

LOVE WINS

Life Group Study Notes

The Gospel of Mark

Session 1

Who is this Man?

1. What do you know about Mark's gospel. Share your thoughts.
 2. Read: Mark 1 v 1. What does his opening sentence tell us about Jesus?
 3. How does Mark show his readers that Jesus understands their struggles?
 4. Read: Mark 1 v 2—3. The use of OT prophecies remind Mark's readers of that God is still at work and waiting is part of the journey. How is that helpful for us to know today?
 5. Read: Mark 1 v 4—13. What does the baptism of Jesus teach us about him and his ministry? Why?
 6. Read: Mark 1 v 14—15. How do you respond to the thought that testing is part of following Jesus?
 7. Read: Mark 1 v 16—20. How do you respond to the truth that God invites us to partner with him in his work?
 8. Read: Mark 1 v 21—39. What do these verses tell us about the Kingdom of the Heavens?
- Pray for one another as you seek to follow him as best you know how.

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Session 2

What Kind of Kingdom?

How would you describe the Kingdom of God?

1. Read: Mark 1 v 40-45. How does Jesus demonstrate the compassion of the Kingdom of God?
2. Read: Mark 2 v 1—12. How does this story inspire you?
3. How important is forgiveness in the Kingdom of God? What difference does it make to our lives?
4. Read: Mark 2 v 13—27. How does this passage show that anyone is welcome in the Kingdom of God?
5. What does it mean to welcome people into our lives and the life of the church?
6. Read: Mark 2 v 18—22. How is the Kingdom of God made up of the old and the new?
7. What are the challenges of trying to discern when new thoughts, practices, way of understanding the life of faith are “of the Kingdom” and when they are not?
8. Read: Mark 2 v 23—3 v 6. How does Jesus challenge the prevailing view of the Sabbath?
9. Why do you think Jesus felt free to act in the way he did on the Sabbath? What can we learn from this?
 - Pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God in all the places you go.

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Session 3

It's Time to DTR?

1. How would you describe the Kingdom of God?
2. What have you learned from Mark's gospel so far?
3. Read: Mark 3 v 7—12. How far would agree that the people follow Jesus because of what they think he can do for them, rather than because they believe his teaching? How far might that be true today?
4. Read: Mark 3 v 13—34
5. Why do you think the disciples had chosen to leave their livelihoods and their security to follow Jesus? How much are these things true for us today?
6. Jesus said that when we follow him, we are adopted into his family. What responsibilities come from part of Gods' family?
7. The Jews in the time of Jesus were expecting the Messiah to set up a political kingdom. How different is the Kingdom Jesus brought to that understanding?
8. Why were the religious leaders so threatened by Jesus? Why do people feel threatened by the gospel today?
 - Pray for one another as you seek to follow Jesu as best you know how with all its challenges.

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Session 4

What's in a Parable?

1. What is your understanding of what a parable is?
2. Why do you suppose Jesus chose to teach in parables?
3. Read: Mark 4 v 1—20
4. Assuming the main point of this parable is the quality of the soil, which do you most identify as being the soil of your heart? How does the parable challenge/help you?
5. Read: Mark 4 v 21—25
6. How might our lives sometimes be like the lamp in the parable?
7. Read: Mark 4 v 26—29
8. What do you think about the thought that seed grows “all by itself?” What might teach about Gods presence in our lives, even when we are not aware of it?
9. Read: Mark 4 v 30—34
10. In what ways have you experienced the Kingdom of God grow from something small into something big?
11. What is your biggest challenge from Jesus teaching in these parables?
 - Pray for one another in the light of 11 above.

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Session 5

By What Authority?

1. Have you ever experienced something you would describe as miraculous? What happened and why was it miraculous?
2. Read: Mark 4 v 35—41
3. What strikes you about this story? Why?
4. Why do you think the disciples were terrified, since they already seen miracles and healings? How might sometimes be the same?
5. Read: Mark 5 v 1—20
6. One commentator notes that the demons took away everything from the man they possessed. How might Satan still do that today?
7. Read: Mark 5 v 21—43
8. Describe the faith and courage of the woman who pushed through the crowd to get to Jesus. How does that present a challenge to you today?
9. Jairus believed in Jesus in the face of the impossible. How far do you agree with this statement?
 - Pray for one another in the situations you face.

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Session 6

Living With Limitations

1. How do people come to believe in someone or something?
2. How did you come to believe in Jesus? What does it mean for you?
3. Read: Mark 6 v 1—6a
4. Why did Jesus coming from Nazareth make it difficult for people to believe in him? What makes it difficult for people today?
5. Read: Mark 6 v 6b—13
6. What would be most rewarding and most challenging about being one of the disciples of Jesus?
7. Discuss the importance of the resources disciples did, and did not have on their mission.
8. How does this speak to us today?
9. Read: Mark 14—29
10. How would you describe Herod and his family? In what ways might we see the request made to Herod in the world today?
11. What does this teach us about persecution?
 - Pray for the persecuted church.

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Session 7

Father's Eyes

1. Read: Mark 6 v 30—44
2. Jesus invites the disciples to get away and rest after being on mission. How do we balance work and rest? What does it mean to do it well?
3. What do you think Jesus was inviting the disciples to do when he told them to give the crowd something to eat?
4. What do you think the feeding of the five thousand teaches us about the nature of God and the work of his Kingdom?
5. In what ways might we sometimes think what we have is not enough for the task? What might this story teach about that?
6. What do you think about the ten baskets left over? What might that teach us about God's provision?
7. Read: Mark 6 v 45—51
8. The disciples don't recognise it's Jesus on the water. How might we do the same?
9. Why might Jesus be about to "pass by them"?
 - Pray for one another in all the situations you face.

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Session 8

Challenging Teaching

1. Read: Mark 7 v 1—30
 2. How important are traditions in the church and the life of worship? How much should we be ready to break with traditions or taboos for the sake of the gospel?
 3. Read: Mark 7 v 31—37
 4. What does this miracle teach us about who Jesus is and what he is doing?
 5. Read: Mark 8 v 1—26
 6. How far do you think the feeding of the four thousand is a different occasion to the feeding of the five thousand?
 7. How are we sometimes like the Pharisees in wanting signs, or some kind of proof of God?
 8. The disciples it seems are slow to understand what Jesus is doing and saying. How might that be an encouragement and a challenge to us today?
 9. In all that you know about God and have experienced of God, how do you navigate your life of faith when challenges come?
- Pray each other as you walk your journey of faith.

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Session 9

Who Am I?

1. Why do you think people failed to understand who Jesus really was? Why do some still struggle today?
 2. Read: Mark 8 v 27-33
 3. Some people say this is the turning point of Jesus' ministry. Why might they say that?
 4. If you had been one of the disciples when Jesus talked about his coming death, how might you have responded?
 5. Read: Mark 8 v 34 - 9 v 1
 6. What is the cost of being a disciple of Jesus?
 7. What do you find most challenging about follow Jesus? What do you find most exciting?
 8. Read: Mark 9 v 2 -13
 9. What do you thin is going on in the transfiguration of Jesus?
 10. Perhaps, for the disciples, it is partly about them seeing more of who Jesus really is. When hae you a time of seeing more of who Jesus really is? How did it affect and change you?
- Pray for those who don't know Jesus.

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Session 10

More To Learn

1. What do you think about miracles?
 2. Read: Mark 9 v 14—29
 3. What do you think Jesus means when he says: “Everything is possible for the one who believes?”
 4. Think of a time when you were like the father in the story, bringing your petition to God. What was your experience?
 5. Read: Acts 3 v 1—10
 6. How does this story contrast with the story in Mark? What changed for the disciples?
 7. How do the two stories serve as an encouragement to us, since when Mark wrote his Gospel, he already knew about what happened in Acts 3?
 8. Read: Mark 9 v 30—37
 9. How is our attitude sometimes like the disciples Why do we find humility so hard?
 10. What is so revolutionary about the Kingdom of the Heavens?
- Pray for on another as you work out your faith in all the circumstances you face.

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Session 11

Worldly Paradox

1. How do you think most people view divorce today?
How has this changed over the years?
2. Read: Mark 10 v 1—12
3. How do you understand what Jesus says?
4. How do you hold together God's ideal and human sin?
5. Read: Mark 10 v 13—16
6. What have children taught you about following God?
7. Read: Mark 10 v 17-22
8. How might being wealthy affect our trust in God?
9. What is the most important lesson you've learned about money?
10. What do you understand Jesus to be saying about living with the right priorities?
 - Pray for one another as you seek to live well, following the way Jesus encourages.

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Session 12

Purpose Made Clear

1. Read: Mark 10 v 32—45
2. How does Jesus view of the future differ from James and John?
3. The disciples watch Jesus as a servant leader and yet argue about who is the greatest. How do you see this in the of men and women today? Why?
4. How far would you agree that the best leaders are those with a servant heart?
5. Read: Mark 10 v 46—52
6. If Jesus were to ask you the same question as Bartimaeus: “What do you want me to do for you?” what would your answer be?
 - Pray for one another as you seek God’s help.

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Session 13

Jesus in Jerusalem

1. As you read the next chapters of Mark, think about what strikes you about what is happening.
2. Read: Mark 11 v 1—12 v 44
3. Reflect together on the what has struck you as you've read the text.
4. As Jesus approaches Jerusalem, he comes into conflict with both the religious and political leaders of the day. How is this still true today?
5. How far did the people understand Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem? How much do we understand his coming to us today?
6. Read: Mark 11 v 15-19
7. Jesus is angry the temple is being used for commercial gain and not for prayer and worship. Is this a problem today? How?
8. Read: Mark 12 v 41—42
9. How do the widow's actions present a challenge to us today?
 - Pray for God's help and you seek to follow him.