

# THE MARK 121 PROJECT

JESUS LEADS: STAY CLOSE





# MARK 1:1-13

(Page 7 of The Gospel of Mark)

## WEEK ONE

Great video to watch [HERE](#)

Open up “The Gospel of Mark” translation from St Paul’s, and read Mark 1:1-13 highlighting on the page, and then discussing as a group:



**Something that is new or interesting to you**



**Any questions you have from the passage**



**Repeated words, key ideas or a key verse**

In the opening words of this Gospel, the author Mark gets straight to the point, revealing the purpose of his book: to tell us about Jesus and what he came to do.

### Question 1

Read verse 1. Here Mark is not just giving us Jesus’ name like he is filling in a form or application. What are the terms used of Jesus? Why are these important?

### Question 2

Read Isaiah 40:1-5. What stands out to you in these verses? How does reading Isaiah’s passage help us understand these verses in Mark? Who is verse 2 talking about?

**Question 3**

Why do you think in verse 4 that John is preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins? Why is that important for us to know?

**Question 4**

Why do you think we are given this description of John in verse 6? What does it tell us?

**Question 5**

In verses 9-11 what was the purpose of Jesus' baptism? Does he need to repent of his sins?

**Question 6**

In verse 12 we are given the shortest account of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. What do we learn about this experience of Jesus? What does the 40 days remind us of elsewhere in the Bible? How does Jesus compare to the people of God?

# MAKING IT STICK

*What does Jesus mean to you? What place does he hold in your life? When was the last time you were a witness to him? What does it mean to you that Jesus is God's Son whom he loves, and with whom he is well pleased (verse 11)?*

As we start reading Mark's Gospel together, this is a good time to reflect on your own relationship with Jesus. Some questions you might ask:

*In what ways do you need a fresh and authentic view of who Jesus is?*

*How do you see yourself in the light of Jesus?*

*Do you have any questions or doubts it would be good to explore as you study Mark's Gospel?*

*How confident do you feel sharing Jesus with others? Why is that?*

## SPEND SOME TIME PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER FOR:

- Our hearts to have a fresh love for Jesus as a person and our Messiah.
- That God will use what we learn powerfully in the lives of our friends and family.
- About who you will ask to start reading Mark's Gospel with you. Encourage each other this week and check how you went at your next small group meeting



# THE MARK 121 PROJECT

Now that you've studied Mark 1:1-13, you're ready to read it with someone 121.  
Here are some helpful tips to get you started.

# IDEAS FOR INVITING SOMEONE

Reading Mark 121 is a great follow on for your Mission 2020 +1 relationships. And this is a time when many people have lots of extra time on their hands. It's inviting them to read the world's best-selling book, and to get to know the amazing person of Jesus Christ. It's trusting that God will sow his Word into their hearts and do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

As you invite people, firstly spend time praying for your friend or family member. Pray for them and the conversation you'll have. Secondly, be positive. God is at work calling people to Himself. Trust that He is working in their life. Spend time reflecting on the joy and privilege of knowing Jesus so that you are confident you are inviting them to be part of something wonderful and potentially life-changing. And remember that while inviting them for you might be scary, it may not be a scary thing for them to consider. You know each other, and this is much easier than inviting them to step inside a church with lots of people they don't know. Some things you could say:

**"Would you have any interest in reading the Bible with me for a few weeks?"**

**"Would you be interested in having a look at the best selling book in the world, the Bible?"**

**"Haven't you ever thought one day you might pick up the book that's sold more copies than in any other in the history of printing, the Bible? Wouldn't you expect that it's got some good stuff in it?"**

**"Can we catch up sometime to have a look at the Bible? All that I'll ask you at the end is - 'Did you enjoy that? Would you like to meet again?'"**

Whatever you say, make it something you're comfortable with, that sounds like you.

*For more ideas and inspiration, listen to Richard Borgonon talking about his experience of God at work amongst the business community in London as he read the Bible 121 with friends: Centre for Christian Living episode 27: A page-turner for the Lord.*





# WHEN YOU MEET TOGETHER

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Send your friend a copy of the Mark 1:1-13 worksheet you used in your Small Group.

Read through the passage together - they may or may not feel comfortable reading aloud. You may want to explain about chapters and verses being used in the Bible.

Work through the 3 questions at the top, particularly any questions they have

At the end discuss the 3 questions at the bottom of the sheet

If you don't know how to answer their question, that's OK. Tell them it was a great question, note it down and offer to come back with an answer next time you meet.

Aim to meet for a maximum of 60 minutes - aim to finish up while they still have some questions.

When you've met, send any questions, suggestions or stories to the link at the bottom of the sheet



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new or interesting  
to you**



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**Repeated words,  
key ideas or a key  
verse**

# MARK 1:1-13

## THE PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God. <sup>2</sup>As it is written in Isaiah the prophet; “Behold! I send forth my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way! <sup>3</sup>The voice of a man crying out in the desert, ‘Make ready the way of the Lord, make straight his trodden paths.’” <sup>4</sup>And so there came a man named John, baptising in the desert and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>All the Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem came out to meet him and as they confessed their sins, they were baptised by him in the Jordan river. <sup>6</sup>Now this was the John who dressed himself with camel’s hair, wore a leather belt around his waist and would eat locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He would preach, saying, “After me comes one far stronger than me, whose sandals I am not fit to bend down and untie! <sup>8</sup>I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit!”

## THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

<sup>9</sup>Now it happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth, a town in Galilee. He was baptised by John in the Jordan and <sup>10</sup>immediately, as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens split apart and the Spirit descend upon him like a dove. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased”.

## THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

<sup>12</sup>Immediately, the Spirit drove him into the desert and <sup>13</sup>in the desert he was tested by Satan for forty days. He was with the wild animals and angels attended to him.



**Who is  
Jesus?**



**Why did  
he come?**



**What does this  
mean for us?**



# MARK 1:14 - 3:35

(Page 8 of The Gospel of Mark)

## WEEK TWO

### Question 1

Read Mark 1:14-15. What is the point of the detail in verse 14 that John was in prison then Jesus went to preach? What do you make of Jesus' message in verse 15?

### Question 2

Using the Bible worksheets or a copy of the St Paul's Mark translation, break into pairs and look at one of these passages, working through the 3 icons:

**Mark 1:21-34**

**Mark 2:1-12 (on the worksheet)**

**Mark 3:1-12**



**Something that is  
new or interesting  
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**Any questions  
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the passage**



**Repeated words,  
key ideas or a key  
verse**

As a group discuss together what you learnt in pairs - What were some of the extraordinary things people witnessed Jesus doing? What do you think was Jesus' motivation for this?

**Question 3**

What do these events reveal to us about who Jesus is?

**Question 4 - the Messianic Secret**

Read Mark 1:21-28 and 1:40-45. What stands out to you in these passages? Why do think Jesus was trying to conceal his identity in these passages?

**Question 5**

Who finds Jesus appealing and who rejects him (e.g. 1:16-20; cf 2:13-17)? Why is Jesus so appealing yet still rejected (for the original readers and in our time)?

**Question 6**

Read Mark 2:23-28. The Sabbath is important to both the Pharisees and to Jesus. Why is the Sabbath important? What does Jesus mean by verse 28?



# MAKING IT STICK

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As we have read these stories of Jesus healing and casting out demons, what has been a fresh insight or something that has surprised or amazed you about Jesus?

In Mark 1:16-20 we see the disciples follow Jesus without question or thought for consequences (although later they will question this).

How are you going personally responding to Jesus' call to follow him each day, as Lord as well as Saviour?

What reasons do you have for following him?

What does it mean that Jesus is Lord of your life:

- at home
- at work or study
- at church
- with family

# THE MARK 121 PROJECT

Spend some time talking about how you went this week, praying for your +1s, your friends and family, and starting to invite them to read the Bible with you 121.

Be honest with each other, about any fears or concerns you might have. You're not expected to be a super-Christian and your small group is the best place to be encouraging each other and praying for each other as you invite your friends to open the Bible with you. Perhaps pair up and send each other a text during the week to check how you're going with this, and pray for each other.

If you haven't listened to the suggested podcast yet - do that this week. You'll hopefully find it really encouraging - Centre for Christian Living episode 27: A page-turner for the Lord.

If you've started reading Mark with someone 121, share how the first week went. What questions did they have? How did the format work? What do you wish you had done differently? Send through any feedback to the link on the bottom of the sheet.





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**Repeated words,  
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# MARK 2:1-12

## THE HEALING OF THE PARALYTIC

Once more Jesus entered Capernaum, and in time people found out that he was home. <sup>2</sup>So many people gathered around that there was no longer any room, not even by the door, and he began speaking the word to them. <sup>3</sup>Men came to Jesus bearing a paralytic, lifted by four of them, <sup>4</sup>and, because they couldn't bring him before Jesus on account of the crowd, they uncovered a spot on the roof above Jesus. After digging a hole through the roof, they began lowering the mat on which the paralytic was lying. <sup>5</sup>When Jesus saw the faith of these men he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven." <sup>6</sup>Now there were some scribes present, sitting back and arguing in their hearts, <sup>7</sup>"Why does this man speak like this? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except God alone?" <sup>8</sup>Jesus, having understood immediately in his spirit that they were arguing like this among themselves, said to them, "Why are you arguing about this in your hearts? <sup>9</sup>What is easier? To say to the paralytic, 'your sins are forgiven', or to say, 'Get up, pick up your mat and walk'? <sup>10</sup>But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins upon earth..." Jesus said to the paralytic, <sup>11</sup>"I tell you, get up, pick up your mat and go home!" <sup>12</sup>He got up and immediately he took his mat and walked out before them all. They were all amazed and began glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen things like this!"



**Who is  
Jesus?**



**Why did  
he come?**



**What does this  
mean for us?**

# MARK 4:1-34

(Page 23 of The Gospel of Mark)

## WEEK THREE

Read Mark 4:1-34 using the 121 handout or the new Gospel of Mark translation, discussing as a group, taking notes, highlighting and underlining:



**Something that is  
new or interesting  
to you**



**Any questions  
you have from  
the passage**



**Repeated words,  
key ideas or a key  
verse**

### Question 1

Compare verses 3-9 with 13-20 and find what each part of the parable represents.

### Question 2

In verse 7 what do you think are the thorns in this life?

### Question 3

In verse 17 what do you think it means to have "no root"? (cf Mark 8:34-35)

### Question 4

How would you recognise those who are good soil?

**Question 5**

What do the parables in verses 26-32 tell us about the kingdom of God?

**Question 6**

What is a theme of this passage woven by verses 3, 9, 23, 24 and 33?

**Question 7**

What puts people on the “outside” of the kingdom of God? (v 11)

**Question 8**

Verse 34b says that when Jesus was alone with his disciples he explained everything. What does this teach us about the disciples? Why would it be important for us to know this?

# MAKING IT STICK

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What things do you hear and need to be careful about?

How do you discern whether the things you hear are true?

In Mark 3:35 Jesus says that his mother and brothers and sisters are those who do God's will

What do you think is God's will??

How do we discern what His will is?



# THE MARK 121 PROJECT

There are lots of ways to use the 5 minutes at the end of your study focusing on reading Mark 121. Here are some ideas...

You can use the time at the end of the study generally to encourage and pray for each other as you invite people to read Mark 121.

Pay particular attention to how people are feeling about inviting someone - afraid, embarrassed, indifferent. How would you encourage them from Scripture to address how they are feeling?

Look back at the 121 handout with the passage from today - what questions might a non-Christian friend have as you read the passage? What would it be helpful for you to focus in on about Jesus as you read together?

You could take a look at one of the resources from the introduction.

If the group members have started inviting people, talk about how that went. If they have invited their 3 people and they all said 'No', think and pray about 3 more people they could ask.

And as people start meeting up 121, share stories about how that is going and remember to send your feedback to **[stpauls.church/mark121project](https://stpauls.church/mark121project)**



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# MARK 4:1-20

## THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Jesus again began to teach beside the sea. A crowd gathered around him, so big that he got up into a boat and sat out on the sea while the whole crowd remained on land by the sea. <sup>2</sup>Jesus began to teach them many things in parables and in his teaching, he said, <sup>3</sup>“Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. <sup>4</sup>As he was sowing, some fell by the road and birds came and devoured it. <sup>5</sup>Others fell upon the rocks where there wasn’t much soil. Because the soil was shallow, the seed shot up immediately <sup>6</sup>but when the sun rose the plant was scorched and because it had no root it withered. <sup>7</sup>Other seed fell among the thorns. The thorn bushes grew up alongside the seed and choked it. It did not produce fruit. <sup>8</sup>Still other seed fell upon the good soil and when it came up and grew it produced fruit. One seed multiplied thirty times, another sixty times and another, one hundred times.” <sup>9</sup>He then said to them, “Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.” <sup>10</sup>When Jesus was alone, the people around him, along with the twelve, asked him about the meaning of the parables. <sup>11</sup>He said to them, “The mystery of the Kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything happens in parables <sup>12</sup>so that, “Though they look, they may look and not perceive, Though they hear, they may hear and not believe, Lest they turn and be forgiven.” <sup>13</sup>And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? <sup>14</sup>The farmer sows the word. <sup>15</sup>Some are like the seed by the road where the word is sown. When they hear, immediately Satan comes and snatches away the word sown among them. <sup>16</sup>Some are like the seed sown upon the rocks who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy! <sup>17</sup>But they have no root in themselves and last only a moment. When pressure or persecution comes because of the word, they immediately fall away. <sup>18</sup>Others are like the seed sown among the thorns. These are the people who hear the word <sup>19</sup>but the worries of the world, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desire for future things come and choke the word and make it unfruitful. <sup>20</sup>But there are those like seed sown upon the good soil, who hear the word, accept it and produce fruit – one seed multiplies thirty times, one sixty times and another one hundred times!”



**Who is  
Jesus?**



**Why did  
he come?**



**What does this  
mean for us?**



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# MARK 4:21-34

## PAY ATTENTION

<sup>21</sup>And he said to them, “Is a lamp really brought out just to be put under a basket or a bed? And not to be put on a lampstand? <sup>22</sup>For nothing is concealed unless it’s meant to be revealed. Nor hidden away save that it might come back into the light! <sup>23</sup>If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear! With the measure you use to measure others it will be measured and applied to you. <sup>25</sup>Because, for the man who has, to him it will be given. The man who does not have, even what he does have, it will be taken from him.”

## THE PARABLE OF THE GROWING SEED

<sup>26</sup>And he said, “The Kingdom of God is like a man who casts his seed upon the earth. <sup>27</sup>He might sleep, or he might get up each day and night, but the seed still sprouts and grows regardless, though he doesn’t understand how. <sup>28</sup>All on its own the earth produces fruit. First, it grows a stalk, then a head, then a full head of corn. <sup>29</sup>And when the fruit is ripe, immediately, the man sends out the sickle because the harvest is ready.”

## THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED

<sup>30</sup>And he said, “What shall we say the Kingdom of God is like? What parable would we use to speak of it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a seed of mustard. Which, when sown upon the earth, though it is the smallest of all the seeds sown upon the earth, when sown, <sup>32</sup>it grows and becomes larger than all the garden vegetables and produces large branches such that the birds of the sky can perch in its shade.” <sup>33</sup>With many parables like these, Jesus would speak the word to them, as they were able to hear. <sup>34</sup>He would not speak to them without the use of a parable. But in private he would explain everything to his disciples.



**Who is  
Jesus?**



**Why did  
he come?**



**What does this  
mean for us?**

# MARK 4:35- 6:56

(Page 27 of The Gospel of Mark)

## WEEK FOUR

**This is a section filled with amazing signs - Jesus calming the storm, sending demons into a herd of pigs, healing a woman, raising a young girl back to life. Even the John the Baptist story is centred around Herod's fear of who Jesus is (6:14).**

**Signs demonstrate that Jesus fulfils scripture. They demonstrate that creation, spiritual and physical, are in Jesus' control. That he is truly God (cf Psalm 107: 23-32 especially v 29). Jesus is not only recognised as powerful by people who are in need but by unclean or evil spirits. Those who are in need come to him out of desperation because no one else can help. However, there is also something about the way Jesus heals and provides and exorcises. It is immediate and complete, showing his authority and power.**

**These signs also point forward to God's kingdom. It will be a place where people are fully healed, where Jesus rules, where people are blessed and have everything they need.**

**Through healing and feeding and control of a hostile spiritual world Jesus commands faith. He proves himself trustworthy. Someone who can quell our fears. Someone who gives many reasons to have faith in him.**

Using the 121 handout or a copy of the St Paul's Mark translation, break into pairs and look at one of these passages, working through the 3 icons:

**Mark 4:35-5:20**

**Mark 5:21-6:29**

**Mark 6:30-56 (on the worksheet)**



**Something that is new or interesting to you**



**Any questions you have from the passage**



**Who are the main characters in the passage?**

### Question 1

Answer the following questions in small groups for the above passages: In what ways does Jesus display power? In what ways does Jesus display authority? In what ways does Jesus display mercy and compassion?



**Question 2**

What do you notice about Jesus' use of power?

**Question 3**

Read Mark 6:32-34. What do you think it means that "they were like sheep without a shepherd"? What is his response to seeing them?

**Question 4**

In each of the three passages that we read, where do you see evidence of fear? How is Jesus asking them to respond?

**Question 5**

Why do you think the story of John the Baptist is included here (6:14-29)?

**Question 6**

Read Mark 6:1-6. What do the questions in verses 2-3 tell us about Jesus? How do these differ from questions people today about Jesus and how are they similar?

# MAKING IT STICK

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Reflect on how you use power and authority in your life and relationships - what can you learn from Jesus?

What areas of your life do you need to trust Jesus with?

What makes it difficult to have faith in Jesus or to sustain that faith (be faithful to him)?

# THE MARK 121 PROJECT

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You can use the time at the end of the study generally to encourage and pray for each other as you invite people to read Mark 121.

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Look back at the 121 handout with the passage from today - what questions might a non-Christian friend have as you read the passage? What would it be helpful for you to focus in on about Jesus as you read together?

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**Who are the main  
characters in the  
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# MARK 6:30-44

## THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

<sup>30</sup>The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported back to him everything that they had done and all that they had taught. <sup>31</sup>And he said to them, “Come away, by yourselves, to a deserted place and rest for a little.” For there were many people coming and going and they hadn’t found time to eat. <sup>32</sup>And so, they went away by boat to a desert place by themselves. <sup>33</sup>But the people saw them as they withdrew, and many recognized them. On foot, the people ran out together from all the cities and arrived there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup>When Jesus got off the boat, he saw a great crowd and he felt compassion for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd. And so, he began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup>The hour was now late when his disciples came and told him that the place was deserted and that a lot of time had passed. <sup>36</sup>They tried to dismiss the people that they might go into the surrounding countryside and villages to buy for themselves something to eat <sup>37</sup>but in response Jesus said to them, “You give them something to eat.” And they said to him, “Shall we go and buy twenty Denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” <sup>38</sup>But he said to them, “How much bread do you have? Go and see.” They found out and said, “Five loaves and two fish.” <sup>39</sup>He ordered them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup>So, they sat down into groups of one hundred and five hundred. <sup>41</sup>Jesus then took the five loaves of bread and the two fish, looked up to heaven and gave thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples for them to hand out to the people and divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup>Everyone ate and had their fill of food. <sup>43</sup>And there were twelve baskets full of leftover bread - also from the fish. <sup>44</sup>There were five thousand men who had eaten.



**Who is  
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**Why did  
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the passage**



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# MARK 6:45-56

## WALKING ON THE WATER

<sup>45</sup>Immediately, Jesus made his disciples get on a boat and travel to the other side to Bethsaida while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>46</sup>Once he had ordered them away, he went up onto a mountain to pray. <sup>47</sup>Evening came, and the boat was out in the middle of the sea while he was alone on land. <sup>48</sup>When Jesus saw them straining at the oars at around the fourth vigil of the night, for the wind was against them, he came out to them, walking on the lake. He intended to pass by them, <sup>49</sup>but when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and screamed out! <sup>50</sup>For they all saw him and were shaken to the core. But immediately, Jesus spoke to them and said to them, “Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.” <sup>51</sup>Jesus got up onto the boat with them and the wind died down. They were absolutely amazed. <sup>52</sup>For they had not understood about the bread. Rather their hearts had been hardened.

## THE HEALING OF THE SICK IN THE GENNESARET

<sup>53</sup>Once they had crossed over to land, they came to Gennesaret and made anchor. <sup>54</sup>They got off the boat and immediately, the crowds recognized him. <sup>55</sup>They ran around that whole area and began to carry those who lay sick upon mats to wherever they heard he was. <sup>56</sup>Wherever he went, whether to villages, to cities or to the countryside, people would place their sick in the marketplace and plead that they might have the chance to touch even the edge of his cloak.



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## WEEK FIVE

This chapter presents us with another encounter that Jesus has with the Pharisees. Mark adds the detail that these teachers of the law were from Jerusalem. The “big wigs” from the big city were in town and had an encounter with Jesus. They question Jesus on why his disciples were not following the law and sanitising their hands before they ate. Mark also adds a comment to emphasise the importance of washing and cleanliness according to law and tradition. This introduces the theme of what makes us pure or clean before God which will be picked up at different points in this chapter - through keeping religious rules, external cleansing, being part of God’s chosen people vs the ‘unclean’ outsider.

Jesus goes on to scorn them for placing burdens on people in adherence to man-made religious traditions and not understanding the law for what it was. It was for God’s people to be in relationship with him and is the best way to live, it was not meant to take your life by being a burden.

Jesus also then goes on to talk about what defiles a person is inside them. What is in a person’s heart defiles them as our lives demonstrate this. Sinful acts do not make us sinners, we do sinful acts because we are sinners. Jesus transforms from the inside out.

The story of the Syrophenician woman adds another twist to the story. Someone who is Greek coming to Jesus begging for his help. She contrasts with the Pharisees who they think they are clean and that she would be unclean. She is a Gentile and a woman. Her response to Jesus in asking for the crumbs of God’s mercy has Jesus saving her and her daughter. The person who was the outsider and “unclean” is the one who Jesus commends. The irony is stark. She came to Jesus without pretension, in complete dependence on Jesus and not her ability to do things or keep traditions but in her emptiness and recognition of her need.

Verse 31 has the healing of a deaf mute. This is a show of Jesus’ power to heal but carries the extra level of a spiritual reality. Since chapter 4 the motif of “they who have ears to hear let them hear” has been apparent. When we hear the truth we can speak plainly. The gospel about Jesus is understandable to the youngest person and deep enough for the most learned or wise. The woman in Mark 7:24-30 was really deaf to the law of God as it was given to the Jews, the teachers of the law (Mark 7:1). The qualification is that we have ears to hear and pray for the Spirit’s work for seed to be planted in good soil.

### Question 1

Read Mark 7:1-2. What do we learn about the Pharisees to whom Jesus was talking?  
Why do you think Mark tells us these things?

### Question 2

Read verses 3-13. Mark spells out the tradition of ceremonial washing before eating which leads to the question asked by the Pharisees. What do you make of Jesus’ reply? What is the sin at the heart of the Pharisees’ traditions? What are human traditions that we can hold on to (religious or otherwise, good or bad)?

**Question 3**

Read verses 14-19. Why does Jesus call the crowd to him? What does he want the people to learn from his "riddle" in verses 14-15?

**Question 4**

Read verses 20-23. What do you think would surprise the disciples in the verses?

Are there things in this list that we think are more "acceptable" (verse 21 b-22)? What is it about us that Jesus is trying to address here?

**Question 5**

Read verses 24-30. What stands out to you in this story?

**Question 6**

Read verses 31-37. Why does Mark include this story here?

# MAKING IT STICK

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What human traditions are we holding on to that we need to let go of (religions or otherwise)?

What thoughts do you struggle with the most of which you need to repent (verse 21-22)?

In the story Jesus shows mercy to the Syrophenician woman. What makes it difficult for us to show mercy to others given that we too have been shown mercy?



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# MARK 7:1-4, 14-23

## THE TRADITION OF THE ELDERS

Now the Pharisees and some of the scribes, having come down from Jerusalem, gathered around Jesus, <sup>2</sup>and because they saw some of his disciples eating bread with unclean, that is unwashed, hands, <sup>3</sup>(for the Pharisees and all the Jewish people, in order to maintain their elders' traditions, do not eat anything unless they have washed their hands in a fist, <sup>4</sup>and if they don't wash their hands when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat, and many other traditions which they have undertaken to maintain, the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles...)

<sup>14</sup>Jesus again summoned the crowd and said to them.

"Listen to me, all of you! And understand! <sup>15</sup>Nothing that goes into a person from outside can make them unclean. Rather it's what comes out of a person that makes them unclean."<sup>[16]</sup>

<sup>17</sup>When Jesus had moved from the crowd and into the house, his disciples asked him about the parable.

<sup>18</sup>He said to them, "Are you so stupid as well? Don't you understand that nothing that goes into a person from the outside is able to make them unclean? <sup>19</sup>Simply because it doesn't go into the heart but into the stomach and then out to the sewer!" He said this to declare all foods clean. <sup>20</sup>And he said, "It's what comes out of people, that is what makes them unclean. <sup>21</sup>Because, from within, out of their hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup>adultery, greed, evil, deceit, indecency, the evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup>Every wicked thing comes from within a person. That is what makes them unclean!"



**Who is  
Jesus?**



**Why did  
he come?**



**What does this  
mean for us?**

## WEEK SIX

This chapter marks a very important turning point in Mark's story.

Jesus again serves the crowd by feeding them and teaching them. The stories about feeding thousands of people are close together in Mark's story yet there seems little progress in people's belief or understanding. They see the sign but miss the point.

There is a significant healing of a blind man in this also that provides layers of insight into the story. How Jesus goes about this is even different. In chapter 7 Jesus exorcises a demon from a girl without even seeing her. Here Jesus performs a gradual healing to bring out the point that this is not just another sign, but is teaching a spiritual truth in itself.

Jesus also dares to ask his disciples who they think he is. We have seen Jesus teach, serve, heal, show authority in both the physical and spiritual realms. Their response is correct but still misguided. They are missing the point of the Kingdom of God and what Jesus has come to do, a point many today still miss.

This chapter finishes with a challenge to us to take up our cross and follow him. This is really the second response Jesus has directed. The first is in Mark 1:14-15, to repent and believe the good news (and the good news is about Jesus Christ, the son of God, Mark 1:1). The second is to take up OUR cross and follow him. We cannot carry his cross. We are denying ourselves and following him. We come into God's kingdom by repentance and faith and we live in God's kingdom under his lordship and teaching while we wait for his return.

### Question 1

Read Mark 8:1-21. In verse 4 the disciples comment that they are in a remote place. Why do you think this is significant to the story about feeding more than 4000 people?

### Question 2

In verses 14-21 Jesus again teaches the disciples but they are not understanding what he is saying or what they have seen (verse 18). What is significant about Jesus questions and the answer of the disciples regarding the number of baskets collected after the meal?

**Question 3**

Can you think of a time when you have focused on an immediate need and misunderstood the bigger picture?

**Question 4**

Read verses 22-26. What do you notice is different in this healing to previous incidents? Why is this significant to the story?

**Question 5**

Read verses 27-33. Jesus asks an important question here. The disciples answer in several different ways. What does it mean that Jesus is Messiah to Peter at this time and to us? In what ways do people think of Jesus today?

**Question 6**

Read verses 34-38. What does it mean to deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus?

# MAKING IT STICK

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In what ways has God taught you spiritual things through physical or material means?

What is Jesus as Messiah to you? How does this unfold in your day to day life?

What makes it difficult to take up your cross and follow him?



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# MARK 8:27-36

## PETER'S DECLARATION ABOUT JESUS

<sup>27</sup>Jesus and his disciples went out into the villages of Caesarea Philippi and on the road, he asked his disciples, saying to them, "Who do people say I am?" <sup>28</sup>Some replied to him by saying, "John the Baptist." Others, "Elijah" And still others, that he was one of the prophets. <sup>29</sup>But he asked them, "Who do you say I am?" In reply Peter said, "You are the Christ." <sup>30</sup>Jesus then ordered them not to speak to anyone about him.

## JESUS FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

<sup>31</sup>And Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man is bound to suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and scribes, and be put to death, and after three days, "get up again". <sup>32</sup>He spoke his message plainly, but Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But Jesus turned around, looked at his disciples and rebuked Peter. He said, "Get behind me Satan! For you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of people." <sup>34</sup>Jesus then summoned the crowd along with his disciples and said to them, "If anyone wants to follow behind me, let him deny himself, let him take up his cross and let him follow me! <sup>35</sup>For whoever wants to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?



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## WEEK SEVEN

Chapter 9 follows the disciples true yet misdirected declaration that Jesus is the Messiah. This is a key turning point in the story.

In chapter 9 we see the story slowing down. as Jesus heads toward Jerusalem and his self predicted death (8:31)

Chapter 9 continues onwards with five sections. The first being The Transfiguration. Jesus takes Peter, James and John up a mountain where he is transfigured in front of the three disciples. God speaks directly to Peter, James and John, up on the mountain and on the way down Jesus instructs his disciples not to tell anyone of what they had just seen. **(9:2-12)**

After coming down from the mountain, Jesus, Peter, James and John come to the other disciples who are surrounded by the teachers of the law. A man had brought his son who was possessed by a spirit to the disciples so that they may exorcise it but they are unable to do it. Jesus sees the crowd approaching and exorcises the spirit and in private after the event, the disciples ask Jesus why they couldn't remove the spirit. **(9:14-29)**

Jesus and the disciples continue on their journey and pass through Galilee. Jesus then predicted his death a second time to his disciples, but the disciples were confused and afraid to ask Jesus about what He had said. Mark then has a conversation wherein Jesus speaks directly with his disciples which leads into 3 teaching moments. **(9:30-34)**

In the first moment, Jesus teaches on servanthood (both in regards to Himself and His disciples). In the second, Jesus teaches on humility ( his disciples should be welcoming to everyone - and outworking of humility) and in the third, Jesus adds to humility but in a different aspect (the inward effect of humility - rebuking the disciples' love of status). **(9:35-41)**

After these moments of teaching, Jesus instructs his disciples to remain focussed and faithful. **(9:42-50)**

### Question 1

In verse 7 what does the statement "This is my Son, Whom I love. Listen to Him," contribute to the understanding of Mark's story?

### Question 2

Read 9: 14-29. In verse 24 the father of the possessed boy asks something profound of Jesus in response to what Jesus says in verse 23. What do you think the man in the story is asking for? What does it teach us about belief? How does this relate to what Jesus says in verse 29?

**Question 3**

Read Mark 9:30-37. This is the second time in as many chapters that Jesus has talked about his death and resurrection. Why did Jesus want to teach his disciples in private (verses 30-31 a)? Why is this important to Mark's story?

**Question 4**

The disciples have a discussion about who was the greatest, in stark contrast to what Jesus said in verse 31. What do we learn about God's view of greatness? What surprises you about this? Can you think of a time when it is hard to follow Jesus' view of greatness?

**Question 5**

Read Mark 9:38-50. Compare the difference in attitude between John in verse 38 and Jesus in verse 41. How does this add to where Mark's story is trying to take us? What is the reason for giving someone a "cup of water"?

**Question 6**

Read Mark 9:42-50. What do you think Jesus is asking of his followers in these verses? What makes it difficult to follow in this way?

# MAKING IT STICK

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*In what ways in your life do you see the glory of Jesus?*

*In what ways do you aim to glorify Jesus?*

*What can we do to remain faithful as followers/disciples of Jesus?*



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# MARK 9:30-37

## JESUS AGAIN FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

<sup>30</sup>After leaving that place they travelled on through the region of Galilee and Jesus did not want anyone to recognize him, <sup>31</sup>for he had been teaching his disciples and telling them that the Son of Man is going to be given over into the hands of men. They will kill him and once dead, after three days, he will be lifted up!

<sup>32</sup>But they didn't understand his meaning and were afraid to ask.

## WHO IS THE GREATEST?

<sup>33</sup>They then came to Capernaum and when they were at home he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" <sup>34</sup>They were silent, for on the road they had argued with each other about who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup>Jesus sat down and called for the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he will be last of all and servant of all." <sup>36</sup>He then took a child and stood it before them. He put his arm around the child and said to them, <sup>37</sup>"Anyone who welcomes one of these little children in my name, welcomes me. And anyone who welcomes me, welcomes not me but he who sent me."



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## WEEK EIGHT

"The material in chapter 10 is set in Jesus' journey through Judea. In addition to bringing Jesus and the disciples to Jerusalem, the journey also symbolizes the theme of discipleship. As Jesus nears Jerusalem, his teaching about his mission and the claims of discipleship becomes increasingly specific. Chapter 10 begins with the call to discipleship in the fundamental aspects of life - marriage (vv 1-12), children (vv 13-16), and possessions (vv. 17-34). For a third time Jesus foretells his death and resurrection; and like his teaching on discipleship itself, the prediction is the most explicit yet (vv. 32-34). For the first time Jesus declares the servant-role of the Son of Man 'not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (v. 45). Mark concludes the chapter with the healing of Bartimaeus, whose trust in Jesus for the recovery of his sight and following of Jesus 'on the way' to Jerusalem represent the quintessence of discipleship (v. 52)."

-Mark commentary by James R Edwards p297.

With all this in mind, a blind man calls on Jesus to heal him – he wants to see. Healed, able to see the Jesus who Mark has been presenting, he immediately follows Jesus on the way ... to Jerusalem (11:1)! He is one who obeys the will of God. He is called "my brother".

### Question 1

Read Mark 10:1-12. In these few verses Jesus' teaching encompasses a few things. What are the things that Jesus teaches? What is it about these verses that reflects God's character and our life as a disciple of Jesus?

### Question 2

Read 10:13-31. What things stand out to you about Jesus in these verses?

### Question 3

Read Mark 9:30-37. How do these stories complement each other? What do you think verse 31 means?

**Question 4**

Read 10:32-34. Why do you think Jesus pulls his disciples aside to tell them a third time about his imminent death? What is different this time to other times (8:31-32 and 9:30-32)?

**Question 5**

Read Mark 10:35-45. Compare these verses with 9:33-37. What have the disciples not learned? How do you feel when you read verses like this? How can we be like the disciples?

**Question 6**

Read Mark 10:46-52. In what ways do these verses contribute to what we know about Jesus through what he did? How do they contribute to what we have read Jesus taught since the start of Mark's story?

# MAKING IT STICK

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What have you given up to follow Jesus?  
What do you find difficult to give up?

Can you remember a time when your  
eyes were opened to the truth of Jesus  
or some aspect of who Jesus is?

What can we do to remain faithful as  
followers/disciples of Jesus?



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# MARK 10:32-45

## A THIRD TIME JESUS FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

<sup>32</sup>They were now on the road travelling up to Jerusalem. Jesus was going on ahead of them. The people were amazed but those who followed him were afraid. Taking again the twelve he began to tell them what was going to happen to him. <sup>33</sup>“Look! We are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will sentence him to death and hand him over to the gentiles. <sup>34</sup>They will mock him, spit on him, whip him and kill him. And after three days, he will be lifted up!”

## THE REQUEST OF JAMES AND JOHN

<sup>35</sup>James and John, the Sons of Zebedee came up to Jesus, saying, “Teacher, we want you to do what we ask.” <sup>36</sup>He said to them, “What is it that you want me to do?” <sup>37</sup>They replied, “Allow for one of us to sit at your right hand and the other at your left in your glory!” <sup>38</sup>But Jesus replied to them, “You don’t know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink or receive the baptism with which I am baptised?” <sup>39</sup>But they affirmed, “Yes, we are able!” But Jesus said, “Indeed, you will drink from the cup I drink from and receive the baptism with which I am baptised <sup>40</sup>but to sit at my right hand or my left is not for me to grant but for those it is prepared.” <sup>41</sup>When the other ten heard what was asked they started to become angry at James and John. <sup>42</sup>But Jesus summoned them and said, “You know that those who presume to rule over the gentiles lord it over them and that their leaders exercise their authority over them, <sup>43</sup>but this is not to be so among you. Rather, whoever wants to be great among you will be your servant and <sup>44</sup>whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all. <sup>45</sup>In fact, the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.”



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## WEEK NINE

In these chapters of Mark the story slows somewhat. In fact, the last few chapters are set in the context of Easter week. Given the disproportionate emphasis on this short time the importance of these events ought not be understated.

Chapter 11 deals with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, Jesus' destination as stated by him in 10:33. The subsequent cleansing or reordering of the temple ensues and some other questions of identity (11:9-11) and authority (11:27-33).

In chapter 12 Jesus does more teaching but this time in Jerusalem. He comes on to the turf of those we met in Mark 7 and Mark 10. This is coupled with the inclusion of the Sadducees asking about the resurrection which Jesus predicted would happen to him.

Jesus finishes his teaching by baffling the Teachers of the Law with his question about identity quoting from Psalm 110:1. A similar question is asked of the disciples in Mark 8:27-30.

In these verses we see the restoration of the temple in Jerusalem which points to restoration on a cosmic level. The example of the widow's offering in Mark 12:41-44 is a display of what it is like to be in God's temple, what it is like to be those who are his disciples. It is not merely the amount we bring but our willingness to be generous with what we have been given. She denies herself and takes up her cross.

### Question 1

Read Mark 11:1-11. What do we learn about Jesus from these verses and why is it significant?

### Question 2

Read 11:12-26. In these verses there is a kind of sandwich. There is part of the story where Jesus curses a fig tree and then he clears the temple and then they return to the tree. Why do you think these stories are linked together? What do we learn from this?

**Question 3**

Mark 11:27-12:12. What does Jesus' interaction with the chief priests and the parable of the tenants teach us about Jesus? Why do you think they respond the way they do in 12:12? What are some reasons we might reject Jesus or what he teaches?

**Question 4**

Mark 11:27-12:44. What is the theme/s in these verses? Why do think they are important leading up to Jesus' arrest?

**Question 5**

Read Mark 12:35-37. Why do the people respond with delight in verse 37? Are there things that Jesus teaches that you would say it is difficult to delight in and why?

**Question 6**

Read Mark 12:38-44. The story of the widow giving all she had has Jesus sitting opposite where offerings were being put in. This part of the story follows the clearing of the temple by Jesus in Mark 11:12-25 and the teaching in between. How do you think this story helps our understanding of chapters 11-12?

# MAKING IT STICK

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Can you remember and share times when you have questioned the authority of Jesus?

In what areas of your life do you find it hard to love God wholeheartedly?

Do you find it hard to love others as you love yourself? Why? How can people in your group be praying for you in this?

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# MARK 12:1-12, 28-34

## THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD AND THE TENANTS

Jesus then began to speak to them in parables. “A man planted a vineyard. He placed a fence around it, dug a trench and built a tower. He then rented it out to farmers and went away. <sup>2</sup>He sent a servant to the farmers at harvest time to take from the farmers the fruit of the vineyard. <sup>3</sup>But the farmers took him, beat him up and sent him away empty handed. <sup>4</sup>Again, he sent another servant to them and they knocked him out and treated him shamefully. <sup>5</sup>And he sent to them another servant and that one they killed, and many other servants whom they’d either beat up or kill. <sup>6</sup>The man had still one to send, his beloved son. He sent him last of all to them assuming, “They will respect my son.” <sup>7</sup>But those farmers said to themselves, “This is the heir! Come, let’s kill him! <sup>8</sup>So, they took him, killed him and cast him out of the vineyard. <sup>9</sup>What will the Lord of the vineyard do? He will come, and he will destroy those farmers and give the vineyard to others. <sup>10</sup>Have you not read the Scripture? ‘The stone that the builders have rejected, has become the capstone. <sup>11</sup>This is of the Lord and it is marvelous in our eyes.’” <sup>12</sup>The people tried to arrest Jesus, but they were afraid of the crowd. For they knew that he spoke the parable against them. But they let him go and went away.

## THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

<sup>28</sup>One of the Scribes approached Jesus after listening to those questioning him. When he saw that Jesus had answered them well he asked him, “Which is the most important commandment?” <sup>29</sup>Jesus answered, “The most important is this, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup>You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole life, with your whole mind and with all of your strength.’ <sup>31</sup>The second is this, ‘You will love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than this.” <sup>32</sup>And the scribe said to him, “Well said, teacher, it’s true that there is one God and no other beside him. <sup>33</sup>And to love him with your whole heart, with all your intelligence and with all your strength and to love your neighbour as yourself, is far more important than every burnt offering and sacrifice.” <sup>34</sup>When Jesus saw that he replied with understanding, he said to him, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.” And nobody dared to question him any further.



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## WEEK TEN

Mark 13 is a very challenging piece of scripture. From its stark pictures of calamities, persecution and division coupled with trying to place events within history we challenged to live as disciples of Jesus as we become citizens of the kingdom of God when we repent and believe the good news.

In his commentary on Mark, James R. Edwards helpfully says when referring to Mark 13:37 to watch, "This admonition... indicates that the purpose of the eschatological discourse in Mark 13 is not primary to provide a timeline or blueprint for the future so much as to exhort readers to faithful discipleship in the present."

### Question 1

Read Mark 12:1-3. Mark gives us the detail of Jesus leaving the temple and then sitting opposite the temple. Why is this significant as part of the story and also spiritually/theologically?

### Question 2

In these verses Jesus says "watch out" and "be on your guard" (verses 5, 9, 23, 33, 35, 37). How does this help our understanding of this discourse?

### Question 3

Mark 13:5-7. In what ways do we see deception (people saying 'I am he') now? From verses 7-8, why do you think people conclude these things speak of the absence of God? How would you answer such scepticism?

**Question 4**

Mark 13:9-13. On what basis does persecution and division occur? Why do you think this is the case?

**Question 5**

Read Mark 13:14-25. Daniel 9:25-27 the abomination that causes desolation is prophesied. What other events in the Daniel verses are associated with this event? How are the Daniel verses similar to Mark 13:14-25? Why does such a prophecy give us confidence in the death and resurrection of Jesus?

**Question 6**

Read Mark 13:32-36. What is to be our response to such calamity and this prophecy? How do we do this?

# MAKING IT STICK

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When do you find it most difficult to be on your guard?

How do you discern what is the truth amongst those who proclaim a false gospel?

What is your greatest difficulty in persevering while waiting for the return of Jesus?

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# MARK 13

## THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE FORETOLD AND THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

As Jesus was walking out of the temple one of his disciples said to him, “Teacher look at how great the stones are and how great the houses are!” <sup>2</sup>But Jesus said to him, “You see these great houses? Not a stone here shall be left on another which has not first been torn down.” <sup>3</sup>While he was sitting upon the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, <sup>4</sup>“Tell us, when will these things happen and what sign will there be for when all these are going to be accomplished?” <sup>5</sup>Jesus began to tell them, “Watch out that no one leads you astray. <sup>6</sup>Many will come in my name saying, “I am he” and many they will lead astray. <sup>7</sup>But when you hear of wars and the rumour of wars, don’t be alarmed. It must happen, but the end is yet to come. <sup>8</sup>For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. In some places there will be earthquakes, there will be famines. These are the beginning of birth pains. <sup>9</sup>But watch out for yourselves! They will hand you over to the council and beat you in the synagogues. You will stand before rulers and kings for my sake as a testimony against them <sup>10</sup>but to all nations the gospel must first be proclaimed. <sup>11</sup>When they hand you over, don’t worry beforehand about what you should say. Rather, whatever is given to you at that hour, say that. For you will not be the ones speaking, but the Holy Spirit. <sup>12</sup>Brother will betray brother to death, and father his child. <sup>13</sup>You will be hated by all on account of my name but the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>14</sup>But when you see the abomination that causes desolation standing where he shouldn’t, let the reader understand, at that very moment, let those in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>15</sup>Let not the man on his housetop come down, nor let him go back inside to take something from his house. <sup>16</sup>And let not the man in his field turn back to get his cloak. <sup>7</sup>Woe to those who are pregnant in those days and nursing children! <sup>18</sup>Pray that it doesn’t happen during winter. <sup>19</sup>For those days will be a calamity of a sort that has not happened since the beginning of God’s creation until now – and will never happen again.



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**Why did  
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**What does this  
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## MARK 13 (CONT.)

<sup>20</sup>If the Lord had not cut short those days no man will be saved. However, for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has cut short the days. <sup>21</sup>Whenever someone says, “Look! Here is the Christ! Look! There he is!” Do not believe him. <sup>22</sup>For false messiahs and false prophets will rise and perform signs and wonders to lead – if possible – the elect astray. <sup>23</sup>But watch out! I have told you everything ahead of time. <sup>24</sup>But in those days, after that calamity, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give off its light. <sup>25</sup>The stars will fall from heaven and the powers in heaven will be shaken. <sup>26</sup>Then, with great power and glory they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven! <sup>27</sup>He will then send forth his angels and gather together his elect from the four winds, from the depths of the earth, to the summit of heaven. <sup>28</sup>But learn this parable from the fig tree. When its branch is tender, and it sprouts forth leaves, you know that the harvest is near. <sup>29</sup>In the same way know, that when you see these things come to pass the time is near for the harvest. <sup>30</sup>I tell you the truth! This generation will not pass away until all these things happen. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away! <sup>32</sup>But about that day or that hour, nobody knows. Not even the angels in heaven nor the Son. Only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Watch out! Stay awake! For you do not know when that time will come. <sup>34</sup>Like a man who goes on a journey and leaves his house behind, granting oversight to his servants, assigning a task to each and commanding the door keeper to keep watch... <sup>35</sup>Be on your guard, therefore! For you do not know when the lord of the house comes! Whether it be evening, in the middle of the night or morning! <sup>36</sup>Lest he comes and finds you sleeping at that very moment! <sup>37</sup>What I say to you, I say to all...be on your guard!”



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# MARK 14:1-15:41

(Page 67 of The Gospel of Mark)

## WEEK ELEVEN

These two chapters make up what is known as the Passion. Passion comes from a Latin word for 'suffering' or 'enduring.' This includes the betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus.

Edwards, in his commentary, states that "the presence of three sandwich conventions in chap. 14 and one in chap. 15 are evidence that Mark is not simply transmitting tradition but is also interpreting it for his purposes." p410.

There are a couple of things worth noting in this part of Mark's story:

*"The narrator leads the reader to see in the crucifixion the ultimate paradox of God's rule, that the anointed one is king precisely because he was willing to live for others even when it meant this humiliating outcome. Only when Jesus has 'died like this' does the narrator allow a human character in the story acknowledge Jesus a "son of God."*  
Mark as Story by David Rhoads p115.

*"There is no intention to exploit the savagery of crucifixion either to sensationalise Jesus' death or to evoke sentimentality from the reader. Especially in Mark the accent on the crucifixion narrative falls not on its brutality and cruelty but on the shame and mockery to which Jesus is subjected. As in the prayer of Gethsemane, so, too, at the crucifixion, the inner sufferings supersedes the physical horror."*

Do we feel this way about our Father? Does our will line up with Jesus will to obey the Father, does our faithfulness fall in line with Jesus faithfulness to see the will of the Father done?

The reader is lead through Jesus' early preparation for burial (14:8), to the last supper, Gethsemane, the trials and the crucifixion.

### Question 1

Read Mark 14:1-11. In this section Mark starts and ends with a plot to arrest and kill Jesus. In the middle we are diverted to Jesus' anointing. What do you learn from this "Markan sandwich" about Jesus' imminent death?

### Question 2

Mark 14:12-26. What stands out to you in these verses? What do you make of the disciples response in verse 19 to Jesus' betrayal announcement?

**Question 3**

Mark 14. In this chapter Peter and Judas play prominent roles. How are they similar and how are they different?

**Question 4**

Mark 15:1-20. What is Pilate's attitude toward Jesus? What is the soldier's attitude toward Jesus? Why do think they have these attitudes toward him?

**Question 5**

Mark 15:21-39. In what ways is Jesus shamed and mocked in these verses? Why do you think Mark gives such detail and so little about the actual crucifixion itself?

**Question 6**

Mark 15:33-39. What is significant about the tearing of the curtain in the temple?

# MAKING IT STICK

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What do you find most difficult about persevering as a disciple of Jesus?

What things about the Passion of Jesus bring you comfort?

What is difficult about holding the tension of Jesus' death at the hands of humans and his submission to the will of God?

# THE MARK 121 PROJECT

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# MARK 14:32-42

## THE PRAYER IN GETHSEMANE

<sup>32</sup>They came to a place by the name of Gethsemane and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” <sup>33</sup>He took Peter, James and John with him and began to be terribly distressed and worried. <sup>34</sup>He said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.” <sup>35</sup>Having withdrawn a little further he fell to the ground and began praying for the hour to pass from him if possible. <sup>36</sup>And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me! But not what I will but what you do.” <sup>37</sup>Jesus then went and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Are you not strong enough to keep watch for one hour? <sup>38</sup>Keep watch and pray that you may not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” <sup>39</sup>After speaking, Jesus again went away and prayed the same prayer. <sup>40</sup>But again, Jesus returned and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy and drooping and they did not know what to say. <sup>41</sup>He came a third time and said to them, “Have you really been sleeping and resting all this time? Enough! The hour has come! The Son of Man is being handed over into the hands of sinful men. <sup>42</sup>Get up, let’s go! Look! The one to betray me is near.”



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# MARK 15:1-20

## JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Early in the morning, the chief priests immediately took council with the elders and the scribes and having bound the Sanhedrin with an oath, they led Jesus away and handed him over to Pilate. <sup>2</sup>Pilate asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus replied and said to him, “You say so.” <sup>3</sup>The chief priests began laying many accusations against him <sup>4</sup>but Pilate asked him again, saying, “Do you have no reply? See how many accusations they bring against you!” <sup>5</sup>But, to the amazement of Pilate, Jesus made no reply.

## JESUS SENTENCED TO DEATH

<sup>6</sup>Now during the Passover feast Pilate would release to them one of the prisoners they asked for. <sup>7</sup>Imprisoned along with the revolutionaries was a man named Barabbas who committed murder during the uprising. <sup>8</sup>The crowd then arose and began asking for Pilate to do for them what he was accustomed to. <sup>9</sup>But Pilate replied with the words, “Would you like for me to release the King of the Jews for you?” <sup>10</sup>For he knew that it was out of envy that the chief priest had handed him over. <sup>11</sup>But the chief priests stirred up the crowd so that he would be more likely to hand Barabbas over to them. <sup>12</sup>But Pilate again replied and said to them, “So then, what shall I do to the King of the Jews?” <sup>13</sup>They cried out again, “Crucify him!” <sup>14</sup>But Pilate said to them, “Why? What crime has he committed?” But they cried out all the more! “Crucify him!” <sup>15</sup>Pilate then, wishing to do what was enough for the crowd, released Barabbas to them and after having him flogged, handed Jesus over for him to be crucified.

## THE SOLDIERS MOCK JESUS

<sup>16</sup>Now the soldiers led Jesus away into the courtyard, that is, the Praetorium, and called together the whole company of soldiers. <sup>17</sup>They wrapped him in purple and placed a twisted crown of thorns around his head. <sup>18</sup>They then began to salute him, “Greetings! King of the Jews!” <sup>19</sup>They struck his head with a reed and spat on him. They would position their knees and bow before him. <sup>20</sup>And once they had their fun with him they stripped him of his purple linen and dressed him in his clothes. They then led him out for them to crucify him.



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# MARK 15:21-41

## THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

<sup>21</sup>They forced a certain passerby named Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexandros and Rufus, as he was coming from his field, to carry Jesus' cross. <sup>22</sup>They then led him to the place of Golgotha, which means, the place of the Skull. <sup>23</sup>They then gave him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup>They then crucified him and divided up his clothes by casting lots to see who got what. <sup>25</sup>It was now the third hour and they crucified him. <sup>26</sup>There was an inscription of the charge which read, "The King of the Jews." <sup>27</sup>With him they crucified two criminals, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>28</sup>Those passing by insulted him. They shook their heads and said, <sup>29</sup>"Ooah! The destroyer of the temple! And the one to build it again in three days! <sup>30</sup>Save yourself by coming down from the cross!" <sup>31</sup>Likewise, the chief priests along with the scribes chuckled amongst themselves and said, "Others he saved, himself he can't save. <sup>32</sup>Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now so that we can see and believe in him." Even those crucified with Jesus heaped insult upon him.

## THE DEATH OF JESUS

<sup>33</sup>When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole earth until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup>At the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi! Eloi! Lema Sabachthani" Which means, my God, "My God, why have you forsaken me?" <sup>35</sup>Some of those standing by heard him and said, "Look! He is calling Elijah." <sup>36</sup>Someone ran and soaked a sponge with sour wine. They put it on a reed and gave it to Jesus to drink, saying, "Leave him, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down." <sup>37</sup>But Jesus let out a great cry and exhaled. <sup>38</sup>The curtain of the temple tore in two from top to bottom <sup>39</sup>and when the centurion standing opposite saw that he had breathed his last he said "Truly, this man was the Son of God." <sup>40</sup>Now there were some women watching from afar, among whom was Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Lesser and Justus and Salome. <sup>41</sup>These were the women who followed him while he was in Galilee and ministered to him. And there were many other women who had come up into Jerusalem.



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# MARK 15:40-16:8

(Page 79 of The Gospel of Mark)

## WEEK TWELVE

These last verses in Mark's story are a witness to the burial and subsequent resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God. There is another three part story to conclude Mark's story. There are the women who were watching from a distance and this time they are named. This is followed by Joseph of Arimathea asking for the body of Jesus and then a return to the women who return to the site of Jesus's burial as first witnesses to the empty tomb.

In the verses there is an interesting contrast of fear and faith. The fear of the women at witnessing something so extraordinary and the faith of Joseph asking for the body of Jesus.

For the original readers of Mark, who were most likely under persecution and maybe even doubted what they believe, this rounds off the story reminding them of whom it is they believe in, who they are disciples of and to persevere. Mark is encouraging them to remember who Jesus is and what he came to do even through what he had to endure.

The end of Mark's story finishes in an odd way with the women not saying anything to anyone because they were afraid. This silence is a theme we have seen through the book of Mark but we know is broken at Pentecost when Jesus ascends and the Spirit is poured out.

### Question 1

Read Mark 15:40-16:8. In verses 40-41 Mark names several women who have been with Jesus through his ministry. Why do you think they are named here (in contrast to the woman in 14:1-11)?

### Question 2

What do we learn about being a disciple of Jesus from these women?

### Question 3

In verse 43 what do you think it means that Joseph of Arimathea was "himself waiting for the kingdom of God to come"?

**Question 4**

How do verses 44-45 of Mark 15 contribute to the credible witness of the resurrection?

**Question 5**

Mark 16:6-7. Jesus' resurrection is confirmed both by his absence from the tomb and seeing him in person. What parallels do you notice between the story in Mark 10:46-52 and these verses in chapter 16?

**Question 6**

Mark 16:8. What is striking about the way Mark's story ends? Is it what you would expect? Why or why not?

# MAKING IT STICK

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*Why is being a disciple of Jesus important to you?*

*What can you do this week to firm up your belief in Jesus?*

*What things obstruct or hinder following Jesus each day?*

# THE MARK 121 PROJECT

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# MARK 15:42-16:8

## THE BURIAL OF JESUS

<sup>42</sup>As evening approached on the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, <sup>43</sup>Joseph of Arimathea, a respectable member of the council, who himself was also waiting for the Kingdom of God, came forward. Boldly he entered the presence of Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. <sup>44</sup>Pilate was amazed to find out that he had already died. He summoned the centurion and asked him if he had been dead for long. <sup>45</sup>Having found out from the centurion the exact time of death, he then gave the corpse to Joseph. <sup>46</sup>So, Joseph purchased a cloth, took him down, wrapped him in the cloth and placed him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock. They then rolled a stone over the entrance of the tomb. <sup>47</sup>And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Justus saw where he lay.

## THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Once the Sabbath had passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome purchased spices to go and anoint him. <sup>2</sup>On the first day of the week at sunrise they came to the tomb. <sup>3</sup>They said to each other, "Who will roll away the stone from the entrance of the tomb for us?" <sup>4</sup>But when they looked up they were amazed to see that the stone was rolled away for it was very large. <sup>5</sup>Entering the tomb, they saw a young man seated on the right wearing a white cloak and they were terrified. <sup>6</sup>He said to them, "Do not be afraid! You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, the one who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. Look, the place where they laid him! <sup>7</sup>But go! Tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of them into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." <sup>8</sup>The women then exited and fled from the tomb! Fear and utter shock overtook them, and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid.



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# APPENDIX

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**ONE TO ONE  
DISCIPLESHIP**

**MINI TRAINING  
SERIES**

# SESSION 1

## THE WHO, WHAT, WHY OF ONE-TO-ONE DISCIPLESHIP

### Vision

*Let me begin by painting a picture of us here at St Paul's. I want to see older women meeting with younger women to talk to them about life and the lessons they've learned and the things God has taught them. I want to see young mums meeting with young women who are just married or just thinking about having a baby, to talk to them about what it's like to follow Jesus when all of that is going on. I want to see men meeting together and being honest and open with each other in a way that Christian men seem especially able to do, and which the rest of men in society desperately need. I want to see the boundaries between the age groups at this church broken down, because young women are meeting with older women, and older women are meeting with younger women, and experienced mothers and fathers are meeting with new mums and dads, and men are reading the Bible together. This is the way in which our church can develop meaningful gospel relationships, caring for each other during the week, sharing our lives and our experiences, and making sure that this church is filled with people who really do love and know one another. And I want each of you to be a part of that. You might be sitting there thinking, but I don't feel qualified to do this and I want to assure you that you are. If you love Jesus, and you have experience of what is to live as a Christian, then your very experiences that you think are ordinary will be the very things that another person needs to hear, that's how God uses our ordinary stories to grow his kingdom.*

### 1. Why disciple 1:1?

There are four main reasons we ought to be involved in one-to-one discipleship (this list is not exhaustive).

#### *I. It is biblical*

Jesus did it. While Jesus taught to large crowds and had many disciples (including the 72 and the women), he also had a smaller group of twelve and an even smaller "inner core" of three - Peter, James and John (Mark 9:2; 14:33; Matt. 5:37; 17:1-2; 26:37) and he also related to Peter one-to-one.

Paul did it. He discipled Timothy and, not only that, but sent him out to continue the legacy by sending out faithful men out who would send others (2 Tim. 2:2).

We are all called to do it. Part of being a follower of Jesus is intentionally helping others to learn from him and become more like him. This happens in two ways:

- a) Evangelism (telling people who don't follow Jesus what it means to follow him which includes our families, colleagues, friends as well as strangers, See Matt. 28:19).
- b) Helping other believers grow in Christ's likeness. We are called to actively build each other up into the fullness of Christ (Eph. 2:19; 4:13, 29). We are called to instruct each other about Christ (Rom. 15:14) and to imitate others who are following Christ (1 Cor. 4:16, 11:1; 2 Thess. 3:7, 9).

#### *II. It's a wonderful way to spur one another on* (1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13; Eph. 4:29)

#### *III. It is flexible.* Unlike programmatic ministries this fits with the rhythms of life.

#### *IV. It is how we make "disciple-makers"* (2 Tim. 2:1-2). I will talk more about this throughout our sessions.

### 2. Who is called to disciple?

Disciples are called to go and make disciples (Matt 28:20). If you are a Christian, then you are a disciple (Mt. 10:38, 16:24-28; Mk. 8:34; Lk. 9:23, 57-62; Jn. 10:27, 12:25-26). Of course, you can have both immature and mature disciples, but essentially if you are a follower of Jesus, you are a disciple.

Being engaged in discipleship then is the act of **following Jesus together**. Put by one minister **"it is really just a bunch of church members taking responsibility to prepare one another for glory"** (Mark Dever, Capitol Hill Baptist Church). We get that idea from Colossians 1:28 where we are called to proclaim Christ "admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ" (Col. 1:28). It is God's people meeting around the Word to help each other learn and grow as we prepare each other to meet Jesus face-to-face. This is in line with the core mission here at St Pauls where we aim to bring people to Christ, build them up in Christ and send them out for Christ.

And so one-to-one or life-on-life discipleship is two (perhaps three) people meeting regularly with the intention of helping each other draw nearer to Jesus. It is taking people wherever they are on their journey (whether it be pre-conversion or mature Christian) and helping them to grow deep, wide, higher, longer, further, stronger in their relationship with Jesus with the hope that they will then go and help others to grow in their relationship with Jesus.

So, if you are a follower of Jesus and are seeking to grow and live in obedience to God, then you are qualified to make disciples. You do not need a bible college degree or to know how to preach from the platform, or to write theological essays. If you love Jesus and you know how to read the bible and pray, and you are passionate about seeing your brothers and sisters grow in their relationship with Jesus, then you are qualified.

This is a ministry that we should all be engaged in both intergenerationally and peer-to-peer. This of course is already happening among some people at our church (some in this room) but this is not the special responsibility of only a few but rather the responsibility of all. As disciples we are **all** called to go and make disciples (Matt. 28) and to prepare one another for glory (Col. 1:28). I love this quote from the writers of the Trellis and the Vine:

*“Imagine if all Christians were caught up in a web of Bible reading, not only digging into the word privately, but reading it with their children before bed, with their spouse over breakfast, with a non-Christian colleague at work once a week over lunch, with a new Christian once a fortnight, and with a mature Christian friend once a month for mutual encouragement. It would be a chaotic web of personal relationships, prayer and bible reading – more of a movement than a program – but at another level it would be profoundly simply and within reach of all (T. Payne and C. Marshall, The Trellis and the Vine, p. 57).*

It may sound like a lot – every person in the church meeting throughout the week to read the Bible – but if everyone meets with one person, we have done it.

So what is the take away? Who is called to disciple? (Answer: disciples, followers of Jesus, you, me) And who is qualified to disciple? (Answer: disciples, followers of Jesus, you, me, anyone who loves Jesus, reads his word and wants to see others grow in their relationship with Jesus).

### **3. What does one-to-one discipleship look like?**

#### ***1. It needs to be intentional***

If it is not intentional it is not reproducible! We want the people that we are discipling to actually be equipped to go and disciple others. This will require us to be purposeful and strategic about how we “follow Jesus together” (the practicalities will be discussed in more detail next week).

#### ***2. It needs to be gospel-centred***

It is very difficult to disciple someone if the gospel doesn’t come into the equation. Some people think the gospel is simply for conversion. But the gospel converts and matures us. One writer said, “no one ever graduates from the gospel” (Dodson, p. 38). When we put the gospel at the centre of our relationship we are fighting together “to find Jesus sweeter, richer, deeper, and more satisfying than anything else in the world” (Dodson, 127). It is only when we look directly into Jesus’ face again and again that we are given all that we need to fight sin and live for Christ.

#### ***3. It needs to be flavoured with grace and encouragement.***

I read once that “encouragement is the context in which equipping can take place”. In an atmosphere of love and grace, we can point people to Jesus, spur them on in the way of truth, and help them to grow and mature. In Romans 15:5-7, Paul prays that God will grant his people with endurance and encouragement so they can live in harmony and together in one voice glorify God.

#### ***4. It needs to be honest and real (aka life-to-life)***

Jesus shared his life with his disciples. And if we are going to model that, we too need to be sharing our lives with one another. Now that will mean sharing your less than perfect moments and being willing to be transparent with the people you disciple. Have you ever noticed that when the gospel writers composed their letters (which they shared with their disciples) they didn’t omit the very embarrassing low points in their ministry, like when they ran away after Jesus was arrested or when they argued over who would be the greatest, or when Jesus said to one of them “get behind me Satan”. They include the good, the bad, the ugly and they show how Jesus was gracious and redemptive through it all.



### *5. It needs to be **relational***

Mark 3:14 says, he [Jesus] appointed twelve so that they might be with him. He doesn't just speak at them, or teach them from a distance, but he did life with them. If you already have lunch at the same café every Monday, invite someone to join you. If you have a small child that normally sleeps from 12-2 maybe someone could come over and you could pray and read the Bible together. The point being: a) we meet together and b) we meet in a way that fits with the natural rhythms of our lives – it's a relationship.

### *6. It needs to be **fluid***

What I mean by fluid, is that discipleship shouldn't be overly rigid. There is no "one size fits all model". In the same way that people have different learning styles, I encourage you to be creative in the way you do one-to-one discipleship. For example, I spoke recently to Faith Oxley and Niki Shepherd and they both shared about how they used to meet and journal together. Paul shared about ripping out a page of the bible to read it with a tradie who was overwhelmed by the task of reading the bible, my dad used to incorporate devotions into his lunch break with his apprentice on the job site, some people meet over lunch, others meet while cooking dinner, some meet at cafes but the key here is that they gather around Jesus/the Word in a relational way. I like to think of this as the Miyagi method, a more fluid way of thinking about discipleship and less programmatic.

### **Challenge:**

- Consider if there is a time in your weekly schedule (among the natural rhythms of life) where you can invite someone to come and do life with you as you follow Jesus together? What would that look like?

## SESSION 2

### FROM START TO FINISH

This session "From Start to Finish" will look at some more practical elements of one-to-one discipleship like how to start the relationship well (establishing expectations and boundaries from day one), as well as how to finish well, both in a single session and for the whole discipleship relationship.

#### **1. Day One**

When you first meet up with the person you plan to begin a one-to-one partnership, here are three suggestions:

#### ***Get to know each other***

On the first meeting it would be best to use most of the time to simply get to know each other. Ask them to tell their story. Where they grew up, how they became a Christian etc. If it is hard to keep the conversation going you could ask questions about their family, job, interests, their experience of church, whether or not they are serving, the bible study they are in, the service they attend, how they become a Christian?

#### ***Establish expectations***

In this first session it is also a good idea to establish expectations and boundaries.

A helpful checklist would be:

**Where and when will you meet?** Make a set time - e.g. the first Sunday of the month at 3:30pm before the 5pm service at Cosmo Cafe. You can meet anywhere but just pick somewhere you can open the Bible, pray and share freely. If you have small children you could meet at your home or a park. Discuss with the one you are discipling what they would feel comfortable with.

**Clearly outline your commitment.** For example, not only your commitment to meet once a fortnight but also to pray for them, to maintain confidentiality (unless there is risk of harm to themselves or someone else - more on that later) and to be open and honest with them about your own walk with Jesus. Your commitment ought to be for at least one year. You can discuss extending this should it be mutually agreed.

**Discuss their commitment.** What do you expect of them (i.e. meeting regularly and on time, engaging with the Bible and discussion, being open and honest).

**Discuss what your sessions will look like.** Will you discuss a book of the Bible? Or work through a book like Tim Keller's book on Prayer?

**Discuss why you are meeting!** Make it clear that you want to help them grow spiritually and so that is why you will be opening the Bible together and keeping the gospel central.

### ***Discuss Confidentiality***

Confidentiality is important for relationship building as you share honestly with one another and your relationship deepens. Confidentiality means that you can't share anything from your 121 time with anyone else without the person's permission, and it's important to explain that from the start of meeting together. However, confidentiality does not apply if the person shares something which may involve the risk of serious injury or harm to someone. If that happens, please contact Jo Gibbs, Paul Lucas or John Gray. Where possible and appropriate, let the person know that is what needs to happen and involve them in the process.

## **2. Offering care and keeping the relationship on-track**

It is likely that the person you meet with will share things about their life, and God uses these conversations to help us grow in maturity. It's important to listen well, and to use gentle open questions to find out more about what life is like for them, so that you can be applying God's Word well together, and praying for one other. The focus of your relationship, however, is spiritual growth. If the issues that they raise become more complex, and beyond your level of training and expertise, it's important to let them know, and talk about getting more support for them. This could mean contacting the Care Minister Jo Gibbs or Paul Lucas. This may mean connecting them up with a counsellor or psychologist, and the Care Minister has a list of local professionals. It's important to know the boundaries of your role, and the focus of the 121 relationship in spiritual growth. It's important to establish these goals from the start, and to reaffirm them as you continue to meet together.

## **3. Caring for yourself**

Following on from the last point it is important to also care for yourself. So, make sure that you are doing well, taking the appropriate time to rest, but also to have solid time with God and your family and your friends. Another way to care for yourself is to meet with someone so that you can debrief. Not only is it important to have these things planned at the beginning of starting a new discipleship partnership but it is important to check-in maybe once every couple of months. Am I feeling drained? Have I taken time to rest?

## **4. Finishing well**

***Finishing the session:*** Ending sessions with prayer is encouraged. It would be good to ask the person if they are comfortable with that first. If they are comfortable, end the meeting with prayer. This is also a great way to end a conversation if the person won't stop talking "before we wrap up what is something you would like prayer for? Or what is one thing I can pray for you right now?"

***Finishing the partnership:*** In terms of ending the whole relationship. It is helpful to reassess at the end of the year and either extend the relationship for another 6 or 12 months or just finish up then. You can even reassess at the end of 6 months if you feel you are not "clicking" and that can be an easy way out.

***Preparing disciple-makers/training others:*** A really important element of "finishing well" is preparing your disciple to go and make disciples. In 2 Tim. 2:2, the calling there is to go and make disciple-makers (pass on what you have been taught so they can in turn pass it on to others).

Edmund Chan says, "Disciple making is the process of bringing people into a right relationship with God, developing them to full maturity in Christ through intentional growth strategies, that they might multiply the entire process in others also." And so, as the relationship is drawing to an end (perhaps the last 3-6 months) it would be great to intentionally train your disciple. It could be as simple as bringing them along to a training session like this, where they can learn the ins and outs of discipleship.

### **Challenge:**

- What are some important boundaries you would put in place in a one-to-one relationship?
- What would be some care strategies you could take to make sure you are doing well?

# SESSION 3

## THE HOWS OF ONE-TO-ONE DISCIPLESHIP

### 1. How to read a passage together and helpful resources to use

When it comes to actually opening the Bible with someone it can feel a bit daunting.

#### *Some hints:*

- Go through passages to keep within the context.
- It is Ok if you do not know something you can ask someone and get back to them.
- It is Ok to not have the answers. There are tensions in the Bible, some of which we just have to hold but they never undermine the truth.
- Ask hard questions of the text, Jesus can handle it.
- Always keep in mind how what you are reading relates to the gospel (this keeps you on track).
- Always be looking for opportunities to apply (given that you have caught up with what has been happening and you have heard their story).
- Moral and social issues are also important to think as you read and apply the gospel.

#### *Some helpful resources for this are:*

One-to-One Bible Reading - David Helm  
God's Big Picture - Vaughan Roberts

### 2. How to pray together

- For the first few times you pray unless they offer to.
- Important for you to be a good example of someone who prays.
- Ask them respectfully if they would like to pray and when they do encourage them. The raw prayers are often the most inspiring.
- Keep it short.

### 3. How to answer difficult questions/ have difficult conversations

- Try and figure things out logically and use illustrations that are specific to them.
- Do not be afraid to take time to figure it out and get back to them.
- Read.
- Ask around. You can ask more than one person for responses.
- Try to work out the question behind the question. The question being asked can be a front for something.

#### **Weekly challenge:**

- Write down a friend's name you could read the bible with.
- Write down an older Christian's name who you could ask to read the bible with.
- Write down the reasons why you are eligible for this ministry.





**ST PAUL'S**  
CASTLE HILL