

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

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Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 1 – “After Me Comes He Who is Mightier than I ...”

Opening Questions

1. What is one piece of good advice that you have received?
2. What is one piece of good news that you received recently?
What is the difference between good advice and good news?

Introduction

We like to hear good news, especially if the news is for us personally. Imagine that you were in a pumpkin-carving contest and the winner would get a free airline ticket to go to anywhere in the world. You were advised by your friends to practice hard. The bad news was that you did not win the contest. Another person won. The good news was that person was your best friend, and he/she gave you the airline ticket.

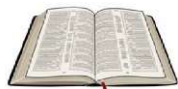
The whole Bible has one theme: **the gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ for us**. All the stories and teachings in the Bible is centered on this theme. The Bible uses the word “gospel” which literally means good news. It is not good advice about what we should do in our lives but is about what Jesus has done and accomplished for our lives.



To think about:

- What if God tells us bad news today that we have failed to live a perfect righteous life and therefore we deserve to be punished?
- What if God tells us good news today that Jesus has lived a perfect righteous life for us and that Jesus’ life will be credited to us, as if it is our own lives, if we believe in him and trust our lives to him?

From the Bible



Mark 1:1-8

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

²As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, ³the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”

⁴John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And 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. ⁸I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Discussion Questions

Mark wrote his book approximately in 50-70 A.D. Mark presents facts about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, as the promised Savior (the Christ) who came to save us.

1. Who is Jesus Christ according to Mark (v.1)?
2. What did John do to prepare the coming of Jesus (v.4)?
3. What did people go to John for (v.5)?
4. What did John wear and eat (v.6)?
5. What did John say to the people about Jesus (v.7-8)?



Notes

God: The Bible describes God as one God in three persons (God the Father, **God the Son**, and **God the Holy Spirit**).

Jesus: the human name given to the Son of God when he came from heaven and was born as a man in this world about 2,000 years ago.

Christ: a title of Jesus. It means *the promised Savior*.

Prophet: a messenger of God. 700 years before Jesus was born, **Isaiah** wrote that God would send a messenger (John) to prepare the coming of Jesus Christ, who is **the Lord** (the Master) of all people.

John: also known as John the Baptist.

Baptize: to give **baptism**, which is a religious ritual using water to indicate our hearts’ **repentance** (feeling deep regret of wrongdoing or sin and turning from sin to God).

Sin: thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God. We daily sin against God in our thoughts, words, and actions.

Mark 1:9-13

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And 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. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

¹²The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³And 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.



Discussion Questions

1. What town did Jesus come from? Why did Jesus go to John (v.9)?
2. What happened after Jesus “came up out of the water” (v.10-11)? How did God the Father and the Holy Spirit affirm what John said about Jesus, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie”?
3. Where did the Holy Spirit take Jesus to after his baptism (v.12)?
4. What did Satan try to do to Jesus in the wilderness (v.13)?
5. Who came to minister to Jesus (v.13)?

Lesson Summary

1. Jesus was preparing to begin his ministry on earth. After his baptism, he was brought by the Spirit of God to the wilderness, where there were wild animals. He spent time with God, praying for forty days. Then God let him be tempted by Satan. To be our Savior, Jesus needed to experience temptation and suffering as a man. He needed to become our model and hope. His victory over Satan brings hope for us to overcome our own temptation and suffering. His victory is also our victory.
2. The Bible teaches that all people were born with a sinful nature. We daily sin against God in our thoughts, words, and actions because we are sinners. We fail to live a perfect righteous and obedient life to honor God. We deserve to be punished by God. God is just, and he must punish our sins. This is the bad news for us.
3. However, God is also loving. He loves us so much, and the Son of God came from heaven to this world to save us. Jesus came to sacrifice himself for the punishment of our sins as our substitute. When we repent from our sins and put our faith in Jesus, trusting our lives to him, God forgives our sins, treats us as righteous people, and adopts us as his children. Jesus’ perfect righteous and obedient life to honor God is credited to us, when we trust our lives to him. This is the gospel (good news) for us.
4. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not good advice about how we should live our lives but is good news about what Jesus has done and accomplished for our lives. Jesus has lived the life that we should live. He has taken the death punishment that we deserve.
5. Once we trust our lives to Jesus and begin to have a personal and loving relationship with him, we live our lives out of a thankful heart for what God has done for us. We don’t live our lives to gain God’s blessings or rewards, because we already have them as God’s children. This is also part of the good news for us.

Notes

Nazareth of Galilee: a small town in a region in northern Israel.

Jordan: River Jordan.

The Heavens: these could refer to (1) the sky—the atmosphere, (2) the outer space, and (3) God’s dwelling place.

Heaven: God’s dwelling place.

The Spirit: the Holy Spirit.

Satan: the devil; a fallen and rebellious angel who is the leader of all evil spirits (demons).

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Lesson 2 – “What is This? A New Teaching with Authority!”

Opening Questions

1. What is your reaction when you hear someone says, “Do as I say, not as I do?”
2. Have you ever had a really good teacher? Have you ever had a bad teacher? What makes someone a good teacher?

Introduction

We like to learn from people who can teach and inspire us. Good teachers teach good knowledge and skills. They teach with respect and patience. There are also good teachers who love their students and desire them to be better people. They want their students not only to learn knowledge but also to change from the heart (from the inside out).

In the Bible, Jesus is described as a great teacher who teaches about the Kingdom of God with many methods including parables, poetry, metaphors, paradoxes, and riddles. Jesus also models what he teaches. He never says, “Do as I say, not as I do.” He says, “I am the good shepherd *who* lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11) and “... love one another just as I have loved you” (John 13:34). Jesus also says many things that no other people have ever said. He says, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12) and “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).



To think about:

- What if Jesus is able not only to teach us about the right way of living before God but also to change our hearts from the inside out?
- What if Jesus truly loves us and has sacrificed himself to bear the punishment of all our sins and rebellions against God?

From the Bible



Mark 1:14-20

¹⁴ ... 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.

Discussion Questions

1. What did Jesus say to people when he was proclaiming the gospel (v.15)?
2. Who did Jesus see alongside the Sea of Galilee? What were they doing (v.16)?
3. What did Jesus say to them (v.17)? What do you think “fishers of men” means?
4. How did they respond to Jesus’ call for them (v.18)?
5. Who else did Jesus call to follow him, and how did they respond to him (v.19-20)?

James and John left with their father’s blessing. It was an honor for the parents if their children could learn from a great teacher. Besides his two sons, Zebedee also had hired servants who helped his work.



Notes

Galilee: a region in northern Israel.

The gospel of God: the good news that God has sent Jesus Christ to save us from our sins (thoughts, words, or actions that are dishonoring or disobedient to God)

The kingdom of God: while God rules the universe, this phrase refers to the kingdom where Jesus will rule as the King. It is **at hand** or here. When Jesus came to this world, He started this kingdom.

To **repent and believe in the gospel** is the only way to get into Jesus’ kingdom.

Repent: to turn away from sin (thought, word, or act that is dishonoring or disobedient to God) with regret and sorrow, and to turn to God with the full intention to be obedient.

Mark 1:21-34

²¹ 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.

Discussion Questions

1. Why were the people astonished at Jesus' teaching (v.22)?
2. What did a man possessed by an unclean spirit (evil spirit) cry out to Jesus (v.23-24)?
3. How did Jesus respond to him (v.25)?
4. How did the evil spirit react to Jesus' command (v.26)? How did the people around them react to this? What question did they ask to one another (v.27)?
5. How quick did Jesus' name spread (v.28)?
6. What illness did Simon's mother-in-law have and how did Jesus heal her (v.30-31)?
7. What sorts of people were brought to Jesus and how did he minister to them (v.32-34)? Why did Jesus not permit the demons to speak about him (v.34)?

Lesson Summary

1. With authority, Jesus teaches about God, his kingdom, his law, and his will for our lives, because he does not need to rely on others' information or to study and gain knowledge about God. He is God himself who came from heaven.
2. Jesus also modeled what he taught, perfectly living an obedient life to the laws of God, which no one can do. The gospel (good news) is that Jesus' perfect record of obeying God's laws is credited to us, when we believe and put our faith in him, trusting and surrendering our lives to him. Jesus' perfect obedient life honoring God becomes ours in God's eyes. God credits it to us, as if it is our own lives—as if we have done that.
3. Who has authority over evil spirits other than God himself? The evil spirits know Jesus, and he has authority over them. He did not want them to expose him and to endanger his mission. He came from heaven to this world not to be a political leader but to save his people. He came to sacrifice himself for the punishment of our sins as our substitute, so that we can have a new life in him, by trusting our lives to him.
4. The crowd were all amazed and questioned the identity of Jesus—who Jesus is. Likewise, each of us faces with the reality of who Jesus is on a personal level—who Jesus is for me. Jesus is the good news for each of us.



Notes

Capernaum: a village on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Sabbath: a holy day to rest and worship God, observed on Saturday until Jesus rose from the dead, which was on Sunday. Since then, Christians have worshiped God together on Sundays

Synagogue: a Jewish place of worship.

Scribe: an expert who transcribe and teach the Jewish laws.

Unclean spirit: evil spirit (**demon**); assistants of Satan (the devil). God has set a time when Satan and his evil spirits will face God's judgment and **be destroyed**. The Son of God will be the Judge. This evil spirit asked Jesus if it is the time.

The Holy One of God: the evil spirit knows that Jesus is the Son of God.

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Lesson 3 – “We Never Saw Anything Like This!”

Opening Questions

1. Have you ever seen something unusual or amazing?
2. How is trying to be a good person not the same as being a self-righteous person?

Introduction

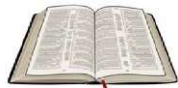
We have pride inside our hearts. We sometimes think that we are better than some other people, especially when we compare ourselves with those who commit crimes. Crime and sin are different. A crime against another person is ultimately a sin against God. The Bible’s definition of sin is thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God. Sin is not being able to achieve God’s standard—falling short of or missing God’s standard. It is like one who tries to shoot an arrow to a target and misses it, whether missing an inch or fifty inches. God wants us to love him and other people with all our hearts. None of us can achieve this standard. We daily sin against God in our thoughts, words, and actions. Our sins are demonstrated in our self-centeredness (selfishness, self-righteousness, pride, etc.).



To think about:

- Why is it so hard to be consistently humble? Isn’t it easier to be prideful than to be humble?
- What if God can perform a spiritual heart surgery for us, repairing our hearts and cleaning us from the spiritual cancer of sin in us?

From the Bible



Mark 2:1-12

¹And when he [Jesus] returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ²And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. ³And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴And 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. ⁵And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” ⁶Now 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?”



Discussion Questions

While living in Capernaum, Jesus probably stayed at Simon Peter’s house. When people found out that Jesus was at the house, they came to Him (v.1).

1. How many people came to listen to Jesus? What was Jesus preaching (v.2)?
2. Who was brought to Jesus? How many men carried him (v.3)?
3. What did they do when they could not get near Jesus because of the crowd (v.4)?
4. What did Jesus say to the paralytic (v.5)?
5. What did the scribes say to themselves in their hearts about Jesus (v.6-7)?

At that time, blasphemy was considered a serious sin, and the blasphemer could be punished by being stoned to death. Jesus was claiming to be God himself, because only God can forgive people’s sins. His claim was a blasphemy if he was not God, and he deserved to be killed. The scribes did not believe that Jesus was God.

Notes

Capernaum: a village on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

The word: the word of God. Jesus preached from the Old Testament of the Bible.

Sin: thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God; We daily sin against God in our thoughts, words, and actions; our self-centeredness.

Scribes: experts who transcribe and teach the Jewish laws.

Mark 2:8-17

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!**”

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.”



Discussion Questions

1. Did Jesus know that they were questioning him in their hearts (v.8)? How? What did Jesus say to them (v.8-10)?
2. How did Jesus heal the paralytic (v.11)?
3. What did the paralytic do after he was healed by Jesus (v.12)?
4. How did the crowd react to this miracle? What did they say to one another (v.12)?
5. What did Jesus ask of Levi, a tax collector, and what was his response to Jesus (v.14)?
6. Who came to Jesus in his house (v.15)? What do you think they came for?
7. How did the scribes of the Pharisees criticize Jesus (v.16)?
8. What was Jesus’ response to them (v.17)? What do you think it means?

Lesson Summary

1. Jesus liked to use the title “the Son of Man” more than “the Son of God” to emphasize his humanity and heavenly kingship. For Jesus, performing a miraculous healing is easier than forgiving sins. Jesus healed the paralytic—the easier act—to prove his authority to forgive sins as God—the more difficult act. Jesus’ act of forgiving the paralytic’s sins was an unseen act by the crowd. At this point, people still thought that Jesus was just a man—a great religious teacher who could heal diseases. The crowd praised God for Jesus’ miraculous healing, not for who Jesus actually was.
2. Forgiveness comes at a cost. Jesus needed to bear our sin punishment (death), so that we can receive God’s forgiveness. Our spiritual life is much more important than our physical life. The paralytic was healed both spiritually and physically because he trusted and believed in Jesus. Jesus forgave his sins, healing him spiritually first, because to get a right relationship with God is the most important matter. We too can be forgiven of our sins by having faith in Jesus and trusting our lives to him, who has sacrificed himself to die on the cross for the punishment of all our sins as our substitute.
3. The sinners are “those who are sick” and in need of Jesus, the true Doctor. The Pharisees and the scribes did not see themselves as sinners but as “those who are well.” They were in fact spiritually sick, but they were blinded by their own spiritual pride. Jesus told them that he came for needy sinners, bringing healing to their corrupted hearts. Jesus is our true Doctor, who can heal our hearts and souls.

Notes

His spirit: Jesus’ divine nature. Jesus is fully God and fully man—100% God and 100% man. As God, Jesus knows our minds.

The Son of Man: Jesus’ favorite title to emphasize His humanity and heavenly kingship.

Glorify: to give glory or honor with praise or worship.

Pharisees: members of a religious group that emphasize external religious acts rather than internal motives of the heart.

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Lesson 4 – “Who Then is This, That Even the Wind and the Sea Obey Him?”

Notes

Opening Questions

1. Name a movie superhero that you like. What is his/her power? What is good about him/her?
2. Have you ever experienced a hurricane, a typhoon, or an earthquake?

Introduction

Natural disasters can cause great damage and loss of life. We often hear from the news that people die because of hurricanes, typhoons, cyclones, tornados, floods, and earthquakes. If we have personally experienced a natural disaster, we surely do not want to experience it again. When we watch superhero movies, we like heroes who use their powers to save others. They are *saviors* because they save people. Their actions often inspire us, although they do not exist in reality.



To think about:

- What if there is a *true superhero*, who is God himself and who was born as a man with all the weaknesses of a human being like us, such as being fragile as a baby, can feel hungry, thirsty, and tired, and can be killed?
- What if Jesus is our *true Savior*, the God who became a man, the Creator of the universe, fully God and fully man, who came from heaven to save us by sacrificing himself to die for us as our substitute?

From the Bible



Mark 4:35-41

³⁵ 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?**”



Discussion Questions

After a full day of teaching people, Jesus was tired and wanted to rest and spend time alone with his disciples. They got into a boat and went across the Sea of Galilee to the other side.

1. What happened to them on the sea (v.37)?
2. Where was Jesus and what was he doing (v.38)?
3. What did the disciples ask of him after they woke him up (v.38)?
4. What did Jesus do after he awoke? What happened to the wind and the sea (v.39)?
5. What did Jesus say to his disciples (v.40)? What do you think it means?
6. How did the disciples react to what they just saw and experienced? What did they say to one another (v.41)?

Mark 5:1-20

¹They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. ²And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴for 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. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷And 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." ⁸For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"

⁹And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." ¹⁰And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, ¹²and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." ¹³So 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.

¹⁴The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened ... ¹⁷And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. ¹⁸As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. ¹⁹And 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." ²⁰And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.



Discussion Questions

1. Who came to meet Jesus when he went to the other side of the sea, and what can we know about him (v.1-5)?
2. What did he do when he saw Jesus from afar (v.6)?
3. What did the man cry out and say to Jesus (v.7)?
4. What was the name of the evil spirit (v.9)?
5. What happened to the pigs after being possessed by the evil spirits (v.13)?
6. What did the herdsmen do after seeing what happened to the pigs (v.14)?
7. What did the people of the city ask of Jesus after learning what just happened (v.17)?
8. What did the man ask of Jesus, and what did Jesus ask of him instead (v.18-19)?
9. What did the man do afterwards (v.20)?

Lesson Summary

1. Jesus is God who came from heaven and became a man like us. He came to save us from our own sins and the power of evil. As a man, Jesus experienced physical tiredness. As God, Jesus has authority over nature (storm, etc.) and evil spirits.
2. Jesus was in the boat with his disciples when the storm hit them. Jesus could prevent the storm from coming, but he allowed it. He did not explain to his disciples but simply asked them to have faith in him, trusting their lives to him. When we experience a storm—a big trouble—God is with us, and he wants us to trust our lives to him.
3. Evil spirits are real. Their mission is to prevent people from believing in the true God and in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom God has sent to save us—to be our Savior. We must be careful of their lies. We need to listen to God and not listen to them.

Notes

Unclean spirit: evil spirit (demon; the devil's assistant; rebellious angel).

Son of the Most High God: Jesus is the Son of God. Most High means the most powerful and superior being.

The Lord: Jesus, as God Himself, is the only Lord (Master) for all people.

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Lesson 5 – “How are Such Mighty Works Done by His Hands?”

Opening Questions

1. What was the worst sickness that you have ever experienced?
2. Has anyone in your immediate family passed away?

Introduction

Nobody likes to get sick, but we all get sick. Our bodies slowly deteriorate as we get older and older. Being sick can be a major suffering in our lives, and it usually causes our family members to suffer as well, as they need to take care of us. If you have been involved in a funeral of an immediate family member, you know that it is not easy emotionally, mentally, and physically. It drains our energy and time. There are two places in this world that are never empty: hospitals and graveyards.



To think about:

- What if there is a world where no one will get sick or die? What will that world look like?
- What if Jesus is planning to renew this world to be a perfect world without sin, sickness, and death, but he is working to renew us first from the corruption of sin?

From the Bible



Mark 5:21-43

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.”

Discussion Questions

1. What did Jairus ask of Jesus, and how did Jesus respond to his request (v.22-24)?
2. What was the woman’s disease and how was her condition (v.25-26)?
3. Why did she try to touch Jesus’ garment, and what happened to her after she touched it (v.27-29)?
4. Did Jesus know this (v.30)? How was her “touch” different than other people’s touch?
5. What did Jesus say to her when she came to him and told the whole truth (v.33-34)?



Notes

Sin: thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God. The Bible tells us that every person is born a sinner with sinful nature.

Synagogue: a Jewish place of worship.

Daughter, your faith has made you well: By calling her *daughter*, Jesus speaks to her as a father to a child, not as a man to a woman. She experienced the love of God, our Heavenly Father.

Mark 5:35-43

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 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 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.

Mark 6:1-2

¹ 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?**"



Discussion Questions

1. What news did some people who came from Jairus' house bring to him (v.35)?
2. What did Jesus say to Jairus (v.36)? What might Jairus' feeling be at this time?
3. What did Jesus see when he arrived at Jairus' house (v.38)?
4. What did Jesus say to the people and how did they respond to Him (v.39-40)?
5. How did Jesus bring the child back to life (v.41)?
6. How did the child's parents and Jesus' disciples react to this miracle (v.42)?
7. What did Jesus ask of them (v.43)?
8. What did the people think about Jesus and what did they say to one another (6:2-3)?

Lesson Summary

1. Sin has brought corruption and sickness to us. Our sin or rebellion against God, including our disbelief in him, is a deadly spiritual sickness—a spiritual cancer that is destroying us from the inside out.
2. The woman's touch was a touch with faith. She had faith in Jesus. Jesus knew that she touched her, just as he knew her unseen faith in him. He healed and made her well. It is more likely that she received *spiritual healing* and *physical healing* from Jesus. He saved her from her sins and made her spiritually well, because she put her faith in him. Jesus gave her spiritual peace by calling her *daughter*, showing her that God accepts and loves her. The spiritual healing is much more important than the physical healing.
3. Jesus brought the child back from death to life. As God, Jesus has power over death. If we put our faith in Jesus and trust our lives to him, we will have a personal and close relationship with him and will not fear death. Death cannot separate us from God's love for us. Death is a stepping stone for us to leave this world and to be with God.
4. Sickness and suffering are temporary problems in our current lives. Jesus has promised us that he will return to this world to renew the world from sin and corruption. He will bring heaven down, unite it with the renewed world, and make it as a perfect home for all his people—all who have faith in him and have trusted their lives to him.

Notes

Sabbath: a holy day to rest and worship God, observed on Saturday until Jesus rose from the dead, which was on Sunday. Since then, Christians have worshiped God together on Sundays.

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 6 – “He Has Done All Things Well.”

Opening Questions

1. Have you ever received a compliment (e.g., “Great job!”) for something good you did?
2. Have you ever experienced a lack of food, or have you personally seen people who experience a lack of food?

Introduction

We have learned that mankind’s rebellion against God has brought sin to our lives, and sin has brought physical and spiritual sickness to us. Everywhere in this world, many people suffer and die because of sickness and hunger. More than 20,000 people in the world die every day because of hunger and hunger-related diseases. This is not how God wanted this world to be when he created it in the beginning.

Mankind has become sinful. Our selfishness or self-centeredness are manifested in our daily lives—in our thoughts, words, and actions. Our souls need spiritual healing more than we realize. Being separated from God—not having a personal relationship with him—make us spiritually dead. God is grieved by our sins and the consequences of our sins. Jesus, the Son of God, has come to this world to save and bring healing to us. While on earth, Jesus healed some people physically to show his divine power as God. However, his main mission is to bring spiritual healing to us, saving us from our sins.



To think about:

- What if Jesus can really heal our corrupted hearts (souls)?
- What if Jesus can really satisfy our spiritual hunger for happiness and prosperity, when we trust our lives to him and have a personal and close relationship with him?

From the Bible



Mark 7:31-37

³¹ Then he [Jesus] 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.”



Discussion Questions

1. Who was brought to Jesus when he arrived in the region of the Decapolis, and what did the people ask of Jesus (v.31-32)?
2. What might be the reason Jesus took him aside from the crowd privately before he healed him—the people who brought the man most likely followed Jesus as he took him aside—and how did Jesus heal him (v.33-35)?
3. What did Jesus charge those who were around and saw him healing the man (v.36)? Did they do what Jesus charged them to do (v.36)? What was their reaction seeing Jesus’ miraculous healing and what did they say to one another (v.37)?

Notes

Sin: thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God. The Bible tells us that every person is born a sinner with sinful nature.

Lay his hand on him: to heal him.

Mark 8:1-10

¹In 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. ³And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away.” ⁴And his disciples answered him, “How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?” ⁵And he asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” They said, “Seven.” ⁶And 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. ⁷And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. ⁸And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. ⁹And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away. ¹⁰And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

Discussion Questions



1. What concern did Jesus have for the crowd (v.2-3)?
2. How did Jesus' disciples respond to his concern (v.4)?
3. What question did Jesus ask them and what was their answer (v.5)?
4. What did Jesus ask the crowd to do, and what did Jesus do with the bread (v.6)?
5. What did Jesus do with the fish (v.7)?
6. How were the people after eating the bread and the fish (v.8)?
7. How much food did they have left over (v.8)?
8. How many people were there in the crowd (v.9)?
9. What do you think about this miracle that Jesus did?

Lesson Summary

1. Sin has brought physical and spiritual sickness to us. Jesus looked up to heaven and sighed because of his sympathy for the deaf man. Jesus often grieved because of the consequence of sin that has brought much pain and suffering to us. The reason he came to this world is to end our pain and suffering by delivering us from the power of sin and evil.
2. Spiritually speaking, Jesus has come to bring healing and to give a new life to those who believe and put their faith in him, trusting their lives to him. When Jesus returns, he will bring a new world for his people and end all their pain and suffering. The new world is heaven on earth. It is a union of spiritual and physical world, where we will live with God for eternity and experience true prosperity and joy.
3. As the Son of God, Jesus multiplied the bread and the fish with his divine power to feed the crowd. With seven loaves of bread and a few small fish, Jesus fed about four thousand people. He had compassion on them. Jesus did not want them to go home and faint on the way. He met their physical need, and they were satisfied. However, Jesus was more concerned about satisfying their spiritual need—saving them from their sins—and having them to believe and put their faith in him, trusting their lives to him.
4. Jesus is the true *Satisfier* and *Provider*. He is the only one who can provide and satisfy our needs, especially the deepest need of our souls—the longing to have a personal relationship with God, our Maker, and to be healed and freed from sin and corruption.

Notes

Having given thanks: praying and thanking God.

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 7 – “You are the Christ.”

Opening Questions

1. What do we know about Confucius, Plato, and Mother Teresa?
2. Can we have a personal and loving relationship with them? Why?

Introduction

Who is Jesus? We have learned that Jesus freed a man who was possessed by a demon and demons were afraid of him. Jesus healed a paralyzed man, a woman with bleeding problem, and a deaf man. He brought a young girl back from death to life. He commanded a storm to calm. He multiplied seven loaves of bread and a few small fish to feed four thousand people. He taught people about the Kingdom of God and claimed to be the Son of God who came to save us. Is Jesus simply a good moral and religious teacher? C.S. Lewis, a Christian author, argued that Jesus is either a liar, a lunatic (mentally ill person), or Lord (Master of all people; God). Either Jesus is the Son of God as he has claimed to be or else a madman. If Jesus were not Lord, he would be a liar or a lunatic. But if he was not a liar or a lunatic, then he must be Lord. Present day people still question who Jesus truly is.



To think about:

- If Jesus is the Son of God, the Lord and Creator of the universe including us, how should we respond to his inviting us to a personal and loving relationship with him?
- What would be the result of (a) having him in our lives and (b) not having him in our lives?



From the Bible

Mark 8:27-30

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.



Discussion Questions

1. What question did Jesus ask his disciples on the way to the villages of Caesarea Philippi (v.27)? Do you think this is an important question? Why?
2. What did they tell Jesus (v.28)?
3. What was the next question that Jesus asked his disciples (v.29)? Why do you think Jesus wanted to know whether his disciples knew about his true identity or not?
4. What was Peter’s answer (v.29)?
5. What did Jesus ask of his disciples (v.30)?

Jesus did not want people to take him as a political leader and therefore endanger his mission to sacrifice himself to bear the punishment of our sins as our substitute. We can have a new life in him by believing and putting our faith in him and trusting our lives to him. He came to take away our guilt and shame, free us from the enslaving power of sin, and give us a new life with him—a personal and loving covenant relationship with him.

Notes

Demon: an evil spirit—a rebellious angel.

Caesarea Philippi: an ancient Roman city at the foot of Mount Hermon.

John the Baptist: was a messenger of God who prepared the coming of Jesus to this world and baptized (to use water as a religious ritual to indicate the cleansing of the heart) many people including Jesus.

Elijah: a great Old-Testament **prophet** (messenger of God) who did not die on earth. God took him up to heaven.

Christ: a title of Jesus which means “the promised Savior.”

Sin: thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God.

Covenant: a binding promise.

Mark 8:31-38

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.”



Discussion Questions

The elders, the chief priests, and the scribes were the religious leaders of the community. They rejected Jesus and did not believe that Jesus was *the Christ*. They did not like people following Jesus and believing in him. They considered Jesus as a religious opponent.

1. What did Jesus tell his disciples—what would the religious leaders do to him (v.31)?
2. What was Peter’s reaction hearing this (v.32)? How did Jesus respond to Peter (v.33)?
3. What did Jesus say to the crowd and his disciples (v.34)?
4. What did Jesus teach the people about life and death (v.35-37)?
5. What did Jesus say about those who are ashamed of him and of his words (v.38)?

Lesson Summary

1. Who is Jesus? Jesus says that he is *the Christ* (the promised Savior) who saves us from our sins and evil. He is the Son of God and the Son of Man—fully God and fully man. He came from heaven to this earth with a mission to sacrifice himself bearing the punishment of our sins against God as our substitute, so by believing in him and trusting our lives to him, we may receive God’s forgiveness and have a new life in him.
2. Jesus invites us to a personal and loving covenant relationship with him that brings true happiness and prosperity for our souls and lives.
3. Jesus says that he will return to this world. He will come in his heavenly glory. He will reject those who reject him but will take his people—those who have a personal and loving covenant relationship with him—to his heavenly kingdom.
4. Jesus warns us of our own sins and adulterous nature—not being faithful to God. Spiritually speaking, in our sinful nature, we want to “have fun” with this corrupted world and all the things that this world can offer us and not be faithful or loyal to God.
5. To be Jesus’ people or followers, we must be willing (a) to deny ourselves—to reject what we want and to submit to God’s will for our lives, and (b) to take up our cross—to give and trust our lives to Jesus and to give up our ways of living.
6. Jesus tells us that for us to save our lives—to enter his heavenly kingdom and to live with him for eternity—we must be willing to give up our lives for his sake and the gospel’s. We must stop trying to save ourselves and to start believing and putting our faith in Jesus, trusting and surrendering our lives to him.

Notes

The Son of Man:

Jesus’ favorite title to emphasize his humanity and heavenly kingship.

Elder: a person who is older; an influential member of a community.

Chief priests: the head or leader of people whose office is to perform religious rites.

Scribe: an expert who transcribe and teach the laws.

Get behind me

Satan: Jesus rebuked Peter and Satan (the devil; the leader of rebellious angels) at the same time. Satan tried to influence Peter’s mind and to use him to discourage Jesus for accomplishing his mission to sacrifice himself for his people.

Deny himself: to follow God’s will and to reject what one wants.

Take up his cross: to surrender our lives to Jesus.

The Gospel: the *good news* that Jesus has come to save us from sin and evil.

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 8 – “This is My Beloved Son; Listen to Him.”

Opening Questions

1. Have you ever seen a caterpillar turning into a butterfly?
2. What would be the potential consequences if I steal money (wallet or purse) from:
(a) a friend, (b) a police officer, and (c) the president of this country?

Introduction

If we do something bad against a friend of ours, the consequence is not as big as doing it against a police officer. What about if we do it against the president of this country? The consequence will be a bigger punishment for us, because the president has a much higher authority and power. What about if we break the law, insult, or dishonor God, who is the Creator and *the President* of the Universe? What may be the punishment for us?

The Bible says that the punishment of one sin against God is death. We have too many sins against God. We daily sin against God in our thoughts, words, and actions. He wants us to obey and love him with all our hearts and to love other people as we love ourselves. We cannot do either of these. We are selfish people by nature. We also like to “have fun” with this corrupted world and all the things that this world can offer us. We are not faithful or loyal to God.



To think about:

- When you forgive someone who has done something bad to you, you need to bear the pain of forgiving that person, as if you are taking the punishment that the person deserves on yourself. Forgiveness is costly.
- For God to love and forgive us, who have sinned and dishonored him in many ways, it costs him a lot. God needs to bear the punishment of all our sins on himself. That is exactly what Jesus has done for us.

From the Bible



Mark 9:2-10

²And 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, ³and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵And 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.” ⁶For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “**This is my beloved Son; listen to him.**” ⁸And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only. ⁹And 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. ¹⁰So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead might mean.



Discussion Questions

1. What happened on the mountain where Jesus took Peter, James, and John to (v.2-3)?
2. Who suddenly appeared and talked to Jesus (v.4)?
3. How did Peter, James, and John feel about seeing this wonder (v.6)?
4. What did God the Father say about Jesus (v.7)?
5. What suddenly happened after the disciples heard God’s voice (v.8)?
6. What did the disciples question themselves about (v.9-10)?

Notes

Sin: thought, word, or act that is dishonoring or disobedient to God.

Elijah: a great Old-Testament prophet (messenger of God) who did not die on earth. God took him up to heaven.

Moses: a great Old-Testament prophet who led the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt. God himself buried Moses on a mountain.

Rabbi: a Jewish teacher or scholar.

The Son of Man: Jesus’ favorite title to emphasize His humanity and heavenly kingship.

Mark 9:14-27

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.

Discussion Questions

1. What did Jesus see when he came down from the mountain (14)?
2. How did the crowd react when they saw Jesus (v.15)?
3. What situation was brought to Jesus (16-18)?
4. What did Jesus say to his disciples (v.19)?
5. What did the evil spirit do to the boy when he was brought to Jesus (v.20)?
6. How long had the boy been possessed by the evil spirit (v.21)?
7. What did the father of the boy ask of Jesus (v.22)?
8. How did Jesus respond to his statement (v.23) and what was his reaction (v.24)?
9. How did Jesus heal the boy from the evil spirit (v.25-27)?
10. If you were one of the people in the crowd seeing this, what would be your reaction?
If you were one of Jesus' disciples (followers) seeing this, what would be your reaction?



Lesson Summary

1. True love requires sacrifice and forgiveness is costly. For God to love us, he needs to sacrifice himself for the pain of loving us. For God to forgive all our sins against him, he needs to bear the punishment of all our sins on himself.
2. God is a just God. He must punish our sins. God is a loving God, and he loves us. God the Father has sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, to die bearing the punishment of all our sins. Jesus died on the cross as our substitute, bearing the judgment of God for the punishment of all our sins. He sacrificed himself for us and took our death, so that we can receive God's forgiveness by believing in him and trusting our lives to him.
3. As a man, Jesus was like us. He could get tired and suffered pain. Unlike us, he was without sin. He lived his life perfectly obeying and honoring God. As a sinless person, Jesus is the perfect substitutionary sacrifice for us. Look at the cross of Jesus, there we see the judgment and the love of God for us; there we see how much Jesus loves us.

Notes

Scribes: experts who transcribe and teach the Jewish laws.

Spirit: here refers to an *evil* spirit (a demon; a rebellious angel; an assistant of the devil who is the leader of all the rebellious angels).

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 9 – “Hosanna! Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord!”

Opening Questions

1. Have you ever seen, perhaps on TV, an athlete coming back home with a medal and was cheered for by fans?
2. Do you know someone who is blind? How does that person live his/her life?

Introduction

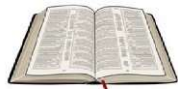
Imagine if you suddenly became blind and could not see anything. Life suddenly became very difficult for you. You became a homeless person and depended on charity. Days turned into weeks, weeks turned into months, and months turned into years. There were no doctors who could heal your blindness. Then you heard about a famous doctor who was able to restore blind people’s sight. You could not travel to meet this doctor. You felt hopeless. However, one day, you heard that he was in your city. You went to him, and he restored your sight. How thankful you were to him. Furthermore, he gave you more than just healing your sight, he invited you to have a meal with him. You had no friends, and he offered you friendship.



To think about:

- We often cannot see our own mistakes, selfish behaviors, or pride. Which one is more dangerous: physical blindness or spiritual blindness?
- We cannot go and find healing for our spiritual blindness unless God comes to us. What if Jesus really has come to this world to bring spiritual healing to us, if we believe and put our faith in him?

From the Bible



Mark 10:46-52

⁴⁶ 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. ⁴⁷ 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!” ⁴⁸ And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁹ And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.” ⁵⁰ And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ 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.” ⁵² 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.



Discussion Questions

1. Who was sitting by the roadside as Jesus, his disciples, and a great crowd who followed him were leaving Jericho (v.46)?
2. What did the blind beggar ask of Jesus (v.47)?
3. What did the people do to him as he was crying out loud, and how did he respond to them (v.48)?
4. What did Jesus do as he heard him crying out loud (v.49)?
5. How did Bartimaeus respond as he heard people calling him to come to Jesus (v.50)?
6. What did Bartimaeus ask of Jesus (v.51)?
7. What did Jesus say to him? How did Jesus heal him (v.52)?

Notes

Hosanna: an expression of adoration or praise.

Jericho: a city about 27 km (17 m) from Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel.

Nazareth: a small town where Jesus grew up.

Son of David: a title for *the promised Savior (the Christ)*, who is a descendant of King David—the famous king of Israel. By calling Jesus the Son of David, the blind man believed that Jesus was the *promised Savior*.

Rabbi: a Jewish teacher or scholar.

Mark 11:1-11

¹ 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!” 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.



Discussion Questions

Jesus planned to go to the city of Jerusalem—the capital of Israel—to accomplish his mission by sacrificing himself to die for the punishment of all our sins as our substitute. He would be arrested and crucified by the religious leaders.

1. What did Jesus ask two of his disciples to do (v.2)?
2. What should they say if someone asks them about why they are doing that (v.3)?
3. Did they find a colt (a young male donkey) as Jesus said (v.4)?
4. Did anyone ask them why they were untying the colt (v.5)?
5. Did the people let them take the colt (v.6)?
6. What did the disciples put on the colt (v.7)?
7. What did people do as Jesus rode the colt (v.8)?
8. What were they shouting as they followed Jesus entering Jerusalem (v.9-10)?
9. Where did Jesus go in Jerusalem (v.11)?

Lesson Summary

1. The blind beggar believed that Jesus is the Son of David, the promised Savior (the Christ), who came to bring the kingdom of God to this world. Though he could not see physically, he could see spiritually. He was very much different than the crowd who rebuked him. He asked Jesus, “Have mercy on me,” and Jesus said to him, “Your faith has made you well.” Jesus gave him spiritual healing, forgiving his sins against God and restoring his relationship with God. Then Jesus healed him physically as well, restoring his sight.
2. Forgiveness is costly. By forgiving him, Jesus would need to bear the punishment of his sins against God as his substitute. God is a just God, so he must punish our sins. God is also a loving God, and he wants to save us. God loves us, and he has sent his own Son to rescue us by sacrificing himself to die bearing the punishment of all our sins on the cross as our substitute. This was not an easy mission for Jesus. He knew that he would suffer and be killed for us, but he did it anyway, because he loves us. His love is greater than our sins. His mercy is more abundant than our sins.
3. When Jesus came, he brought the kingdom of God to this world. God’s kingdom is already here, and its fullness will be completed at Jesus’ second coming. He will renew this world, bring heaven down, and unite heaven with the renewed world. It will be a perfect home for all his people—all who trust and believe in him by faith.

Notes

Bethphage and Bethany: small towns outside of Jerusalem.

Hosanna: an expression of adoration or praise.

The coming kingdom of our father David: The people were shouting that Jesus would establish a new kingdom like the kingdom of David, because Jesus is a descendant of David. The people did not understand that Jesus would establish a spiritual kingdom—his church for his followers—and not a physical kingdom. He will bring a physical kingdom when he returns to this world.

Sin: thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God.

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 10 – “Hail, King of the Jews!”

Opening Questions

1. Have you ever gotten angry because someone or something hurt your loved ones?
2. If you had a rebellious child, what would you do to rescue the child from his/her rebelliousness?

Introduction

In previous lesson, we read the story of Jesus healing a blind man on his journey to Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel. Israel was under Rome, and there was a Roman governor who governed the area. Jerusalem was the center of religious activities and was the city where many religious leaders lived. Jesus often spoke against the religious leaders and was angry with them, because they were leading people away from the right direction to follow God. Jesus called them *false shepherd* and exposed their hypocrisy and spiritual blindness. The religious leaders were also angry with Jesus and were jealous that people followed him. They sent soldiers to arrest him at night secretly and brought him to their religious council.

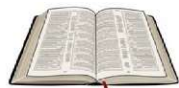
We are angry if there is someone who wants to hurt our loved ones, such as our families. Anger comes out of love to defend something or someone. The religious leaders were angry with Jesus to defend their pride, power, and social status. They did not want to lose any of these. God’s anger is righteous, while our anger is often unrighteous or distorted.



To think about:

- If we refuse to love God with all our hearts, what would be the natural reaction of God dealing with us?
- If God wants to rescue us from our own rebelliousness against him, what do you think he should do?

From the Bible



Mark 15:1-5

¹And 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. ²And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” ³And the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴And Pilate again asked him, “Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.” ⁵But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.



Discussion Questions

1. What did the religious leaders do to Jesus on the next morning (v.1)?
2. What was Pilate’s question to Jesus and what was Jesus’ answer to him (v.2)?
3. How did Jesus respond to the many accusations brought against him (v.3-5)?

The religious leaders brought Jesus to Pilate in order to get a death penalty for Jesus. During the Roman’s occupation, the Jews were not allowed to give a death penalty in their own court, only a Roman official could give it.

The *Passover Feast*, a celebration of the deliverance of the Jews out of slavery in Egypt, was happening. Pilate used to release and give amnesty to a prisoner chosen by the people in order to please them. As a governor, Pilate did not want troubles in his province.

Notes

Elder: an influential member of a community, usually an older man.

Scribe: an expert who transcribe and teach the Jewish laws.

Pilate: governor of the Roman province in Judea, where Jerusalem was.

Mark 15:6-20

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.



Discussion Questions

1. What was Pilate's question to the crowd when they were asking him to release a prisoner as he used to do (v.6-9)? Why did Pilate ask that (v.10)?
2. How did the chief priests react to Pilate's question (v.11)?
3. How did Pilate respond to the chief priests and the crowd (v.12)?
4. What did they want Pilate to do to Jesus (v.13)?
5. How did Pilate reason with the crowd and attempt to release Jesus? How did the crowd respond to him (v.14)?
6. What did Pilate finally do and what was his reason (v.15)?
7. How did the soldiers humiliate Jesus (v.16-17)? What did they say to him (v.18)?
8. What else did the soldiers do to torture Jesus (v.19)?
9. What did they do to Jesus after mocking him (v.20)?

Lesson Summary

1. God is a just God, so he must punish our sins and rebelliousness against him. God is also a loving God, and he wants to save us from the enslaving power of sin and evil. God's forgiveness is available for us, when we believe in what Jesus has done for us and trust our lives to him.
2. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came from heaven to this world with a mission to save us by sacrificing himself to bear the punishment of all our sins and rebelliousness against God as our substitute. He died on the cross for us—our cross, not his cross—because he loves us. He knew that he would suffer and be killed for us. If we ever doubt his love for us, we can look at the cross and see how much he loves us. His love is greater than our sins, because his love is a sacrificial love.
3. Is Jesus the King of the Jews? Yes, he is. Jesus is not only the King of the Jews but is also the King of all people. He is the Creator of the universe and is the Son of God who loves us so much. He invites us to trust our lives to him and to a personal and loving relationship with him. Jesus will never leave us. He is always with us and is committed to love us eternally.

Notes

The King of the Jews: Pilate used this title for Jesus which the religious leaders didn't like.

Purple cloak: expensive robe and a mark of royalty.

Hail: a form of salutation. The soldiers mocked Jesus, as if it was his coronation day as a king.

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 11 – “Truly This Man Was the Son of God!”

Opening Questions

1. If you knew that you would die tomorrow, how would you spend your time today?
2. If we needed a lawyer to defend us, what kind of lawyer would we be looking for?

Introduction

Imagine that we are accused of doing something wrong that we have not done. We are called to go to a court to present our case and to answer our accuser before a judge. Since we do not understand much about the laws, we need a good lawyer who can help us, speaking on our behalf and defending us.

The Bible tells us that Satan accuses us daily before God of all the sins we do against God. We indeed sin against God daily in our thoughts, words, and actions. However, if we have trusted our lives to Jesus, all our sins—past, present, and future—have been forgiven, because Jesus has taken the punishment of all our sins on the cross as our substitute. He is now our *Lawyer* defending us daily before God the Father against Satan.



To think about:

- If Jesus, the Son of God, defends us, who can condemn us?
- If Jesus was willing to sacrifice himself and die for us, would he not do anything for us—for our own good? Who can separate us from his love?

From the Bible



Mark 15:21-32

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!”



Discussion Questions

1. Whom did the soldiers compel to carry Jesus’ cross? Who were his children (v.21)?
Mark provided this detailed information to prove the accuracy of his account. He was indirectly telling his readers that they could check the truth with Alexander and Rufus, who were still alive when he wrote this.
2. Where did the soldiers bring Jesus to? What is the meaning of that place (v.22)?
3. What did they offer Jesus to drink? Did Jesus drink it (v.23)?
4. What did the soldiers do with Jesus’ garments after they crucified him (v.24)?
5. At what time was Jesus crucified (v.25)?
6. What inscription did they put for Jesus (v.26)?
7. Who else were crucified with Jesus (v.27)?
8. What did the people who passed by say to mock Jesus (v.29-30)?

Notes

Sin: thought, word, or action that is dishonoring or disobedient to God.

The third hour:

Ancient Jews used the sun as their time. The first hour is 6 am. The third hour is 9 am

Mark 15:33-41

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. 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.



Discussion Questions

1. What did the chief priests and the scribes say to mock Jesus (v.31-32)?
2. What happened from the sixth hour to the ninth hour (v.33)?
3. What did Jesus cry with a loud voice at the ninth hour (v.34)?
4. What did some of the bystanders think when Jesus cried with a loud voice (v.35)?
5. What happened to the Temple of Jerusalem when Jesus died (v.38)?
“The curtain” was the divider between the holy place and the holiest place, where only a high priest could enter in on behalf of the people as a mediator between them and God. The curtain was massive and heavy. The curtain was supernaturally torn from top to bottom, because Jesus has become the new High Priest and Mediator for us.
6. What did a centurion—a Roman commander of a hundred soldiers—say about Jesus after watching him die (v.39)?
7. Who were some of the women witnessing Jesus’ death from a distance (v.40-41)?
Mark recorded these women as witnesses to whom his readers could check the truth. Many women followed Jesus and helped him in his work. These women stayed when Jesus was crucified, while the male disciples were afraid and had run away.

Lesson Summary

1. Jesus was crucified without clothing. He was willing to be humiliated for us. He came to this world to sacrifice himself for the punishment of all our sins as our substitute. He has accomplished his mission. He died for us. He took the death we deserve, so that we can have a new life in him by believing in him and trusting our lives to him. If Jesus was willing to sacrifice himself and die for us on the cross, he will never leave us alone in our lives. There is nothing that can separate us from his love.
2. Jesus’ sacrifice and death have opened a direct access for us to God. Jesus has become the Mediator between us and God. We have a Mediator who loves us so much. We have a Lawyer who defends us against Satan, who is the enemy and accuser.
3. Jesus died and would be buried. He had one more mission to accomplish for us. He would conquer death by coming back to life with a new heavenly body. The same body that Jesus would give us when he returns to this world. A body that will not decay, perfectly fit to live with him in heaven—our new home.

Notes

Scribe: an expert who transcribe and teach the Jewish laws.

Christ: a title of Jesus which means “the promised Savior.”

The sixth hour is 12 pm noon. **The ninth hour** is 3 pm.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me: Jesus was quoting and fulfilling Psalm 22:1. He was separated from God the Father. He was treated as a sinner, as he was bearing all our sins as our substitute.

Elijah: a great Old-Testament prophet (messenger of God) who did not die on earth. God took him up to heaven.

Exploring Mark: What People Say about Jesus

Lesson 12 – “He Has Risen; He is Not Here.”

Opening Questions

1. Imagine that you died and went to heaven and could meet family members and relatives who had died before you. Whom would you like to meet first? Why?
2. If God would grant you whatever you ask of him today, what would you ask for?

Introduction

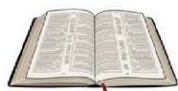
The Son of God came from heaven and was born to this world as a human being. He was given the name Jesus. Jesus is fully God and fully man. As a man, he was perfectly obedient to God. He lived the life that we cannot live—but should. He became a person that we cannot be—but should. He sacrificed himself for us as a perfect substitution to bear the punishment of all our sins on the cross. As God, Jesus rose himself from death. Jesus has defeated death for us, so that death will have no power over us. Jesus has accomplished his mission, so that we can be saved by believing in him and what he done for us. Jesus says, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die” (John 11:25-26).



To think about:

- Because Jesus loves us, he came to this world and died for us. He desires that each of us understands his love and sacrifice for us.
- He also wants us to understand the only way that our sins can be forgiven by God is for us to believe in him and trust our lives to him.

From the Bible



Mark 15:42 – 16:4

⁴²And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³Joseph 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. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. ⁴⁵And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. ⁴⁶And 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. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James saw where he was laid. ¹When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” ⁴And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large.

Discussion Questions

1. Who went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus? Who was he (v.43)?
2. How did Pilate respond to him? Did Pilate give Jesus’ body to him (v.44-45)?
3. What did Joseph do with Jesus’ body (v.46)?
4. Who saw where Jesus’ body was laid (v.47)?
5. Who went to Jesus’ tomb to anoint his body on Sunday morning (v.1-2)?
6. What were they discussing on the way to Jesus’ tomb (v.3)?
7. What did they see when they arrived at Jesus’ tomb (v.4)?



Notes

Sabbath & the day of Preparation:

Friday was “the day of Preparation” for the Jews to prepare for Sabbath—a holy day to rest and worship God, which was observed weekly on Saturday.

Joseph of

Arimathea: By asking for Jesus’ body, Joseph was in opposition with other religious leaders. He could lose his religious career and reputation that he had achieved. He had been following Jesus in secret. He became courageous.

Pilate: Roman governor in Judea.

Mark 16:5-16, 19-20

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. ⁹ Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. ¹² After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. ¹³ And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

¹⁴ Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. ¹⁵ And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

¹⁹ So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.



Discussion Questions

1. What did they see inside the tomb (v.5)? What did he say to them (v.6-7)?
2. What did the women do after seeing the angel? Why (v.8)?
3. To whom did Jesus appear first (v.9)? Did Jesus' disciples believe her when she told them that Jesus was alive (v.10-11)? To whom else did Jesus appear (v.12)?
4. What did Jesus do to the eleven disciples when he appeared to them (v.14)?
5. What instruction did Jesus give them to do? Why do you think Jesus gave that (v.15)?
6. What does Jesus say about those who will believe the gospel and those who will not believe (v.16)?
7. Where did Jesus go after he had spoken to his apostles (v.19)? How did Jesus work together with his disciples as they went and proclaimed the gospel (v.20)?

Lesson Summary

1. Jesus came from heaven to this world to end the consequence of our sins without ending or punishing us. He wants us to believe in him and his gospel (good news) that he is the Son of God who has sacrificed himself and died on the cross for the punishment of our sins as our substitute. He wants us to put our faith in him alone as our Lord and Savior and to trust our lives to him. He wants us to experience his' love and forgiveness for our sins and to have a personal and loving covenant relationship with him that brings joy to our lives.
2. Jesus came from heaven to this world to end our sufferings and death. He has created us to live with him and to have a loving relationship with him for eternity. Our sins and rebelliousness have put us out of this relationship and have brought sufferings and death to us. Jesus came and died for us. He rose again from the dead. He defeated death. Death has no power over him, and likewise, death has no power over those who are in a covenant relationship and spiritual union with him. He will raise us up from death to live with him in heaven forever. Heaven will be our new home. This is the gospel that Jesus has for each of us.

Notes

Demon: an evil spirit—a rebellious angel.

The gospel: the good news about God's salvation for mankind through Jesus Christ.