

- 1 Be concise.** Please share your thoughts and answers, but be considerate so that others will have time to share their answers also. Be charitable and kind. Be willing to share with the group, but do not try to dominate the conversation. Use the time after the class to find help with any personal issues or problems you may be confronting in your life.

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

(James 1:19–20)

- 2 Be thoughtful with your answer.** Consider your words. Do not simply regurgitate what you have always heard. We have the tendency to speak in “Christianese” — words that only people who grew up on the pews would understand. Think about how your words will be heard by others. Will they understand what you are saying? Is what you are about to say going to be useful for the building up of the faith of others? Or will your words be confusing, cause hurt, or worse, damage someone’s faith? Speak without harshness or anger, but with kindness and humility.

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

(Ephesians 4:29)

- 3 Rely on the scriptures for truth.** It is easy to rely upon conventional, worldly wisdom as truth. Bible study is about seeking God’s answers for our lives, not dispensing the advice of the world. We must consider that our natural answers may be the wrong answers if they are not founded on God’s word.

“For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.”

(1 Corinthians 1:25)

This is a booklet to aid you in your personal study of this book. Read through the text first, discovering God's precious truths for yourself. Write down the main point of each section of text in the space provided. Use the margins on each side of the text and the backside of the page to make notations of the truths you discover and passages you do not understand. When you believe you have seen all there is in text, read and answer the questions in the booklet pertaining to that section of text. The questions are not an exhaustive list of things to look for in the text. The questions are to help you consider the points that the author was trying to convey to his audience. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

You have certainly had someone say this to you before: "I have good news and I have bad news." But the Book of Mark begins with simply, "I have good news." It is important to note that it is good news. The news about Jesus is not bad news nor is it a tragedy. It is the announcement of a major success. Notice how this book begins: "The beginning of the gospel...." Matthew begins with a genealogy, Luke begins with announcements of John and Jesus' births, and John begins with Jesus as the eternal Word that was in the beginning. But Mark begins with, "This is the beginning of everything!" "The beginning of the gospel" signals the fulfillment of God's everlasting word.

The Gospel of Mark is going to explain who Jesus is, why did he come, and what does it mean to follow him. But how Mark does this as he was carried along by the Holy Spirit must not be missed. Too often we can look at the gospels as merely the story of Jesus and one gospel is as good as another. But there are distinct purposes for each of these four gospels that we do not want to miss. Read Mark independently from the other gospels. Mark's story is complete in itself apart from the other gospels. If we read an episode in Mark in light of details given about the same episode in one of the other gospels, we will have changed Mark's story. Consider treating Mark's gospel as if it were the only story we know about Jesus. This will be the lens we will use as we study this gospel. So let us see what this book says about itself and why it is an amazing gospel, though frequently overlooked.

The Beginning of the Gospel

The opening is that this is the beginning of the gospel. This is the start of the gospel. What did that mean to those who heard those words? We hear the word "gospel" so often that it is easy to misunderstand what this word meant to those who first heard it. The term "gospel" is never a reference to the scriptures in the scriptures. Sometimes we might say the gospel is the message of salvation. But the gospel includes much more than salvation only. The good news (gospel) is the message that God reigns.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." (Isaiah 52:7 ESV)

Isaiah says that the good news is not just a message of salvation but also the declaration, "Your God reigns." Notice another picture of the good news in the scriptures.

Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. (Isaiah 40:9–10 ESV)

Notice that the good news is the arrival of God. God has come. See him coming with strength to reward those who are with him and recompense to those who are against him. The good news is a message of enthronement and royal exaltation of a king who has come to take his rightful throne.

This is how the Greco-Roman world also used the word, "gospel." It was a word used to proclaim the news of victory from the battlefield. The gospel was used in the Greco-Roman world to announce an emperor's accession to the throne. Caesar Augustus declared that he brought good news to the world by making war cease and creating order everywhere. The beginning of the good news was the birth of Augustus, calling him a god and proclaiming a universal impact. So Mark opens with the similar wording, the beginning of the gospel. But the gospel is not about Caesar but about Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. A key theme of Mark's gospel is God establishing his rule over creation. The rule of God has arrived! This is the inauguration of God's rule over Israel, over all the nations, over the Roman Empire, over all nature, over all creation, and over all people.

As Is Written By Isaiah

But the sentence does not end, though most English translations indicate such. Like in English so also in Greek, the phrase "as it is written" does not typically begin a sentence. This is the beginning of the good news of Jesus as it is written in Isaiah the prophet. The NIV rendering reflects this continuation:

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: (Mark 1:1–2 NIV)

Isaiah is the beginning point that Mark draws our attention to. The Gospel of Mark as a whole can be called the Gospel According to Isaiah. Mark says that this is the beginning of the gospel that Isaiah spoke about. Isaiah is our key to understanding this gospel. Further, this is the only place in the whole gospel where the author tells the reader that scripture is being fulfilled. Therefore, Mark's gospel must be understood against the backdrop of Isaiah, whose prophecy proclaimed the coming a new exodus, restoration, a new creation, and the return of God to Zion to reign. Isaiah is also the prophet connected to the messianic time. This is the beginning of hope for the end of exile as God will return to restore Israel through Christ. I hope this is exciting to us because we must not read Mark as just another gospel or just another account of Jesus. What you are about to read in Mark's gospel is the beginning of the good news that Isaiah wrote about now unfolding.

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

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

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

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What is the good news (gospel) according to Isaiah 52:7 and 40:9-10?

- 2 The quotation found in verses 2-3 comes from three sources: Exodus 23:20, Malachi 3:1, and Isaiah 40:3. Read each passage and write down the context and meaning below.

Exodus 23:20

Malachi 3:1

Isaiah 40:3

- 3 Based on your above answers, what is about to happen with the arrival of Jesus?

- 4 Based on your above answers, what must the people prepare for?

- 5 What was the purpose of the Levites who were not the priests (sons of Aaron) (1:47-54)?

- 6 What is John doing? Why?
- 7 Why are people being baptized?
- 8 Explain what John is wearing and eating. Read 2 Kings 1:1-8 and Zechariah 13:4 to understand John's message through his clothing and food.
- 9 What is John's purpose? Read Malachi 4:5-6 to fully understand John's message and purpose.
- 10 Read Mark 1:7-8. What two other things is John proclaiming?
- 11 What did the people expect when they heard the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Read Isaiah 32:12-18 and Isaiah 44:1-5 and look what God was doing when the promised Spirit was poured out.
- 12 Think about your answer above. Read Acts 2:38-41. When we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit when we repent and are baptized, what are we receiving?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

1:9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." 12 The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. 13 And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him. 14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1** Mark's gospel is the only one that speaks of Jesus' baptism as the heavens being "torn open." The Greek word reflects a violent splitting open (the same Greek word used in Mark 15:38 when the curtain of the temple was torn at Jesus' crucifixion). Read Isaiah 63:10-19 to gather the context and then read Isaiah 64:1-3. What is Isaiah's prayer? What is happening at the baptism of Jesus?

- 2** Read Isaiah 11:1-4. What does it mean for the Spirit to descend on Jesus?

- 3** Read Psalm 2:6-7 and Isaiah 42:1. What is the Father declaring about Jesus at his baptism? Who is Jesus?

- 4** How long is Jesus in the wilderness? Consider the following passages for the relevance of this time marker (Deuteronomy 8:2; Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8). What is happening in the wilderness in all of these instances, including Jesus' time in the wilderness?

- 5 Who is Satan (cf. 1 John 3:8; 1 Peter 5:8)?

- 6 Why does Mark note that Jesus was with the wild beasts in the wilderness? Read Isaiah 43:16-21 to understand what Mark is teaching. What is the message about Jesus?

- 7 When does Jesus' ministry begin (1:14)?

- 8 What message is Jesus proclaiming? (1:14-15)?

- 9 What is to be the response of the people to the arrival of Jesus (1:15)?

TRANSFORMATION:

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1:16 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. 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. (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

Historical Note: First century fishing was a thriving industry on the Sea of Galilee with at least 16 ports around this lake. These men are not catching fish for themselves for a simple meal. They are not out there trying to catch their lunch. Nor was the catch of fish for the local market alone. Fish was a staple food in the Greco-Roman world. Fish from the Sea of Galilee was exported to Antioch of Syria and even to Alexandria in Egypt. This is a fishing business. This is the career for these men. This is their livelihood. This is their financial stability. In fact, the success of these fishing businesses is further emphasized in verse 20. Zebedee not only employs his two sons, James and John, but owns a boat and employs hired servants for this fishing business. There is nothing small about this fishing that these men are engaged in.

- 1 What is the mission given to these called disciples (1:17)? What do we learn?

- 2 What is the response of Simon and Andrew (1:18)? What do we learn?

- 3 What is the response of James and John?

- 4 What two things are Simon, Andrew, James, and John leaving? What is the message regarding what discipleship looks like?

- 5 Why were the people astonished at Jesus (1:22)? What was Jesus doing different than others?

- 6 What authority of Jesus is on display in 1:23-28? What is the response of the people? What do they learn about Jesus?

- 7 What does the unclean spirit confess about who Jesus is and what the work of Jesus is (1:24)? What is the message about the kingdom of God?

- 8 What authority of Jesus is on display in 1:29-31? What authority of Jesus is on display in 1:32-34?

- 9 What is the message about Jesus? Read Isaiah 53:4 and Isaiah 57:16-19. Who is this Jesus and what has he come to do?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

1:35 And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. 36 And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, 37 and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you." 38 And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out." 39 And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

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

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What does Jesus do (1:35)? Why? In your answer consider what has been happening to Jesus so far and the context in verses 36-39. Why does he need to pray now? What do we learn from this?
- 2 What does Jesus say is his purpose (1:38)? Is his purpose to do miracles? Is his purpose to heal the sick? Is his purpose to gather large crowds? Explain what Jesus is saying?
- 3 What did God determine to do (5:4-6)? What was the response of the people?

Historical Note: Touching a leper, like touching a corpse, resulted in being unclean. Only a priest could declare a person to be clean or unclean of this disease. Those who were determined to be unclean were required to live outside of the community of Israel, wearing torn clothing, leaving their hair messy, covering the lower part of their face, and crying out, "Unclean! Unclean!" (Leviticus 13:45-46; Numbers 5:2-4). According to the Talmud, the closest a leper could come to someone without the disease was six feet. On windy days, the distance was extended to 150 feet. With the ostracizing experienced, the fear people had of being around you, and the specter of death hanging over you, leprosy was a dreaded disease.

- 4 What is the boldness of the leper?

- 5 What shocking thing do we see Jesus do?

- 6 What do we learn about the authority of Jesus and the mission of Jesus that Jesus cleanses the leper and does not become unclean by touching him?

- 7 What does the leper doubt (1:40)? Does the leper doubt Jesus' power?

- 8 What is Jesus' answer to the leper's question? Does God make to us the same offer (cf. 1 John 1:9)? What lessons do we learn?

- 9 What is the result of Jesus' cleansing (1:45)? How does this parallel what we read about John the Baptist at the beginning of this chapter?

TRANSFORMATION:

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

Main point: _____
Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Explain the scene. Where is Jesus? What is happening? What is the problem?
- 2 What do we learn about faith (2:5)?
- 3 What does Jesus tell the paralyzed man (2:5)? Why does Jesus say this rather than heal his legs? What is the message Jesus is bringing about his mission and about who he is?
- 4 How does Jesus show he is God in verse 5 and in verse 8?

- 5 What problem do the scribes have with Jesus? What do they fail to see?

- 6 Explain verse 9. What is Jesus teaching about himself?

- 7 Verse 10 is the first time Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man" in Mark's gospel. Turn to Daniel 7:13-14 and read about the Son of Man figure in prophecy. What is the Son of Man given in Daniel's prophecy? What then is Jesus teaching about himself by calling himself the "Son of Man?"

- 8 How does your answer in question 7 fit what Jesus is saying about himself in Mark 2:10?

- 9 Read Isaiah 35:3-6 and Isaiah 33:22-24. What was expected to happen when the new kingdom arrived? How does this help understand what Jesus is saying and doing in this passage?

- 10 What is the result of Jesus' healing (2:12)? What is to be our response?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

2:13 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." (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

1 What are the crowds doing (2:13)? What is Jesus doing?

Historical Note: Levi is likely working in a toll booth where customs would be collected on goods in transit on one of Galilee's important roads. Tax collectors were despised because of their reputation for dishonesty, their exorbitant surcharges, and their duplicity with oppressive rulers. Since tax collectors made their living from the money they could collect over and above the taxes owed, extortion and corruption were rampant. The Mishnah prohibited receiving alms from a tax collector as his office since the money was presumed to have been gained illegally. If a tax collector entered a house, all that was in the house became unclean. The rabbis went so far as to say it was permissible to lie to tax collectors to protect your own property.

2 Who are the people that are following Jesus (2:15)?

3 What is the complaint of the scribes (2:16)?

4 Explain Jesus' answer in 2:17. What does it mean that Jesus did not come to call the righteous? Are there righteous people? Who would be the righteous in this teaching? What do we learn?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

2:18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" 19 And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. 21 No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. 22 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins."

23 One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" 25 And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: 26 how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" 27 And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28 So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath." (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 How often did the Pharisees fast (cf. Luke 18:12)?
- 2 Why does Jesus' disciples not fast (2:18-20)? What is the reasoning Jesus gives?
- 3 How do the two illustrations in verses 21-22 prove this conclusion Jesus draws?
- 4 What is Jesus expressing he is doing by his arrival?

- 5** Please consider how Jesus explains why his disciples are plucking heads of grain on the Sabbath. Does Jesus argue that plucking heads of grain on the Sabbath is not work and therefore not a violation of the Sabbath? Does Jesus argue that it is acceptable to pluck heads of grain because they are hungry? Does Jesus defend David? Carefully look at what Jesus says. Why was it acceptable for David and for Jesus to do what they did? Explain.
- 6** What does it mean that Jesus is “Lord of the Sabbath?” What is Jesus saying about himself and his authority? How does this fit with the teaching of Mark 2:18-22?
- 7** How does Jesus’ life parallel David’s life in the account Jesus retells of David needing to eat from the holy bread?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

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

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What are the people watching to see regarding Jesus (3:1-2)? Why are they watching him? What kind of heart does it take to be looking for this kind of evidence in a person?

- 2 Explain Jesus' question in verse 4.

- 3 What was the purpose of the Sabbath (cf. Deuteronomy 5:12-15)? What were the people remembering? What had God done for Israel?

- 4 With the above answer in mind, how had these Pharisees completely missed the meaning and purpose of the Sabbath? How does this fit with Jesus' question in verse 4?

3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea 8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him. 9 And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him, 10 for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him. 11 And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." 12 And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

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

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Who is coming to Jesus? How does this fit Isaiah 49:6? What is the response of the leaders of Israel (3:6)?

- 2 Describe the popularity of Jesus at this point. What are unclean spirits doing and saying? Why is this happening? What is the message?

- 3 What is Jesus re-enacting by going up the mountain and appointing the twelve? Why are twelve chosen? What do they represent?

3:20 Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. 21 And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.” 22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” 23 And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. 27 But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house. 28 “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— 30 for they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.” 31 And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. 32 And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” 33 And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” 34 And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.” (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What does Jesus’ family think about what Jesus is doing?

- 2 What do the scribes (teachers of the Law of Moses) think about what Jesus is doing?

- 3 Explain the parable in verses 23-27. What has Jesus come to do for all people?

- 4 Write down what Jesus says in verse 28. This is the mission of Jesus. How does this change your life and perspective of God?

5 What sin can never have forgiveness (3:29)? Look at verse 30 and write down what this sin exactly is. Why would such a person never receive forgiveness?

6 Do the scriptures reveal anyone who genuinely desired to be forgiven by God not receiving God's mercy and forgiveness?

7 Who belongs in the family of Jesus (3:31-35)?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

4:1 Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. 2 And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: 3 “Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. 5 Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. 6 And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. 8 And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.” 9 And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

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

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

21 And he said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? 22 For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” 24 And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. 25 For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” 26 And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. 27 He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. 28 The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

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

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

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Why does Jesus teach in parables (4:10-12)? Please notice that Jesus does not say that the parables are told to make spiritual principles easier to understand. Explain what Jesus means. For help, be sure to read the original context of Jesus' quotation from Isaiah 6:1-10 and identify its meaning in the original context.

- 2 What is wrong with the heart of the person when the seed is sown on the path (4:14-15)?

- 3 What is wrong with the heart of the person when the seed is sown on rocky ground (4:16-17)?

- 4 What is wrong with the heart of the person when the seed is sown among thorns (4:18-19)?

- 5 What is right about the heart of the person when the seed is sown on good soil (4:20)? What is seen when the seed is planted in good soil?

- 6 What is the message of the parable in 4:21-25? Please be sure to keep the message in the context of the prior parable in 4:1-20 (since there is no break in the account).

- 7 What is the message of the parable in 4:26-29? Please be sure to keep the message in the context of the prior parables (since there is no break in the account).

- 8 What is the message of the parable in 4:30-34? Please be sure to keep the message in the context of the prior parables (since there is no break in the account).

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

4:35 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?" (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 Describe the problem (4:35-37).
- 2 What is the reaction of the disciples (4:38)? What is the response of Jesus?
- 3 What does Jesus tell the disciples (4:40)?
- 4 Why are the disciples "filled with great fear" (4:41)?
- 5 Read Psalm 89:8-9, Psalm 65:6-8, and Psalm 107:23-31. Based on these passages and what Jesus has just done, who is this person? What has he come to do, based on these passages you read?
- 6 What was the fear of the disciples supposed to lead them to? Consider Exodus 14:30-31.

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

5:1 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. 2 And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. 3 He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. 5 Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. 6 And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. 7 And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." 8 For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" 9 And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." 10 And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. 11 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, 12 and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." 13 So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea. 14 The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. 15 And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. 16 And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. 17 And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. 18 As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. 19 And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled. (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 What does Jesus encounter as soon as he gets out of the boat (5:1-8)? What is the man doing? How powerful are these unclean spirits?

- 2 What does Jesus do? What happens by Jesus' words?

- 3 What is the response of the people from the city and country in verse 15?

- 4 Do they have the same response as the disciples in the boat in 4:35-41? What do these people from the city and country ask Jesus to do (5:17)?

- 5 Does Jesus heed their wishes (5:18)? What do we learn from this (cf. Romans 1:21-25)?

- 6 Who has a different response (5:18)? What does he want to do?

- 7 What does Jesus tell this man to do instead (5:19-20)? What lessons do we learn from this?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

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

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

35 While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" 36 But overhearing 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. (ESV)

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1 In verse 34 Jesus declares that the faith of the woman with the flow of blood has saved her. Explain the faith that she has exhibited. Write down the many things she has done to show faith.

- 2 Where did her faith come from? What caused her to act? What do we learn from this?

- 3 What difficult decision is Jairus faced with in verses 35-36? What does Jesus tell Jairus to do (5:36)?

- 4 What does Jairus do? How does he come to this faith? What caused him to act? What do we learn from this?

- 5 What keeps us from having the kind of faith that Jesus praises in these two individuals?

- 6 Based on what we have read, does having faith mean not having fear? Explain. What do we learn?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

6:1 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? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. 4 And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.” 5 And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them.

6 And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

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

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

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

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

- 1** Why is Jesus rejected at home (6:1-6)? What problems does his hometown have? What do we learn from this?

- 2** Explain verses 5-6. How is it that Jesus could not do mighty works there?

- 3** What does Jesus send his disciples out to do (6:7-13)? What are the disciples going to experience? What do we learn from this?

- 4** What were people saying about Jesus (6:14-16)?

- 5** Why is the death of John the Baptizer recorded here? What is Mark showing us about preaching repentance and what it means to be a disciple? Consider 2 Timothy 3:12-13. What do we learn from this?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

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

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

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

Main point: _____

Make additional notes at left and below:

Note: the words "desolate place" is the same Greek word used in chapter 1 for "wilderness."

1 What is Jesus' response to the crowds that are chasing after him?

- 2 Explain the phrase, "like sheep without a shepherd" (6:34). Where is this phrase used in the Old Testament? What does it mean?

- 3 Since the people are sheep without a shepherd, what does he do as the solution (6:34)?

- 4 What was the result of the miracle (6:41-44)? What is the message of the miracle?

- 5 What did the disciples not understand exactly (6:45-52)? What does this cause fear in the disciples? What lessons do we learn?

- 6 What does it mean that Jesus "meant to pass them by" (6:48)? To help, look in the scriptures for places where God "passed by" a person and what that "passing by" meant.

- 7 How could the disciples hearts be hardened (6:52)? How did this happen? What do we learn?

TRANSFORMATION:

How does this relationship change your relationship with God? What did you learn about him? What will you do differently in your life?

MARK



THE KING'S CROSS

CHAPTERS 1-6

SELF-STUDY WORKBOOK

by: Brent Kercheville

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