



TEXAS A&M CRU

MARK

INTRODUCTION

What is our goal for those you are leading? Most simply I would say that we want them to follow Jesus, to be His disciples for life. To follow Jesus we need to interact with Him through His word. Mark will help us focus on who Jesus is and why He is worth following. Everyone in your Study should receive a Bible Study Basics card from you. These cards will help them to spend time in the passage over the week and give them a few questions to think about. Our hope is that it would serve as training wheels that prepare them to study other books on their own. We would like for the card to give a basic framework and questions as the student reads Mark. As the leader you will need to use your group time well. There is so much to this book that you will not be able to discuss it all. It would be helpful for you to use the process of Connect, Hear, Apply, and Tell.

Before the study:

Everyone in the group needs to work through the section for that week. Their participation in the discussion will be much more profitable that way.

During the study: (if 1:15 for this part of the small group time)

Connect: (around 10 minutes)

You want to connect the group to each other and to the topic for the week. It would be a good time to review what you've covered so far. Maybe ask a question or introduce an idea that relates to the week's topic.

Hear: (around 50 minutes)

Now you want to 'hear' what the Bible has to say through observation (what does it say?) and interpretation (what does it mean?). It may be helpful to read through the passage out loud together and then walk through it from beginning to end asking what was observed and what questions they had. After you've moved through the passage, it's a good time to pull it together by asking, "What do you think is the main idea of the section?" or "What is Mark's point here?"

Apply: (around 10 minutes)

We don't want to end the semester just smarter. We want the Word to change our lives. You can't force those in your small group to take this step, but you can make sure you take the step yourself. And you can create an environment that assists your group in applying the scriptures to their lives. You want everyone to think about how they should live in light of what they've just learned or been reminded of. This needs to be practical and specific. Such as: 'I'm going to serve my roommate by keeping my part of the room clean and asking how I can pray for her' verses 'I'm going to be a better roommate.'

Tell: (around 5 minutes)

This is one more step in application and it's huge. If you tell someone what you've learned from reading the Bible it's much easier to continue engaging in spiritual things with that person and it may lead to an opportunity to share the Gospel. It also helps us to see that Bible study isn't just for us to know more and it's not just that we would live differently, but that we would share with others what has been given to us from the Lord. We must pass on what we've been given. This is an essential step in the process of spiritual multiplication.

First Week

So what will you do this week? For the first week, have fun with your group and let them get to know each other. Have snacks and drinks and create an inviting atmosphere. During the first week share what material you will be going thru (Mark) and explain how it works (i.e. doing the work before hand). This means you need to be familiar with the format of the study to orient those in your group. Also, it would be good for you to read through the book. Spend a few minutes of your time discussing God's big picture and where Mark fits into it.

The next week covers Marks' introduction, and chapter 1:1-20. Show them how to work through those first 20 verses. Remind them how to observe, interpret, and apply.

As you read Mark consider these themes as they play out in the book:

- Jesus is fully man and fully God.
- Jesus has all power and authority and yet He must suffer.
- Jesus is the Messiah and He calls his followers to imitate Him in humble service, self-denial, and suffering.
- Jesus is Lord and He teaches on the kingdom of God, and implies that God continues to call a people to himself.

Thanks for leading! Please feel free to ask any questions you have along the way. I will be teaching it too.

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BIBLE STUDY BASICS

(Be sure to share this sheet with the people in your Bible study so they can use it thru the week as they read the passage)

Pray

1. Ask God to open your heart and eyes to Him and to understand what He has written in the Bible.
2. Ask Him to help you to be focused, not distracted, and willing to grow.
3. Invite Him to meet you in your time studying His Word.

Read to understand the passage

1. Have someone read the passage out loud. Or read aloud together from www.esv.org.
2. Note the author, audience, characters, themes and historical context
3. Have everyone read it again to themselves and write on their printed-out passage
 - Circle repeated words or ideas.
 - Put a ? by words you don't know. Put an ! by things you thought were interesting.
 - Is an idea confusing? Write your questions in the margin.
 - Are there key transition words (if/then, therefore, but, because)? Draw arrows to visualize the connection between statements.

Discuss your observations

1. Was there anything that confused you or any words that you wanted to define better?
2. What stuck out to you? What questions do you have?
3. Was there anything helpful for you to write out?
4. What were some repeated words or ideas? (*Camp out here for a while)
5. *Optional Deep Dive: How do all these repeated ideas relate to each other?

Interpret what the passage says

1. What do you learn about God in this passage (who He is/what He does)?
2. What do you learn about yourself in this passage?
 - Follow-up question: what are we called to be or do in this passage?
 - How do you fall short of those standards? Why do you fall short?
3. How does this passage point me to Jesus and my need to be saved (how do you see the grace of God in this passage)?

Application

1. How can you see God more clearly because of this passage? How does that encourage or challenge you?
2. In light of what's true about God, how will that affect the way I live (attitudes, thoughts, actions)?
 - Tip: focus on the main theme expressed by the passage. Keep it short and practical.

Helpful Resources: your Bible's book introductions or footnotes, BlueLetterBible.org (or the app) for verse breakdowns and Greek/Hebrew word meanings, The Bible Project videos on YouTube, SonicLight Commentaries (<http://planobiblechapel.org/constable-notes/>)

KEY REMINDERS

Suggested Calendar

- Week 1 - Social*
- W2 - Intro / 1:1-20
- W3 - 1:21-3:12
- W4 - 3:13-6:6
- W5 - 6:7-8:26
- W6 - 8:27-9:50
- W7 - 10:1-52
- Spring Break
- W8 - 11:1-12:44
- W9 - 13:1-37
- W10 - 14:1-15:15
- W11 - 15:16-16:20
- W12 - Conclusion
- W13 - Social*



01 — Be with Jesus

Because Jesus said "... for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5, ESV), we realize our need for Him in every aspect of life and ministry. We depend on His Spirit moment by moment, yielding to Him as He instructs, abiding in Him and seeking to maintain a wholehearted devotion to Him.



02 — Pray for God's Word to change lives!

"Prayer lays hold of God's plan and becomes the link between his will and its accomplishment on earth. Amazing things happen, and we are given the privilege of being the channels of the Holy Spirit's prayer." - Elisabeth Elliot
If we want to see ourselves grow and others grow as learners of Jesus then we need to ask God to grow us!



03 — Faithfulness = Success

Be faithful with what you can control! You can invite people to come, you can study God's word and be ready to facilitate the time, you can meet lots of folks - but you can't ultimately make people come or cause the growth in their lives. We leave that up to God! Don't feel under the pile or the pressure to perform. But also remember you get out what you put in. You can't give away what you don't have.

Summary and Conclusion

As we draw this study of Mark to a close, we begin by summing up the big picture of Mark as a whole. We will then review some questions for reflection in light of Mark's entire account, with a final identification of Gospel Glimpses, Whole-Bible Connections, and Theological Soundings, all with a view to appreciating the Gospel of Mark in its entirety.

The Big Picture of Mark

Over the course of this study we have seen that Mark's Gospel falls roughly into two halves. The first half (Mark 1:1–8:30) shows Jesus performing miracles, gathering disciples, teaching about God's kingdom, and amazing crowds. In short, he is convincing the disciples that he is indeed the long-awaited king, the Messiah.

The second half (Mark 8:31–16:8) shows Jesus suddenly and repeatedly predicting his suffering and death as he shows his disciples what kind of king he is going to be. He is to be a suffering king. And Jesus repeatedly connects this suffering of his to the life of his disciples. Yet this suffering will, as for Jesus, lead ultimately to life and glory for his faithful disciples.

Putting both halves together, the Gospel of Mark shows us that in Jesus, God has provided redemption for his people. Jesus came as the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises for a coming king. He was not the king they expected (a king of political triumph); he was the king they most desperately needed (a king of suffering). The kingdom of God arrived, and with it its rightful ruler (Mark 1:14–15). But this ruler laid down "his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). By faith in Jesus and his work on our behalf, we are restored to God and enter into God's kingdom. The first half of Mark shows us that God has come to us. The second half shows us how we can come to God.

Gospel Glimpses

Throughout Mark we have seen the grace of God in the gospel. Jesus has shown mercy to sinners, shared meals with the socially marginalized, and touched the ceremonially unclean. He has exposed and confounded the emptiness of the religion of the scribes and Pharisees, earning their opposition as a result. Time and again Jesus has upended our intuitive expectations as to who receives the attention of God and who does not. Throughout, we are reminded that God's mercy benefits just those who know their need of it. The reason this can be so is Jesus' death on our behalf: "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

- Has your understanding of the gospel changed at all during the course of this study?
- Are there any particular passages in Mark that have brought the gospel home to you in a fresh way?

Whole-Bible Connections

While Mark does not often quote the Old Testament explicitly, his Gospel is filled with allusions to the Old Testament (think, for example, of the story of Jonah as a backdrop to Mark 4:35–41). More than this, Mark uses the categories and language of the Old Testament—referring to the temple, a fig tree, a vineyard, the Son of Man, Moses, Elijah, and much more. Throughout, we see in Mark that Jesus is bringing the entire Old Testament to decisive fulfillment—as Jesus says in Mark 1:15, “The time is fulfilled.” Jesus is the one who, through his death and resurrection, is leading God’s people to their true restoration, their final exodus, their needed liberation.

- How has your understanding of the place of Mark in the sweep of the Bible been deepened through your study of Mark?
- What are some connections in Mark to the Old Testament that you hadn’t noticed before?
- Has your understanding of the unity of the Bible been clarified through studying Mark? How so?
- What development has there been in your view of who Jesus is and how he fulfills the Old Testament?

Theological Soundings

Mark contributes much to Christian theology. Doctrines that are reinforced and clarified in Mark include the deity of Christ, human sin, resurrection, divine sovereignty, and the kingdom of God.

- Where has your theology been tweaked or corrected as you have studied Mark?
- How might our understanding of God be impoverished if we did not have Mark’s Gospel?
- How does Mark’s Gospel uniquely contribute to our understanding of Jesus?
- Are there any specific ways in which Mark helps us understand the human condition?

Personal Implications

As you consider the Gospel of Mark as a whole, what implications do you see for your own life? Consider especially the issue of discipleship. This is an important emphasis throughout this book, particularly Mark 8–10. What are the ramifications for your own life of Jesus’ teaching on discipleship in Mark?

*Excerpt from: *Knowing the Bible: Mark* written by Dane Ortlund, Crossway*