

And They Fled From the Tomb

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Lesson One: John and the Teaching of Jesus

TEXTS:

- Mark 1:1-8
- Mark 1:9-15
- Mark 1:35-39
- Mark 6:14-29
- Mark 4:1-20
- Mark 4:21-25
- Mark 4:26-34

Salvation... If You Want It

In our Bible classes and sermons, we often talk about how easy God made our salvation. Because of the death of Jesus, we no longer have to be perfect to please God. Instead, it is enough that we are perfected.

However, it's equally legitimate to talk about how hard salvation is. Jesus Himself tells us that most will walk the road to destruction, and only a few walk the path to life. In truth, nobody is going to end up in heaven by accident. If we want to end up there, we have to dedicate our lives to going there. That's the way God set it up.

We see another place where God makes pleasing Him doable but difficult in the teaching of Jesus. When our Lord spoke to the multitude, He never spoke without a parable, obscure stories they would never understand on their own.

That was precisely the point. Jesus wasn't fishing for the spiritually lazy who wanted to be spoon-fed. He wanted the people who cared enough to go to Him afterwards to find the truth. If we want to be disciples of His, we must share that truth-seeking heart, even when it's difficult.

Day One

1. Who appears in Mark 1:4? According to 1:2-3, what is the significance of his appearance? Why is this important?

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6. Lesson Six

Day Two

7. Lesson Seven

8. Lesson Eight

9. Lesson Nine

10. Lesson Ten

11. Lesson Eleven

12. Lesson Twelve

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Lesson Thirteen: Review

Below, describe the main themes of each lesson mentioned and relate their spiritual significance to us.

Day One

1. Lesson One

2. Lesson Two

3. Lesson Three

4. Lesson Four

5. Lesson Five

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2. According to 1:4-5, how do the people react to this man? What promises does he make to his hearers in 1:7-8? How are these promises fulfilled?

3. What happens in 1:9? In 1:10-11, what results from this? What is the significance of this event to us?

4. What does Jesus begin to do in 1:14? What is He responding to? According to 1:15, what message is He proclaiming? How does all of this connect back to John the Baptist?

5. What does Jesus say in 1:38? What does He do in 1:39? What does this tell us about His view of His purpose?

6. What happens to John in 6:17-20? Why? What does John's example teach us about proclaiming the truth?

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7. In 6:21-29, what happens to John? Why does this happen? What lessons can we take from this?

Day Two

8. In Mark 4:1-9, what four kinds of seeds does Jesus describe? What happens to each? Unless we read the explanation, how clear is the meaning of this parable to us?

9. What happens in 4:10? How does Jesus respond to this in 4:11-12? What do Jesus' words tell us about His parables?

10. According to 4:13-20? What do the four kinds of seeds and their fates represent? What can we learn from each type of seed?

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11. Whom do we encounter in 16:1? In 16:1-2, what are they doing? Why have they waited? What unexpected thing do they see in 16:3-4? Are these people who expect Jesus to be resurrected? Why or why not?

12. Who appears in 16:5? What does he tell the women in 16:6-7? How do they react in 16:8? Why is this a reasonable reaction? How does it fit with the overall tone of Mark?

13. What does Jesus do in 16:9? What does she do in 16:10? According to 16:11, what result does this have? What does this incident tell us about the disciples' understanding?

14. What happens in 16:12? To what story does this Scripture refer? What results from this? Are the disciples here acting like conspirators, or are they just acting clueless? Why? Why is this question important?

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7. What general action do we see people doing in 15:29-32? Who is involved in this? What are they saying? Why is this Scripturally important?

Day Two

8. What happens in Mark 15:33? What do we see Jesus doing in 15:34? How do the bystanders react to this in 15:35-36? Where do we see any of these events in the Old Testament?
9. What does Jesus do in 15:37? What two events accompany this, as described in 15:38-39? Why are these things important?
10. Whom do we meet in 15:43? What does he do? In 15:44-45, what is the result of his request? How does he then treat the body of Jesus, according to 15:46? Why is this Scripturally significant?

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11. What point does Jesus make in 4:21-23? What warning does He offer in 4:24-25? What does this tell us about the way that we should receive the teaching of Jesus?
12. What comparison does Jesus make in 4:26? According to 4:27-29, what happens over the course of this comparison? What do these things mean?
13. What other comparison does Jesus present in 4:30-31? According to 4:31-32, what is the focus of the comparison? What should we learn from this today?
14. What does 4:33-34 reveal about Jesus' teaching to the multitude? What does it reveal about His teaching to the disciples? Why is this important?

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Lesson Two: Jesus and His Disciples, Part I

TEXTS:

- Mark 1:16-20
- Mark 2:13-17
- Mark 3:13-19
- Mark 6:7-12
- Mark 8:27-30
- Mark 8:31-33
- Mark 8:34-9:1
- Mark 9:2-13

Commitment to Christ

When we turn our attention instead to Jesus' interaction with those courageous enough to be His disciples, one of the first things we notice is just how much He demanded of them.

You couldn't be a disciple of Jesus and keep doing what you were before. You had to drop it all and follow. You couldn't hold on to even the greatest prophets of the Jewish religious tradition. Instead, you had to put Him on a level above everyone else. You couldn't even hope to hold on to your life. Only by dying to self could you live for Him. When we consider how much the disciples had to absorb, the wonder isn't that they failed as much as they did. It's that they succeeded as much as they did.

Today, nearly 2000 years later, the rules haven't changed. Jesus still expects His disciples to make Him the center of their existence, to submit everything in their lives to His will. This transformation is profound, demanding, and far more than many so-called Christians realize. In reality, if we want the reward that Jesus promises, we have to live the life He expects.

Day One

1. Whom does Jesus see in Mark 1:16? What does He say to them in 1:17? According to 1:18, how do they respond? Who else does the same in 1:19-20? What does this tell us?

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2. Where does Jesus go in 15:1? What is He asked in 15:2? How does He answer this? What do the chief priests do in 15:3? What happens in 15:4-5? Why is this Scripturally significant?
3. What custom is described in 15:6? According to 15:7, who is the other candidate for this custom? How is he described? What does the crowd do in 15:8? How does Pilate react to this in 15:9-10? Why? What does this tell us about Pilate's mindset?
4. How does the crowd answer Pilate in 15:11-14? Why? In 15:15, what result does this have? How is this a fulfillment of Scripture?
5. Who has charge of Jesus in 15:16? What do they do to Him in 15:17-20? Why is this treatment of Jesus ironic?
6. According to 15:21-27, what happens to Jesus? What events during this process were prophesied? Where?

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Lesson Twelve: The Death of Jesus, Part II

TEXTS:

- Mark 14:66-72
- Mark 15:1-15
- Mark 15:16-20
- Mark 15:21-32
- Mark 15:33-41
- Mark 15:42-47
- Mark 15:1-8
- Mark 15:9-13

The Jesus Conspiracy

One of the big problems that the enemies of Christ have is that His tomb was in fact found empty. From the day of resurrection onward, they've tried to deal with this by claiming that His disciples stole the body, that what looks like a resurrection was in fact the result of conspiracy.

Of course, the big flaw with this argument is that no one was expecting a resurrection, least of all His disciples. That Sunday morning, the followers of Jesus were a defeated band, almost willfully blind to the evidence that He had been raised. The women fled from the tomb when they found it empty. When Mary Magdalene told the apostles she had seen the Lord, she was dismissed. Thomas even rejected the testimony of the other ten apostles.

If this was a conspiracy, who were the conspirators? Every single one of Jesus' closest followers is on record as expecting Him to stay dead and denying the possibility that He wasn't. The thought of a hoax never crossed their minds. In truth, the empty tomb was not the work of crafty followers. It was the wondrous work of God.

Day One

1. In Mark 14:66, where is Peter? What happens to him in 14:66-67? How does he deal with this in 14:68? How does the cycle repeat itself in 14:69-71? What happens in 14:72? What can we learn from Peter?

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2. Whom does Jesus encounter in 2:14? What is this man's profession? Why is this significant? What does Jesus command him to do? How does he react? What does this teach us today?
3. What does Jesus do in 3:13? What appointments does He make in 3:14? According to 3:14-15, why are these men so designated? Why does Jesus do this?
4. What does Jesus do in 6:7? How are these men sent out? Why does Jesus do it this way? What can we learn from Him?
5. What does Jesus command the apostles not to do in 6:8-9? According to 6:10-11, how are they to provide for themselves instead? What are they to do if rejected? Why do you think Jesus chooses this method?
6. What question does Jesus ask in 8:27? What replies does He get in 8:28? What answer does Peter give in 8:29? In 8:30, how does Jesus reply to him? What should we take from this?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Two

7. What does Jesus prophesy in 8:31? How does Peter react to this in 8:32? How does Jesus deal with him in 8:33? What does this account teach us?

Day Two

8. What command does Jesus give in Mark 8:34? What reason for so doing does He provide in 8:35? What does this mean? What should we do about it?
9. What rhetorical questions does Jesus ask in 8:36-37? What related promise does He give in 8:38? What does this mean to us?
10. What promise does Jesus make in 9:1? What does this refer to? Why is it important for us to understand this today?

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11. Who appears in 14:43? According to 14:45, what plan has he devised? What actually happens in 14:45-47? What would it have been like to witness this event?
12. What does Jesus ask in 14:48-49? What is His final conclusion? According to 14:50, what do the disciples do? What's the difference between Jesus' outlook and theirs? What can we learn from Him today?
13. According to 14:53, where does Jesus go next? As per 14:55, what is the goal of the Sanhedrin here? In 14:55-59, how much of what they want do they get? What does this tell us about the trial of Jesus?
14. What exchange takes place between Jesus and the high priest in 14:60-62? How does the high priest react to this in 14:63? What is the result in 14:64-65? What is the logical problem with this condemnation?

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7. What does Jesus do in 14:22? What does He subsequently do in 14:23-25? Why is it significant that Jesus speaks of “My blood of the covenant” here? What does this mean for us today?

Day Two

8. What does Jesus prophesy in Mark 14:26-28? According to 14:29, how does Peter take this? How does Jesus answer him in 14:30? What do the rest of the disciples say in 14:31? What can we learn from this about the power of temptation?
9. What does Jesus do in 14:32-34? What do we see Him praying in 14:35-36? How do we make this fit with what Jesus knew was going to happen? What can we learn from this about prayer?
10. In 14:37, what does Jesus discover? What does He say about it in 14:37-38? Despite this, what happens in 14:39-40? According to 14:41-42, what is the final resolution of this? What can we learn from this story about the humanity of Jesus?

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11. Where does Jesus go in 9:2? What happens to Him in 9:2-3? According to 9:4, who else appears there? What is the significance of their appearance?
12. What does Peter propose in 9:5-6? Why? What reaction does Peter’s proposal generate in 9:7? Why is this important?
13. What command does Jesus give in 9:9? According to 9:10, what about this confuses the apostles? Why is their confusion significant? What can we take from this episode?
14. What topic do the apostles bring up in 9:11? What reply does Jesus make in 9:12-13? About whom is He talking? Why is this important?

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Lesson Three: Jesus and His Disciples, Part II

TEXTS:

- Mark 9:30-32
- Mark 9:33-50
- Mark 10:13-16
- Mark 10:23-31
- Mark 10:32-34
- Mark 10:35-45

The Frightening Jesus

One of the challenges of latter-day discipleship is that we are simultaneously more removed from and more familiar with Jesus. On the one hand, we never experienced what it was like to walk with Him. On the other, we are so familiar with the story of His life that we have to work to be amazed even by its most amazing parts.

This causes us to lose touch with how frightening it must have been to walk with the Master. As a teacher, He pushed them to their limits constantly. As a miracle worker, He demonstrated an overwhelming and terrifying control over the forces of nature. As a prophet, He made repeated spooky predictions that He was going to be captured and executed. This was not a man who made life easy on His followers!

Even as we remember the meekness of Jesus and the love of Jesus, we cannot forget the awe of Jesus. Our Lord was not and is not some kind of milquetoast hippie drifting around the countryside. He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the wielder of devastating authority and power. Only if we respect it can we hope to be saved.

Day One

1. What does Jesus reveal in Mark 9:31? According to 9:32, how do His apostles deal with this? Why would they react in such a way?

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2. What do the disciples do with the colt in 11:7? In 11:8-10, what results from this? How is this event an important fulfillment of prophecy?
3. What do the Jewish leaders decide to do in 14:1? How does 14:2 explain their motivations? What help do they receive in 14:10? What is the result of this in 14:11? What does this tell us about the human vulnerability to evil?
4. What happens in 14:3? How do some react to this in 14:4-5? What response does Jesus make in 14:6-8? What prophecy does He utter in 14:9? What can we learn from this?
5. According to 14:12, what time of year are all of these events occurring? What does Jesus command His disciples to do in 14:13-15? What happens in 14:16? Why is all this significant?
6. What does Jesus say during dinner, according to 14:17-18? What response does this meet with in 14:19? How does Jesus reply in 14:21? What can we learn from this about the interaction between prophecy and free will?

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Lesson Eleven: The Death of Jesus, Part I

TEXTS:

- Mark 11:1-11
- Mark 14:1-2
- Mark 14:3-9
- Mark 14:10-25
- Mark 14:26-42
- Mark 14:43-52
- Mark 14:53-65

The Doomed Sacrifice

As we've observed throughout the quarter, Mark is the darkest of all the gospels. One of the things that makes it so dark is the way that so many of the comments that Jesus make foreshadow the cross. He predicts His imminent death several times, speaks of His body being prepared for burial, and, when He is on trial for His life, refuses to say a word in His defense.

To say the least, this is not the way that founders of human religions operate. When Mohammed was thrown out of Mecca, He didn't wait humbly for execution. He gathered an army and conquered His enemies instead. In our own time, David Koresh didn't give himself up to spare His followers. He went down in flames in His Waco compound, but he took them with him.

Jesus was different because His purpose was different. He didn't live for Himself. He lived for us, and when our sin required His death, He willingly offered Himself. That's not the way that men behave. A false prophet who dies for his people gains nothing by the exchange. Jesus died because it was His plan from the beginning.

Day One

1. Where is Jesus in Mark 11:1? What does He say to His disciples in 11:2-3? What happens in 11:4-6? What insight does this give us into what it would have been like to travel with Jesus?

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2. What does Jesus ask in 9:33? According to 9:34, what response does this generate? Why? What does this reveal about the apostles?
3. How does Jesus deal with the apostles' problem in 9:35? What does this mean to us today?
4. What does Jesus do in 9:36? Using this visual aid, what does He say in 9:37? What does this have to do with the previous discussion? How should we apply it?
5. What problem does John present in 9:38? How does Jesus reply to this in 9:39-40? What does this mean? What should we take from it?
6. What general topic does Jesus address in 9:42-49? What specific instructions appear within this topic? What do we need to do about these things?

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7. What rhetorical question does Jesus ask in 9:50? What point does Jesus use this rhetorical question to make? What must we do to apply His words here?

Day Two

8. What happens in Mark 10:13? What commentary does Jesus give on this in 10:14-15? What do His words here mean? How should they shape our understanding of the kingdom?
9. What statement does Jesus make/repeat in 10:23, 25? How do the disciples react to this in 10:24, 26? Why do they react in this way? When can the same attitude be a problem for us?
10. What question do the disciples ask about this in 10:26? What answer does Jesus give them in 10:27? What's the point of this for us?

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11. According to 12:30-31, what is the substance of Jesus' answer to the scribe? How should this passage shape our understanding of what it means to be a disciple of Christ?
12. How does the scribe react to Jesus' answer in 12:32-33? What does Jesus say to him in 12:34? Why? What is the final result of this encounter? What can we learn from the scribe?
13. What is Jesus doing in 12:35? What apparent contradiction does He bring up in 12:35-37? What point does Jesus mean to make here? What is the result of His teaching?
14. About whom does Jesus warn the people in 12:38? How does He describe them in 12:38-40? What can we learn from this today?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Ten

7. What do the Jewish leaders do in 12:13? What do these people ask in 12:14? Why is this a trap? How does Jesus answer in 12:15-17? What is the ultimate result? What does this teach us about Jesus?

Day Two

8. Who appears in Mark 12:18? What do they believe? What do they ask in 12:19-23? How does Jesus describe these people in 12:24? How does He answer them in 12:25? Why is this debate relevant to us today?
9. What general topic does Jesus address in 12:26? How does He resolve the question? What conclusion does He arrive at in 12:27? What can we learn from Him about the study of the word?
10. Who shows up in 12:28? What is different about his motive? What does he ask? What is different about the way that Jesus deals with him? Why? What does this teach us?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Three

11. What does Peter ask in 10:28? Why does this question appear here? What reply does Jesus make in 10:29-30? Why is persecution on the list of benefits that disciples will receive? What conclusion does Jesus offer to this in 10:31? Why?
12. What does Jesus do in 10:32? What reaction does this generate from the disciples? Why? What does Jesus say about Himself in 10:33-34? Why is it significant that this is the third repetition of this idea?
13. In 10:35-37, what do James and John want? In 10:38, how does Jesus initially respond? Why is this an appropriate response? What question does He then ask? According to 10:39, what reply do James and John make? What does Jesus finally say about all this in 10:40?
14. According to 10:41, how do the other apostles react to James and John's maneuver? What teaching does Jesus give them in response in 10:42-45? How should this teaching change our behavior today?

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Lesson Four: Jesus and His Disciples, Part III

TEXTS:

- Mark 12:41-44
- Mark 13:1-31
- Mark 13:32-37
- Mark 16:14-20

Context and the Bible

Although the Bible is certainly the most relevant book in human history, many misguided believers attempt to carry that relevance too far. Rather than focusing on the Bible's instructions for righteous living, which are no less true today than 2000 years ago, they home in on Biblical prophecies about the rise and fall of nations, the more obscure the better.

We see this plainly in the way that many religious groups deal with Jesus' prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels. They take those predictions, mix them with other predictions from the book of Revelation, and from this, attempt to foretell what will happen in modern world events. The fact that their attempts uniformly meet with failure doesn't seem to bother them much.

Among other problems, this interpretation method has a context problem. Why would Jesus tell His first-century disciples about events in the far future that wouldn't concern them at all? We must turn to the events of 2000 years ago, not today, to find the fulfillment of prophecy.

Day One

1. What do Jesus and His disciples observe in Mark 12:41-42? In 12:43-44, what commentary does Jesus offer on this? How should this change our perspective on giving?

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2. According to 11:27, what happens the next time Jesus comes to the temple? In 11:28, what is He asked? What is the purpose of this question?
3. In 11:29-30, how does Jesus reply? How do the chief priests, scribes, and elders take this in 11:31-32? What's noteworthy about their line of reasoning? What result does all of this have in 11:33? Why did Jesus answer them as He did?
4. In 12:1, what does Jesus begin to do? According to 12:1-5, how does the parable progress? What is this parable about?
5. In the parable, what does the man finally decide to do in 12:6? According to 12:7-8, how do the tenants take this? What's the ultimate resolution of their decision in 12:9? What is Jesus talking about here?
6. What does Jesus ask in 12:10-11? What is the Scripture He quotes about? What result does His teaching have in 12:12? Why?

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Lesson Ten: Jesus and Opposition, Part III

TEXTS:

- Mark 11:15-19
- Mark 11:27-33
- Mark 12:1-12
- Mark 12:13-17
- Mark 12:18-27
- Mark 12:28-34
- Mark 12:35-37
- Mark 12:38-40

The Master of the Ready Reply

When Jesus arrives in Jerusalem and really starts opposing the religious leaders of the Jews, they decide that they need to embarrass this hick upstart by sending their most subtle religious scholars against Him. According to the script, these scholars are going to trap Jesus with all sorts of trick questions, discrediting Him in front of the multitude.

Of course, Jesus doesn't follow the script. When they present Him with a lose-lose question ("Do we pay taxes to Caesar?"), He finds a third option that embarrasses His questioners instead. When the Saducees come to Him with a trick hypothetical they've been using on the Pharisees for years, He blows the hypothetical up by revealing their spiritual ignorance. The religious leaders end up discredited instead.

When the temple guards in John 7 say "No man ever spoke like this," they're exactly right. Jesus is too good, His answers are too perfect, for Him to be a mere mortal. Even today, we can appreciate His brilliance, and be reassured by it that He truly was the Son of God.

Day One

1. In Mark 11:15-16, what does Jesus do? According to 11:17, how does He justify His actions? In 11:18, what reactions does this meet with? What can we learn from Him here?

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2. What do Jesus' disciples exclaim about in 13:1? What does Jesus say in response in 13:2? How does this comment fit in with the foreboding nature of this gospel generally?
3. What do the four "inner circle" apostles ask Jesus about in 13:3-4? Why is the wording of their question significant? What concern does Jesus bring up in reply in 13:5? According to 13:6-8, what things are not yet the signs of the end?
4. What negative events does Jesus prophesy will happen to His disciples in 13:9-13? What positive promises does He make? What comfort can we take from those promises today?
5. What sign does Jesus point to in 13:14? What does this refer to? According to 13:14-20, what should Christians then do? According to 13:21-23, what should they avoid? Why were these things important?
6. What does Jesus predict will happen in 13:24-27? Would the apostles necessarily have expected a literal fulfillment of these things? Consider Acts 2:14-21 in your answer.

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7. What natural example does Jesus cite in Mark 13:28? What application does He make from this in 13:29? In 13:30, how else does Jesus limit the time in which these things will occur? Why is this important today?

Day Two

8. What does Jesus say in Mark 13:32? Are these words still about the destruction of Jerusalem, or are they about something different? Why?
9. What warning does Jesus offer in 13:33? Why? How can this be reconciled with 13:29?
10. What comparison does Jesus make in 13:34? What resulting commands does He give in 13:35-37? How do we need to apply His words today?

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11. In 10:1, where is Jesus? Who shows up in 10:2? What do they ask? Why? How is this a new strategy for the Pharisees?
12. In 10:3, how does Jesus respond? What answer do they give in 10:4? What reply does Jesus make in 10:5? How should we understand His words?
13. What does Jesus reveal about God's intent for marriage in 10:6-8? In 10:9, what conclusion does He reach? What does this mean for us and our marriages?
14. What happens in 10:10? What does Jesus reveal about the implications of His words in 10:11-12? What exceptions are there to this rule? What do His words lead us to do here?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Nine

7. In 7:20-22, what does Jesus say does defile us? Why did the Pharisees prefer to pay attention to external things rather than these? How do we need to apply this passage?

Day Two

8. What do the Pharisees do in Mark 8:11? In 8:12-13, how does Jesus respond? Why does Jesus react in this way? When do we encounter people with the same attitude as the Pharisees?
9. What problem emerges in 8:14? What does Jesus say about it in 8:15? What does He mean by this? How do we need to apply His words?
10. In 8:16, how do the apostles react? What does Jesus say about this in 8:17-20? What does He want them to understand? When are we guilty of the same misunderstanding?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Four

11. What does Jesus do in 16:14? When does this take place? How does He deal with His apostles at this time? Why? How does this fit in with one of the major themes of Mark?
12. What command does Jesus give in 16:15? According to 16:16, what difference does the response to this gospel make? Why do we care about this today?
13. What promise does Jesus make in 16:17-18? According to this text, to whom does this promise apply? What other passages limit the breadth of this promise? Why is this important?
14. What happens to Jesus in 16:19? According to 16:20, how do the apostles respond to this? How does the Lord help them? What important insight does this give us into the purpose of spiritual gifts?

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Lesson Five: Jesus and Healing

TEXTS:

- Mark 1:29-31
- Mark 1:40-45
- Mark 5:21-43
- Mark 6:53-56
- Mark 7:31-37
- Mark 8:22-26
- Mark 10:46-52

The Purpose of Healing

Even though the wave of Pentecostalism has largely crested in this country, we don't have to look very hard to find so-called faith healers. We see them on TV. We hear about them in conversations with denominational friends. In some areas of the country, they pose a serious obstacle to the spread of the gospel.

As diverse as these faith healers are, they all share the unspoken assumption that Jesus and the apostles healed people just because, that healing was just as much a goal of Christ's ministry as seeking the lost was. As a result, they see no problem with healing continuing today.

Of course, the Bible tells a different story. God's servants never healed for the sake of healing. Because all men are mortal anyway, such a ministry would have been pointless. Instead, the healings of Christ served a larger purpose. They proclaimed Him as the Messiah, the prophet God had sent as the successor to Moses. His obviously divine healings made it obvious that His message was divine in origin too. Healing was the means, not the end.

Day One

1. What sick person does Jesus encounter in Mark 1:30? According to 1:31, what does Jesus do for her? How does she react to this? What does her behavior teach us?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Nine

2. What does Jesus reveal in 3:28-29? According to 3:30, what provoked this comment? What do Jesus' words mean? What do they mean for us? Hebrews 2:3-4 may help you answer.
3. Who appears in Mark 7:1? What do they see in 7:2? How does 7:3-4 explain their problem with it? What can we learn from the Pharisees and their traditions?
4. What accusations do the Pharisees level against Jesus in 7:5? In 7:6-8, how does Jesus answer them? What happens to us if we teach as doctrine the commandments of men? How do we avoid this?
5. What does Jesus say the Pharisees do in 7:9? How does He prove His point in 7:10-13? What problem with binding tradition does this illustrate?
6. What does Jesus reveal to the people in 7:14-16? Why does He say this here? What do the disciples do in 7:17? How does He answer them in 7:18-19? What should this teach us about spiritual growth?

And They Fled From the Tomb

Lesson Nine: Jesus and Opposition, Part II

TEXTS:

- Mark 3:22-30
- Mark 7:1-23
- Mark 8:11-21
- Mark 10:1-12

Binding Tradition

In the Lord's church today, we have any number of traditions that were established by men, from offering an invitation song to meeting in a church building. We are perfectly free to follow these traditions because Scripture permits them.

However, we must take care that none of these traditions become elevated to the same level as the word. We must not bind them on ourselves or on others. We see why from the example of the Pharisees. With the best intentions in the world, they developed a set of traditions to act as "a hedge around the Law". However, as this body of tradition accumulated and became more and more important, it began to contradict the Law itself. When that point came, the Pharisees rejected the Law in favor of the tradition.

The same thing has happened to denomination after denomination, and it can easily happen to us. We can become so set in following our unwritten guidelines that they become rules to be upheld at all costs. Down that road lies disaster. We can maintain godly traditions, but the only authority for our practice must be the word.

Day One

1. Who shows up in Mark 3:22? Of what do they accuse Jesus? In 3:23-27, what three parables does He use to rebut them? How do these three illustrations logically refute the accusation?

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2. Who appears in 1:40? What is his attitude? According to 1:41, what does Jesus do? Why? According to 1:42, what is the result? What insight does this give us into the character of Jesus?
3. What command does Jesus give in 1:43-44? In 1:45, what does the ex-leper do instead? What result does this have for Jesus? Why would Jesus have given this command in the first place?
4. What does Jesus do in 5:21? What happens in 5:22-23? How does Jesus handle this? What does this show us about the fame of Jesus at this point?
5. What member of the crowd around Jesus does 5:25-26 focus on? What problem does she have? According to 5:27-28, what does she decide to do? Why? What does her example teach us about faith?
6. What happens to this woman in 5:29? In 5:30-32, how does Jesus react? What should we make of this sequence of events?

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7. In 5:33, what does the woman do? In response, what does Jesus tell her in 5:34? How are Jesus' words here true? What does this mean for us?

Day Two

8. What news does the ruler of the synagogue receive in Mark 5:35? What response does Jesus give him in 5:36? When are we presented with similarly conflicting opinions today?
9. What does Jesus do in 5:37? In 5:38, what does He find? In 5:39, what commentary does He offer on what has happened? According to 5:40, what reaction does this generate? What do we need to take from this?
10. What does Jesus do in 5:41? What result does this have in 5:42? According to 5:43, what does He command those who saw this? Once again, why would Jesus do this?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Eight

11. What do the Pharisees question Jesus about in 2:18? What two replies does He make in 2:19-22? What should we learn from this about the relationship between the law of Moses and the law of Christ?
12. What are Jesus' disciples doing in 2:23? What do the Pharisees ask about this in 2:24? How does Jesus answer them in 2:25-28? Does this mean that we get to ignore the law in times of necessity? If not, then what does it mean?
13. What situation does Jesus encounter in 3:1-2? What does He ask in 3:4? What reply does He get? According to 3:5, how does He take this? What does He do anyway? What can we learn from Him about doing the right thing in hostile environments?
14. What do the Pharisees do as a result in 3:6? What does this tell us about them? How can we avoid falling into the same trap today?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Eight

7. How is Jesus' attitude described in 10:21? What does He say to the man as a result? According to 10:22, how does the man react? Why? How can we avoid a similar problem?

Day Two

8. What is the scene presented in Mark 2:1-2? How do four resourceful men react to this in 2:3-4? What result does this have in 2:5? What does this tell us about the relationship between faith and action?
9. What do the scribes say to themselves about Jesus' words in 2:6-7? What does Jesus ask in 2:8-9? What's the obvious answer? What does Jesus do about this in 2:10-12? How does this illustrate the purpose of the miracles that Jesus worked?
10. In 2:15, who are Jesus' dining companions? How do the scribes react to them in 2:16? How does Jesus explain Himself in 2:17? What should we learn from Jesus here?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Five

11. What does Jesus do in 6:53? How do the locals react to this in 6:54-55? What result do their actions have in 6:36? What does this tell us about the spectacular nature of the power of Jesus?
12. Whom do we encounter in 8:22? What does Jesus do in 8:23? According to 8:24, what result does this have? What does Jesus then do in 8:25? What result does this have? What conclusions can we draw from this event?
13. Who appears in 10:46? According to 10:47, what does he do? What reaction does this meet with in 10:48? What does he continue to do regardless? What lesson can we learn from his behavior?
14. What does Jesus do in 10:49-51? What does Bartimaeus say in response? What result does this have in 10:52? How does this healing differ from the "healings" of modern faith healers?

And They Fled From the Tomb

Lesson Six: Jesus and Demons

TEXTS:

- Mark 1:21-28
- Mark 1:32-34
- Mark 3:7-12
- Mark 5:1-20
- Mark 7:24-30
- Mark 9:14-29

Understanding Demons

To us, the casting out of demons is one of the most confusing parts of Jesus' ministry. Many people today attempt to equate demonic possession to mental illness, epilepsy, and so on, but a study of the Scriptural record reveals important differences from these modern ailments. For example, some demons granted supernatural strength or the ability to predict the future.

As best as we can tell, during the times in which God filled men with His Holy Spirit, Satan was likewise allowed to send unclean spirits into the land. These evil spirits could seize men and force them to perform things against their will. They did not appear to have some coherent plan for opposing the forces of good. They were merely agents of chaos, though in some cases powerful enough to give even Jesus pause.

Thankfully, the demons are no longer with us. In Zechariah 13:2, God says, "I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness." Today, although we are without inspired men to guide us, we are also without demons to torment us. Both can only be found in the word.

Day One

1. What do we see Jesus doing in Mark 1:21-22? What reactions is this generating? What unusual reaction do we see in 1:23-24? In 1:25, what does Jesus do about this? What does 1:26-28 tell us about the result? Why is this significant?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Eight

2. What happens in 3:31-32? What do they likely want? In 3:33-35, how does Jesus reply to them? Why is this important to us?
3. What does Jesus do in 6:1-2? What do the villagers say in response in 6:3? What do we learn from this about the mother and family of Jesus?
4. What does Jesus say about the Nazarenes in 6:4? Do we ever encounter similar problems today? When? How should we deal with them?
5. According to 6:5-6, how able is Jesus to heal in Nazareth? Why? How precisely did this attitude hinder Jesus?
6. In 10:17, what do we see a man asking? What reply does Jesus give him in 10:18-19? How does the man reply in 10:20? Why did Jesus ask this question when He knew the man already knew the answer?

And They Fled From the Tomb

Lesson Eight: Jesus and Opposition, Part I

TEXTS:

- Mark 3:20-21
- Mark 3:31-35
- Mark 6:1-6
- Mark 10:17-22
- Mark 2:1-12
- Mark 2:15-17
- Mark 2:18-28
- Mark 3:1-6

The Enemies of Jesus

For many students of the word, one of the most puzzling revelations of the gospel is that Jesus had enemies. There were people who lived during the time of Jesus, heard Him speak, saw what He did, and said, "I have to oppose Him."

On one level, that is utterly bizarre. Everybody, from the Pharisees on down, knew what Jesus was what He claimed to be. They saw the miracles He worked, but their reaction was to finesse the miracle away ("He casts out demons by Beelzebul!") or destroy the evidence ("Lazarus is raised from the dead! Let's kill him!"). Despite the slap-in-the-face certainty of what had occurred, they did not believe.

Their behavior makes more sense when we recognize that it still exists today. In the religious world, denomination after denomination takes the plain teaching of the Bible and rejects or distorts it. Why? Because they love power. Because they care more about their own theology than about God. The same was true for Jesus' opponents. They knew He was God, but that just wasn't important enough for them to follow.

Day One

1. In Mark 3:20, how do we see the crowd reacting to Jesus? In 3:21, how do we see His family reacting to Him? What additional insight into His ministry does this give us?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Six

2. What happens in 1:32-33? What result does this have in 1:34? What does Jesus forbid the demons to do? Why would He have done this?
3. Describe the situation presented in 3:7-9. What does 3:10 tell us about why such a crowd had gathered? According to 3:11-12, what interaction does Jesus have with the demons present? Why does He behave like this?
4. What does Jesus do in 5:1? Whom does He meet in 5:2? How is this man described in 5:3-5? How does this description differ from the description of other demon-possessed men? Why is this important?
5. What does the demon do in 5:6-7? What explanation for this is given in 5:8? What does this reveal to us about casting out demons?
6. What does Jesus ask in 5:9? What answer does He receive? What does the demon ask of Him in 5:10-12? According to 5:13, what is the result of this? What can we learn from this account?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Six

7. What reactions does Jesus get in 5:14-17? What different reaction does He see in 5:18? How does Jesus deal with both of these things in 5:19? According to 5:20, what ultimate result does this have? What does this emphasize about the ministry of Jesus?

Day Two

8. What does Jesus do in Mark 7:24? Why? What result does this have? How does this help us understand Jesus better?
9. Whom do we encounter in 7:25-26? What does she want? What is significant about her racial background? What does this tell us about race relations in first-century Palestine?
10. What does Jesus say in 7:27? What reply does the woman make in 7:28? What result does all of this have in 7:29-30? Why is this encounter unique? What does it teach us?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Seven

11. What does Jesus start with in 8:5? In 8:6-10, what does He do with it? Does this, along with the feeding of the 5000, have the impact that we would expect? In your answer, consider Jesus' words in John 6:26. What does this teach us?
12. What is the situation of Jesus in Mark 11:12? In 11:13, what does He do? What's the result of this? Why? What does Jesus do about it in 11:14? Is this just Jesus being petty, or is something else going on here?
13. What do the disciples see in 11:20-21? What reply does Jesus give them in 11:22-23? What does this mean for us today?
14. What two attributes does Jesus identify as essential to our prayers in 11:24-25? What does He promise if we have those things? What does His promise mean? What must we do to take advantage of these promises in our prayers?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Seven

7. What does Jesus begin His solution with in 6:38? In 6:39-44, how does His solution unfold? How does this differ from so-called “miracles” today?

Day Two

8. What does Jesus do in Mark 6:45-46? What does He then decide to do in 6:47-48? What does this reveal about Jesus?
9. How do the disciples react to Jesus in 6:49-50? What does Jesus say in response? What are the disciples thinking in 6:51-52? Why? What should we learn from this?
10. What problem does Jesus present in 8:1-3? How do the disciples reply to Him in 8:4? Was this the answer that Jesus was probably looking for? How do we avoid making the same mistake?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Six

11. What does Jesus find in 9:14-16? How is this argument explained in 9:17-18? What does this tell us both about the disciples of Jesus and about the climate in which they preached?
12. What does Jesus say in 9:19? In 9:20, what result does this have? How does the father describe the boy's symptoms in 9:21-22? What illness does this sound like? How is it different? Why is this important?
13. What does Jesus say to the father in 9:23? What reply does the father make in 9:24? According to 9:25-27, what result does this have? What should we learn from this?
14. What do the disciples ask Jesus in 9:28? What answer do they receive in 9:29? What does this teach us about demon possession?

And They Fled From the Tomb

Lesson Seven: Jesus and the Natural World

TEXTS:

- Mark 4:35-41
- Mark 6:30-44
- Mark 6:45-52
- Mark 8:1-10
- Mark 11:12-14
- Mark 11:20-25

The Power of Jesus

There are many blessings that come with being familiar with the word of God, but there are a few problems as well. Most notably, we reach the point where we know the stories of the Bible so well that we no longer marvel at them. If we're not careful, Jesus feeding the 5000 can be just as humdrum to us as mopping the kitchen floor.

Obviously, that's not the way that the miracles of Jesus deserve to be treated. There is nothing comparable to them in the natural realm, and in the supernatural realm, no prophet since Moses had demonstrated such breathtaking power. When Jesus said, "Peace; be still" and the storm on Galilee ceased, He probably changed the weather patterns for the entire globe in an instant. When He fed the hungry multitudes, he created or synthesized food in a way we can't even imagine. His works were spectacular.

As Jesus points out before He healed the paralytic, though, His works that we cannot see are even more spectacular. The same power that stilled storms is the power that saves us from sin, and that is a comforting thought indeed.

Day One

1. What does Jesus do in Mark 4:35? Judging from 4:36, what is His objective in doing so? Does even this succeed? How does this shed light on Jesus' travel patterns?

And They Fled From the Tomb: Lesson Seven

2. What happens in 4:37? What do the disciples do about this in 4:38? In 4:39, what's the result? How impressive is this? Why?
3. What does Jesus say to His apostles in 4:40? In 4:41, how do they react to this? What does this show us about what it was like to be with Jesus?
4. Whom do we see returning to Jesus in 6:30? What does Jesus say to them in 6:31? Why? What seldom-remembered aspect of Jesus' ministry does this highlight?
5. How do Jesus and the apostles solve the problem in 6:32-34? Does this work? Why? What does Jesus do in response? What does His example teach us about selflessness?
6. What difficulty do the disciples point to in 6:35-36? In 6:37, what is Jesus' reply? What should we learn from this?