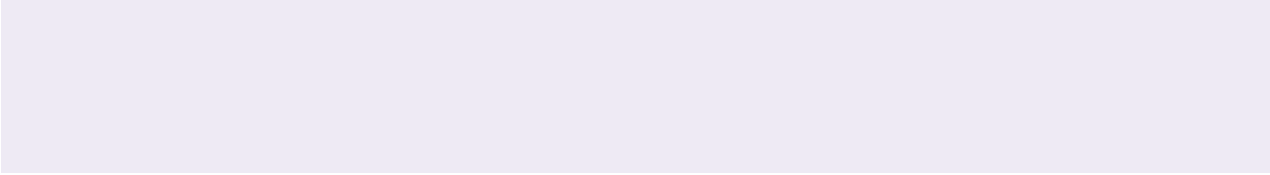
Today we are going to look at the greatest miracle in world history, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, as a historical fact. It also is the basis of our hope for eternal life beyond the grave and proof that 1) Jesus is who he claimed to be and 2) God has accepted Jesus' death on our behalf.

JESUS PREDICTED HIS OWN RESURRECTION

Mark 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.*

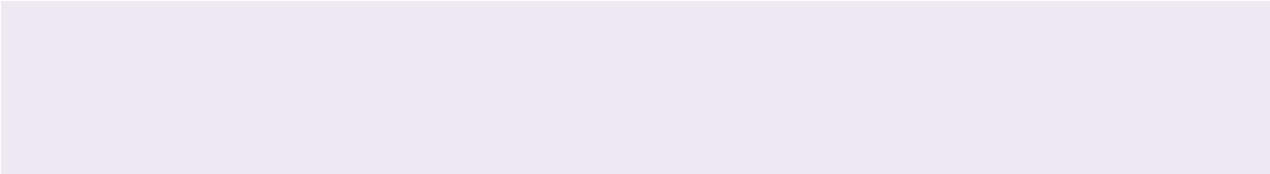
Mark 9:31 - *saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise."*

Jesus knew and predicted his own death. What do you think this says about Jesus?



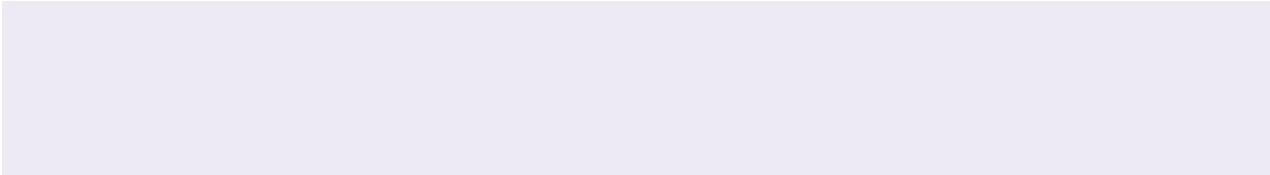
THE WOMEN SAW WHERE JESUS WAS BURIED

Mark 15:42-47 - *And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 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. Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. 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. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid.*

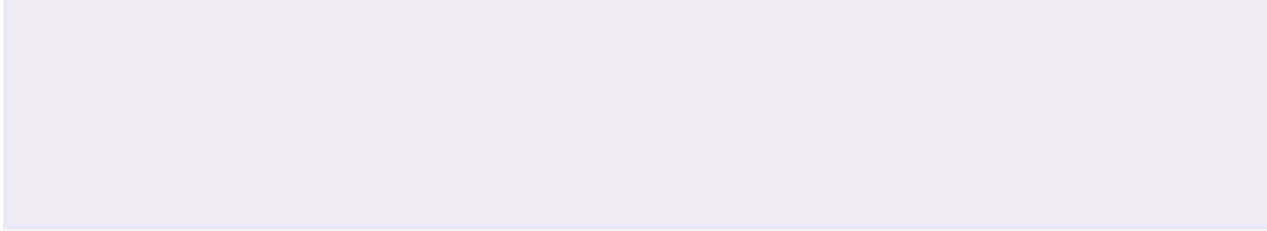


THE RESURRECTION ACCOUNT

Mark 16:1-8 - *When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. 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. 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." 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.*




THE SIGNIFICANCE

- Proof that Jesus is the Son of God, validating all his claims.
 - Proof that the death penalty for sin has been paid in full, accepted by God.
 - Hope for our own eternal life in heaven.
- 

JESUS' CALL

Mark 1:14-15 - Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

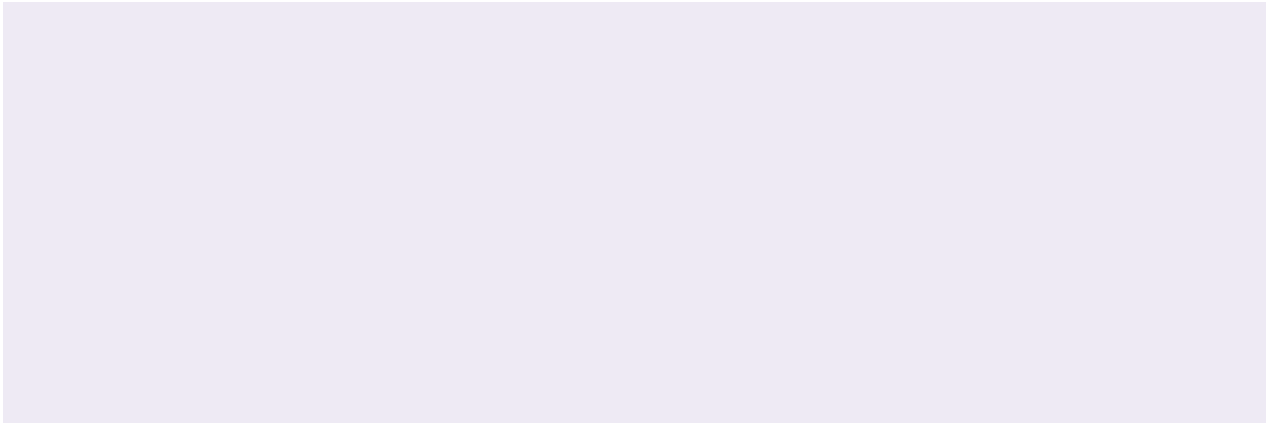
As we have seen every week, Jesus is calling us NOW to repent of our sins and believe in the good news of his death and resurrection for our salvation. In so doing, we will enter the Kingdom of God where we will live forever, even beyond our own death.



SUMMARY: TODAY, WE HAVE SEEN...

- Christ rose from the dead physically on the third day!
- His tomb was empty.
- He appeared physically to eyewitnesses.
- In this way, Christ is unique among all leaders in all history; no one else has defeated death!

OK... WHAT NOW?

- There is a lot more to say about salvation and following Christ.
 - If you are interested in continuing, simply let the leader know and more study can be arranged!
- 

NOTES

STUDY five

FOLLOWING JESUS PART ONE

OBJECT

This study builds upon the four weeks of learning about Christ's person and work and shows how this understanding impacts our current living as His disciples. If you have placed your faith in Christ for salvation, then He now calls you to a radically different way of living. This is the life of discipleship.

THE FIRST THREE STUDIES

The first week we saw that Jesus is the Son of God, fully human and fully God, with authority to teach and do amazing miracles, including healing every disease and stilling a storm.

The second week we covered Jesus' authority to forgive sins. We saw that sin is a heart issue, flowing from deep inside us, corrupting the way we live our lives. Sin is breaking God's commands, especially the two greatest commandments: love God and love others. Sin's penalty is death, ultimately eternal death in hell. Jesus has authority from God to forgive all sins based on repentance and faith in Him.

The third week we discussed Jesus' death on the cross as a ransom in our place for our sins. We saw that His death resulted in the curtain in the Temple being torn in two by God, signifying that sinners were now welcome into His holy presence because of the death of His Son.

Last week we looked at the greatest miracle in world history, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, as a historical fact. It also is the basis of our hope for eternal life beyond the grave and proof that 1) Jesus is who He claimed to be and 2) God has accepted Jesus' death on our behalf.

THE FIFTH STUDY

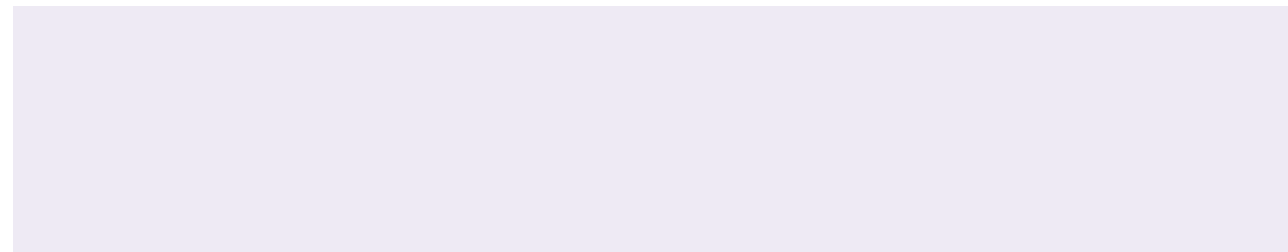
In this fifth study, we will look at what it means to follow Jesus. Following Jesus means believing in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, which results in a new way of living. Today, we will look at different passages in the Gospel of Mark that reveal what it may look like for you to follow Jesus.

Jesus' command to follow is extended to all types of people to show His power and ability.

Mark 1:16-20 - *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. And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed Him. 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. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed Him.*

Jesus commanded all different kinds of people to follow Him. He called men, women, fishermen, tax collectors, etc. to follow Him. Jesus doesn't need the most successful or famous people to advance His kingdom. He uses poor and weak sinners to advance His kingdom in order to show His power (1 Corinthians 1:26-31). Christ's power is magnified as He calls and uses the powerless.

- What kind of people would you expect Jesus to call as His disciples?
- What does Jesus' choice of fishermen say about Him?
- Does Jesus need powerful, smart, or rich people for His kingdom?

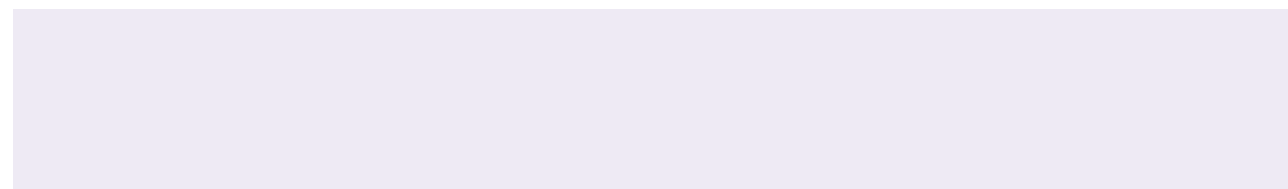


Jesus' command to follow him requires people to leave things behind.

Mark 1:13-14 - *He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to Him, and He was teaching them. 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.*

Like the fishermen, Levi had to leave his vocation behind to follow Jesus. Levi may have been prestigious, wealthy, and envied in his society. This would have made it really difficult for Levi to follow Jesus. He would be leaving the safety and comfort of his current lifestyle to follow Jesus of Nazareth. But Levi recognized that what he was gaining (Christ) was far better than what he was leaving and losing. Following Jesus is worth giving up everything for (Matthew 13:44; Philippians 3:7-11).

- What things are hard for people to leave behind or let go of?
- Why would someone let go of something valuable? (see Matthew 13:44)
- How is Jesus better than anything one could own in this life?
- What does Christ offer you that this world can't offer you?

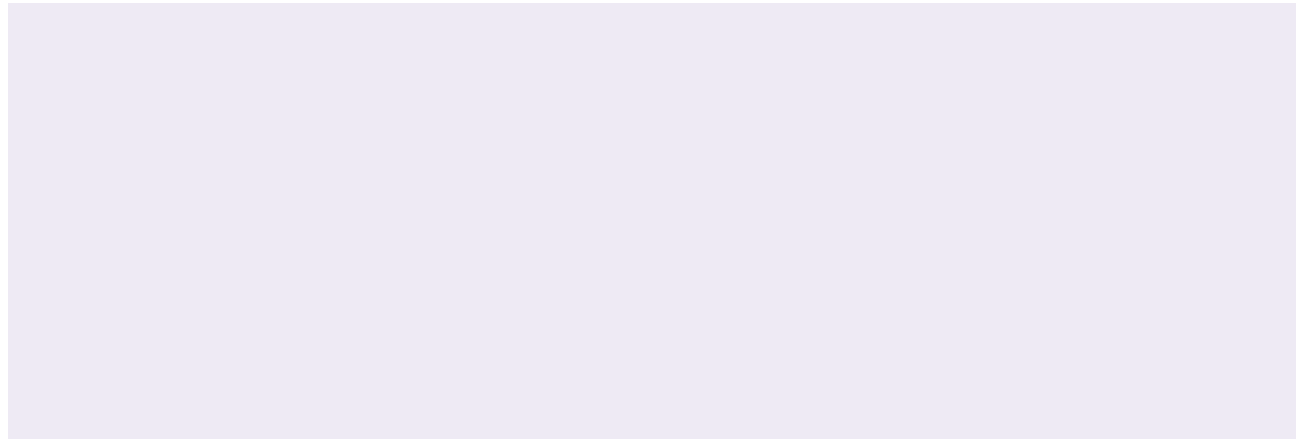


The command to follow Jesus will require you to sacrifice your own comfort and convenience.

Mark 8:34-38 - *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. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? 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.”*

The life of following Christ is full of joy, a joy that is unspeakable and inexpressible. A joy that can never be stolen or lost (1 Peter 1:8-9). Although we will have eternal joy in Christ, it doesn't mean our lives will be easy. Following Christ is very difficult, so He tells his disciples to be ready to give up comfort and convenience to follow Him. Following Jesus may result in insults, exclusion, harm, suffering, and maybe even death for His namesake. Despite the difficulties we may face in this life, Christ is worth it. He has suffered for us to save us from our sins. Therefore, we should gladly lay down our comforts and conveniences for the sake of our Savior! Ultimately, we know that He is shaping us in our suffering (James 1:2-4) and great reward awaits those who suffer for the sake of Christ (Matthew 6:11-12).

- What do you think it means to “take up your cross”? What happens on a Roman cross?
- What comforts or conveniences are hard to give up?
- How is it worth giving up everything to follow Jesus?
- What might it look like to be persecuted or insulted because of your faith in Christ?



SUMMARY: TODAY, WE HAVE SEEN...

- Jesus calls people from all different backgrounds, jobs, lifestyles, etc. to be His disciples.
- Following Jesus will require you to give up things, specifically your former way of life in sin.
- Following Jesus may result in exclusion, persecution, and suffering because of Christ.
- Suffering for the sake of Christ is worth it. He gives a joy in Him that can never be taken away.

NOTES

STUDY six

FOLLOWING JESUS PART TWO

OBJECT

The object of this study is to build upon the five previous studies and to provide a small picture of what is involved in the life of a disciple of Jesus. If you have decided to repent of your sins and follow Jesus, then you are now His disciple and are called to follow His instructions. Disciples of Jesus will serve God alone, love Him with everything, love others, and tell the world about Him.

THE FIRST FIVE STUDIES

The first week we saw that Jesus is the Son of God, fully human and fully God, with authority to teach and do amazing miracles, including healing every disease and stilling a storm.

The second week we covered Jesus' authority to forgive sins. We saw that sin is a heart issue, flowing from deep inside us, corrupting the way we live our lives. Sin is breaking God's commands, especially the two greatest commandments: love God and love others. Sin's penalty is death, ultimately eternal death in hell. Jesus has authority from God to forgive all sins based on repentance and faith in Him.

The third week we discussed Jesus' death on the cross as a ransom in our place for our sins. We saw that His death resulted in the curtain in the Temple being torn in two by God, signifying that sinners were now welcome into His holy presence because of the death of His Son.

The fourth week we looked at the greatest miracle in world history, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, as a historical fact. It also is the basis of our hope for eternal life beyond the grave and proof that 1) Jesus is who He claimed to be and 2) God has accepted Jesus' death on our behalf.

Last week, we considered what it means and entails to follow Jesus. It does require believing in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, but it also requires action and a new way of living.

THE SIXTH STUDY

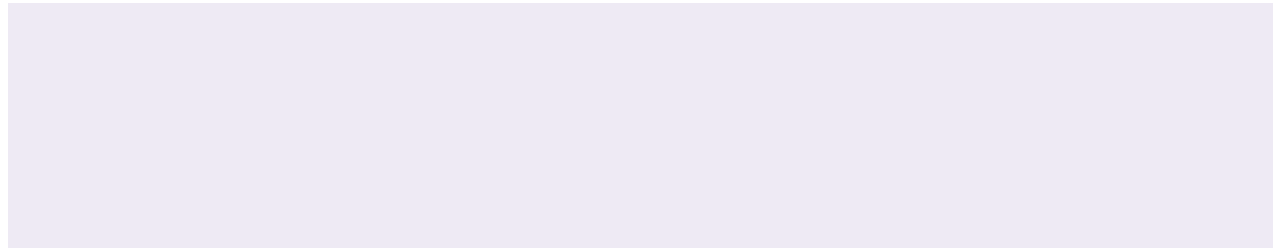
This week's study will consider various aspects of the life of a disciple of Jesus. The disciple of Jesus believes that the Lord God, the Triune God of the Bible, is the only God. The disciple of Jesus loves God with everything they are and have. The disciple of Jesus will love God and love others. And, out of a love and joy in God, the disciple of Jesus will tell others about Him.

Disciples of Jesus serve God exclusively.

Mark 12:28-29 – *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?” Jesus answered, “ The most important is ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’*

Jesus refers to a very popular verse in the Old Testament called the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). He references this passage to affirm the exclusivity of the Triune God of the Bible. The Bible teaches that there is only one God and there is no other before Him, beside Him, or after Him. Salvation from sin comes only from the Triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit).

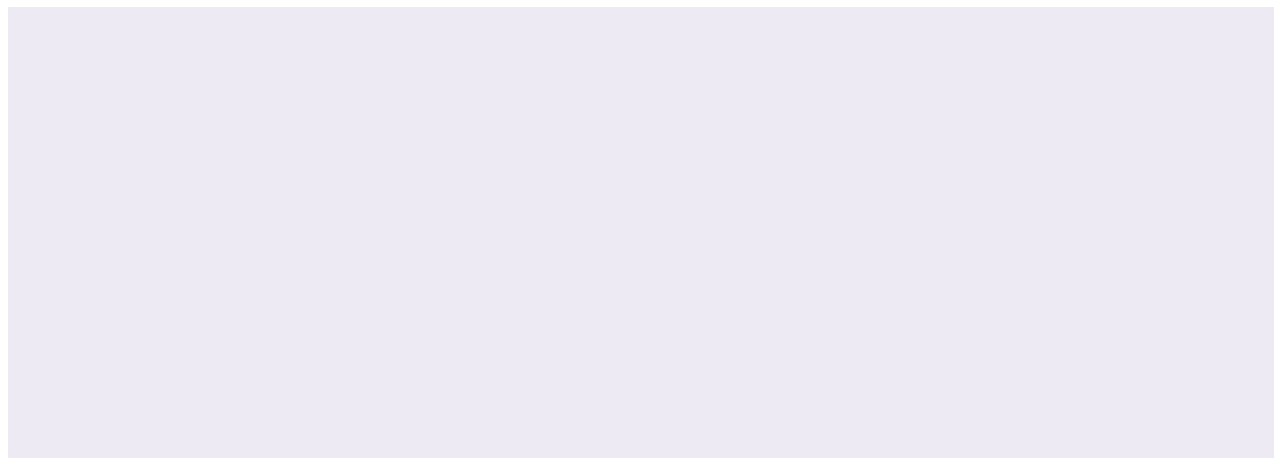
- What is an exclusive claim? How do you feel about Jesus’ exclusive statement?
- What does this say about the gods of other religions?
- Based on Jesus’ statement can we serve The Lord God along with other gods? Why not?



Disciples of Jesus love God with everything.

Mark 12:30 – *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.’*

Jesus continues His reference to the Shema. How should disciples respond to the one and only Lord God who is Father, Son, and Spirit? Love Him. Jesus says that this is the first and greatest commandment. The right response to who He is and what He has done is to love Him. And we love Him with everything we have and all that we are. This is why Jesus says with “all your heart, soul, mind and strength.” There is not a part of us that is not called to love God. We love God with our heart, head, and hands by obeying His commands and instructions (John 14:15). Our love for Him is expressed by our obedience to His commands.



Disciples of Jesus love others as themselves.

Mark 12:31 - *The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

Jesus makes a second interesting statement. Equally as important as loving God is loving others. The command to love God and the command to love others are inseparable. The Scriptures say it is impossible to love God and hate your brother (1 John 4:19-21). All of God's commands can fall under the umbrella of these two commands (Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14). For those who follow Jesus, our neighbor isn't just someone who lives next door. Our neighbor is everyone...even our enemies (Matthew 5:43-44). Disciples of Jesus love our neighbors as themselves. The same considerations, concerns, care, etc. that you would take for yourself should be extended to others. Why should disciples of Jesus love our neighbors? Because we have experienced the greatest love from God through Christ. *We love because He first loved us* (1 John 4:19).

- Why are the commands to love God and love others inseparable?
- What are some ways we can love others as ourselves?
- Why should we love our neighbor?

Disciples of Jesus make disciples of Jesus.

Mark 1:16-17 - *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. And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."*

Mark 4:13-19 - *And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those whom He desired, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with Him and He might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons. He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.*

In both of these passages, Jesus calls His followers and sends them out to make disciples. Disciples of Jesus make disciples of Jesus. He sends out His disciples to be "fishers of men." Jesus is using their own occupation to explain what the call of discipleship includes. The good news of Jesus is advanced in this world through His disciples sharing with and helping others understand who Jesus is, what He has done, and why it matters. Disciples of Jesus are called to make disciples of Jesus. He has called us and sent us out into the world to proclaim the transforming power of the gospel of Jesus.

- From this passage, what do you think your purpose is as a disciple of Jesus?
- Who are some people you can think of that need to hear the good news of Jesus?
- What are some reasons that keep us from telling others about Jesus?

CONCLUSION

This the end of our 6-week study of Discovering Christ. We hope that this material has helped you better understand who Jesus is, what He did, and why it matters. Though this may be the end of our study, this is not the end of the journey of knowing Jesus. Growing in our knowledge and love for Jesus is a never-ending journey. The wealth of riches and knowledge in Christ are a bottomless pit that will never be completely explored...but keep exploring! As you understand Christ better, your love for and joy in Him will only increase. As your love and joy grow, you will not be able to contain it. You will want to tell the whole world about the person and work of our God, Savior, and King: Jesus Christ! Blessings.

- What are some takeaways from the entire study?
- Who is Jesus?
- What did He do?
- Why does it matter?
- What do you think you should do following this study?

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