

The Gospel of Mark

Aids for Teachers and Preachers

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October 2014

Contents

Contents.....	2
Introduction	3
Mark--the man.....	4
Mark 1.....	6
Mark 2.....	18
Mark 3.....	28
Mark 4.....	39
The Parable of The Sower.....	41
The Parable of The Seed Growing Secretly.....	46
The Parable of The Mustard Seed.....	47
Mark 5.....	49
Mark 6.....	64
Mark 7.....	75
Mark 8.....	85
Mark 9.....	92
Mark 10.....	104
Mark 11.....	115
Mark 12.....	124
Mark 13.....	132
Mark 14.....	141
Mark 15.....	153
Mark 16.....	159
Conclusion.....	165
Appendix 1---Miracles in the Book of Mark.....	166
Appendix 2---Questions for Teachers and Preachers	168

Introduction

The book of Mark is a short book but it is loaded with beautiful things. Since God's purpose in giving us the Scriptures was to reveal Himself and His character to us (something we could not have known except by His revelation), each chapter ends with a section labeled: "What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?" I encourage you to consider how each of those truths affects your daily life.

I believe it is His intent that as He reveals who He is, we will fall more and more in love with Him and grow to trust Him more and more. Then in turn we will reveal more of ourselves to Him in prayer. Although He already knows everything about us, it is important for us to trust Him enough to verbalize the things about ourselves that we might not want to share with anyone else. He in turn loves us unconditionally in spite of who we are or what we do, so our mutual love and trust grow into a wonderful abiding relationship.

The book of Mark can facilitate that growth as we study it, not just for doctrine or instruction, but as a love-letter that shows us what our loving God is like.

May God do so in you and those you teach as you reverently consider His Words.

Mark---the man

The author of the book of Mark (besides the Holy Spirit) was known variously as "John whose other name was Mark," "John called Mark," or simply "John," "Mark" or "Marcus"---a Roman name which gradually came to supersede his Jewish name "John."¹ *"The change of John to Mark is analogous to that of Saul to Paul; and we cannot doubt that the disuse of the Jewish name in favor of the other is intentional, and has reference to the putting away of his former life, and entrance upon a new ministry."*²

His mother Mary was a prominent member of the Jerusalem church. Christians regularly met in her home,³ where Peter came after his miraculous release from prison. It may well be that Peter (who calls Mark his "son"⁴) had the privilege of leading young Mark to faith---thus their warm lifelong relationship. He also had a close association with Paul and had family connections to his cousin Barnabas.⁵

Barnabas chose Mark as his traveling companion---perhaps to disciple the young man. Barnabas and Mark together with Paul went to Cyprus⁶ which was Barnabas' home of origin⁷ then continued on to Perga of Pamphylia.⁸ Unfortunately, Mark for some reason, decided to turn back and go home to Jerusalem⁹ to his mother Mary.¹⁰ Perhaps he was

¹ Acts 12:12,25; 13:5,13; 15:37,39; Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11; Philemon 24; 1 Peter 5:13

² McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia

³ Acts 12:12, And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

⁴ 1 Peter 5:13, She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.

⁵ Col 4:10, Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him).

⁶ Acts 13:2-4, While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. 4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

⁷ Acts 4:36-37, Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), 37 and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

⁸ Acts 13:13, Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

⁹ Acts 13:13, Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

¹⁰ Acts 12:12, And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

homesick; perhaps he had Jewish prejudices against the Gentiles; perhaps he was afraid of the journey ahead. Whatever the reason, later on when Paul wanted to go on his second missionary journey and Barnabas wanted to take Mark again, this caused a major rift between Paul and Barnabas.¹¹ Therefore they parted company and Paul took Silas on his journey¹² whereas Barnabas took Mark again to Cyprus.¹³

Later, Mark apparently grew in his faith and earned Paul's full confidence¹⁴ resulting in Paul commending him. Paul even calls him "my fellow laborer."¹⁵ Then Paul says to Timothy, "take Mark and bring him with you, for he is profitable to me for the ministry."¹⁶

It is probable that the naked "young man" spoken of in Mark 14:51-52¹⁷ was Mark himself.¹⁸

According to non-biblical texts, Alexandria was the final scene of Mark's labors, bishopric, and martyrdom.

Whether Mark was literally in the Middle Eastern city of "Babylon" mentioned in 1 Peter 5:13 or whether it is a euphemism for "Rome" is unknown.

¹¹ Acts 15:37-39, Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. 38 But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. 39 And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

¹² Acts 15:40, But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

¹³ Acts 15:39, And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

¹⁴ Col 4:10, Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him).

¹⁵ Philemon 24, Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, 24 as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers.

¹⁶ 2 Tim 4:11, Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

¹⁷ Mark 14:51-52, "There followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: 52 and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked."

¹⁸ "The detail of facts is remarkably minute; the name only is wanting. The most probable view is that Mark suppressed his own name, while telling a story which he had the best means of knowing. Awakened out of sleep...he comes out to see the seizure of the betrayed Teacher, known to him and in some degree beloved already. He is so deeply interested in his fate that he follows him even in his thin linen robe. His demeanor is such that some of the crowd are about to arrest him; then, 'fear overcoming shame', he leaves his garment in their hands and flees. We can only say that if the name of Mark is supplied, the narrative receives its most probable explanation." (McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia)

Mark 1

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

v1: **Gospel** means “good news” or “glad tidings.” This term was familiar to people.¹⁹ You’d think everyone would want to hear good news.

v1: The name “**Jesus**” is transliterated from the Hebrew “Joshua” which means “Jehovah saves” [rather appropriate, isn’t it?]. There are some amazing parallels between Joshua of the Old Testament and Jesus of the New Testament:

1. Both were saviors.
2. Both led God’s people out of captivity.
3. Both led them into the Promised Land.
4. Both were totally dependent on God in order to accomplish their tasks.
5. Both apportioned the land to the people.²⁰
6. Both led them to victory.

v1: “**Christ**” is not a surname (like Johnson or Berding). It is a title. It is identical to the Hebrew “Messiah.” It is equally valid to say “Jesus the Christ”, “Jesus the Messiah”, “Christ Jesus”, etc. It’s sort of like saying “Pastor Steve” or Mister Berding.”

v1: The term “**Son of God**” occurs zero times in the OT and 43 times in the NT (7x Mt; 3x Mk; 6x Lk; 9x Jn; 2x Ac; 4x epistles; 4x Heb; 7x 1 Jn; 1x Rev). In contrast, the designation “Son of Man” occurs much more frequently---107x in the OT and 88x in the NT. This shows that He is both 100% God and 100% man.

Mark 1:2-3, As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

***BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU,
WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY;
3 THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS,
'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD,
MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'***

v2-3: As is absolutely clear in the next verse, this refers to John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus.

¹⁹ “Good news” was used 24x in the OT (Hebrew “basar” which was translated in the Septuagint as Greek “euangelísasthai”). In the NT, this Greek word is used 76x.

²⁰ Luke 19:17, “And he said to him, ‘Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.’”

Mark 1:4, John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Actually, this was a pretty radical message for the Jews who had been taught for centuries that their sins were covered (but not forgiven) by having the priest make an atoning animal sacrifice. Although repentance is taught in the OT, the people were more interested in works they could do to earn God's favor.

John also introduced the people to the concept of baptism. They were familiar with the idea of ceremonial washing ²¹ (hands/feet/head ²²) so this was an extension to include the whole body (the "flesh"). John the Baptist also prepared them for baptism in the Spirit (see v8).

Mark 1:5, And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

This was threatening to the Pharisees and the Jewish leaders because they were losing their control over the people.

Clearly, the word "all" is a general term and does not mean every single person without exception. Therefore we need to be careful in other places where this word is used.

Mark 1:6, John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey.

On the surface this does not sound important until we realize that John the Baptist was dressed the same as Elijah.²³ The Jews were expecting²⁴ Elijah²⁵ to return just before the Messiah.

²¹ Leviticus chapters 11-17.

²² John 13:9, Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head."

²³ 2 Kings 1:8 says: "They answered him, "He was a hairy man with a leather girdle [belt] bound about his loins." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

²⁴ Mal 4:5, "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord."

²⁵ Matt 11:14, [Jesus speaking] "And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come." Also Matt 17:10-13, And His disciples asked Him, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" And He answered and said, "Elijah is coming and will restore all things; but I say to you that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

Mark 1:7, And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals."

John had a proper awe of Jesus. Do we?

Sandals implied reverence.^{26 27}

Mark 1:8, "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

This is crucial! This happened on Pentecost.²⁸ Prior to this day, although the disciples walked daily with Jesus and were convinced in their minds that He was the Son of God, they didn't "get it"---they had no power in their lives and ultimately turned away from Him and betrayed Him. But after the Holy Spirit was given, they were transformed into incredible witnesses, able to do miracles and willing to die rather than deny Him.

The key questions are:

1. What does it really mean to be baptized with the Holy Spirit?²⁹
2. Have we actually experienced Him?
3. Why not? [didn't believe]
4. What would be different if we did?^{30 31}
5. How do we experience Him?³² [ask and believe]

This contrasts the Law (the Old Covenant) with Grace (the New Covenant). This did not happen until Jesus was resurrected^{33 34} and totally fulfilled the Law.³⁵ Then He sent His Holy Spirit to dwell within us.^{36 37}

²⁶ Acts 7:33, "BUT THE LORD SAID TO HIM, 'TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND.'"

²⁷ Josh 5:15, The captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

²⁸ Acts 2:4, And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

²⁹ Rom 8:9-10, "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

³⁰ Acts 1:8, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

³¹ Gal 5:22-23, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..."

³² Luke 11:13, "...how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

The water of baptism represented the purifying water outside the Tabernacle which was necessary for the symbolic removal of the sins of the flesh.³⁸ Unfortunately, it did not take care of the heart.³⁹

On the other hand, the Spirit cleanses and empowers the heart.⁴⁰

The sealing of the Holy Spirit is not the same thing as the baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁴¹

In 2 Cor 1:21-22 it says: "Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge." These are two separate events:

1. The sealing occurs at the moment of belief. The seal⁴² of the Holy Spirit indicates ownership, a pledge, a down payment, a warning for Satan not to touch, etc.
2. The baptism of the Holy Spirit (the "filling", the "second blessing") occurs later when the believer surrenders everything to the Lord and is empowered for service.⁴³ In the wonderful book "They Found the Secret," every one of those people was a dedicated Christian who worked typically fifteen years with very little fruit until they experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Thereafter, their ministry blossomed exponentially.

³³ Acts 1:4-5, Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

³⁴ John 7:39, But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

³⁵ Matt 5:17, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."

³⁶ Rom 8:9, However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

³⁷ 1 Cor 6:19, Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God.

³⁸ Ex 30:18, "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it."

³⁹ Mark 7:21-23, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. 23 All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

⁴⁰ Jer 31:33, "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

⁴¹ Eph 4:30, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

⁴² In contrast to the "mark" of the Beast.

⁴³ Acts 1:8, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses..."

Although I totally love and respect our charismatic friends (and I have several), I don't believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is synonymous with speaking in tongues---although that may occur (if God so chooses).

The sealing, however, is mandatory for conversion (as indicated in Romans 8:9), but the baptism of the Holy Spirit may or may not occur, depending on the commitment and intent of the believer.

How does the baptism of the Holy Spirit take place? I think it occurs when the believer gets totally desperate trying to live the Christian life in his own power and he humbly turns to the Lord and confesses his need and asks⁴⁴ for the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵ Then Jesus sends His Spirit to dwell within us.^{46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53}

Mark 1:9, In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

Since he came from Nazareth, the Jews rejected Him because they expected the Messiah to come from Bethlehem.⁵⁴ Why didn't Jesus ever correct them and say He was born in Bethlehem? [they wouldn't have believed anyway]

⁴⁴ James 4:3, You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

⁴⁵ Luke 11:13, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

⁴⁶ Prov 1:23, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.

⁴⁷ Isa 44:3, I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring and My blessing on your descendants.

⁴⁸ Ezek 36:26-27, "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."

⁴⁹ John 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

⁵⁰ John 14:16-17, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth..."

⁵¹ John 15:26, "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me..."

⁵² John 16:7, "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."

⁵³ Acts 1:4-5, Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁵⁴ Mic 5:2, "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel."

Why did Jesus need to be baptized by John? ⁵⁵ Wasn't He already perfect and without sin? Wasn't He already filled with the Spirit? Otherwise, how could He have lived a life without sin?

Mark 1:10-11, Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; ¹¹ and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." ⁵⁶

v10: In the parallel passage in Luke 3:21-22, notice that Jesus was baptized by the Holy Spirit "while He was praying." ⁵⁷ That is significant.

v11: **You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased**---this is the same statement that God made at Jesus' transfiguration. ⁵⁸

Mark 1:12-13, Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness. ¹³ And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

v12: Why did the Spirit impel Him to go out into the wilderness? [to be away from people so He would be dependent only on God to minister to Him]

v13: What if Jesus had yielded to temptation? [See Hebrews 4:15]

v13: What is the significance of the number "**forty**"? The Flood rained for 40 days and nights. The Israelites wandered and ate manna 40 years in the desert. Moses was on Mt. Sinai for 40 days without food or water as he received the Ten Commandments [twice]. The spies spied out the Promised Land for 40 days. No more than 40 lashes were permitted for punishment. Many of the Judges and Kings ruled for 40 years and took power at age 40. In all, the number 40 is mentioned 109 times. It represents a time of trial or temptation.

⁵⁵ Matt 3:14-15, But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him.

⁵⁶ Parallel passage Matt 3:16-17, After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

⁵⁷ Luke 3:21-22, Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

⁵⁸ Matt 17:5-6, ...a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

Mark 1:14-15, Now after John had been taken into custody,⁵⁹ Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

v15: What is meant by **"the kingdom of God"**? [this is a huge topic beyond the scope of this paper]

v15: This message from Jesus [**"repent"**] sounds identical with John's message. Is it? [Notice the emphasis on the word **"believe"**]

v15: What is meant by **"the time is fulfilled"**? [the time of the Old Covenant is over]

Mark 1:16-18, As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." ¹⁸ Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

v17: Will He make us **"fishers of men"** too? Do we want that or is it inconvenient?

v18: **"Immediately they left their nets and followed Him."** Their nets were their livelihood. Would we leave our livelihood to follow Him? Would we do it immediately or wait until our lives are almost over?

Mark 1:19-20, Going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. ²⁰ Immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him.

v18: They even left their families to follow Him. Would we?

Mark 1:21-22, They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach. ²² They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

v21: It was common practice for a visitor from another town to teach in the **synagogue**.

v21: The Jewish **Sabbath** was from sunset Friday until sunset Saturday.

⁵⁹ Matt 14:3, For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him and put him in prison...

They were **amazed** since they thought He was merely a carpenter from Nazareth,⁶⁰ yet He taught with authority. Scribes and Pharisees usually quoted other rabbis rather than speaking with their own authority. Of course He spoke with authority since He only spoke what the Father instructed Him.⁶¹

Mark 1:23-24, Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, ²⁴ saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are — the Holy One of God!"

v23: Are there people in our “**synagogue**” with “**unclean spirits**”? Do we have authority to cast those spirits out?

v24: The “**unclean spirits**” know that He will come to destroy them---they are just mixed up on the timing.

v24: They “**know**” who Jesus is---“**the Holy One of God.**” Even though they have knowledge, they don’t have faith. Are we like that sometimes? Educated way beyond our faith?

Mark 1:25-26, And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" ²⁶ Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.

v25: Jesus merely spoke [He is the living Word] and the “**unclean spirit**” had to obey. He could command us too with the same authority but then we would not have free will to choose. He wants us to choose Him out of love---not fear. However, if we don’t choose Him, we’d better fear!

Mark 1:27-28, They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." ²⁸ Immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.

v27: Are we “**amazed**” or do we just passively take our salvation for granted? I wish that “**the news of Him would spread everywhere into all the surrounding district**” where I live.

Mark 1:29-31, And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a

⁶⁰ John 6:42, They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?"

⁶¹ John 8:28, "I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me."

fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. 31 And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them.

v31: Just another "routine boring miracle!" Jesus has done dozens of miracles but people still don't believe.^{62 63}

Mark 1:32-34, When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. 33 And the whole city had gathered at the door. 34 And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.

v34: Again as in v24, "they knew who He was." ["the Holy One of God."]

He did not allow them to speak because He did not need the testimony of men or demons.⁶⁴ In John 5:31-47, He called six witnesses (only two or three were required^{65 66 67}) to prove that He was the Son of God and still people didn't believe:

1. Himself (John 5:31)
 2. John the Baptist (John 5:33)
 3. His works (John 5:36)
 4. The Father (John 5:37)
 5. The Scriptures (John 5:39)
 6. Moses (John 5:46)
-

Mark 1:35, In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.

This is what we need to do, too. He would rather **pray** than sleep even though He really needed sleep.

⁶² John 4:48, So Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe."

⁶³ John 6:36, "But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe."

⁶⁴ John 2:24-25, But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, 25 and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

⁶⁵ Deut 17:6, "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness."

⁶⁶ Deut 19:15, ...on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.

⁶⁷ Heb 10:28, Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Mark 1:36-37, Simon and his companions searched for Him; ³⁷ they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You."

v37: This would sure catch most people's attention. Wow, people want to hear me! But Jesus had other priorities besides personal fame. He did not let Himself get distracted. Do we?

Mark 1:38-39, He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for." ³⁹ And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.

v38: **that is what I came for**---What was the purpose of all His miracles? [It showed His authority as God's representative (prophet) and as God's Son (Messiah)].

v39: Apparently there were a lot of demons in the synagogues and throughout Galilee even though they were supposedly God's people. How about us? Would we recognize demons in our church? ⁶⁸ ⁶⁹ If so, would we know what to do about them?

Mark 1:40-42, And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." ⁴¹ Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, ⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

v40: Wow! This desperate man had faith. He worshiped Jesus **on his knees**. We should follow his example because we too are afflicted with **leprosy** [sin].

v41: Jesus touched him. Amazing! The Law required lepers to warn people by shouting "unclean" so no one would touch them.⁷⁰ However, not only was Jesus willing to heal him, He was not afraid to touch him.

v41: Likewise, Jesus is willing to **touch** us and make us **clean** of our leprosy of sin and disobedience.

⁶⁸ 2 Peter 2:1, But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

⁶⁹ 2 Cor 11:13-15, For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

⁷⁰ Lev 13:45-46, "As for the leper who has the infection, his clothes shall be torn, and the hair of his head shall be uncovered, and he shall cover his mustache and cry, 'Unclean! Unclean!' ⁴⁶ He shall remain unclean all the days during which he has the infection; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp."

Mark 1:43-44, And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away, ⁴⁴ and He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded,⁷¹ as a testimony to them."

v44: Notice that Jesus is telling this man to follow the Law of Moses and **show yourself to the priest**. Strange? Not really. Jesus had not yet been crucified and resurrected so they were still under the Old Covenant. He fulfilled to Old Covenant.⁷² Then His resurrection and sending the Holy Spirit instituted the New Covenant.

v44: He also said the leper would be a **testimony** to the priests! They sure needed it! We too will get to be a testimony "to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places."⁷³

Mark 1:45, But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.

Notice that although "unclean spirits" were obligated to obey Jesus (v25-26), men aren't so willing to obey. Are we?

The people "**were coming to Him from everywhere**" to be healed physically, but they still didn't believe.

⁷¹ Lev 14:1-32

⁷² Matt 5:17, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."

⁷³ Eph 3:10-11, ...so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He sends us good news (1: 1)
2. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah (1: 1)
3. Jesus is the Son of God (1: 1)
4. God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus (1: 2)
5. God wants us to repent of our sins (1: 4)
6. He will forgive our sins (1: 4)
7. Jesus is mighty (1: 7)
8. We are nothing in comparison (1: 7)
9. He will baptize us with the Holy Spirit (1: 8)
10. Jesus the Son of God was born as a human (1: 9)
11. He was baptized by John in the Jordan River (1: 9)
12. The Spirit appeared as a dove upon Him (1: 10)
13. The Father's voice came out of Heaven (1: 11)
14. He claimed Jesus as His Son (1: 11)
15. He was well pleased with Jesus (1: 11)
16. The Spirit impelled Jesus into the wilderness (1: 12)
17. Jesus was tempted for forty days (1: 13)
18. Angels ministered to Him (1: 13)
19. Jesus preached good news (1: 14)
20. Jesus preached the Kingdom of God is at hand (1: 15)
21. Jesus wants followers (1:17, 20)
22. He teaches (1:21-22)
23. He has authority (1: 22)
24. He is the Holy One of God (1: 24)
25. He rebukes (1: 25)
26. He has authority over demons; they must obey Him (1: 27)
27. He heals physical illnesses (1: 31, 41)
28. He prays (1: 35)
29. He came to preach (1: 38)
30. He is not afraid to touch lepers (1: 41)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 2

Mark 2:1, When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home.

Although He had been born in Bethlehem^{74 75 76} and raised in Nazareth,⁷⁷ apparently Jesus made **Capernaum** his new “home town”⁷⁸---probably in the home of Simon Peter.⁷⁹

The Greek “en oiko” means “at home”---not just “in a house.”

come back---He went to Capernaum immediately after He called Simon Peter.^{80 81} Now he is back again.

When Jesus called us, did we make our home available to Him? Do we now?

Mark 2:2, And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them.

When the Word of God is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit, “many” will come to hear the words of truth.

We want our “house” to be packed “**so that there is no longer room, not even near the door.**”

⁷⁴ Mic 5:2, "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah. From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel."

⁷⁵ Matt 2:1-2, Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 2 "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him."

⁷⁶ John 7:42, "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

⁷⁷ Luke 2:39-40, When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth. 40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

⁷⁸ Matt 9:1, Getting into a boat, Jesus crossed over the sea and came to His own city.

⁷⁹ Mark 1:29, And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon [Peter]...

⁸⁰ Mark 1:16-18, As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." 18 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him

⁸¹ Mark 1:29, And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

I wish I could have been there to hear Jesus teach.

Mark 2:3-4, And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. 4 Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying.

v3: This person must have been in really bad shape if it took four men to carry him on a **pallet** [bed].

“The roof of single-story homes was sturdy enough for walking but was normally made of branches and rushes laid over the roof’s beams and covered with dried mud; thus one could dig through it.”⁸²

Mark 2:5, And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Jesus was always impressed when He saw people’s **faith**. This is what He desired. This is far more important than obedience to the Law.⁸³

Other verses where Jesus commented on their **faith**: Mt 9:22⁸⁴ and the parallel verses in Mt 9:2⁸⁵ and Lk 5:20.⁸⁶

It is interesting that John the apostle does not recount this story in his gospel.

Your sins are forgiven---this was the message that John the Baptist preached.⁸⁷ However, the Jews thought that sins could only be covered by having a priest sacrifice an animal at the Temple and pour its blood on the altar.

Mark 2:6-7, But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?"

v6: Who were the **scribes**?

⁸² IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament by Craig S. Keener

⁸³ Rom 4:13, For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

⁸⁴ Matt 9:22, But Jesus turning and seeing her said, "Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well."

⁸⁵ Matt 9:2, And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven."

⁸⁶ Luke 5:20, Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

⁸⁷ Mark 1:4, John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

The professional Torah scholars were charged with the very great responsibility of interpreting the Law. The scribes, following in the tradition of Ezra their forefather, made the study and teaching of the Law the center of their lives. When another scribe [Jesus] came into the picture teaching the dawning of the awaited Kingdom — a scribe neither formally trained nor ordained (cf. John 7:15), who nonetheless spoke with a unique authority — a clash was inevitable.⁸⁸

Despite their acknowledged authority (Matt 23:2) and the seriousness of their quest for righteousness (cf. 5:20), the scribes associated with the Pharisees receive harsh criticism, particularly in the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus says that their tradition has canceled out the commandments of God (Matt 15:3 par.), and He castigates them for their hypocrisy (15:7 par.). Six times in Matt 23:13-33 (cf. parallel material in Luke 11:39-52; 20:45; Mark 12:38) the blistering refrain occurs: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" In a seventh woe they are described as "blind guides" (Matt 23:16).⁸⁹

v7: Although these men were highly trained in the Law, and although their reasoning was correct (**only God can forgive sins**), nevertheless because it was not mixed with faith,⁹⁰ their conclusion was wrong. They should have reasoned thus: "since only God can forgive sins and Jesus just forgave this man's sins, therefore Jesus must be God." Alas, that was not their conclusion. They said: "why does **this man...**" They thought Jesus was merely a man. He was 100% man---no doubt about it---but He was also 100% God.

This can happen to us too. Many are "educated beyond their faith." I'd rather know one verse with my heart than to know one hundred with my head.

Mark 2:8, Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?"

Jesus knows our thoughts.^{91 92 93 94 95 96} This is either very comforting (if we love Him) or terrifying (if we reject Him).

⁸⁸ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, revised edition

⁸⁹ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, revised edition

⁹⁰ Heb 4:2, ...but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (KJV)

⁹¹ Matt 9:4, And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"

⁹² Luke 5:22, But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"

⁹³ Luke 6:8, But He knew what they were thinking, and He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!"

⁹⁴ Rev 2:23, I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

Mark 2:9-11, "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? ¹⁰ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."

v9: In His rhetorical question, He is contrasting spiritual reality with physical reality. Obviously, spiritual things are out of our reach (impossible) were it not for the Holy Spirit indwelling us.

v10: He gives them a sign of His authority by healing the man---just one of many healings He has done. However, as we see in the next verse, they still reject His authority. Many people today also reject His authority but they will someday have to acknowledge it by bowing the knee to Him.⁹⁷ It is so much better to acknowledge Him today before it is too late.⁹⁸

Mark 2:12, And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

"The bed had borne the man: now the man bore the bed."⁹⁹

They were **amazed** (by the healings) and **glorified God**. Unfortunately they thought that Jesus was merely a prophet as indicated in the parallel passage in Mt 9:8 where they saw Him just as a man---although one with authority.¹⁰⁰ How do we view Him? As a prophet? As a great teacher? As a wonderful historical figure? Or as God?

Mark 2:13, And He went out again by the seashore; and all the people were coming to Him, and He was teaching them.

⁹⁵ Ps 139:23-24, Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.

⁹⁶ Ps 139:23, Examine me, O Lord, and try me; test my mind and my heart.

⁹⁷ Phil 2:10-11, ...at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

⁹⁸ Heb 3:7-9, TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED Me BY TESTING Me, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS.

⁹⁹ Bengel

¹⁰⁰ Matt 9:8, But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

All the people were coming to Him and being **taught** by Him, but did they “get it”? Do we? If we really did, wouldn't it make a bigger difference than we are presently experiencing?

Mark 2:14, As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.

Wow! Jesus said “**follow me**” and Levi (surnamed Matthew) got up! What incredible authority! Mathew gave up a secure and prosperous job. And as we can see in the next verse, Matthew must have invited Jesus into his home and then invited all his acquaintances to come hear Jesus.

Tax collectors were considered the scum of the earth:

Tax collectors were especially despised by the Jewish population of Palestine for several reasons: (1) they collected money for the foreign power that occupied the land of Israel, thus indirectly giving support to this outrage; (2) they were notoriously unscrupulous, growing wealthy at the expense of others of their own people; and (3) their work involved them in regular contact with Gentiles, rendering them ritually unclean.¹⁰¹

However, Jesus had a different attitude:

Jesus, however, set a new precedent among the Jews by accepting and associating with the tax collectors. He ate with them (Mark 2:16), He bestowed His saving grace upon them (Luke 19:9), and He even chose a tax collector (Matthew) as one of His twelve disciples (Matt 9:9). By His attitude toward the tax collectors, Jesus showed that God's covenant of grace extends to all people-not simply the righteous who observed the Law of the Old Testament. In fact, His message was that God would welcome the repentant and humble tax collector, while He would spurn the arrogant Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14). His mission was to bring sinners-people like the tax collectors of His day into God's presence (Matt 9:11-13).¹⁰²

Mark 2:15, And it happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him.

It is interesting that in the Greek it says “his house.” My house is His house.

Matthew had a lot of faith to invite all these disreputable people.

“Sinners”:

¹⁰¹ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, revised edition

¹⁰² Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary

In the NT the term is used with several different meanings... In the Gospels the term is most often used to denote someone who does not keep the commandments of the Torah. This includes those who live flagrantly immoral lives, e.g., harlots (Luke 7:37,39) and tax collectors (who had a reputation for dishonesty; cf. 18:13; 19:7), but also those who have in any way fallen short of a strict observance of the Mosaic law.¹⁰³

There are many of us. Are we still sinners? Or have we been forgiven even though we occasionally sin?

It's easy to point the finger at others, but we are no better.

Mark 2:16, When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?"

We are always being watched by **"the scribes and Pharisees"** who delight in seeing us do something they consider wrong. Let's make sure we don't give them something legitimate to criticize.

Mark 2:17, And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

What a beautiful statement!

By **"righteous,"** He meant those who thought they were righteous because they diligently kept the Mosaic Law and the Torah. They were depending on their own self-righteousness and were scornful of those who were **"sinners."** It is ironic (and beautiful) that Jesus rejected their righteousness but accepted the sinners they abhorred.

Jesus offers us His righteousness which is based only on humble recognition that apart from His grace we are sinners. We merely have to have faith to accept His unconditional gift.

Mark 2:18, John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁰³ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, revised edition

Here we have legalistic people trying to impose their law on those that are free of the Law. This happens frequently in churches today. That is why the whole book of Galatians was written. "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"¹⁰⁴

Mark 2:19-20, And Jesus said to them, "While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day."

v19: Jesus is using a common illustration to try to communicate with them. While the wedding party is going on, people celebrate rather than fast.

v20: But when He [**the bridegroom**] is crucified and taken away from them, **then they will fast**. We are in a time of spiritual fasting now until He comes again. We can look forward with eagerness to the wedding feast of the Lamb.¹⁰⁵

Mark 2:21-22, "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. ²² No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

v21: On the surface, this statement seems "off the wall." However, if we remember that Jesus usually is teaching about spiritual things, it becomes clear.

v22: I don't usually like to quote commentaries, but this one got it right:

Jesus' presence with His people was a time of newness (fulfillment) and signaled the passing of the old.

An attempt to bind the newness of the gospel to the old religion of Judaism is as futile as trying to patch an old (palaion, "worn out by use") garment with a new, unshrunk piece of cloth. When the new (kainon, "qualitatively new") piece (pleroma, "fullness") becomes wet, it will shrink, pull away from the old, and make a larger hole.

It is equally disastrous to pour new (neon, "fresh"), not fully fermented wine into old (palaious, "worn out by use," with no elasticity, brittle) wineskins. Inevitably, as the new wine ferments (expands), it will burst the skins and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. Salvation, available through Jesus, was not to be mixed with the old Judaistic system.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Gal 3:3

¹⁰⁵ Rev 19:9, Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'

¹⁰⁶ Bible Knowledge Commentary

Mark 2:23-24, And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain. ²⁴ The Pharisees were saying to Him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"

v24: Again (just as in verse 18), others are trying to substitute law for grace. We are not under law.

v24: The Torah greatly expanded what God had commanded and it had become burdensome:
"Following the return from Babylon, the development of the synagogue gave rise to interpretations of the law by leading rabbis, which after a time were collected into 613 precepts."¹⁰⁷

Mark 2:25-28, And He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions became hungry; ²⁶ how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he also gave it to those who were with him?" ²⁷ Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

v25-26: This story can be found in 1 Sam 21:3-6.

David in that story represents Christ:

1. Only the priests were allowed to enter the house of God.¹⁰⁸
2. Only the priests were allowed to eat the bread.¹⁰⁹
3. Jesus is our high priest.¹¹⁰
4. As David gave the bread to his companions, so Jesus gives the bread of life¹¹¹ [Himself] to us.

v27: What does it mean when it says: **"The Sabbath was made for man?"** [We are to observe the Sabbath so we can know and worship God.]

¹⁰⁷ Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary

¹⁰⁸ Heb 6:20, Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

¹⁰⁹ Matt 12:4: ...they ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for him to eat nor for those with him, but for the priests alone.

¹¹⁰ Heb 4:14, Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

¹¹¹ John 6:35, Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

v28: **“So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath:”** The word **“so”** is the Greek word **“hoste”** which means **“in an identical manner”** or **“consequently.”** Therefore, since **“the Sabbath was made for man”** and Jesus is the **“Son of Man,”** it follows that Jesus is **“Lord even of the Sabbath.”**

v28: The term **“Son of Man”** is Jesus’ most common reference to Himself (85x). It was originally used in the OT (12x) as a general reference to mankind. Subsequently it was used as a title in Ezekiel (93x) and Daniel (2x).

v28: Since the Sabbath was instituted by God, and Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, therefore He is stating clearly that He is God.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He makes His home with us (2:1)
2. He speaks to us (2:2)
3. He is impressed by faith (2:5)
4. He forgives sin (2:5)
5. He does what only God can do (2:5)
6. He is aware of our thoughts and intents (2:8)
7. He calls Himself “Son of Man” (2:10)
8. He identifies with us (2:10)
9. He has authority (2:10)
10. He does things that glorify God (2:12)
11. He teaches us (2:13)
12. He commands (2:14)
13. He in human form eats real food (2:15)
14. He in human form drinks real drink (2:15)
15. He is willing to associate with the outcasts (2:16)
16. He uses everyday examples to illustrate His teaching (2:19-22)
17. He knows and quotes the OT (2:25-26)
18. He is Lord of the Sabbath (2:28)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 3

Mark 3:1, He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there whose hand was withered.

Jesus probably deliberately set up this confrontation since He knew it was the Sabbath. He knew what they were thinking.^{112 113 114 115}

Mark 3:2, They were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.

"They" were the Pharisees (see verse 24 of the previous chapter).

were watching Him---repeatedly men tried to trap Jesus in order to find evidence with which to accuse Him.^{116 117} The OT is prophetic about this moment.^{118 119 120}

Their distorted version of the Sabbath was more important to them than who Jesus was. Is this ever our state where our religion is more important to us than the person of Jesus?

If you don't like the message, kill the messenger!

Mark 3:3-4, He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" 4 And He said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?" But they kept silent.

¹¹² Luke 11:17, But He knew their thoughts....

¹¹³ Matt 9:4-5, And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"

¹¹⁴ Matt 12:25, And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste."

¹¹⁵ Rev 2:23, I am He who searches the minds and hearts;

¹¹⁶ Luke 11:53-54, When He left there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to question Him closely on many subjects, 54 plotting against Him to catch Him in something He might say.

¹¹⁷ Luke 20:20, So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so that they could deliver Him to the rule and the authority of the governor.

¹¹⁸ Jer 20:10, For I have heard the whispering of many, "Terror on every side! Denounce him; yes, let us denounce him!" All my trusted friends, watching for my fall, say: "Perhaps he will be deceived, so that we may prevail against him and take our revenge on him."

¹¹⁹ Ps 37:32, The wicked spies upon the righteous and seeks to kill him.

¹²⁰ Isa 29:20-21, For the ruthless will come to an end and the scorner will be finished. Indeed all who are intent on doing evil will be cut off 21 who cause a person to be indicted by a word, and ensnare him who adjudicates at the gate, and defraud the one in the right with meaningless arguments.

v3: The man with the **withered hand** must have had some faith in order to come forward to Jesus in the presence of those trying to entrap Him. However, the man was desperate to be healed. We should recognize in desperation that we too are **“withered”** and need His healing.

v3: **Come forward**---this sounds like an invitation message! This is the same thing he said to dead Lazarus in the tomb.¹²¹

v4: Jesus was not afraid to challenge those in power for He knew nothing could happen to Him until He had fulfilled His mission on earth. We should have this same confidence too.

v4: Jesus challenged the Pharisees to make a commitment one way or the other¹²² **but they kept silent.**

Will we stand for Jesus in the presence of our accusers or will we remain silent?

Mark 3:5, After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

Jesus was **angry** at their hardness of heart. **Anger** is not always bad.^{123 124} The Greek word translated here as “anger” is almost always elsewhere translated as “wrath.” (32 out of 36 times).

Jesus gave a command (“**stretch out your hand**”) and the man obeyed. Unfortunately, we tend to be selective in which commands we decide to obey. Example: forgiving one another.

Someday soon our bodies will be restored too if we have believed Him. I’m eagerly anticipating that day but in the meantime we have work to do.¹²⁵

¹²¹ John 11:43-44, When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." 44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth.

¹²² Rev 3:15-16, "I wish that you were cold or hot. 16 So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."

¹²³ Eph 4:26-27, BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.

¹²⁴ James 1:19-20, But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.

¹²⁵ Phil 1:21-24, For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

Mark 3:6, The Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

What a response to an absolute miracle! The same evidence that causes some people to believe, causes other people to harden their hearts.

conspiring---they deliberately, premeditating first-degree murder.^{126 127 128}

Who were the **Herodians**?^{129 130}

Jews of influence and standing who were favorable toward Greek customs and Roman law in New Testament times. Although the Herodians should not be equated with the Sadducees, they sided with the Sadducees in their pro-Roman sympathies and opposed the Pharisees, who were anti-Roman. The Herodians joined forces with the Pharisees, however, in their opposition to Jesus.¹³¹

Upholders of the Herodian dynasty, regarding it as the safeguard against direct pagan rule which the Jews loathed, and also as the best compromise between the ancient faith and pagan civilization.¹³²

The Jews, the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Herodians all saw Jesus as their common enemy. Likewise today, many disparate groups (all motivated by Satan) see Jesus as their common enemy.

Satan thought that he would win and be equal with God¹³³ if they killed Jesus and eliminated Him forever.¹³⁴ What a shock Satan must have had when Jesus was resurrected and conquered death and took away its power!¹³⁵

¹²⁶ Matt 12:14, But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

¹²⁷ Matt 22:15, Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said.

¹²⁸ Matt 27:1, Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death.

¹²⁹ Matt 22:15-16, Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. 16 And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher....."

¹³⁰ Mark 12:13, Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him in order to trap Him in a statement.

¹³¹ Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary

¹³² Fausset's Bible Dictionary

¹³³ Isa 14:13-17, "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' 15 Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit. 16 Those who see you will gaze at you, they will ponder over you, saying, 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, 17 Who made the world like a wilderness and overthrew its cities, who did not allow his prisoners to go home?'"

¹³⁴ Ps 13:4, And my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.

Mark 3:7-8, Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great number of people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him.

Word spread widely about Jesus' miracles. This is a huge area from which to draw people who traveled on foot. **Sidon**, for example, is on the Mediterranean coast at least 60 miles away across rugged mountains. I would guess this would be four or five days walk. **Idumea** is at the south end of the Dead Sea and is at least 100 miles away from Capernaum.

Why did **"they come to Him?"** For salvation? Out of morbid curiosity? Out of spiritual need? For physical healing?

Why do we come? Intellectual curiosity? Spiritual hunger? A desire to follow Him?

Mark 3:9-10, And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him; 10 for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him.

There was a huge crowd. He healed many; therefore all who were afflicted sought Him. If we truly understood how afflicted we really are, we would seek Him too.

Merely touching Him^{136 137 138} or being touched by Him^{139 140} brought healing---even from death.¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ Heb 2:14-15, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

¹³⁶ Luke 8:43-48, And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, 44 came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. 45 And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You." 46 But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me." 47 When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. 48 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

¹³⁷ Luke 6:19, And all the people were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all.

¹³⁸ Mark 6:56, Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.

Mark 3:11-12, Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!" 12 And He earnestly warned them not to tell who He was.

v11: Someday, every knee shall bow¹⁴² in intellectual acknowledgement that Jesus is God. However, not all will believe with their hearts and be saved. There is urgency to believe now while we can.

v11: There are many other scriptures that say He is the Son of God.^{143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150}

v12: If He did not need the testimony of man,¹⁵¹ how much less would He accept the testimony of demons!

v12: Many times He told people whom He had healed not to tell others about it. However, just as we are often selective in obeying things Jesus tells us to do, we are also selective in obeying things He tells us not to do.

¹³⁹ Luke 22:51, And He touched his ear and healed him.

¹⁴⁰ Luke 5:12-14, While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 13 And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy left him.

¹⁴¹ Luke 7:14-15, And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" 15 The dead man sat up and began to speak!

¹⁴² Phil 2:9-11, For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹⁴³ Matt 14:33, And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

¹⁴⁴ Matt 26:63-64, And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." 64 Jesus said to him, "You have said it..."

¹⁴⁵ Mark 5:5-7, Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones. 6 Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; 7 and shouting with a loud voice, he said, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!"

¹⁴⁶ Luke 1:35, The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God."

¹⁴⁷ Luke 4:41, Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.

¹⁴⁸ John 1:32, "I myself [John the Baptist] have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

¹⁴⁹ John 1:49, Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

¹⁵⁰ Acts 9:19-20, Now for several days he [Saul→Paul] was with the disciples who were at Damascus, 20 and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

¹⁵¹ John 5:34, "But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

Mark 3:13-14a, And He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. ¹⁴ And He appointed twelve...

He preceded this by spending all night in prayer.¹⁵² Many of us would rationalize and say “I need a good night’s sleep and a clear mind if I am going to make such an important decision in the morning” but Jesus knew He needed God’s leading rather than man’s wisdom.¹⁵³

Remember Gideon? Originally he had 32,000 followers; then he had 10,000;¹⁵⁴ then he only had 300.¹⁵⁵ Likewise, Jesus had “multitudes”, then He had some disciples, then He only had twelve.

Even among the twelve, there was one who He knew beforehand would betray Him.¹⁵⁶

Mark 3:14-15 He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, ¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out the demons.

v14: **He appointed**---This is a fascinating phrase to examine. It shows God’s sovereignty. It occurs 237x in the Bible.¹⁵⁷

v14: **so that they would be with Him**---Jesus mentored these twelve men. They lived with Him, ate with Him, heard Him preach, saw Him heal people, saw Him fully human. We ought to be doing exactly the same thing with new believers---mentoring them.

v14: **that He could send them out**---Jesus didn’t do all the preaching. He had the lay people do it too. We should all be carrying the message rather than expecting our pastor to do it all.

v15: **authority**---we get our authority from Jesus¹⁵⁸---not from our own skill or knowledge. That is what it means to do something “in Jesus’ name.” He has given us the right to be ambassadors¹⁵⁹ representing Him with the full authority to use His name.

¹⁵² Luke 6:12-13, It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. ¹³ And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them,

¹⁵³ 1 Cor 2:4-5, ...my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

¹⁵⁴ Judges 7:3, “So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained.”

¹⁵⁵ Judges 7:7, The Lord said to Gideon, “I will deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands; so let all the other people go, each man to his home.”

¹⁵⁶ John 6:61, “But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him.

¹⁵⁷ Familiar phrases include: Jonah 1:17 (a great fish); 4:6 (a plant); 4:7 (a worm); 4:8 (a scorching east wind).

Mark 3:16-19, And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), 17 and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder"); 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.

Of course, "**Andrew**" was the best name of all (my name). ☺

Bartholomew is another name for Barnabas (son of encouragement). Since Mark (his cousin¹⁶⁰) is writing this book, he may have called him by a familiar family name.

James the apostle is not the same person as James the author of the Epistle of James who was Jesus' brother.

It would be interesting to do a character study on each of these men---particularly Barnabas. However, we know very little about some of them.

Since Mark is writing this book under the strong tutelage of Peter, I would not be surprised if Mark were also the author of 1 Peter, 2 Peter and Jude.¹⁶¹

Mark eventually became a close associate of Peter; this is evident in two pieces of Biblical evidence. First, it appears Peter was part of a Christian group in Jerusalem that met in Mark's home. When Peter miraculously escaped from jail (assisted by the angel of the Lord), he returned to this group to tell them the good news:

Acts 12:12-14,

When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!"

Peter appears to have been well known to Mark, and over the course of time, Mark became even closer to Peter as he ministered throughout Asia Minor and Rome. By the time Peter wrote his first epistle, Mark had become like a son to him:

1 Peter 5:13,

She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Matt 28:18, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."

¹⁵⁹ 2 Cor 5:20, Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us.

¹⁶⁰ Col 4:10, Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him);

¹⁶¹ 2 Peter and Jude obviously were written by the same author or by the same scribe. Remember that Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas as their scribe on Paul's first missionary journey. He was replaced on the second missionary journey by Silas who was Paul's scribe.

¹⁶² <http://coldcasechristianity.com/2018/marks-relationship-with-peter-was-the-foundation-for-his-gospel/>

Mark 3:20, And He came home, and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal.

Here we have the same word “home” that we saw in Mark 2:1---Peter’s home in Capernaum.

They could not even eat a meal---the pressure of ministry.

Mark 3:21, When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses."

“His own people”---His kinsmen---His family.

They were going “to take custody of Him”---put Him in the loony bin, the insane asylum.

Sometimes our own family thinks we are crazy for living for Jesus. My own sister Anne once said to me after Marilyn and I shared our faith: “Drew, are you sure we are in the same family?!” Now I wish I had answered: “No we aren’t, but I wish we were.”

Mark 3:22, The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

They were agreeing with His family (verse 21) that He was insane.

Criticism by other Christians is picked up by the world and thrown at us. We should be united, stick together, love one another, rather than putting down other Christians that aren’t doing it the way we think they should. At a minimum, we should do it privately, going to them individually rather than publicly.

It is ironic that those [the scribes] who were under the control of Satan accuse Jesus of being under the control of Satan. The Muslims do that today calling the United States “the big Satan.” It is clear that their god is Satan himself but they are trying to divert attention from that fact.

Mark 3:23-27, And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26 If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! 27 But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house."

Jesus spoke in parables so that those who wanted to know the truth would be able to hear it, but those who would reject the truth would be confused.¹⁶³

Jesus called Satan “the strong man.” He was being prophetic since:

1. Jesus was going “to bind the strong man” by dying on the cross.
2. Jesus was going to “plunder his house” by emptying Hades¹⁶⁴ of all of Satan’s captives and taking them to Heaven.¹⁶⁵

Although Satan is the “strong man,” Jesus is stronger still and we have nothing to fear if we abide in Him.

Mark 3:28-30, "Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin" — 30 because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

v28: **All sins**---isn’t this wonderful? Past, present and future sins, no matter how large or small, no matter whether confessed or not. The big issue isn’t “sin” but whether or not we believe Jesus.

v29: Many people worry about sinning “the unpardonable sin.” However, the only sin that is unpardonable is rejecting Jesus when the Holy Spirit is drawing us to Him. The scribes were attributing to Satan Jesus’ work by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit---thus rejecting Jesus.

Whatever you do, don’t reject Jesus---the consequences will be “eternal!” Accept Him now.

v28: Looking at the positive side of this statement, “all sins shall be forgiven” if we accept Jesus! Even present and future ones---not just those that occurred before we accepted Jesus. It even includes those we fail to confess per 1 John 1:9.

¹⁶³ Matt 13:10-13, And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" 11 Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. 12 For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."

¹⁶⁴ Rev 20:13, And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

¹⁶⁵ Eph 4:8, Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."

Mark 3:31-32, Then His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him. ³² A crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You."

These are the ones who think He is "out of His senses." (verse 21)

His earthly family "called" Jesus but He did not get distracted from His God-given purpose. There are many who know God has called them to the mission field (or other endeavors) but they yield to family pressure and don't go.¹⁶⁶ That's tragic.

Mark 3:33-35, Answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" ³⁴ Looking about at those who were sitting around Him, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother."

Those of us who believe in Jesus and do His will are family to Him and to each other. We are "heirs together of the grace of life"---co-heirs, joint-heirs, as if we are joined together as one.¹⁶⁷ Let's not squabble like earthly families sometimes do---let's be unified in the bond of love.

¹⁶⁶ Matt 19:29-30, "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life."

¹⁶⁷ 1 Peter 3:7

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He heals; even on the Sabbath (3:2)
2. He is not bound by men's rules (3:2)
3. He commands (3:3)
4. He reasons with us (3:4)
5. He has emotions like anger and grief (3:5)
6. He heals (3:5)
7. He is popular with the masses [but not the leadership] (3:8-9)
8. Merely touching Him resulted in healing (3:10)
9. Even unclean spirits testified that He was the Son of God (3:11)
10. He warns us (3:12)
11. He sought wisdom through prayer to the Father (parallel passage to 3:13)
12. He appoints with God's authority (3:14)
13. He shares that authority with us (3:15)
14. He seems crazy to those who don't believe (3:21)
15. He prophesies the future (3:23-27)
16. He will forgive any sin but rejection (3:29)
17. He accepts believers as His family (3:35)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 4

Mark 4:1, He began to teach again by the sea. And such a very large crowd gathered to Him that He got into a boat in the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land.

He will **teach** us¹⁶⁸ too if we gather to Him eagerly like this crowd did. He will teach us the same way He did them---by His words, as recorded in these Scriptures. However, without the Holy Spirit to illuminate¹⁶⁹ us, these will seem foolishness.¹⁷⁰ But if we have believed Jesus, we have the Holy Spirit¹⁷¹ who will reveal the meaning to us.

Do we really want Him to teach us or are we afraid that if we really understood the relationship He desires, we would have to give up our comfortable life?^{172 173} We sometimes mislead people by implying that if they would just accept Jesus, all their problems would be solved. Their problems won't necessarily be solved,^{174 175} but they can have God's peace and contentment anyway.

What do we want Him to teach us? Doctrine? Or, better yet, about Himself?¹⁷⁶

sat down in the boat---it is amazing that **"a very large crowd"** on the shore was able to hear Him.¹⁷⁷

¹⁶⁸ Luke 24:32, They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

¹⁶⁹ 1 Cor 2:10, For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

¹⁷⁰ 1 Cor 1:18, For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

¹⁷¹ Rom 8:9-11, However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. 10 If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

¹⁷² Matt 16:24: Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

¹⁷³ Matt 19:29, "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life."

¹⁷⁴ John 16:33, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

¹⁷⁵ John 15:18-21, "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. 20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

¹⁷⁶ 2 Peter 3:18, ...but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Mark 4:2-3, And He was teaching them many things in parables, and was saying to them in His teaching, 3 "Listen to this!"

v2: **Parables**---back in chapter 3 they refused to believe Him and even accused Him of doing things by Satan's power,¹⁷⁸ therefore He began to speak to them only¹⁷⁹ in parables.¹⁸⁰

Why? Look at the parallel passage in Matt 13:13-17 which is even clearer.¹⁸¹ He knows that their hearts are already hardened and that they refuse to believe. Therefore He doesn't want to give them "the mysteries of the kingdom." These are precious and the unbelievers will turn against us and use them against us.¹⁸² He instructs us not to cast our pearls before swine because they will just trample them into the mud.¹⁸³ This thought is stated explicitly in Luke's version of the Parable of the Sower.¹⁸⁴

There are more parables than the three that Mark recorded. In chronological order they are as follows (with those in Mark indicated in bold face type):

¹⁷⁷ John 5:25, "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

¹⁷⁸ Mark 3:22, The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

¹⁷⁹ Mark 4:33-34, With many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to hear it; 34 and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.

¹⁸⁰ Mark 3:23, And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables.

¹⁸¹ Matt 13:13-15: "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; 15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'"

¹⁸² Prov 23:9, Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

¹⁸³ Matt 7:6, "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces."

¹⁸⁴ Luke 8:5, "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it [the Word of God] was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up."

Parable	Matthew	Mark	Luke
The Sower	13:3-23	4:3-25	8:5-18
The Seed Growing Secretly		4:26-29	
The Tares	13:24-30		
The Mustard Seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
The Leavened Loaf	13:33-35		13:20-21
The Hidden Treasure	13:44		
The Pearl of Great Price	13:45-46		
The Dragnet	13:47-50		
The Householder	13:51-52		

Interestingly, John the Apostle chose not to mention any of the parables.

Those who were willing to believe understood the parables. This is how we should approach Jesus' words: with a heart that is willing to believe. Then we will understand God's Word.

All of the parables were meant to teach something about "the Kingdom of God" (or as Matthew frequently called it, "the Kingdom of Heaven"---these terms are synonymous). For example, the first parable explains who gets into the Kingdom of God, who doesn't, and why.

When Jesus says "**listen**," we should listen with our ears, eyes, mind, spirit and heart.

When our son Ken was a little boy he loved to come into the kitchen and talk to his mom while she was very busy fixing dinner. One time in exasperation he said, "Mom, listen to me!" She answered, "I am listening to you." He replied, "Listen to me with your eyes!" That's how we should listen to Jesus.

The Parable of The Sower

Mark 4:3-8, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; 4 as he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Other seed fell on the rocky ground where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil. 6 And after the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. 7 Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. 8 Other seeds fell into the good soil, and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

This is by far the longest parable. We don't have to guess what it means because a few verses later Jesus explained most of it privately to his disciples.

Let's look at His explanation then come back and examine verses 9-13.

Mark 4:14-20, "The sower sows the word. 15 These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them. 16 In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; 17 and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away. 18 And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, 19 but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 20 And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

Now, let's go back and look at the statement of the parable and Jesus' explanation verse by verse:

Mark 4:3-4, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; 4 as he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up.	Mark 4:14-15, "The sower sows the word. 15 These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them.
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Who is the **"sower"**? Obviously in this case Jesus is the sower but it can be anyone (even us) who sows the word.

What are the **"word"** and the **"seed"**? It is the Gospel [good news] of Jesus Christ as Mark stated back in the very first verse of this book. **"Seeds"** are expected to take root, grow and produce fruit.

What is **"the road"**? Life.

Who are **"the birds"**? Satan and his accomplices.¹⁸⁵

Luke is even more explicit and says the **seed** got trampled into the road.^{186 187}

¹⁸⁵ Rev 18:2, ...a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

¹⁸⁶ Luke 8:5, "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up."

Mark 4:5-6, Other seed fell on the rocky ground where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil. 6 And after the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

Mark 4:16-17, In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; 17 and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.

We need a **firm root** deeply planted in the Word of God.¹⁸⁸ Otherwise we will **wither**.

Everyone experiences tribulation¹⁸⁹ in this fallen world.

They are eager but temporary. Does this mean they lose their salvation? Not if their belief was real. But their lives will look like those of the unbeliever and they will never produce fruit.

Mark 4:7, Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

Mark 4:18-19, And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, 19 but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

What are **“the thorns”**? These are the cares of the world. We are instructed us to “cast all our cares on Him”¹⁹⁰ and “to be anxious for nothing.”¹⁹¹

The **“desires for other things”** can overwhelm our desire for Jesus and His Word.

¹⁸⁷ Heb 10:29, How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

¹⁸⁸ Ps 1:3, He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.

¹⁸⁹ John 16:33, In this world you will have trouble. (NIV)

¹⁹⁰ 1 Peter 5:7, ...casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

¹⁹¹ Phil 4:6-7, Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Mark 4:8, Other seeds¹⁹² fell into the good soil, and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

Mark 4:20, And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

What is the "fruit"? It could either be the "fruit of the Spirit"¹⁹³ or souls won to Christ.

What is "the good soil"? It is a heart that "listens" (see verse 3). It is a heart that seeks God.^{194 195} It "has ears to hear."

Notice that in every case except the first one where the birds of the air ate it, the seed did indeed sprout; it did become alive. However, it did not produce fruit except in the last case. These are Christians but they are fruitless Christians.

Continuing on:

Mark 4:9, And He was saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

This is a common phrase^{196 197 198 199 200 201 202} meaning: "listen up---this is important!"

Verses 10-12 have already been covered. However, verse 12 in Mark's version seems to imply that people are prevented by God from understanding and being saved. On the other hand, it becomes

¹⁹² Don't let the plural "seeds" confuse you. The word is not in the Greek.

¹⁹³ Gal 5:22-23, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

¹⁹⁴ Acts 13:22, "I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will."

¹⁹⁵ Matt 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

¹⁹⁶ Deut 29:4, "Yet to this day the Lord has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear."

¹⁹⁷ Isa 6:10, "Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed."

¹⁹⁸ Isa 32:3, Then the eyes of those who see will not be blinded, and the ears of those who hear will listen.

¹⁹⁹ Jer 5:21, Now hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes but do not see; who have ears but do not hear.

²⁰⁰ Jer 6:10, To whom shall I speak and give warning that they may hear? Behold, their ears are closed and they cannot listen. Behold, the word of the Lord has become a reproach to them; they have no delight in it.

²⁰¹ Ezek 12:2, "Son of man, you live in the midst of the rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear; for they are a rebellious house."

²⁰² Ezek 40:4, "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to all that I am going to show you."

clearer in Matthew's version²⁰³ that they have hardened their own hearts ("THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES") because, if they hadn't, they would have understood the word and thus been saved.

Mark 4:13, And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables?"

He only explained two of the parables: The Sower and the Tares. He expects us to understand the others. We can do so with the enlightening of the Holy Spirit.

Now, continuing after Jesus' explanation of the parable:

Mark 4:21-22, And He was saying to them, "A lamp is not brought to be put under a basket, is it, or under a bed? Is it not brought to be put on the lampstand? 22 For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light."

v21: This is not a separate parable but a further expansion on the Parable of the Sower.

v21-22: The "Gospel of Jesus Christ" [the **word**; the **seed**] is a **lamp** that is not intended to be **hidden** but shown to the world in order that some might believe. Jesus said that He was the **light** of the world.²⁰⁴

v22: The "Light" will reveal all things when He comes to judge.

²⁰³ Matt 13:14-15, In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says,
'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND;
YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;
FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL,
WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR,
AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES,
OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES,
HEAR WITH THEIR EARS,
AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN,
AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'

²⁰⁴ John 8:12, Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

These next two verses could be mentioned at the end as a wrap-up after the next two parables.

Mark 4:24-25, And He was saying to them, "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides. 25 For whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him."

v24: **Take care what you listen to**---A lot of Christians listen to sermons and tapes by their favorite preachers without considering whether their teaching is accurate to the Scriptures. Instead, they should be like the Bereans---checking everything against the Scriptures.²⁰⁵ Even better, they shouldn't get their instruction "second hand" but they should study the Word of God themselves by means of the discernment of the Holy Spirit.

v24: **Measure**---if you study eagerly, you will learn much and even more will be given to you.

v25: However, if you don't pursue knowledge of the Lord, even what little you have will dim and be forgotten.

The Parable of The Seed Growing Secretly

Mark 4:26-29, And He was saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; 27 and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows — how, he himself does not know. 28 The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head. 29 But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

v26: What is "**the Kingdom of God**" that every parable is teaching us about? This is a long, difficult subject with several meanings. However, in these three parables, it seems to mean those people who belong to God's kingdom---those who will be with Him someday in Heaven---those in whom the seed of faith has sprouted and brought forth much fruit.

v26: Although we get the privilege of "**casting seed upon the soil,**" we don't know how the Holy Spirit causes it to take root and grow. That truly is a miracle. But sometimes, when it produces believing faith, we get to lead someone to the Lord (reap the **harvest**).

²⁰⁵ Acts 17:11, Now these [the Bereans] were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

The Parable of The Mustard Seed

Mark 4:30-32, And He said, "How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, 32 yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR can NEST UNDER ITS SHADE."

v30: Here He is teaching that even a little tiny bit of God's Word which results in a tiny bit of understanding can grow up to be huge faith and huge productivity.

v31: v32: Don't get hung up on the fact that there are other seeds that exist in nature that are smaller than a **mustard seed**. Likewise, don't get hung up on the fact that mustard doesn't grow to be a **tree**. He is speaking allegorically and deliberately exaggerating in order to show how even something very small can grow into something very big.

If a person doesn't want to believe, I think God gives him plenty of evidence not to believe (for example: mustard seeds aren't the tiniest in nature and mustard seeds don't grow into trees). However, if a person is willing to believe, I think God gives him even more evidence to believe. God's goal is to make a person get off the fence and make a clear decision²⁰⁶---either for Him or against Him.²⁰⁷

John Piper said something I love: he said that the Word of God "is self-validating." Read it carefully and you can't help but know that God wrote it.

Mark 4:33-34, With many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to hear it; 34 and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.

We've already discussed why He did this.

v34: I wish I could have heard Him expound upon His teaching.

v35: This is where the chapter break should have occurred. The rest of this chapter logically belongs with the next chapter and will be considered along with Mark 5.

²⁰⁶ Josh 24:15, "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

²⁰⁷ Rev 3:15-16, "I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He teaches us in simple ways that we can understand (4:3)
2. He says we can bring forth much fruit---30/60/100 fold (4:8,20)
3. He understands us and our cares (4:19)
4. He knows everything and brings it into the light (4:22)
5. He cautions us to take care (4:24)
6. He knows we don't understand everything (4:27)
7. His Word can have huge effect (4:32)
8. He explains things to those who believe (4:34)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 5

The chapter break between Mark 4 and Mark 5 was put (by humans) in the wrong place. Verses 35-41 of Mark 4 logically belong in chapter 5. Therefore I will discuss them now.

Mark 4:35-37, On that day, when evening came, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." ³⁶ Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. ³⁷ And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up.

v³⁷: The Sea of Galilee (actually a lake) is sandwiched between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara Desert. Therefore since the desert heats up fiercely during the day and chills off to bitter cold during the night, there are major swinging temperature differences between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara Desert. This temperature difference gives rise to sudden violent changing winds over the Sea of Galilee. It can be calm and clear one minute and twenty minutes later the wind (called the Simoom) can reach hurricane intensity, causing huge waves.

Perhaps Satan sent the wind in order to kill Jesus. He did that with Job's sons.²⁰⁸ Also remember that he got Herod senior to kill all the babies in Bethlehem.²⁰⁹ He tried to get Jesus to cast Himself off the pinnacle of the Temple.²¹⁰ He repeatedly tried to get Him stoned.^{211 212 213} He also impelled Herod junior to try to kill Him.²¹⁴

²⁰⁸ Job 1:17, "...and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

²⁰⁹ Matt 2:16, Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi.

²¹⁰ Matt 4:5-6, Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down..."

²¹¹ John 8:59, Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him....

²¹² John 10:31, The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.

²¹³ John 11:8, The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?"

²¹⁴ Luke 13:31, Just at that time some Pharisees approached, saying to Him, "Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You."

Mark 4:38, Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

We can learn a lot from Jesus' example. He was totally peaceful and able to sleep even in the midst of serious danger because He fully trusted the Father's care. Paul, too, learned to be content (at peace) in all circumstances.²¹⁵

Do you not care?---In our own lack of faith we often think the same thing, but God's Word makes it abundantly clear that He does care.²¹⁶ Remember the ninety-and-nine sheep?²¹⁷ Remember the sparrows?²¹⁸ Always remember God's love.²¹⁹

Mark 4:39, And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.

He rebuked---He has all authority (as pointed out so clearly in Mark 2). "Rebuked" is a word you use when someone has done something wrong. This adds weight to the thought that Satan was trying to kill him and His disciples. We are safe in the hands of God. As it says in the next verse, "**why are you afraid?**"

Mark 4:40-41, And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" 41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

^{v40:} He is connecting lack of "faith" with the presence of "fear." In other words, if we truly believe in Him, we will have no fear.²²⁰

²¹⁵ Phil 4:11, Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

²¹⁶ 1 Peter 5:6-7, Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

²¹⁷ Luke 15:7, "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."

²¹⁸ Luke 12:6-7, "Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. 7 Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."

²¹⁹ Isa 43:4, "Since you are precious in My sight, since you are honored and I love you...."

²²⁰ 1 John 4:18, There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

v40: I am personally learning a lot about the word “**afraid.**” In the book of Job it says that the thing Job feared the most came upon him.²²¹ Therefore, if we don’t want to experience our worst fears, we need to give them to our Lord in faith. We can do that in full confidence because He loves us and is working out everything for our good.²²² There is nothing we need fear.^{223 224 225 226}

v41: So even though Jesus had just told them not to fear, “**they became very much afraid!**” Why? Because they realized that this “man” was much more than just a man. They suddenly understood that what He had told them about Himself might just be true. In that case, they were in the presence of God and they knew that a sinful man could not stand in the presence of holy God and live.^{227 228 229}

v41: Fear is insulting to God. It is lack of faith. In effect we are saying: “God, you don’t love me and you’re going to bring something into my life to hurt me” or we are saying “God, you are unable to protect me” or “God, you won’t give me the grace to go through this.” We are totally safe in His loving hands.

v41: “Even the wind and the sea obey Him,” but rebellious men do not. Let’s not fall into that category!

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[The following is a continuation of the previous paragraph even though it is in a different chapter.]

²²¹ Job 3:25, For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. (KJV)

²²² Rom 8:28, And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

²²³ Matt 10:31, "So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."

²²⁴ John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."

²²⁵ Rom 8:15, For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

²²⁶ Rev 2:10, 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer.'

²²⁷ Ex 33:20, But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!"

²²⁸ Isa 6:5, Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

²²⁹ Deut 4:33, "Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived?"

Mark 5

Mark 5:1-3a, They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. 2 When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him, 3 and he had his dwelling among the tombs.

v1: It is not absolutely clear where the Gerasenes area was but most likely it was the region at the extreme north-east of the Sea of Galilee. This is reasonable since Jesus had just been in Capernaum at the north-west end of the Sea of Galilee and the boat went “across” to the “other side of the Sea.”

v2: How would you like to be met by someone like this powerful, crazy, screaming man? Terrifying!

v3: The man with the unclean spirit (demon possessed) lived in the tombs where no one else wanted to be.

v3: The demon possessed man probably lived in one of those cave tombs. The word that was mistranslated “among” is the Greek word “en” which means literally “in.”

v3: Wealthy Hebrew tombs were generally extensive caves excavated out of solid rock, but ordinary people were buried in the ground. The mouths of such rocky tombs were usually closed by a large stone which could only be removed by the united efforts of several men. Almost invariably, the tombs were some distance from the city. There was a lot of superstition concerning tombs--- particularly a fear of ghosts.

Mark 5:3b-5, And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; 4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. 5 Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones.

v5: The demons who lived in this man did everything horrible to him just short of killing him. This still happens today. I know of a woman here in this church who cuts herself and is suicidal. How do you deal with such a person? [Prayer²³⁰ and exorcism.]

By the way (humor), do you know what happens if you don't pay your exorcist? You get repossessed!

²³⁰ Mark 9:28-29, “Why could we not drive it out?” 29 And He said to them, “This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer.”

Mark 5:6, Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him.

Even the demons know who Jesus is²³¹---even from a distance! Every person will eventually **bow down** before Jesus---willingly or unwillingly.²³² It is so much better to do it now while there is a chance to believe unto eternal life.

Mark 5:7, ...and shouting with a loud voice, he said, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!"

These demons are very aware of the Scripture that predicts their dreadful future. The parallel passage in Matt 8:29 reads: "And they cried out, saying, 'What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?'" Notice that the demons know that He is the "Son of God." "The time" may refer to Rev 9:5.²³³ This is further explained in Rev 14:9-11.²³⁴

Remember back in Mark 1:23-24, a demon knew that Jesus was "the Holy One of God."²³⁵ If the demons know who He is, why do we have so much trouble acknowledging who He is?

Mark 5:8, For He had been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"

Unclean means the direct opposite of clean---a common word that is very important in the Old Testament.²³⁶ Half the time, the Hebrew word is translated "pure"²³⁷ (morally, ceremonially).

²³¹ James 2:19, You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

²³² Phil 2:10-11, ...at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

²³³ Rev 9:5 "And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man." [These are the people with the mark of the beast who have refused over and over to believe. They may have refused to believe because they were possessed by demons.]

²³⁴ Rev 14:9-11, Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever."

²³⁵ Mark 1:23-24, Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, 24 saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are — the Holy One of God!"

The words “unclean” or “uncleanliness” occur 246x so it is obvious that this is an important subject to God.

These **unclean spirits** (fallen angels) were originally clean but they rebelled against God, sided with Satan, and were thrown out of Heaven because they were unclean.²³⁸ Nothing impure is allowed to stay in Heaven. That is why we need to be cleansed of our sin by Jesus in order to allow us into Heaven. Without His cleansing, we are grouped with the demons as unclean,²³⁹ not allowed into Heaven, and we will suffer their same fate.

Mark 5:9, And He was asking him, "What is your name?" And he said to Him, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

Name---title, character.

Even though there were many, they had one name. There are other instances of someone having multiple demons.²⁴⁰

Mark 5:10, And he began to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country.

I don't know what to make of it but “**implore**” in Greek is “paraclete”²⁴¹---the same word we associate with the Holy Spirit.

country---region.

²³⁶ This word is first mentioned in Gen 7:2, "You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female."

²³⁷ This same word is used to describe pure gold---gold that contains no dross or impurities.

²³⁸ Rev 12:7-9, And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, 8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

²³⁹ Eph 5:6-10, Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light 9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

²⁴⁰ Luke 11:24-26, "When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. 26 Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."

²⁴¹ NT:3870 To call upon someone to do something. To beg. To entreat.

Mark 5:11-12, Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. 12 The demons implored Him, saying, "Send us into the swine so that we may enter them."

v11: Why was there a **"large herd of swine"**? Jews aren't supposed to eat pork---it is unclean.²⁴² Just another example of rebelling against God's commands for the sake of profit.

v12: The demons were terrified of being commanded to come out of the man unless they had someplace else to go---even into pigs. Spirits apparently need a body to contain them.

Mark 5:13, Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand of them; and they were drowned in the sea.

The demons can't do anything without Jesus' **permission**. Remember when Satan wanted to afflict Job, he had to get God's permission.^{243 244} Satan can only do what God allows. This should be a great comfort to us who belong to a loving, omnipotent God.

When the **unclean spirits** entered the swine, they became crazy and self-destructive. We should be extremely cautious about anything to do with the occult.²⁴⁵ No Ouija boards, no fortune tellers,²⁴⁶ etc.

Were there really 2000 demons in the man **"Legion"**? There were 2000 swine that they went into. A Roman legion consists of 3000-6000 soldiers. It's terrifying to think of that many demons.

²⁴² Deut 14:8, "The pig, because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud, it is unclean for you. You shall not eat any of their flesh nor touch their carcasses."

²⁴³ Job 1:12, Then the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.

²⁴⁴ Job 2:1, So the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."

²⁴⁵ Deut 18:10-12, "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11 or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. 12 For whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord; and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you."

²⁴⁶ 1 Chron 10:13-14, So Saul died for his trespass which he committed against the Lord, because of the word of the Lord which he did not keep; and also because he asked counsel of a medium,...

Mark 5:14, Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the country. And the people came to see what it was that had happened.

What a contrast: pig **herdsmen** versus the good Shepherd! We sheep know His voice.²⁴⁷ Shepherds lead their flocks from the front by love; in contrast, **herdsmen** drive their herds from the rear by fear. The Shepherd lays down His life for His sheep;²⁴⁸ in contrast, hired herders run from danger and abandon their herd.²⁴⁹ This is a stark picture of the difference between the Lord's flock and Satan's herd.

Mark 5:15-16, They came to Jesus and observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the "legion;" and they became frightened. 16 Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and all about the swine.

v15: This is so strange. When they saw **"the man who had been demon possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind"**, instead of rejoicing and praising God, they became frightened. Probably they became frightened because they were in rebellion against God (raising pigs) and this was clear evidence of God's working---something they were in denial about. People can deny God's existence all their lives but eventually they will have to face reality, whether they want to or not. He exists! He is real! And He will judge those who reject His offer of love. It is so much better to face reality now, while we can, and accept His unconditional love. Actually, it is "conditional"---it is conditional on us just believing in Jesus.

v15: In spite of having a thorough description of how it happened, they remained rebellious in heart.

Mark 5:17, And they began to implore Him to leave their region.

This is one of the saddest verses in the Scriptures. God will honor our decisions. If we reject Him, He will give us what we want---eternity separated from Him. On the other hand, if we believe, He will honor that decision too and give us eternity in blessed union with Him.

If we saw Jesus do a miracle, would we implore Him to go away?

²⁴⁷ John 10:14, "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me."

²⁴⁸ John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."

²⁴⁹ John 10:12-13, "He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep."

Mark 5:18-20, As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might accompany Him. 19 And He did not let him, but He said to him, "Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you." 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

v19: **As He was getting into the boat**---Apparently since He is leaving immediately after arriving, Jesus' one purpose in going to the other side of the Sea was to rescue this demon possessed man.

v19: God does not always work the same way in every situation. In some cases Jesus said "follow Me." But in this case, He was saying "don't follow me." Often we want God to be predictable so we have a formula to follow instead of abiding in Him.

v19: Jesus told the man the same thing He tells us: **"Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you."** When the man went to Decapolis and proclaimed **"what great things Jesus had done for him"** of course the people were amazed. Here was a man who had been certifiably crazy for years and now he was sane, freed from Satan's grasp. This was spectacular! Just like I was depressed for 73 years and now I am free, rejoicing and reaching out to others (in spite of losing my wonderful wife).

Mark 5:21, When Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around Him; and so He stayed by the seashore.

Jesus was swarmed wherever He went. He had neither rest nor privacy but that was OK since He delighted in doing God's will.²⁵⁰

Mark 5:22-24, One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet 23 and implored Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live." 24 And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him.

v24: Jesus did not tell Jairus, "I'm too busy to bother with one little girl---I'm here to save a world." Instead, He quit what He was doing and immediately went with Jairus. God is never too busy to listen to us. He never is impatient, bothered or annoyed at our needing Him. Our need is His opportunity to show His love and power.

²⁵⁰ John 4:34-35, Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."

v24: The crowd is still pressing in on Him but that's OK. It gives Him yet another chance to demonstrate His compassion.

Mark 5:25-28, A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, 26 and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse — 27 after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. 28 For she thought, "If I just touch His garments, I will get well."

v26: Some in this audience can personally empathize with this woman **"who had endured much at the hands of many physicians and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all."** It is a desperate thing to be afflicted with no one to help. In her distress she turned to Jesus. In our desperation we should turn to Jesus rather than trying everything else first. My wife Marilyn was in a grocery line once when she heard two women in line ahead of her talking. One of them said, "Well, I guess I'll just have to trust the Lord." The other woman replied, "Oh I'm so sorry. I had no idea that things were that bad!!!"

v28: It was the faith of the woman with the hemorrhage that led to her healing---not her theology. Likewise, our theology is not all that important but what is of prime importance is faith in Jesus---that He is who He claims to be; that He knows what our problem is; that He is able to meet our need; and that He will do it in a loving way at the right time.

Mark 5:29, Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

In her case, her physical healing was immediate. It is not always that way. I don't think God lets us suffer unnecessarily---He will somehow use our pain for our good. But often we can't see the big picture and we want immediate relief. However, with spiritual need the answer is immediate. The moment we trust Jesus in faith, we are joined with Him and sealed by His Spirit for eternity.

Mark 5:30, Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?"

It is Jesus' power that heals us. If we reject Him, we reject His healing. How sad; how unnecessary.

Mark 5:31, And His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"

He is aware of everything---even one individual in a crowd.

Mark 5:32-33, And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. 33 But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.

She was afraid and trembling---an appropriate feeling in the presence of the power of the Son of God.

Mark 5:34, And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction."

Rather than scolding her, He called her **"daughter"** and told her that her faith in Him as healer had made her well.

He told her to **"go in peace"**---peace with God. Shalom!

Why did she have her affliction? So that God could be glorified.²⁵¹ That's why we have our afflictions too. We see them as problems but in reality they are opportunities to grow in faith.

This parable also has a deeper meaning. The woman represents Israel with its spiritual disease (sin and disbelief) that has lasted many years. The flow of blood symbolizes the many blood sacrifices that have been offered for centuries. The many doctors that have provided no relief are the scribes, Pharisees, priests, etc, that couldn't heal her and, in fact, only made her situation worse. However, when Jesus came, faith in Him healed her. Likewise that is all that can heal Israel.

Mark 5:35-36, While He was still speaking, they came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore?" 36 But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe."

v35: Clearly the people only thought Jesus could heal while someone was alive. They did not realize that He was the Lord of the living and the dead.^{252 253}

²⁵¹ John 9:1-3, As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him."

²⁵² Rom 14:9, For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

²⁵³ Rev 1:18, "I have the keys of death and of Hades."

v35: **Don't trouble the Teacher**---does a little girl's unnecessary death trouble Him? Of course. He knows when even a sparrow falls.^{254 255} He wept over Lazarus.²⁵⁶

v36: Jesus had just healed the woman with the issue of blood who had faith. So He is telling the **synagogue official** to have faith in Him just like that woman and not to be afraid for his daughter.

Mark 5:37, And He allowed no one to accompany Him, except Peter and James and John the brother of James.

Why? These three were His closest disciples. He was discipling them. Everyone else was there for circus sensationalism. It was like a carnival. They were there to get what they could from Him rather than letting Him teach them as He wished.

We do the same thing. We try to tell God how we want Him to act rather than just responding to Him.

Mark 5:38-39, They came to the house of the synagogue official; and He saw a commotion, and people loudly weeping and wailing. 39 And entering in, He said to them, "Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep."

v38: They are in full morning for the dead little girl---weeping and wailing loudly as only Middle Eastern people are so capable of doing.

v39: He offered them hope saying **"the child has not died but is asleep."** This is very similar to what He told the people around Lazarus' tomb.²⁵⁷ In both cases the person actually was physically dead but Jesus indicated that the person was in a state of sleep (even while dead). When a person dies, he sleeps^{258 259} in Hades^{260 261} (Sheol^{262 263}---the resting place of the dead) until Jesus comes again at the Rapture and wakes him. In these two examples, He woke them early.

²⁵⁴ Matt 10:29-31, "Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. 30 "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 "So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."

²⁵⁵ Luke 12:6-7, "Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. 7 "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."

²⁵⁶ John 11:35, Jesus wept.

²⁵⁷ John 11:11, This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."

²⁵⁸ John 11:13-14, Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. 14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

Mark 5:40a, They began laughing at Him. But putting them all out...

Can you imagine laughing scornfully at Jesus?

He **put them out** because of their unbelief. Someone who is not disposed to believe will not believe even when he sees an obvious miracle.²⁶⁴

Mark 5:40b-42a, He took along the child's father and mother and His own companions, and entered the room where the child was. 41 Taking the child by the hand, He said to her, "Talitha kum!" (which translated means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). 42 Immediately the girl got up and began to walk, for she was twelve years old.

v41: He merely said to her **"get up."** His word was sufficient. Just like when He told Lazarus to "come forth."²⁶⁵ He didn't have to pray, fast, burn incense, lay hands on her or anything---only speak to her.

He will return someday soon and will say **"come forth"** and at His word all believers will go to Him, all the graves²⁶⁶ will be emptied, and Hades will be vacated.²⁶⁷

²⁵⁹ 1 Cor 15:51-52, Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet;

²⁶⁰ Dan 12:2, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt."

²⁶¹ Rev 20:13, And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

²⁶² Often called euphemistically: "the pit".

²⁶³ Isa 38:10, I said, "In the middle of my life I am to enter the gates of Sheol; I am to be deprived of the rest of my years."

²⁶⁴ Luke 16:30-31, "But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' 31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

²⁶⁵ John 11:43-44, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." 44 The man who had died came forth...

²⁶⁶ John 5:28-29, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment."

²⁶⁷ Rev 20:13-14, And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

Mark 5:42b-43, And immediately they were completely astounded. 43 And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this, and He said that something should be given her to eat.

v42-43: Yes, this is astounding! Although at the time He did not want it broadcast [because His "hour had not yet come" ²⁶⁸ ²⁶⁹ ²⁷⁰ ²⁷¹], He did it in the presence of His three most trusted disciples so they could write about it for our benefit.

v43: He was not looking for sensationalism or fame or else He would have let them tell everyone. As it was, he was so besieged with people wanting physical healings that it was difficult for Him to get their attention about spiritual things. That attitude can happen to us too. We can get so wrapped up in our temporal troubles that we miss the big picture---which is: believing Jesus unto eternal life.

²⁶⁸ John 7:8, "Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come."

²⁶⁹ John 7:6, So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune."

²⁷⁰ John 7:30, So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

²⁷¹ John 8:20, These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in these chapters?

1. He is peaceful in the midst of turmoil (4:38)
2. He has power even over the wind and waves (4:39)
3. Even unclean spirits are drawn to Him [but in fear] (5:2)
4. The unclean spirits bow to Him (5:6)
5. The unclean spirits know He is the Son of the Most High God (5:7)
6. He commands (5:8)
7. Unclean spirits fear Him (5:7, 10, 11)
8. He gives permission (5:13)
9. He allows us to choose our destiny (5:17)
10. He wants us to tell others what He has done for us personally (5:19)
11. He has mercy on us (5:19, 24)
12. Faith in Him results in healing (5:28, 29, 34)
13. His power causes the healing (5:30)
14. He is the source of peace (5:34)
15. He removes fear even of death (5:36)
16. He equates physical death with spiritual sleep (5:39)
17. He raises the dead [physically and spiritually] (5:42)
18. He has power over death (5:42)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 6

Mark 6:1-3, Jesus went out from there and came into His hometown; and His disciples followed Him. 2 When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him.

v1: **went out from there**---Capernaum

v1: **His hometown**---Nazareth

v2: **many listeners**---poor translation: should be "many that were hearing" ---the word means "those hearing with understanding." In other words, they heard Him, they understood what He was saying, and even so they rejected Him.

v2: **astonished**---amazed, awed, flabbergasted.

v2: They acknowledged His amazing **teaching**, His **wisdom**, His **miracles**. These shows the awesome changes that the Holy Spirit had wrought in Jesus at His baptism. Nevertheless, the people rejected Him because they thought they knew Him and that He was a mere **man** that they personally grew up with. There is a danger here for us too: we might reject or underestimate the Man we think we know, but that's not who He really is. He is so much more than our limited understanding.

v3: By the way, since He has four brothers and two or more sisters, how come the Catholic Church teaches that His mother Mary remained a virgin?

v3: **took offense**---Greek word "skandalizo" from which we get "scandalized." This word derives from "skandalon" which means "a trap, a stumbling block, to cause to stumble or fall." This reminds me of several Scriptures: ²⁷² ²⁷³ ²⁷⁴ ²⁷⁵

²⁷² 1 Cor 1:23, "...but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness..."

²⁷³ Matt 18:7, "Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!"

²⁷⁴ Rom 9:31-33, ...but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

Remember also John 1:11, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (KJV)

Look what they passed up: John 1:12, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name."

Mark 6:4-6a, Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household." 5 And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And He wondered at their unbelief.

v4: **prophet**---Jesus is "the prophet" of John 6:12, "Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, 'This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.'" I underlined the word "the" because the Greek usually leaves out the definite article except when it wants to emphasize "the one and only."

v4: **not without honor**---literally means "not dishonored." In other words: a prophet is honored everywhere except in His own household.

Why is this? His relatives saw Him grow up for 30 years. They saw that He was an ordinary person just like them. Suddenly, after He was baptized by the Holy Spirit, He acted very differently. He claimed to be the Son of God. However, they had always known Him merely as the son of Mary and Joseph. They thought He was the same person they had known for three decades---a carpenter---but not The Prophet.

That same unbelief can affect us too. We think we know Jesus but He is so much more than we can conceive of.

v5: **He could do no miracle there**---lack of faith results in lack of seeing miracles. True story: there was a pastor who was a substitute preacher at a fairly legalistic church. The head elder took him aside just before he preached and cautioned him: "We don't believe in miracles here." The preacher reassured him, "Don't worry. You won't see any!"

v6a: **marveled**---Greek word "thaumazo" from which we get "amazed." "Wonder, marvel, astonished." We should be amazed!

²⁷⁵ 1 Peter 2:7-8, This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," 8 and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word...

v6a: I'm amazed too at people's unbelief when we are given so much reason to believe. I think that God gives us plenty of evidence to believe (if we are willing) but He also gives us plenty of evidence to doubt (if we are not teachable). He wants us to make a definite decision pro or con. ²⁷⁶

Mark 6:6b-11, And He was going around the villages teaching. 7 And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; 8 and He instructed them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff — no bread, no bag, no money in their belt — 9 but to wear sandals; and He added, "Do not put on two tunics." 10 And He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. 11 Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them."

v6b: **teaching**---He was frequently called "Rabbi"---teacher. What did He teach? See verse 12: **"preached [taught] that men should repent."**

v7: **pairs**---we need each other. Lack of fellowship leads to coldness.

v7: **authority over the unclean spirits**---do we have that today? [Yes]

v8: **take nothing**---depend totally and only on God's provision working through people.

v8: **no bag**---not to have anything in reserve but to depend daily for God's provision. This is just like God's instructions about hoarding manna. ²⁷⁷

v8: **no money**---no "plan B" in case God didn't come through with their needs.

v11: **shake the dust**---See: ²⁷⁸ ²⁷⁹ What is the significance of this? In John 13:10, Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean." He is symbolically saying to the people who rejected the message that they are rejecting cleansing from sin. Therefore their sin remains. ²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ Rev 3:15-16, "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."

²⁷⁷ Ex 16:19-20, Moses said to them, "Let no man leave any of it until morning." ²⁰ But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul.

²⁷⁸ Acts 13:51, But they shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium.

²⁷⁹ Matt 10:14, "Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet."

²⁸⁰ John 8:24, "...unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

Mark 6:12-13, They went out and preached that men should repent. 13 And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.

This is the same message that John the Baptist preached.²⁸¹ After the resurrection, the message changed to "believe in Me."^{282 283 284} But repentance is still a prerequisite.²⁸⁵

Why did they cast out demons and heal many sick people? To validate their authority as having been sent by God.

This next section is a long parenthesis in the middle of the story of the disciples being sent out two by two.

Mark 6:14-29, And King Herod heard of it, for His name had become well known; and people were saying, "John the Baptist has risen from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in Him." 15 But others were saying, "He is Elijah." And others were saying, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." 16 But when Herod heard of it, he kept saying, "John, whom I beheaded, has risen!" 17 For Herod himself had sent and had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, because he had married her. 18 For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death and could not do so; 20 for Herod was afraid of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was very perplexed; but he used to enjoy listening to him. 21 A strategic day came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his lords and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee; 22 and when the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you want and I will give it to you." 23 And he swore to her, "Whatever you ask of me, I will give it to you; up to half of my kingdom." 24 And she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." 25 Immediately she came in a hurry to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." 26 And although the king was very sorry, yet because of his oaths and because of his dinner guests, he was unwilling to refuse her. 27 Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded him to bring back his

²⁸¹ Matt 3:1-2, Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

²⁸² John 1:12, But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.

²⁸³ John 8:24, "...unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

²⁸⁴ John 20:31, ...these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

²⁸⁵ Mark 1:15, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

head. And he went and had him beheaded in the prison, 28 and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples heard about this, they came and took away his body and laid it in a tomb.

v17: **Herod** had a guilty conscience (for good reason!).

v22-23: He made foolish **vows**. He was probably drunk at his dinner party.

v25: Can you imagine having your teen-age daughter ask for someone's head to be chopped off and presented to her on a platter? Yuk!!!! Cold-blooded viciousness. Visualize a bloody head being brought into a dinner party!!! Would this help you want a second helping of dessert?

v26: His pride kept him from rescinding his foolish promise. His appearance to his dinner guests was more important to him than a righteous man's life.

[Now the long digression is over and we are back to the story of the disciples who were sent out two by two]

Mark 6:30-33, The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. 31 And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) 32 They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves. 33 The people saw them going, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them.

v30: We too should **"gather together with Jesus"** and **"report to Him all that we have done and taught."** In other words, "abide in Him" moment by moment.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁶ John 15:1-11, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. 9 Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."

v30: Notice that these twelve included Judas who later betrayed Him. Even though he personally had been enabled to heal people and cast out demons, it did not transform him---he remained the same money-loving, betraying, double-dealing person.

v31: Jesus knew the necessity for rest---physical, emotional and spiritual. In Hebrews it talks about entering into His rest.^{287 288}

v31: **a secluded place**---quiet, no TV, no cell-phone, no interruptions----just Jesus and me.

v33: **got there ahead of them**---Satan will do his worst to make sure we don't get that needed rest.

Mark 6:34, When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.

In spite of desperately needing rest, He felt **compassion** for them and unselfishly sacrificed His own need in order to meet their need.

sheep without a shepherd---Jesus is that Shepherd.^{289 290 291}

Mark 6:35-37, When it was already quite late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and it is already quite late; 36 send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But He answered them, "You give them something to eat!" And they said to Him, "Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them something to eat?"

v36: His disciples said "**send them away**"---we too try to tell Jesus what to do. He knows what is best.

v37: Jesus already knew what He was going to do²⁹² but He was testing His disciples. This is a perfect example of learning by doing.

v37: One denarius was about one day's wage so this is a lot of money.

²⁸⁷ Heb 4:1, Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

²⁸⁸ Heb 4:3, For we who have believed enter that rest.

²⁸⁹ Num 27:16-17, "May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man [Jesus] over the congregation, 17 who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord will not be like sheep which have no shepherd."

²⁹⁰ John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."

²⁹¹ 1 Kings 22:17, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep which have no shepherd."

²⁹² John 6:6, This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.

Mark 6:38, And He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go look!" And when they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish."

Five loaves and two fish---We too need to take inventory or our resources so we will see our total inadequacy to meet the situation.

Mark 6:39-44, And He commanded them all to sit down by groups on the green grass. 40 They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. 41 And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food and broke the loaves and He kept giving them to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all. 42 They all ate and were satisfied, 43 and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. 44 There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

Wow! Jesus takes the little bit we have to offer to Him and He multiplies it to make it more than adequate---super-abundant! This seems to be a general teaching in Scripture. There are many stories of miraculous multiplication. I was thinking about the stories of Elisha and the widow with the inexhaustible pot of oil,²⁹³ Elijah and the widow of Zerah and her unending jar of flour,²⁹⁴ the twenty barley loaves that fed a hundred men,²⁹⁵ and about Jesus feeding the five thousand²⁹⁶ and the four thousand.²⁹⁷ Why are those stories in the Bible? Although they impress us with God's power, they have a deeper meaning. In each case, the Lord took some things (a pot of oil, a jar of flour, some barley loaves, three loaves, a few fishes) that were hopelessly inadequate and multiplied them to be super-abundant to meet the needs of many people.

What I see is that this is a general spiritual principle. If we ask Him, He will take our little bit of faith and multiply it to be great faith; if we ask Him, He will take our little bit of love and multiply it to be great love; if we ask Him, He will take our little bit of forgiveness and multiply it to be great forgiveness. We have not because we do not ask.²⁹⁸ But if we ask, He is more than willing to answer

²⁹³ 2 Kings 4:1-6

²⁹⁴ 1 Kings 8:7-16

²⁹⁵ 2 Kings 4:42-44

²⁹⁶ Matt 16:9, "Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up?"

²⁹⁷ Matt 16:10, "Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets full you picked up?"

²⁹⁸ James 4:2, You do not have because you do not ask.

far more than we can imagine. He even tells us specifically to ask for the Holy Spirit²⁹⁹ to fill us. If we ask in faith,³⁰⁰ He will answer and multiply.^{301 302}

This must be a really important principle because God repeated the story at least five times in different situations for emphasis. He can multiply my willingness, courage, understanding, boldness, insight, energy, humility, etc, etc. In fact, everything I willingly give to Him, He can multiply.

v41: **He blessed the food**---even though it was pitifully inadequate, He thanked God for what He had.

v44: **There were five thousand men**---because a lad was willing to give Jesus his meager lunch of five small loaves and two fishes, five thousand men (plus women and children) were blessed. What would have happened if the lad was unwilling to share?

Mark 6:45-46, Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the crowd away. 46 After bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.

v45: Even though the disciples had no idea how Jesus was going to rejoin them, to their credit they obeyed Him without questioning. We need to also.

v46: **to pray**---Jesus understood the necessity of abiding in His Father. He set us a beautiful example of how we should abide (remain, continue, bask) in Him.³⁰³

Mark 6:47-51, When it was evening, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land. 48 Seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, at about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them. 49 But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out; 50 for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, "Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid." 51 Then He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped.

²⁹⁹ Luke 11:13, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

³⁰⁰ Matt 7:7-8, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

³⁰¹ Matt 7:11, "...how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!"

³⁰² Matt 21:22, "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

³⁰³ John 15:4-5, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me."

v48: **Seeing them straining at the oars**---How did He see them? It was the middle of the night, it was dark, the storm was blowing and they were miles from shore. How in the world could He see them? Miraculous.

v49: **walking on the sea**---another miracle. How did He do this if He were mere man?

v49: **they supposed it was a ghost**---I don't blame them! I probably would have too. They were likely thinking that they were about to die in the storm and here comes a ghost to take them.

v50: **Take courage; it is I**---We do not need to fear when we are abiding in Jesus. 1 John 4:18, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear." Fear is the opposite of faith "and without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."³⁰⁴

v51: **...and the wind stopped**---another miracle!

Mark 6:51-52, and they were utterly astonished, 52 for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

v51: **astonished**---it was inconceivable to them that Jesus could do this. They still thought He was a mere man, albeit one with amazing wisdom and skills, but nevertheless a man like them.

v52: **they had not gained any insight**---not only they "had not gained any insight into the incident of the loaves" but they had had a similar incident before when Jesus calmed the sea back in Mark 4:39-41,

³⁹ "And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Hush, be still.' And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. ⁴⁰ And He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?' ⁴¹ They became very much afraid and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?'"

They had forgotten this previous incident even though it was almost identical to the present state. We too tend to forget which is why God tells us to remember His miracles.^{305 306 307 308 309}

³⁰⁴ Hebrews 11:6

³⁰⁵ Deut 8:2, "You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."

³⁰⁶ 1 Chron 16:11-12, "Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face continually. 12 Remember His wonderful deeds which He has done..."

³⁰⁷ Neh 9:17, "They refused to listen, and did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them."

³⁰⁸ Ps 77:11-12, I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. 12 I will meditate on all Your work and muse on Your deeds.

v52: I wonder why **their heart was hardened**? Perhaps because they were too familiar with Him and thought they knew Him fully. No way! We can never know Him fully because He is infinite.

Mark 6:53-56, When they had crossed over they came to land at Gennesaret, and moored to the shore. 54 When they got out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him, 55 and ran about that whole country and began to carry here and there on their pallets those who were sick, to the place they heard He was. 56 Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.

Gennesaret---this is at the north-west corner of the Sea of Galilee just below Capernaum.

v55-56: The people saw Him as a physical healer to satisfy their immediate needs. They didn't seek Him in order to meet their spiritual needs----they were spiritually numb in spite of the awesome miracles He performed. Take care that we don't become numb too and overlook our spiritual needs.

³⁰⁹ Ps 143:5, I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your doings; I muse on the work of Your hands.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He has wisdom and performs miracles (6:2)
2. As a man, He was a carpenter, the son of Mary, and had brothers and sisters (6:3)
3. He was a prophet (6:4)
4. Unbelief hinders His miracles (6:5)
5. He is dumbfounded at our unbelief (6:6)
6. He gives us His authority (6:7)
 - a. To teach (6:30)
 - b. To cast out demons (6:13)
 - c. To heal (6:13)
 - d. To make people accountable (6:11)
7. He knows the value of rest (6:31)
8. He has compassion for us (6:34)
9. He tells us to take inventory of our inadequate resources (6:38)
10. He is thankful to the Father for even inadequate resources (6:41)
11. He multiplies what we give Him to make it more than adequate (6:41)
12. He satisfies our needs (6:42)
13. He knows the necessity of prayer (6:46)
14. He can do anything (6:49)
15. He can stop a storm (6:51)
16. He heals (6:56)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 7

Mark 7:1-5, The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, 2 and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. 3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; 4 and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.) 5 The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?"

v2: **impure hands**---Greek "koinos"---unclean, defiled, common, unholy, profane. This same Greek word is used in Rom 14:14, "I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

v2: **unwashed**---Greek "a" (not) and "niptos" (washed)---this speaks of washing just part of the body (such as hands, or feet, or face) in contrast with Greek "pluno" which means to wash the whole body. Originally God's commands were for the priests to wash before going to the tent of meeting³¹⁰ but the scribes expanded the law for everyone to include many other occasions such as coming in from the marketplace.

v3: **the traditions of the elders**---there is a fascinating little story in Jeremiah³¹¹ about the traditions of Jonadab---not drinking wine. Jeremiah, speaking for the Lord, jumped on them for substituting the traditions of men for the commands of God.³¹² However, he later commended them for at least keeping those traditions.³¹³

³¹⁰ Ex 30:17-20, The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 18 "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. 19 "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; 20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die."

³¹¹ Jer 35:1-10.

³¹² Jer 35:12-14, Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, 13 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Will you not receive instruction by listening to My words?" declares the Lord. 14 "The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are observed. So they do not drink wine to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. But I have spoken to you again and again; yet you have not listened to Me."'"

³¹³ Jer 35:18-19, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Because you have obeyed the command of Jonadab your father, kept all his commands and done according to all that he commanded you; 19 therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, "Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before Me always."'"

v3: There are many other scriptures speaking of the traditions of men.^{314 315 316} Some of them are really strongly worded.^{317 318}

v3: Because Mark carefully explained the Jews' traditions, it is clear that his intended audience is to the Gentiles.

Mark 7:6-8, And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. 7 BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.' 8 Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men."

v6-7: This is a very stern quote from Isaiah 29:13.

v6: **hypocrites**---Greek "hupokrites"---an actor playing a part, a pretender. This word is used 17x in the NT---mostly in Matthew. Ken Purvis used to say this was someone posing.

v6: **honors me with their lips**---see^{319 320 321}

Mark 7:9-13, He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. 10 For Moses said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER'; and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER, IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH'; 11 but you say, 'If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban

³¹⁴ Matt 15:2-3, "Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." 3 And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"

³¹⁵ Col 2:8, See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

³¹⁶ Isaiah 29:13, Then the Lord said, "Because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, but they remove their hearts far from Me, and their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote."

³¹⁷ Jer 8:7-8, But My people do not know the ordinance of the Lord. 8 "How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us'? But behold, the lying pen of the scribes has made it into a lie."

³¹⁸ Titus 1:13-14, For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.

³¹⁹ Ezek 33:31, "They come to you as people come, and sit before you as My people and hear your words, but they do not do them, for they do the lustful desires expressed by their mouth, and their heart goes after their gain."

³²⁰ Jer 5:2, "And although they say, 'As the Lord lives,' surely they swear falsely."

³²¹ Jer 12:2, You are near to their lips but far from their mind.

(that is to say, given to God),'¹² you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; ¹³ thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that."

v11: **CORBAN:**

In Jewish tradition, a word used to declare something dedicated to God. In the Gospel story Jesus castigates the Jews for their practice, justified in their legal tradition, of pronouncing their property "corban" and thus rendering it unable lawfully to be used for the material support of aged parents, even though it did not then need actually to be offered to God but could be retained for personal use.³²²

v11: This same word is translated "gift" in Matthew 15:5. It is transliterated from Hebrew "qorban" into Greek "korban" then transliterated again into English "corban." It was a devious way for a man to escape the responsibility of caring for elderly parents by pretending that his money had been dedicated to God.

v11-13: Jesus is showing how the letter of their tradition invalidates the spirit of God's commandments---in this case the fifth commandment.³²³

These people were very religious but they did not honor God.

OK, so this is an interesting story. How does it apply to us? How do our traditions invalidate God's commandments? One of the most subtle is when we put a special interpretation or emphasis on a passage of Scripture to the exclusion of other Scriptures then use that as authority to deny love or forgiveness to someone who doesn't meet our criteria. For example, homosexuals, etc.

Mark 7:14-16, After He called the crowd to Him again, He began saying to them, "Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man. ¹⁶ ["If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."]

v14: **understand**---Greek "suniemi"--- NT:4920---

it entails the assembling of individual facts into an organized whole, as collecting the pieces of a puzzle and putting them together. The mind grasps concepts and sees the proper relationship between them. Such understanding includes the moral and religious awareness of man's heart.³²⁴

³²² International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

³²³ Deut 5:16, "Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you."

³²⁴ The Complete Word Study Dictionary.

v14: **listen**---Greek “akouo”---NT:191----hear with attention, hearken or listen to.

v15: **defile**---to make profane, common, unclean, polluted.

v15: The people are thinking about physical things (washing hands, avoiding forbidden foods, etc.) whereas Jesus is speaking about spiritual things. They are using the Scriptures (as augmented unfortunately by the rabbis’ extra commands) as a rule book to govern their actions, rather than governing their hearts. We still do that today very commonly.

v16: this verse is not in the best original manuscripts. It was probably added by a scribe because it seemed logical based on Mark 4:9 and Mark 4:23. Perhaps also the scribe was familiar with Matthew 11:15 or Luke 8:8 or Luke 14:35.

Mark 7:17-18, When he had left the crowd and entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable. 18 And He said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also?"

v18: Ouch! This must have stung. He had just told them to listen with understanding and now He is saying to His disciples that they lack understanding as badly as the crowd.

How can we avoid the same pitfall? By asking the Holy Spirit to reveal His Word to us as we carefully read it. We have an advantage that they did not have: Jesus said, **"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."**³²⁵ They did not yet have the Holy Spirit since Jesus had not yet been resurrected but we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us as our Helper to understand³²⁶ what Jesus has said. Hallelujah!

Mark 7:19-23, "Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, 19 because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.) 20 And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. 23 All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

³²⁵ John 16:3

³²⁶ 1 Cor 2:10,12, For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 12 Now we have received ... the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God.

v19: **his heart**---This is the Greek “kardia” which can mean the physical heart or the spiritual heart, soul, spirit, etc. In this context, it undoubtedly means the spiritual heart.

v19: **is eliminated**---This is a euphemism for the literal translation which means “into the latrine, privy, out-house, the crapper, etc.”

v21: The word “**heart**” is used 677x in the Bible---one of the most frequently used words. Therefore it must be very important to God.

v21: **out of the heart**---the heart of man is evil.^{327 328} Therefore, that which comes out of it is evil.³²⁹ [That is, until we accept Jesus and learn to abide in Him moment by moment.]

v23: **defile the man**---we are defiled and unacceptable to God until we by faith accept Jesus’ love gift of His righteousness (not ours) which then makes us acceptable to the Father.

Mark 7:24, Jesus got up and went away from there to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know of it; yet He could not escape notice.

v24: **Tyre**---This isn’t even in Israel---The city of Tyre is on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea forty miles from where Jesus was, but the “**region of Tyre**” borders the region of Galilee and is within about twenty miles of the Sea of Galilee.

v24: **He wanted no one to know of it**---He was exhausted. He wasn’t looking for public attention. But “**He could not escape notice.**”

v24: **escape notice**---Greek “lanthano”---to be hidden from view, concealed.

³²⁷ Gen 6:5-6, Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

³²⁸ Jer 17:9, “The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”

³²⁹ Titus 3:3, For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

Mark 7:25-26, But after hearing of Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately came and fell at His feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of the Syrophenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

v25-26: This woman was desperate. Someone who lived without the knowledge of Yahweh had zero hope of freeing someone from an evil spirit.

v25-26: She was a Gentile---probably of mixed race---half Phoenician (Tyre was in the region of Phoenicia) and half Syrian. Jesus blesses the most unlikely people---such as you and me.

v25: **she fell at His feet**---she humbly worshipped Him. So should we.

v26: **She kept asking**---she was persistent.

v26: She knew by faith that He could cast the demon out of her daughter.

Mark 7:27, And He was saying to her, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

v27: Although this sounds hard-hearted, we know Jesus was anything but hard-hearted. So why did He speak thus? Perhaps He wanted her to be persistent. Perhaps He knew already what she would say and He wanted that recorded by Mark for our benefit.

v27: **the children**---the children of Abraham---the Jews. He is giving the Jews full opportunity to accept or reject Him before offering Himself to us---we Gentiles. Unfortunately, they rejected Him. We'd better not!

v27: **bread**---the Word of God.

v27: **dogs**---Gentiles. The Jews were very disdainful of the Gentiles and called them dogs.^{330 331} In that culture, many of the dogs were not the loveable pets we have today but they were dangerous wild animals like wolves that ran in packs and were a dire threat.

³³⁰ Phil 3:2-3, Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; ³ for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

³³¹ Rev 22:15, Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.

Mark 7:28, But she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs."

v28: She was incredibly bold and persistent. It was unusual for a woman³³² to speak to a man³³³--- especially a rabbi.

v28: Her answer was very wise and also very humble. She did not take offense at being called a dog--- she kept focused on her daughter's need.

Mark 7:29-30, And He said to her, "Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter." 30 And going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left.

v29-30: It is even clearer in the Matthew account: **Matt 15:28, Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish."**

v30: She believed Him (she had **great faith**) and went home---she did not even ask Him to come to her house (unlike the official of the synagogue³³⁴ we met back in Mark 5). Isn't it interesting that an uneducated Gentile woman living outside Israel had more faith than a synagogue official who was fully educated in the Scriptures?

v30: **has gone out**---He didn't say "will go out" or "is going out" but instead He said "has already gone out." It didn't require exorcism, psychological counseling, anti-depressant drugs, bathing in the Jordan, offering two turtledoves in the Temple, or anything else, except faith in Jesus.

v30: **lying**---literally "thrown violently on the bed"---Greek "ballo" from which we get the English word "ball." This was typical of demons when they were cast out. They tried to do as much damage as they could before exiting their victim.^{335 336 337 338}

³³² John 4:27, At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman.

³³³ John 4:9, Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?"

³³⁴ Mark 5:22-23, One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet 23 and implored Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live."

³³⁵ Mark 9:22, "It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him."

³³⁶ Mark 1:26, Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.

³³⁷ Mark 9:26, After crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, "He is dead!"

Do we believe in demons today? We should. They are real and terrifying for those people that don't belong to Jesus.

Mark 7:31, Again He went out from the region of Tyre, and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of Decapolis.

Jesus sure did a lot of walking. Remember, the roads in those days were just muddy, rocky tracks.

Since Sidon is about 20 miles up the coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Tyre, it is probable that He took the coast route from the city of Tyre. However, this is the hard way to get to the Sea of Galilee. It is backtracking. The more straightforward way would be to go north from Tyre a couple of miles up the coast to the River Litani and follow its valley east through the coastal mountains to the headwaters of the Jordan River then south along the Jordan to the Sea of Galilee. Why He went to Sidon I don't know unless it was because it was an important city of the Phoenicians [they were Gentiles] and He wanted them to hear the gospel. Perhaps the account means that after He left Sidon, He went back down to Tyre then to Galilee by way of the route I suggested.

v31: **Decapolis**---"ten cities"---this makes even less sense since Sidon is roughly 60 miles north-west of the Sea of Galilee and Decapolis is a region roughly 40 miles south-east of the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 7:32-35, They brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they implored Him to lay His hand on him. 33 Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue with the saliva; 34 and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, "Ephphatha!" that is, "Be opened!" 35 And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly.

v35: Miracle after miracle!

v34: **deep sigh**---groan,^{339 340 341} grief.³⁴² Jesus empathized with his plight.^{343 344}

³³⁸ Luke 9:42, While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him to the ground and threw him into a convulsion.

³³⁹ Rom 8:23, And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

³⁴⁰ 2 Cor 5:2, For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven.

³⁴¹ 2 Cor 5:4, For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed.

³⁴² Heb 13:17, Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

³⁴³ Heb 4:15, For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

v34: ***and looking up to heaven***---Why did He do this? [He was praying because He as a man was totally dependent on the Holy Spirit to do these miracles. He is setting us a perfect example of how we too should live in total dependence on the Holy Spirit to empower us for service.]

Mark 7:36-37, And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it. 37 They were utterly astonished, saying, "He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

v37: They were astonished at His miracles and they couldn't wait to tell others about Him and what He had done. I realize that they were being disobedient to His command but we too should be so astonished that we want to tell others about Him.

Why weren't they obedient? Why aren't we obedient? If they had believed that He was the Son of God, would they have been obedient? If we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, shouldn't we be obedient? Or are we going to do what we want, irrespective of what He wants?

³⁴⁴ Heb 2:17-18, Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He hates hypocrisy (7:6)
2. He validates Scripture as having authority (7:6)
3. He rejects the traditions of men (7:7)
4. He emphatically rejects the tradition of Corban (7:11)
5. He defines “defile”---that which comes from the heart (7:15)
6. He explains to those who really want to hear (7:19-23)
7. His intent is for Jews to understand first, then Gentiles (7:27)
8. But He responds to Gentile faith (7:29-30)
9. He can heal from a distance (7:29)
10. He can heal even obscure ailments (7:35)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 8

Mark 8:1-3, In those days, when there was again a large crowd and they had nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples and said to them, 2 "I feel compassion for the people because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat. 3 If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way; and some of them have come from a great distance."

v2: **I feel compassion**---Jesus empathizes with our weaknesses.³⁴⁵ ³⁴⁶ He understands our needs. He cares.

Mark 8:4-9, And His disciples answered Him, "Where will anyone be able to find enough bread here in this desolate place to satisfy these people?" 5 And He was asking them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven." 6 And He directed the people to sit down on the ground; and taking the seven loaves, He gave thanks and broke them, and started giving them to His disciples to serve to them, and they served them to the people. 7 They also had a few small fish; and after He had blessed them, He ordered these to be served as well. 8 And they ate and were satisfied; and they picked up seven large baskets full of what was left over of the broken pieces. 9 About four thousand were there; and He sent them away.

v4: **Where will anyone be able to find enough bread**---apparently they had forgotten about Him feeding five thousand people just previously in Mark 6:41. Unfortunately, we too tend to forget His miracles.

v6: **He gave thanks**---If we give thanks even when there is not enough to meet the need,³⁴⁷ God will take care of us.³⁴⁸ We are not to worry.³⁴⁹

v8: **they ate and were satisfied**---more than they needed.³⁵⁰ The lesson of course is that He can superabundantly meet our spiritual needs too.³⁵¹

³⁴⁵ Heb 2:17-18, Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

³⁴⁶ Heb 4:15, For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

³⁴⁷ 1 Thess 5:18, In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

³⁴⁸ 2 Cor 9:8, And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.

³⁴⁹ Phil 4:6-7, Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Mark 8:10-13, And immediately He entered the boat with His disciples and came to the district of Dalmanutha. ¹¹ The Pharisees came out and began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, to test Him. ¹² Sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, "Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." ¹³ Leaving them, He again embarked and went away to the other side.

Dalmanutha---see footnote³⁵²

v11: **seeking from Him a sign from heaven, to test Him**---Obviously they weren't seeking a sign in order to believe but they were trying to trap Him. Since He had just done an amazing sign (feeding 4000+ people) this was ingenuous. He had also done many other signs previously. These religious leaders were "the blind leading the blind"^{353 354}---false shepherds.^{355 356 357 358}

v12: **Sighing deeply in His spirit**---pray to God that we would never cause Him to sigh in His spirit.

³⁵⁰ 1 Cor 1:4-5, I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in everything you were enriched in Him...

³⁵¹ 2 Peter 1:2-3, Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; 3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

³⁵² Dalmanutha---a place on the west of the Sea of Galilee, mentioned only in Mark 8:10. In the parallel passage it is said that Christ came "into the borders of Magdala" (Matt 15:39). It is plain, then, that Dalmanutha was near Magdala, which was probably the Greek name of one of the many Migdols (i.e., watch-towers) on the western side of the lake of Gennesaret. It has been identified in the ruins of a village about a mile from Magdala, in the little open valley of 'Ain-el-Barideh, "the cold fountain," called el-Mejdel, possibly the "Migdal-el" of Josh 19:38. (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

³⁵³ Matt 15:14, "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

³⁵⁴ Luke 6:39, "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit?"

³⁵⁵ Jer 23:1, "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!" declares the Lord.

³⁵⁶ Jer 50:6, "My people have become lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray."

³⁵⁷ Ezek 34:2, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? ""

³⁵⁸ Ezek 34:7-10, Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 8 "As I live," declares the Lord God, "surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but rather the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock; 9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 10 'Thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them.' ""

v12: **no sign will be given to this generation**---In the parallel passage in Matthew 12:39-40 He elaborates: "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; 40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." He is teaching them that He will spend three days and nights in Hades (Sheol) between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. The "sign" will be that He will rise from the dead after three days! He will conquer death!

v13: **leaving them**---how sad. Because of their unbelief, He left them.

Mark 8:14-21, And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. 15 And He was giving orders to them, saying, "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." 16 They began to discuss with one another the fact that they had no bread. 17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart? 18 HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE? AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR? And do you not remember, 19 when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?" They said to Him, "Twelve." 20 "When I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?" And they said to Him, "Seven." 21 And He was saying to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

v14: **They had forgotten**---but now they are concerned that they will have nothing to eat.

v14: In that context, He was talking to them about the "leaven" of the Pharisees. Remember, they had just left the Pharisees that were trying to entrap Jesus. Since they were thinking about their hungry stomachs (the flesh), they totally missed His spiritual message. That can easily happen to us too.

v19-20: Notice that Jesus refers to both feeding 5000 and feeding 4000. I used to think that this was an error in the Bible because I wrongly thought this was referring to the same event. I have since learned that whenever I have a problem with the Scripture, it is not the Scripture's problem but mine. I have subsequently discovered that the Scripture can be trusted implicitly.

v21: **Do you not yet understand?**---What is His main point here? Is it that He is the bread of life? Or is it that He meets our needs super-abundantly? Or is there significance in the numbers "12" (the twelve tribes in Israel) or "7" (the number representing God and His perfection)? Or is His point that He is the Son of God and therefore able to do these miracles? [All of the above]

Mark 8:22-26, And they came to Bethsaida. And they brought a blind man to Jesus and implored Him to touch him. 23 Taking the blind man by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting on his eyes and laying His hands on him, He asked him, "Do you see anything?" 24 And he looked up and said, "I see men, for I see them like trees, walking around." 25 Then again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and began to see everything clearly. 26 And He sent him to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village."

v22: **Bethsaida**---a town at the north shore of the Sea of Galilee right by the exit of the Jordan River. It was the home of three of Jesus' disciples: Phillip,³⁵⁹ Andrew and Peter.³⁶⁰

v23, 26: **He brought him** [the blind man] **out of the village**---Jesus avoided attention because "His time had not yet come."³⁶¹ Furthermore, the people of the village were skeptical.

v24: **I see them like trees, walking around**---We too see men "like trees"---we don't see them the way the Lord sees them---He sees us as precious, redeemed, forgiven, and glorified as His beautiful pure bride.

v25: **Then again He laid His hands on his eyes**---this speaks to me of the "second blessing" where the Lord opens the eyes of our hearts³⁶² and we really see things³⁶³ as He sees them.³⁶⁴ We can then love the unlovable because He loves them.³⁶⁵

v26: This is a fulfillment of the prophesy about Jesus: "To open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon and those who dwell in darkness from the prison."³⁶⁶ This was referring to both physical and spiritual blindness.

v26: **Do not even enter the village**---Again, He is avoiding premature fame because it is ahead of the Father's timetable.

³⁵⁹ John 12:21, ...these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee...

³⁶⁰ John 1:44, Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.

³⁶¹ John 7:6-8, So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil. 8 Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come."

³⁶² 2 Kings 6:17, Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

³⁶³ Ps 119:18, Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law.

³⁶⁴ 2 Kings 6:20, Elisha said, "O Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." So the Lord opened their eyes and they saw.

³⁶⁵ 1 John 4:19, "We love, because He first loved us."

³⁶⁶ Isa 42:6

Mark 8:27-30, Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He questioned His disciples, saying to them, "Who do people say that I am?" 28 They told Him, saying, "John the Baptist; and others say Elijah; but others, one of the prophets." 29 And He continued by questioning them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ." 30 And He warned them to tell no one about Him.

v27: **the villages of Caesarea Philippi**---There were several Caesareas named in honor of Caesar. This one was about twenty miles north from the Sea of Galilee, at the headwaters of the Jordan River near the base of Mt. Hermon. It had a pagan Greco/Roman culture. Originally it was a Canaanite city.

v29: **But who do you say that I am?**---this is the most important question that we individually can answer. Our answer determines our eternal destiny!

v29: **You are the Christ**---And He warned them to tell no one about Him---Can you imagine the stir it would have caused if they had publically proclaimed that the Messiah had come? All Jews were anticipating the coming of Christ but, unfortunately, they had an incorrect impression of what He would be like. They wanted a fleshly king to free them from the Roman oppression rather than a spiritual King to free them from the oppression of Satan. ^{367 368}

Mark 8:31-33, And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 And He was stating the matter plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. 33 But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

v31: **Son of Man**---Although He was the Son of God, He humbly identified with us and called Himself "**Son of Man.**" ³⁶⁹ Good Friday proves He was 100% man; Easter proves He was 100% God.

v31: **and be killed, and after three days rise again**---This is the same "three days" referred to above in verse 11 concerning the "sign of Jonah."

³⁶⁷ Acts 1:6, So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

³⁶⁸ John 6:15, So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

³⁶⁹ Phil 2:5-8"Although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

v32: **Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him**---Peter (like us) had a plan for Jesus and what Jesus had in mind wasn't what Peter (or us) wanted. When we do that, we can expect to be similarly rebuked by Jesus: **"get behind Me, Satan."** Satan is constantly trying to thwart God's plan and even tries to use us to defeat it. Let's not play into his interests, but God's interests.

Mark 8:34-38, And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 35 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37 For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

v34-35: Nobody wants to **take up his cross**---that means death. But Jesus said in the next verse **"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."**

One of the most amazing quotes is from Jim Elliott (the missionary to Ecuador who was killed by the Auca Indians whom he loved). He said: "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot possibly keep in order to gain that which he cannot possibly lose."

v38: Will we be **"ashamed"** by Jesus when He returns? Perish the thought! I want to be ready.

v38: **He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels**---His glory is beyond our comprehension. ^{370 371 372}

³⁷⁰ Deut 33:2, "The Lord came from Sinai,
And dawned on them from Seir;
He shone forth from Mount Paran,
And He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones;
At His right hand there was flashing lightning for them. "

³⁷¹ Dan 7:9-10, And the Ancient of Days took His seat;
His vesture was like white snow
And the hair of His head like pure wool.
His throne was ablaze with flames,
Its wheels were a burning fire.
10 "A river of fire was flowing
And coming out from before Him;
Thousands upon thousands were attending Him,
And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him;

³⁷² Zech 14:5, Then the Lord, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He has compassion for us (8:2)
2. He understands hunger (8:3)
3. He knows our limitations (8:3)
4. He wants us to take inventory of our meager means (8:5)
5. He is thankful for whatever the Father gives (8:6)
6. He takes what we give Him and multiplies it to be more than adequate (8:8)
7. He feels deeply (8:12)
8. He doesn't do signs for unbelievers (8:12)
9. He warns about legalism (8:15)
10. He wants us to remember what He has done for us (8:18)
11. He wants us to make an effort to understand (8:21)
12. He can heal blindness [physical or spiritual] (8:25)
13. He is the Messiah (8:29)
14. He knows the future (8:31)
15. He rebukes (8:33)
16. He will save those who are not ashamed of Him (8:38)
17. He is coming again! (8:38)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 9

Mark 9:1, And Jesus was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."

v1: This verse has caused confusion for centuries. Its interpretation pivots on the definition of **"the kingdom of God"** which has many varied usages in the New Testament.³⁷³ If one arbitrarily restricts the definition to be eschatological, then it wrongly appears that the Scripture is incorrect since everyone at that time has died physically. However, if "the kingdom of God" is correctly understood to be those people who believe in Jesus' resurrection, who are His, then it makes sense.

Is He speaking of physical death or spiritual death?^{374 375 376}

v1: **with power**---I believe this refers to the empowering by the Holy Spirit who was given at Pentecost.³⁷⁷

Mark 9:2-8, Six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; ³ and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. ⁴ Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶ For he did not know what to answer; for they became terrified. ⁷ Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!" ⁸ All at once they looked around and saw no one with them anymore, except Jesus alone.

³⁷³ The "kingdom of God" is evidently a more comprehensive term than the "kingdom of heaven" and embraces all created intelligences, both in heaven and on earth, who are willingly subject to God and thus in fellowship with Him. The "kingdom of heaven"---more precisely the "kingdom of the heavens"---is a term descriptive of any type of rulership God may assert on the earth at a given period. (from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary.)

³⁷⁴ Rev 20:4, Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

³⁷⁵ Rev 20:14, Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

³⁷⁶ Rev 21:8, "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

³⁷⁷ Acts 1:6, "...but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Related verses are Matthew 17:1-9 and Luke 9:28-36.

Since Peter was one of the three, he told John Mark his experience which Mark recorded here.

These three were the inner core of Jesus' friends. John was the closest.^{378 379}

Luke states that Jesus went up on the mountain in order to pray³⁸⁰ and it was while He was praying³⁸¹ that He became transfigured. Likewise, we too can become transfigured spiritually through prayer. Remember that Moses' face shone after he was in the presence of God.³⁸²

v3: **His garments became radiant and exceedingly white**^{383 384 385 386}

Illustration: Have you ever been camping and used a Coleman lantern? The mantle is made of woven silk. As the mantle burns as bright as a 100 watt light bulb, you can still clearly see each woven fiber that has turned to glowing ash. This is how I imagine Jesus' garments----dazzling bright ---like looking at the sun [Son].

v4: **Elijah appeared to them along with Moses**---These are probably the "two witnesses" that are mentioned during the Tribulation.^{387 388} They were in their glorified bodies just as we believers will be someday.^{389 390 391 392}

³⁷⁸ John 13:25, He [John], leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

³⁷⁹ John 21:20, Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved [John] following them, the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"

³⁸⁰ Luke 9:28

³⁸¹ Luke 9:29

³⁸² Ex 34:29-30, It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony were in Moses' hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him. 30 So when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

³⁸³ Ps 104:1-2, O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering Yourself with light as with a cloak...

³⁸⁴ Dan 7:9, "I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His vesture was like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool."

³⁸⁵ Acts 10:30, Cornelius said, "Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments..."

³⁸⁶ Luke 2:9, And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

³⁸⁷ Rev 11:3-6 "And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. 6 These have the power to shut

v5: Peter, of course, when he didn't know what to do, automatically did the wrong thing (just like us!). At least he was awed by Jesus and revered Him. Unfortunately, he put Jesus on the same level as Moses and Elijah.^{393 394}

v7: **a voice came out of the cloud, 'This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!'**---this is the voice of God the Father praising Jesus just like He did at Jesus' baptism.^{395 396 397 398}

v7: **This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!**---God the Father commands us to listen to Jesus. He is more than just a prophet like Moses or Elijah. Unfortunately, many refuse to listen and actually stop their ears.^{399 400 401} Listening implies much more than just hearing with the ears---it means to understand with the heart and to act upon it.

up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.

³⁸⁸ Also Rev 11:7-13

³⁸⁹ Rev 3:4-5, ...and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments.

³⁹⁰ Rev 6:11, And there was given to each of them a white robe.

³⁹¹ Rev 7:14, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

³⁹² Rev 19:14, And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

³⁹³ Heb 3:3-6, For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. 5 Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; 6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house — whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

³⁹⁴ Heb 3:5-6, Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; 6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house — whose house we are...

³⁹⁵ Luke 3:21-22, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

³⁹⁶ Ps 2:7-8, He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.'

³⁹⁷ Isa 42:1, "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold, My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him."

³⁹⁸ 2 Peter 1:17-18, For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased" — 18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

³⁹⁹ Zech 7:11-12, "But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing. 12 They made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the Lord of hosts."

Mark 9:9, As they were coming down from the mountain, He gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man rose from the dead. 10 They seized upon that statement, discussing with one another what rising from the dead meant. 11 They asked Him, saying, "Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" 12 And He said to them, "Elijah does first come and restore all things. And yet how is it written of the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt? 13 But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him."

v9: **He gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen**---Again, His time has not yet come⁴⁰² and He was not ready to reveal who He really is---the Messiah---the Christ.⁴⁰³

v9: **until the Son of Man rose from the dead**---this is the most important event in history and it marks the division between the Old Covenant (the Law) and the New Covenant (grace).

v10: **...discussing with one another what rising from the dead meant**---we are still doing that today, wondering what it will be like to be with Jesus. We cannot even imagine how wonderful it will be.⁴⁰⁴

v11: **They asked Him, saying, 'Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?'**---In Malachi 4:5 it says, "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." It seems to me that, rather than referring to the Transfiguration, perhaps the verse in Malachi is referring to the Tribulation (the great and terrible day⁴⁰⁵ ⁴⁰⁶ of the Lord) when Elijah will be one of the two witnesses (see v:4 note above).

⁴⁰⁰ Jer 5:21-22, 'Now hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes but do not see, who have ears but do not hear. 22 Do you not fear Me?' declares the Lord. 'Do you not tremble in My presence?'

⁴⁰¹ Acts 7:57, But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse.

⁴⁰² John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20

⁴⁰³ Many people think that "Jesus" is His first name and that "Christ" is His last name. No, "Christ" is a title. In those days most Jews did not have a last name. They were referred to as "Jesus son of Joseph" or something similar like "Simon of Bethsiada."

⁴⁰⁴ 1 Cor 2:9, ...but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

⁴⁰⁵ Joel 2:31, "The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes."

⁴⁰⁶ Acts 2:19-21, 'AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE. 20 THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME. 21 AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.' [This shows God's infinite grace since these are people who have hitherto rejected Him.]

v11: **Elijah does first come and restore all things**---As we will see in the next verses, He is referring to John the Baptist. So then how does John the Baptist “restore” all things? The word in Greek is NT:600 “apokathistemi” which means to reconstitute, to put back into a former state, to restore lost dominion or authority. John restored the correct order of things by preaching repentance for the forgiveness of sins (not works of the Law or keeping man’s traditions). He emphasized a heart relationship to the Lord rather than legalism.

v12: **And yet how is it written of the Son of Man that He will suffer many things and be treated with contempt?**---They had quoted the Scripture about Elijah but He was reminding them that there were other quotes that were applicable too.⁴⁰⁷ We likewise tend to remember the verses we want to remember rather than seeing God’s Word as a whole.

v13: **But I say to you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him**---He is referring to John the Baptist who they killed⁴⁰⁸ just as they had done to many other prophets.⁴⁰⁹

Mark 9:14, When they came back to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. 15 Immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and began running up to greet Him. 16 And He asked them, "What are you discussing with them?" 17 And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; 18 and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it." 19 And He answered them and said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!" 20 They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. 21 And He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. 22 It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" 23 And Jesus said to him, "'If You can?' All things are possible to him who believes."

v14: So, ironically, while the glorious Transfiguration was taking place, scribes and disciples were **arguing!** What a contrast.

⁴⁰⁷ Isa 53:3, He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

⁴⁰⁸ Mark 6:27-28, Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded him to bring back his [John the Baptist's] head. And he went and had him beheaded in the prison, 28 and brought his head on a platter...

⁴⁰⁹ Matt 23:37, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling."

v15: **amazed**---I wonder why they were amazed. Was His face still glowing like Moses'? ⁴¹⁰

v18: **I told Your disciples to cast it out**---the first problem here is that he "told the disciples." We tend to do the same thing rather than humbly asking Jesus. Unfortunately, we have an immediate plan for how God is supposed to answer us rather than letting Him lovingly pick the best way at the best time.

v18: **they could not do it**---of course not. We can only do spiritual things through the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells within us as we abide in Christ.⁴¹¹ On the other hand, we "can do all things through Him who strengthens us."⁴¹²

v19: He addresses us as "**O unbelieving generation.**" How sad! I'm sorry Lord.

v21: Notice that this boy had been possessed by an evil spirit since birth---this was not an easy thing for Jesus to fix. That made it even more dramatic when Jesus cast out the demon.

v22-23: **'If You can?'**---That's our problem. We don't really believe He can. Perhaps intellectually we do, but when "the rubber meets the road," our hearts don't trust Him. I want to grow to trust Him absolutely, no matter what.

v23: **all things are possible to him who believes** [in Christ]. What keeps us from doing amazing thing through His power? Unbelief. If we totally believed Him, we could do anything He tells us to do. ⁴¹³

Mark 9:24, Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief." 25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again." 26 After crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, "He is dead!" 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him; and he got up. 28 When He came into the house, His disciples began questioning Him privately, "Why could we not drive it out?" 29 And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer."

⁴¹⁰ Ex 34:30, So when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

⁴¹¹ John 15:5, "...apart from Me you can do nothing."

⁴¹² Philippians 4:13

⁴¹³ John 14:12, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father."

v24: **I do believe; help my unbelief**---this has been my prayer so many times. I think the Lord loves to answer such prayers. It expresses the longing of our hearts yet at the same time it expresses our inability unless He intervenes.

v25: **...and do not enter him again**---salvation is permanent. Remember the story of the man who was cleansed of the demon but didn't become filled with the Holy Spirit.⁴¹⁴ His final state was much worse than when he had the demon.

v26: **...the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, 'He is dead!**---I assume he really was dead---that the demon thought "if I can't have him, you can't either!" But Jesus raised the boy from the dead---just like He does us.

v27: This miracle again demonstrates beyond doubt Jesus' power over death---both physical and spiritual.

v29: **This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer**---again this shows the power of prayer. However, I think the power is not just in our prayers but in the relationship of trust that develops through much prayer. Notice that Jesus didn't pray over the boy---He was already "prayed up" and His relationship with the Father was so tight [warm] that He had the power to raise the dead.

Mark 9:30, From there they went out and began to go through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know about it. 31 For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later." 32 But they did not understand this statement, and they were afraid to ask Him.

v31: Jesus spent quality time **teaching** His disciples. He will do the same for us if we spend time with Him in listening prayer.

v31: **The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men**---He is still relating to them as "the Son of Man"---identifying with our human weakness--- empathizing with us---being one with us.

v31: **delivered**---crucified.

v31: **...rise three days later**---This was the promised sign of Jonah.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁴ Matt 12:43-45, "Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. 44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."

v32: ...**they did not understand this**---That is because the Holy Spirit was not yet given. ^{416 417 418 419}

v32: ...**they were afraid to ask Him**---We too are afraid to reveal our ignorance. That is pride! Jesus knows our thoughts anyway so what is there to be afraid of? ⁴²⁰

Mark 9:33, They came to Capernaum and when He was in the house, He began to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?" ³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which of them was the greatest. ³⁵ Sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶ Taking a child, He set him before them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me."

v33: **What were you discussing on the way?**---He already knew but He was giving them a chance to confess. In the parallel passage in Luke 9:47-48 it says:

But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood him by His side and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great."

In another passage He said: 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' ⁴²¹

Extending this line of thought, if we curse anyone [my wife?], we are cursing Jesus; if we bless anyone, we are blessing Jesus. That is the way we show Him that we love Him by loving those for whom He gave His life [all people---even those we don't like].

⁴¹⁵ Matt 12:39-40, He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; ⁴⁰ for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

⁴¹⁶ John 20:9, For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

⁴¹⁷ John 13:7, Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter."

⁴¹⁸ John 7:39, But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

⁴¹⁹ John 12:16, These things His disciples did not understand at the first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

⁴²⁰ James 1:5, But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

⁴²¹ Matt 25:40

v37: Jesus equates "receiving Him" to "receiving God the Father."⁴²² Awesome!

Mark 9:38, John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to prevent him because he was not following us." 39 But Jesus said, "Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. 40 For he who is not against us is for us. 41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as followers of Christ, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward."

v38: ...he was not following us---We've got it wrong---people aren't supposed to follow us but to follow Jesus.

v38: Unfortunately, we sometimes don't like others who don't see Jesus exactly the same way we do (for example: Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Catholics, etc.). But Jesus has a much larger view. If these people do a miracle in Jesus' name, they will realize the power of that name and they **will not lose their reward.**

Mark 9:42, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea. 43 If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire, 44 [where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.] 45 "If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than, having your two feet, to be cast into hell, 46 [where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.] 47 "If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell, 48 where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED."

This section refers back to verses 36 and 37 where He was speaking of little children.

v42: He warns them severely not to cause anyone to stumble.⁴²³ This is an evocative word^{424 425 426}
^{427 428 429} that occurs 99 times in the Bible. Every Jew would know what He was talking about.

⁴²² John 14:9, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father."

⁴²³ Prov 4:16, For they cannot sleep unless they do evil and they are robbed of sleep unless they make someone stumble.

⁴²⁴ Isa 8:14-15, Then He [Jesus] shall become a sanctuary; but to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 Many will stumble over them, then they will fall and be broken.

⁴²⁵ Jer 6:21, Therefore, thus says the Lord, "Behold, I am laying stumbling blocks before this people and they will stumble against them..."

v43 and v47: Jesus, by His dramatic examples of cutting off your hand or plucking out your eye [which He does not mean literally], is showing how much more important the spiritual life is than the physical life. We tend to get this backwards and we do not realize the crucial importance of eternity.

v47: **...to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire**---The Greek word is not "hell" but NT:1067 "Gehenna." This is the valley near Jerusalem where they threw their garbage and which always burned. This word is only used 13 times in Matthew, Mark and Luke. It is not the same word that is normally translated "hell" (NT:86 "hadou" or "Hades") which is the resting place of the dead until resurrected by our Lord. "Gehenna" is often equated with "Outer Darkness" as a place of temporary tribulation ^{430 431 432} to give the unrepentant souls a chance to humble themselves and accept the Lord's offer of forgiveness and love.

v44 and v46: **...where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED**---Verses 44 and 46 are not in the original and were probably the work of an over-zealous scribe who wanted to please King James who firmly believed in Hell. Since he was the king and he was paying for the translation, it behooved the translators (if they wanted to keep their heads) to translate it thus. This is a quote from Isaiah 66:24.

⁴²⁶ Jer 20:11, But the Lord is with me like a dread champion. Therefore my persecutors will stumble and not prevail.

⁴²⁷ Ezek 14:3, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put right before their faces the stumbling block of their iniquity.

⁴²⁸ Ezek 18:30, "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you."

⁴²⁹ Mal 2:6, "But as for you, you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by the instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi," says the Lord of hosts.

⁴³⁰ Matt 8:11-12, "I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; ¹² but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

⁴³¹ Matt 22:13-14, "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen."

⁴³² Matt 25:29-30, "For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. ³⁰ Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Mark 9:49, "For everyone will be salted with fire. so Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

v49: **For everyone will be salted with fire**---everyone's works will be tested by fire. ^{433 434 435} Those things that are fleshly will be burned up; ^{436 437} those things that are spiritual will be preserved. ^{438 439} This is like refining. ^{440 441 442}

v50: **...if the salt becomes unsalty**---Although this may seem impossible, remember that salt was used as currency in those days. Unscrupulous men would dilute the salt (which was expensive) with something else tasteless (which was cheap) in order to make a profit. Therefore, the salt could be so diluted that it was tasteless and worthless.

v50: **salt**---is sometimes a symbol for the Holy Spirit. Therefore when Jesus says to "have salt in yourselves," He is telling us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. If we are, we will be at peace.⁴⁴³

⁴³³ Isa 48:10, "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction."

⁴³⁴ 1 Cor 3:15, If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

⁴³⁵ Ps 66:10, For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined.

⁴³⁶ 1 Cor 3:12-13, Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

⁴³⁷ 1 Cor 3:15, If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

⁴³⁸ 1 Cor 3:12-13, Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

⁴³⁹ 1 Cor 3:14, If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward.

⁴⁴⁰ Zech 13:9, Refine them as silver is refined and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are My people' and they will say, 'The Lord is my God.'

⁴⁴¹ Dan 12:10, "Many will be purged, purified and refined..."

⁴⁴² Jer 9:7, Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, "Behold, I will refine them and assay them."

⁴⁴³ Rom 12:18, If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He knows the future (9:1, 31)
2. He was transfigured into His Heavenly body (9:2-3)
3. The Father spoke from out of a cloud (9:7)
4. He reaffirmed that Jesus is His beloved Son (9:7)
5. He ordered us to listen to Jesus (9:7)
6. In spite of this incredible glorious event, Jesus still relates to us as the Son of Man (9:7)
7. He foretells His death (9:9, 31)
8. He foretells His resurrection (9:9, 31)
9. He explains that Elijah did come as John the Baptist (9:12-13)
10. He says the OT Scriptures spoke of John the Baptist (9:13)
11. He calls us "O unbelieving generation" (9:19)
12. He tells us "all things are possible to him who believes" (9:23)
13. He heals (9:26-27)
14. He says prayer is mandatory for spiritual power (9:29)
15. There will be three days between His Crucifixion and His Resurrection (9:31)
16. He explains greatness is equated to servanthood (9:35)
17. How we treat the least important person is how we treat Him (9:37)
18. Receiving Jesus is equated with receiving the Father (9:37)
19. That which is done in His name will be rewarded (9:41)
20. Spiritual things are so much more important than physical things (9:42-48)
21. He will test us with "fire" (9:49)
22. He tells us to be filled with the Holy Spirit (9:50)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 10

Mark 10:1, Getting up, He went from there to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan. Crowds gathered around Him again, and, according to His custom, He once more began to teach them.

v1: **Getting up, He went from there**---They had been in Galilee (Mark 9:33) and now they are in Judea. Jesus is quite a walker; He traveled hundreds of miles on foot. It is probable that He used these times for personal discipleship of His followers.⁴⁴⁴

v1: **He once more began to teach them**---He was frequently called "Rabbi"⁴⁴⁵ which means "teacher."⁴⁴⁶

v1: **His custom**---If His custom was to teach from the Scriptures, shouldn't that be our custom too?

Mark 10:2-9, Some Pharisees came up to Jesus, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. 3 And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?" 4 They said, "Moses permitted a man TO WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY." 5 But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. 6 But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. 7 FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, 8 AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

v2: **Some Pharisees came up to Jesus, testing Him**---Unfortunately we still test Him.⁴⁴⁷ ⁴⁴⁸ Unless we see a sign from Him, we won't believe.⁴⁴⁹ We are supposed to live by faith---not by sight.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁴ Luke 24:32-32, They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

⁴⁴⁵ Matt 26:25, 49; Mark 9:5; Mark 11:21; Mark 14:45; John 1:49; John 3:2; John 3:26; John 4:31; John 6:25; John 9:2; John 11:8

⁴⁴⁶ John 1:38, They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?"

⁴⁴⁷ John 2:18, The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?"

⁴⁴⁸ Matt 12:38-40, "...we want to see a sign from You." ³⁹ But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet, ⁴⁰ for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

⁴⁴⁹ John 6:30, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?"

⁴⁵⁰ 2 Cor 5:72, ...for we walk by faith, not by sight.

v2: **...and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife**---Remember, they were trying to trap Him with this question. They were scheming to get Him to either say divorce was OK or else to contradict Moses. Rather than falling into their pit, He answered their question by quoting Scripture. Remember this is how He answered Satan when Satan was tempting Him. He kept repeating: “it is written...”⁴⁵¹ Today we do the same thing by setting up a conflict between the judicial law of the land and the Word of God. We even think the judicial law overrides the Bible.

v4: The Pharisees paraphrased Moses from Deut 24:1-3. However, they left out the important part about only for infidelity. Since our judicial law allows divorce for any reason, we rationalize in order to justify our own hard-hearted decisions. When a man and a woman marry (notice God said “male and female”), they are joined together by God and they are to be committed to each other for life.

Being realistic, into every marriage, problems will come.⁴⁵² But if a couple recognizes that and honors their vows, they can get through anything (even infidelity if there is repentance).

v7: **FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER**---Sometimes couples have problems because the man (or woman) doesn’t emotionally leave their parents and transfer that bond to their spouse. Jesus is quoting from Gen 2:24 but for some reason He abbreviated it and didn’t add “and be joined⁴⁵³ to his wife” which is part of that passage. We are supposed to be joined emotionally---not just physically.

If I (Drew) sound like I’m preaching, it’s because I believe so strongly about the sanctity of marriage! I think it is the most beautiful thing on earth.⁴⁵⁴ It is the God-given analogy of our marriage to Jesus.⁴⁵⁵ Because of this, Satan is doing his worst to undermine marriage---especially Christian marriages. He is redefining “love” to mean “sex.” God repeatedly equates sexual infidelity⁴⁵⁶ with pursuing “foreign gods”--He says we are being unfaithful to Him.⁴⁵⁷ This is the whole theme of the book of Hosea. Someday, when we have been cleansed and sanctified, we will then be pure and an acceptable bride of Christ.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵¹ Matt 4:4, 7, 10; Luke 4:4, 8, 12.

⁴⁵² 1 Cor 7:27, But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.

⁴⁵³ OT:1692, Hebrew “dabaq”---A verb meaning to cling to, join with, stay with (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

⁴⁵⁴ Heb 13:4, Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled.

⁴⁵⁵ Eph 5:32, This mystery is great, but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

⁴⁵⁶ 1 Chron 5:25, But they acted treacherously against the God of their fathers and played the harlot after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.

⁴⁵⁷ Hos 4:12, For a spirit of harlotry has led them astray, and they have played the harlot, departing from their God.

⁴⁵⁸ 2 Cor 11:2, For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.

v9: **What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate**---This summarizes the whole thing: divorce should not occur.⁴⁵⁹

Mark 10:10-11, In the house the disciples began questioning Him about this again. 11 And He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; 12 and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery."

What is not clear about this statement? Jesus said it. Period. No rationalization is possible.⁴⁶⁰

Mark 10:13-16, And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. 14 But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, "Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all." 16 And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.

v14: **But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant**---I sure hope I don't give Jesus a reason to be indignant about any of my actions or words.

v14: **Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them**---if we don't teach our children to know the Lord or if we live lives than don't honor Him, then we are hindering them. It is inconceivable to me that the Muslims are actually training their children to be terrorists! Jesus calls such people "children of the devil"^{461 462} They have a day of judgment coming.⁴⁶³

v14: **...for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these**---this is true quite literally since the Scriptures teach a twenty-year-old age of accountability.

v15: **whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all**---does this mean adults can't be saved? No. It means that we need to come in faith in the same manner as little children: in simple trust. The word translated "like" ("as" KJV & ASV) is the Greek NT:5613 "hos" which means "in the same exact manner."

⁴⁵⁹ Mal 2:16, "For I hate divorce," says the Lord, the God of Israel...

⁴⁶⁰ Matt 5:32,except for the reason of unchastity....

⁴⁶¹ John 8:44, "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father."

⁴⁶² Matt 13:38, "...and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one."

⁴⁶³ Luke 17:2, "...but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea."

v15: This is another verse that shows that the only way to Heaven is by way of faith---in dependence on God's love and forgiveness as expressed through Jesus.

v16: **And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them**---Wow! How I want this for myself!!!!

Mark 10:17-22, As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. 19 You know the commandments, 'DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, Do not defraud, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'" 20 And he said to Him, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up." 21 Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 22 But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property.

v18: **Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone**---the man completely missed the point; Jesus is telling him that He Himself is God!

v19: **You know the commandments**---Jesus is able to read this man's mind and realizes that he knows the Scriptures (the OT). Jesus used the Greek word for "know" (NT:1492 "oida") which means to have intellectual knowledge. The other Greek word for "know" (NT:1097 "ginosko"), which He did not use, means "heart knowledge" or "experiential knowledge." So this man was studied in the Scriptures (like so many of today's Christians) but he did not have true faith and trust in God.

v20: **And he said to Him, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up"**---he had tried to earn God's favor by doing all the works of the Law but they did not come from his heart. There is no way we can earn God's love---it is free.⁴⁶⁴

v21: **Jesus felt a love for him**---Jesus knew this man had been trying to please God but that he was ignorant of the real way to please God. Because of this love, Jesus told him the thing that was getting in the way of a real relationship with the Lord. However, the man was depending on his own understanding, good works, position,⁴⁶⁵ and wealth rather than being humbly dependant on Jesus.

v21: Jesus was not saying that having wealth prevents us from going to Heaven. It was this particular man's hang-up. I have different hang-ups---so do you. Whatever our hang-ups, we need to give them to the Lord and follow Jesus.

⁴⁶⁴ Matt 10:8, Freely you received, freely give.

⁴⁶⁵ Luke 18:18, A ruler questioned Him...

v22: Lord, give me the faith not to be sad at Your words---whatever they are. I know You are only telling me things that are motivated by love. A wise man once said: "God may hurt you but He will never harm you."

Mark 10:23-27, And Jesus, looking around, said to His disciples, "How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 The disciples were amazed at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 They were even more astonished and said to Him, "Then who can be saved?" 27 Looking at them, Jesus said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God."

v23: **How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!**---Jesus is clearly not saying that we need to be financial paupers (although some unscrupulous preachers have instructed their people to give all their money to the church in order to be saved). Jesus is telling us not to be proud in our own ability to earn God's favor. Our righteousness⁴⁶⁶ is not perfect and that is what is required!⁴⁶⁷ That is only possible when He cleans us.^{468 469 470 471}

v25: **It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle**---lots of commentators and preachers have tried to explain away this verse by saying such baloney as "the eye of the needle" was another name for a small pedestrian door in the main gates of Jerusalem, but this is not necessary. Jesus is saying it is literally impossible for someone who is rich in his own righteousness to get into Heaven. Heaven is only for those who bear no sin (those who have accepted Jesus thus making them acceptable).

v27: **With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God**---True! It is impossible for us to save ourselves but, in spite of our being filthy,⁴⁷² God will cleanse us if we will let Him.

⁴⁶⁶ Isaiah 64:6, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment.

⁴⁶⁷ Matt 5:48, "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

⁴⁶⁸ Rev 7:14, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

⁴⁶⁹ Rev 3:5, "He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."

⁴⁷⁰ Matt 8:2-3; Mark 1:40 And a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 3 Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

⁴⁷¹ John 15:3, "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. "

⁴⁷² Rom 5:8, But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Mark 10:28-31, Peter began to say to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You." 29 Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, 30 but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last, first."

v28: **Peter began to say to Him, 'Behold, we have left everything and followed You'**---Peter missed the point entirely just as the rich young ruler had missed it. The rich young ruler was bragging about how he had earned God's favor by keeping the rules of the Law; similarly Peter was bragging about how he and the other disciples had left everything to follow Jesus. Obedience doesn't earn us anything---only faith and love pleases our Father. ⁴⁷³ ⁴⁷⁴ Works don't earn His salvation.

v30: **he will receive a hundred times as much now**---this phrase is also used by unscrupulous preachers in order to induce people to give to their ministry. There was even a preacher who got sued because the "promise" was not kept!

v30: **in the present age**---This is confusing because it is incorrectly translated:

1. The Greek word translated "he will receive" (NT:2983 "labeē") is not in the future tense but is in the Aorist Tense (no time significance) and the Subjunctive Mood (possible but not certain). Therefore it should read "he may receive." The Subjunctive Mood means he has the opportunity to receive but it is conditional upon something [his faith].
2. The Greek word translated "present age" (NT:2540 "kairo") means "opportune time."
3. The Greek word translated "now" (NT:3568 "nun") refers to what he presently has. In other words, "houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions." The fact that he has "persecutions" proves that this is speaking of the present---not the future.
4. Also remember that the order of Greek sentences is very different than in English.
5. Furthermore, the word "age" later in the verse ("the age to come") is a different word (Greek NT:165 "ainoon") which means "forever." It is the same word used for "eternal life."

Therefore the correct translation of this verse is: "he may receive at an opportune time a hundred times as much as the houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms (and persecutions) that he now has, but in addition, in the age to come, he may receive eternal life."

⁴⁷³ Matt 7:22-23, "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'"

⁴⁷⁴ Heb 11:6, And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

v31: **But many who are first will be last, and the last, first**---here He is referring to status---not time. Therefore, those who have given up everything to follow Jesus will be most important in Heaven but those who were honored here on earth will be least in Heaven.

v31: It is interesting to note that there will be rank in Heaven and, in fact, there will be wealth in Heaven. ^{475 476 477}

Mark 10:32-34, They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking on ahead of them, and they were amazed, and those who followed were fearful. And again He took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him, ³³ saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again."

v32: **They were on the road going up to Jerusalem**---this is a dangerous place for Jesus and His disciples.

v32: **they were amazed**---they were probably amazed that He was going to such a dangerous place.

v32: **Jesus was walking on ahead of them**---He leads; we follow. He has never asked us to do something that He hasn't already done.

v32: **those who followed were fearful**---this is not surprising.⁴⁷⁸ At least they followed anyway. We should too in spite of our fear. However, fear implies lack of trust.

v32: **again**---Jesus had previously begun telling them what would happen.^{479 480} But they did not understand, so He is repeating it a third time.

⁴⁷⁵ Mark 10:21, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

⁴⁷⁶ Matt 6:20, "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal."

⁴⁷⁷ Luke 12:33, "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys."

⁴⁷⁸ John 11:16, Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."

⁴⁷⁹ Mark 8:31, And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

⁴⁸⁰ Mark 9:31-32, For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later."

v32: **He took the twelve aside**---These twelve were special to Him and He instructed them carefully. Notice that Judas was included even though Jesus knew what he would do.

v33: **Son of Man**---He is identifying with us frail (but loved) humans.

v33: **delivered to the chief priests and the scribes**---of all people, these are the ones who should have truly known who He was since they were experts in the Scriptures. However, they (like us) were weak in faith so they looked to the Scriptures to substantiate their own rules rather than seeing the beauty of God's revealed love.

v33: He accurately revealed what was certain to happen to Him.

v34: **three days later He will rise again**---this is the most important event in all of history. It marks the division between the Old Covenant (Law) and the New Covenant (grace). Because He conquered death, we have hope. If He hadn't, we'd be like the Gentiles "separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."⁴⁸¹

Mark 10:35-40, James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, came up to Jesus, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask of You." 36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 37 They said to Him, "Grant that we may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory." 38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" 39 They said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you shall drink and you shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized. 40 But to sit on My right or on My left, this is not Mine to give but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

v37: Again, as in an earlier chapter,⁴⁸² they wanted the most important positions rather than being content with following Jesus' example of being a servant.⁴⁸³

v38: **Cup that I drink**---this is the cup containing the sins of the whole world.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸¹ Eph 2:12

⁴⁸² Mark 9:33, They came to Capernaum and when He was in the house, He began to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?" 34 But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which of them was the greatest.

⁴⁸³ Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

⁴⁸⁴ Rev 14:10, "...he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger." Although this verse was written about those who take the mark of the beast and therefore bear the consequences of that decision (the Father's wrath), Jesus too will share this wrath because "He

v38: **Baptism**---what baptism is He speaking of? Water? Holy Spirit? Or probably the baptism of pain, suffering, death on the Cross, and being immersed three days in the horrors of Hades.

v39: **We are able**---a more appropriate answer might be: "No Lord, but you can make us able." Just like Peter and the other disciples that swore that they were ready to die rather than deny Jesus,⁴⁸⁵ we have an overinflated opinion of what we can do. In fact, Jesus said in another place Jesus said: "for apart from Me you can do nothing."⁴⁸⁶

v40: **this is not Mine to give**---The Father will determine this. Remember the parable of the guests?⁴⁸⁷

Mark 10:41-45, Hearing this, the ten began to feel indignant with James and John. 42 Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. 43 But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant 44 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

v43: **But it is not** [supposed to be] **this way among you**---He is telling them how they should act.

v43: **whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all**---Wow! This doesn't sound attractive to most of us until we realize Jesus' wisdom. Truly "He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"⁴⁸⁸ My personal experience with my wife Marilyn (who had advanced Alzheimer's disease) was that I was totally blessed and fulfilled by having the privilege of loving on her even when she could not respond.

[the Father] made Him who knew no sin [Jesus] to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor 5:21)

⁴⁸⁵ Matt 26:35, Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You." All the disciples said the same thing too.

⁴⁸⁶ John 15:5

⁴⁸⁷ Luke 14:7-11, And He began speaking a parable to the invited guests when He noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor at the table, saying to them, 8 "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him, 9 and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this man,' and then in disgrace you proceed to occupy the last place. 10 But when you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you. 11 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

⁴⁸⁸ Acts 20:35

Mark 10:46-52, Then they came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road. 47 When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 48 Many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49 And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him here." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage, stand up! He is calling for you." 50 Throwing aside his cloak, he jumped up and came to Jesus. 51 And answering him, Jesus said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" And the blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, I want to regain my sight!" 52 And Jesus said to him, "Go, your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and began following Him on the road.

v46: **they came to Jericho**---this ancient city is about 18 miles from their destination (Jerusalem) and is at a much lower elevation. It is the lowest city on earth (about 853 feet below sea level) on the shores of the Dead Sea. In contrast, Jerusalem is about 2590 feet above sea level. Therefore, people going from Jericho to Jerusalem have to climb about 3400 feet in only 18 miles. They used to sing the Psalms labeled "Songs of Ascent" ⁴⁸⁹ during this arduous climb.

v47: **Jesus, Son of David**---blind Bartimaeus may have been blind physically but he definitely wasn't blind spiritually. This is the first time in Mark that this title is used for Jesus. Jesus accepted this title which means "Messiah." ⁴⁹⁰

v48: **have mercy on me!**---This should be our cry too because without His mercy we are doomed. This is similar to the cry of the Publican in the Temple. ⁴⁹¹

v50: **Throwing aside his cloak**---This demonstrates real faith because unless he is healed, he might not be able to find it again.

v52: **Go, your faith has made you well**---actually we are not healed by our faith but by Jesus in whom we place our faith.

v52: **began following Him**---because of what Jesus has done for us, we should follow Him moment by moment in complete dependence and trust for the rest of our lives.

⁴⁸⁹ Psalms 120-134

⁴⁹⁰ Matt 1:1, The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David...

⁴⁹¹ Luke 18:13, "But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'"

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He teaches us (10:1)
2. He validates Scripture as final authority (10:3)
3. God made us male and female (10:6)
4. God instituted marriage (10:6)
5. He declared husband and wife to be one flesh (10:8)
6. God joined them (10:9)
7. He forbids divorce (10:9)
8. He defines adultery (10:10)
9. He loves children (10:14)
10. He says we must receive Him in the same manner as a child does (10:15)
11. He blessed them (10:16)
12. God is good (10:18)
13. Jesus loves us (10:21)
14. We can have treasure in Heaven (10:21)
15. Love of material wealth can keep us from Heaven (10:25)
16. With God all things are possible (10:27)
17. He will give His followers so much more in Heaven (10:30)
18. He will give us eternal life (10:30)
19. Jesus leads (10:32)
20. He knows the future and informs us (10:32)
21. He knows (10:33-34)
 - a. He will be mocked
 - b. He will be spit on
 - c. He will be scourged
 - d. He will be killed
 - e. He will be resurrected in three days
22. The Father determines our position in Heaven (10:40)
23. Jesus teaches that servanthood equals greatness (10:43)
24. He came to serve (10:45)
25. He gave His life as a ransom for many (10:45)
26. He is "son of David"---the Messiah (10:47)
27. He restores sight [both physical and spiritual] (10:52)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 11

Mark 11:1-10, As they approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, 2 and said to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. 3 If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' you say, 'The Lord has need of it'; and immediately he will send it back here." 4 They went away and found a colt tied at the door, outside in the street; and they untied it. 5 Some of the bystanders were saying to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" 6 They spoke to them just as Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission. 7 They brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it and He sat on it.

v1: **Bethphage**---the name means "house of unripe figs" perhaps attesting to its once fertility. This was on the Mount of Olives on the Jericho road.

v1: **Bethany**---the name means "house of unripe dates." This was just east of Jerusalem (a Sabbath's walk⁴⁹²) on the Mount of Olives and very close to Bethphage. Jesus was very familiar with it since it was where Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived and He frequently lodged with them^{493 494 495} (see verse 11). Bethany was probably the site where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.⁴⁹⁶ It was also the place where Simon the leper had a dinner^{497 498} in Jesus' honor. It is the location of the ascension^{499 500} and also where Jesus will return.^{501 502}

⁴⁹² Acts 1:12, Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. [approximately 3/5 mile]

⁴⁹³ Luke 21:37, Now during the day He was teaching in the temple, but at evening He would go out and spend the night on the mount that is called Olivet.

⁴⁹⁴ John 12:1-2, Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

⁴⁹⁵ Luke 10:38-39, Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His words.

⁴⁹⁶ John 11:43-44, When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."
44 The man who had died came forth...

⁴⁹⁷ Matt 26:6-7, Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume....

⁴⁹⁸ Mark 14:3, While He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining at the table....

⁴⁹⁹ Luke 24:50-51, And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven...

⁵⁰⁰ Acts 1:12, Then they returned [from the ascension] to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet...

v1: **He sent two of His disciples, and said to them, "Go..."**--- even though this was a strange command (stealing a colt!), they went. We should go too even when we don't understand why.

v2: **you will find a colt tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat**---Jesus knew things no mere man could know. He even knew how the owner would respond. He knows us too [even every impure thought] and loves us anyway.

v7: **They brought the colt to Jesus**---this fulfilled a prophesy of the Messiah. ⁵⁰³ ⁵⁰⁴

v7: **He sat on it**---this was an unbroken colt and it would have bucked off any cowboy who tried to ride it---but not Jesus!

Mark 11:8-10, And many spread their coats in the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. 9 Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting: "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!"

v8: **many spread their coats in the road**---they are proclaiming Him king! ⁵⁰⁵ Notice, that the apostle John thought this was so important that he included it in his gospel. ⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰¹ Zech 14:2, In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

⁵⁰² Acts 1:11, "This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." [In an identical way]

⁵⁰³ Zech 9:9, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

⁵⁰⁴ Matt 21:4-5, This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'"

⁵⁰⁵ 2 Kings 9:13, Then they hurried and each man took his garment and placed it under him on the bare steps, and blew the trumpet, saying, "Jehu is king!"

⁵⁰⁶ John 12:12-16, On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel." ¹⁴ Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, ¹⁵ "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT." ¹⁶ These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

v10: **the coming kingdom of our father David**---the people thought Jesus was going to be the same kind of military king that David was and that He would free them from the Romans.⁵⁰⁷ Actually, He would free⁵⁰⁸ them from a much fiercer slave-driver---Satan.

v10: **Hosanna in the highest!**---this is virtually the same message the angels proclaimed at Jesus' birth.⁵⁰⁹

At this point, Mark chooses to skip over some material that Luke includes:

1. The Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke the disciples for their praise. But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"⁵¹⁰
2. Jesus wept over the hard-heartedness of His people Jerusalem.⁵¹¹
3. He predicted the coming destruction of Jerusalem because of their unbelief.⁵¹²

Mark 11:11, Jesus entered Jerusalem and came into the temple; and after looking around at everything, He left for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late.

v11: As we saw above [v:1], Jesus often lodged with Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany.

Mark 11:12-14, On the next day, when they had left Bethany, He became hungry. 13 Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening.

⁵⁰⁷ Acts 1:6, So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

⁵⁰⁸ Isa 9:6-7, And the government will rest on His shoulders and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom...

⁵⁰⁹ Luke 2:14, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

⁵¹⁰ Luke 19:39-40, Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

⁵¹¹ Luke 19:41-42, When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes."

⁵¹² Luke 19:43-44, "For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

v12: **He became hungry**---Jesus was just as human as we are⁵¹³---yet divine. He has experienced every temptation that we have.⁵¹⁴ Remember how He fasted forty days then “became hungry.”⁵¹⁵ In that depleted state (almost dead) he was tempted by Satan.⁵¹⁶ By the way, this was not just a daytime fast like the Pharisees did; this was totally without food at all.

v13: **He found nothing but leaves**---I sure hope He finds ripe fruit on me and not just leaves. Leaves are necessary but they are not sufficient. Our purpose is to produce fruit---not just leaves.

v13: **it was not the season for figs**---with us, it should always be the season⁵¹⁷ for harvest.⁵¹⁸ Jesus was giving us a vivid graphic example of the necessity to be good and faithful stewards.⁵¹⁹ Otherwise we may become withered. This is the message of John 15.⁵²⁰ We are supposed to bear much fruit.^{521 522 523} Otherwise we will wither.⁵²⁴ The word translated “dry up” in John 15:6 is the Greek NT:3583 “xeraino.” This is the same word we see in Mark 11:20-21⁵²⁵ as “withered.” It also means “shrivel, desiccate.” Unfortunately, this certainly describes many Christian lives. Notice in John 15:2 that He is speaking about Christians (“every branch in Me”). Also observe that “men gather them up” (not God) and throw them into the fire. This is not condemnation to Hell---it is tribulation in this lifetime that God will use in His mercy to bring people back into a fruitful relationship with Him.

v14: **He said to it**---Jesus spoke and it happened. He is the Word. God spoke⁵²⁶ and this whole universe was created.

⁵¹³ Heb 2:18, For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

⁵¹⁴ Heb 4:15, For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

⁵¹⁵ Matt 4:2, And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

⁵¹⁶ Matt 4:1, Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

⁵¹⁷ 2 Tim 4:2, Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

⁵¹⁸ John 4:35, "Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest."

⁵¹⁹ Luke 19:17, "And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave.'"

⁵²⁰ John 15:1-2, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit."

⁵²¹ John 15:16, "I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain."

⁵²² John 15:8, Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. (KJV)

⁵²³ Mark 4:20, "...they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

⁵²⁴ John 15:6, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (KJV)

⁵²⁵ And also in Matt 21:19-20, Mark 4:6, Luke 8:6

⁵²⁶ Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 14,

v14: **"May no one ever eat fruit from you again!"**---I'm not sure how to interpret this. He was speaking to the fig tree in order to make a graphic example of it. It does not necessarily mean that someone who falls away will never be productive again. I am aware of some in our congregation who fear that they have lost their opportunity because they fell away for years. They incorrectly cite Hebrews 10:26⁵²⁷ but without truly understanding that verse.

Mark 11:15-19, Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; 16 and He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. 17 And He began to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS'? But you have made it a ROBBERS' DEN." 18 The chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching. 19 When evening came, they would go out of the city.

v15: **Then they came to Jerusalem**---apparently they would go to Jerusalem each morning from Bethany and Jesus would teach in the Temple. Then **when evening came, they would go out of the city** (see verse 18) and lodge with Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany.

v15: **began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple**---this really ticked off those who made money selling animals to be used for sacrifice.

v15: **overturned the tables of the money changers**---the money changers had a real scam going---a monopoly. Only Temple currency was allowed to purchase the animals for sacrifice so they made fortunes exchanging Temple currency for the coin of the realm.

v15: **those who were selling doves**---these people were predators who were milking the poorest⁵²⁸ people who could not afford larger animals.⁵²⁹

v17: He claimed the Temple as **"My House"**

v17: **A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS**---this is a quote from Isaiah 56:7⁵³⁰ The Jews failed in their responsibility to tell all the nations about God. We tend to do that too.

⁵²⁷ Heb 10:26-27, For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.

⁵²⁸ Lev 14:22, ...two turtledoves or two young pigeons which are within his means...

⁵²⁹ Lev 12:8, 'But if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two young pigeons.'

v17: **A ROBBERS' DEN**---this is a quote from Jeremiah 7:11 ⁵³¹

v18: **The chief priests and the scribes heard this**---to them, the money was their god. They were using the Temple for their own financial gain rather than as a place of worship. Jeremiah and Ezekiel had some very strong words to say about them. ^{532 533 534}

v18: **seeking how to destroy Him**---see ^{535 536 537}

v18: **the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching**---He taught with authority. ⁵³⁸ However, if we merely relegate Him as a great teacher, we've missed eternal life.

⁵³⁰ Isa 56:7, "Even those I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar, for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples."

⁵³¹ Jer 7:11, "Has this house [the Temple], which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your sight?"

⁵³² Jer 23:1-2, "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!" declares the Lord. Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel concerning the shepherds who are tending My people: "You have scattered My flock and driven them away, and have not attended to them; behold, I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds," declares the Lord.

⁵³³ Ezek 34:2-6, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? ³ You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat sheep without feeding the flock. ⁴ Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them. ⁵ They were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered. ⁶ My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek for them.'""

⁵³⁴ Ezek 34:7-10, Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: ⁸ "As I live," declares the Lord God, "surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but rather the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock; ⁹ therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: ¹⁰ 'Thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them.'""

⁵³⁵ Matt 12:14, But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

⁵³⁶ Luke 19:47, the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him...

⁵³⁷ Mark 3:6, The Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

⁵³⁸ Matt 7:28-29, ...the crowds were amazed at His teaching, for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

Mark 11:20-21, As they were passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots up. ²¹ Being reminded, Peter said to Him, "Rabbi, look, the fig tree which You cursed has withered."

See comments above on verses 12 to 14. Also notice how quickly it occurred---overnight.

Mark 11:22-26, And Jesus answered saying to them, "Have faith in God. ²³ Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. ²⁴ Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. ²⁵ Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions." ²⁶ [But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.]

v22: **Jesus answered**---this definitely does not sound like an answer about the fig tree, but it is. Remember our discussion above about John 15:6-9, "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned."? Well, the very next verse says "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples." Jesus connects abiding in Him with fruitfulness and answered prayer. As some very wise person once said: "Abide in Christ and do whatever you want."

v25: **Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone.** ⁵³⁹

v25: **so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions.** ⁵⁴⁰

v26: **[But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions]**---although verse 26 was probably added later by some overzealous scribe, it is biblical. ⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁹ Matt 5:23-24, "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."

⁵⁴⁰ 1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

⁵⁴¹ Matt 6:15, "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

Mark 11:27-33, They came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him, 28 and began saying to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things, or who gave You this authority to do these things?" 29 And Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question, and you answer Me, and then I will tell you by what authority I do these things. 30 Was the baptism of John from heaven, or from men? Answer Me." 31 They began reasoning among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Then why did you not believe him?' 32 "But shall we say, 'From men'?" — they were afraid of the people, for everyone considered John to have been a real prophet. 33 Answering Jesus, they said, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

v28: **By what authority?**---His authority came directly from God the Father. But **the chief priests and the scribes and the elders** were saying that He needed their permission in order to do these things in the Temple. They considered it their Temple rather than God's. The Temple was their money-maker and they totally missed their calling as shepherds of Israel⁵⁴² (and the nations).

v33: **We do not know**---it must have been humiliating for them to answer thus. They were supposedly "the teachers of Israel."⁵⁴³

v29: **I will ask you one question**---Jesus trapped them in their own hypocrisy! What if Jesus asked us that same question? How would we answer? Our future depends on our answer.

⁵⁴² Ezek 34:1-4, Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, 2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? 3 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat sheep without feeding the flock. 4 Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.'""

⁵⁴³ John 3:10, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?"

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He knows things no man could know (11:2)
2. He accepted people calling Him king---the Messiah (11:9-10)
3. In his human form He became hungry (11:12)
4. He cursed the fig tree for not bearing fruit (11:14)
5. He cleansed the Temple (11:15)
6. He claimed the Temple as "My House" (11:17)
7. He said it was for "all the nations" (11:17)
8. He taught with "authority" [of course] (11:18)
9. His curse caused the fig tree to wither (11:21)
10. He commanded "have faith in God" (11:22)
11. He promised answers to prayer based on faith (11:23-24)
12. He wants us to forgive (11:25)
13. He is smarter than the wisest man (11:29-32)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 12

Mark 12:1-12, And He began to speak to them in parables: "A man PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT, AND DUG A VAT UNDER THE WINE PRESS AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. 2 At the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive some of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers. 3 They took him, and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 4 Again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. 5 And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so with many others, beating some and killing others. 6 He had one more to send, a beloved son; he sent him last of all to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 7 But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!' 8 They took him, and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. 9 What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others. 10 Have you not even read this Scripture:

**THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED,
THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone;
11 THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD,
AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES?"**

12 And they were seeking to seize Him, and yet they feared the people, for they understood that He spoke the parable against them. And so they left Him and went away.

v1: **Parables**---in the OT, a parable was a wise or pithy statement. The Hebrew word "mawshall" (OT:4912) is used 52x and translated either as "parable" or "proverb." For example Proverbs 1:1, "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel." Why are they given? "1:2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; 3 to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; 4 to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion." However, verse 6 says they contain "dark sayings" which means only the Holy Spirit can reveal them.

v1: **A man PLANTED A VINEYARD**---Who is this "man"? God the Father. He owns the vineyard. What is the "vineyard"? Israel. However, the teaching applies to us today since we have been grafted in.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴⁴ Rom 11:17-24, But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." 20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; 21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. 22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted

v1: **PUT A WALL AROUND IT ... AND BUILT A TOWER**---He protected it from enemies just like He protects us today from Satan and his horde.

v1: **AND DUG A VAT UNDER THE WINE PRESS**---He naturally expected fruit from it.⁵⁴⁵ That's why He planted it. Israel's commission was to share God's love (fruit) with all nations,⁵⁴⁶ but they didn't do that. Instead they hoarded it all for themselves and lorded it over others and looked down on them. We can fall in that same hole.

v2: **At the harvest time He sent a slave to the vine-growers**---He gave them time to grow the vines and then expected a harvest. So He sent "a slave"---a prophet of Israel. The "vine growers" are the leaders of Israel---the priests and the scribes. In other passages they are called "evil shepherds" that eat and exploit the sheep instead of taking care of them.^{547 548 549}

v3: **They took him, and beat him**---This was the fate of many of the prophets. When the people didn't want to hear and obey the word of the Lord, they killed His prophets.^{550 551}

v6: **He had one more to send, a beloved son**---Who is the "Son"? [Jesus of course.]

v6: **They will respect my son**---Even today people don't respect Jesus. They use His name as a swear word. Pray that we won't.

v9: **He will come and destroy the vine-growers**---Those bad shepherds were destroyed. Their hearts were hardened and even today they do not recognize Jesus as their Messiah.⁵⁵² However, in God's

in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

⁵⁴⁵ John 15:16, "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain."

⁵⁴⁶ Gen 18:18, Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?

⁵⁴⁷ Jer 12:10, "Many shepherds have ruined My vineyard, they have trampled down My field."

⁵⁴⁸ Jer 23:1, "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!" declares the Lord.

⁵⁴⁹ Jer 50:6, "My people have become lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray."

⁵⁵⁰ Neh 9:26, And killed Your prophets who had admonished them..."

⁵⁵¹ Matt 23:37, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!"

⁵⁵² Luke 19:44, "...and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

mercy, someday soon (during the second half of the Tribulation), He will open their eyes and they will all turn to Him in humble repentance and belief.⁵⁵³

v9: **and will give the vineyard to others**---That's us; the gentiles.⁵⁵⁴ Now we have the unction that Israel originally had: to share God's love with all nations. Lord help us not to fail that privilege.

v12: **they understood that He spoke the parable against them**---they understood. They can't even plead ignorance. We can't either. An interesting illustration of this point is that the Arabs have made a large cemetery just outside the Golden Gate of the walls of Jerusalem because they know that Jesus is a priest and that the Bible says no priest can go into a cemetery. They are trying to prevent His second coming! They understand and believe who He is but they refuse to put their trust in Him.

Mark 12:13-17, Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him in order to trap Him in a statement. 14 They came and said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not? 15 "Shall we pay or shall we not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius to look at." 16 They brought one. And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" And they said to Him, "Caesar's." 17 And Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were amazed at Him.

v13: **Herodians**---All the high priests had come from the Herodian dynasty until the Seleucid Greek ruler Antiochus appointed his own high priest in order to worship Greek gods. This caused the Maccabean revolt around 167-160 BC when Judas Maccabeus defeated the Seleucids and restored the Herodians to the priesthood. These later joined with the Sadducees.

v13: **in order to trap Him**---This happened frequently.^{555 556 557 558}

⁵⁵³ Rom 11:25-26, For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved.

⁵⁵⁴ Rom 11:17-18, But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches.

⁵⁵⁵ Luke 11:53-54, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to question Him closely on many subjects, plotting against Him to catch Him in something He might say.

⁵⁵⁶ Matt 22:35, One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him...

⁵⁵⁷ Matt 22:15, Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said.

⁵⁵⁸ Ps 56:5-6, All day long they distort my words; All their thoughts are against me for evil. They attack, they lurk, they watch my steps, as they have waited to take my life.

v14: **we know that You are truthful and defer to no one, for You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth**---Flattery obviously because if they believed what they said, they would not have been trying to **trap Him**. Jesus is not affected by man's opinion---He is secure in the Father's love. We can be too.

v15: **knowing their hypocrisy**---He knows our hearts. Therefore we should be completely transparent and honest with Him.

v17: **Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's**---As long as the government's requirements don't contradict God's teaching, obey them. ⁵⁵⁹

v17: **they were amazed at Him**---We should be too. He is amazing!

Mark 12:18-27, Some Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection) came to Jesus, and began questioning Him, saying, ¹⁹ "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that IF A MAN'S BROTHER DIES and leaves behind a wife AND LEAVES NO CHILD, HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER. ²⁰ There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife, and died leaving no children. ²¹ The second one married her, and died leaving behind no children; and the third likewise; ²² and so all seven left no children. Last of all the woman died also. ²³ In the resurrection, when they rise again, which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her." ²⁴ Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God? ²⁵ For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ²⁶ But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, and the God of Jacob'? ²⁷ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken."

v18: **Some Sadducees**---Usually Jesus is castigating the Pharisees and leaving the Sadducees alone. However, remember that the Sadducees were the ruling party (the High Priests) and didn't want their comfortable position threatened.

v24: **you are mistaken**---This must have been hard for the proud Sadducees to hear.

v24: **you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God**---Wow! I never want to hear Jesus say that to me. I realize we are justified by faith and not by the accuracy of our doctrine but...

⁵⁵⁹ Rom 13:1-2, Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

v25: **For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven**---I really don't know how to feel about this teaching. Marilyn's and my love for each other was wonderful and even transcends death. I can't believe we won't have an even stronger love in Heaven. Paul said: "Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love."⁵⁶⁰

v26: **regarding the fact that the dead rise again**---notice the word **fact**. Jesus is stating emphatically that there actually is a resurrection (which the Sadducees denied). We should always compare our beliefs with what the Bible teaches to make sure our beliefs are not mistaken. Baptism falls into this category.

v26: **I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, and the God of Jacob?**---He didn't say: I WAS THE GOD... In other words, these men are not dead but alive in Heaven.

Mark 12:28-34, One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?"²⁹ Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD,³⁰ AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'³¹ "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."³² The scribe said to Him, "Right, Teacher; You have truly stated that HE IS ONE, AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM;³³ AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO LOVE ONE'S NEIGHBOR AS HIMSELF, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions.

v28: **One of the scribes**---among other duties, the scribes expounded the meaning and application of the Torah. They tended to be very legalistic and even bitter. However, this particular scribe must have had a soft heart towards God and was diligently seeking Him.

v28: **What commandment is the foremost of all?**---This is a great question---one which we too should ask. The answer **YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD** is applicable today. If we truly understand that God the Father loves us infinitely and unconditionally in the same way He loves Jesus,^{561 562 563} we can't help but love Him back. The corollary of course is for us to love those that He loves.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶⁰ 1 Cor 13:13 (New Living Translation)

⁵⁶¹ John 15:9, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love." The words translated "just as" in the Greek means "in the exact same, identical manner." Therefore Jesus is saying that He loves us just as much as the Father loves Him! Wow!

v34: **You are not far from the kingdom of God**---Anyone who understands God's love, is on the doorstep of faith. All God's love has to do is to move from a person's understanding to his heart. Jesus actually praised a scribe!

Mark 12:35-37, And Jesus began to say, as He taught in the temple, "How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? ³⁶ David himself said in the Holy Spirit, 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET."' ³⁷ David himself calls Him 'Lord'; so in what sense is He his son?" And the large crowd enjoyed listening to Him. This is a direct quote from Psalm 110.

v36: **David himself said in the Holy Spirit**---Here we see evidence of the Holy Spirit in the OT. Jesus is affirming that the OT is sacred and written by the Holy Spirit of God.

v36: **THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD**---The first word "LORD" is the Hebrew word OT:3068 "Yahweh" meaning God the Father, Jehovah. The second word "Lord" is the Hebrew word OT:113 "Adoni" meaning "lord, master, owner." This word refers to Jesus the Messiah who is our lord, master and owner.

v37: **In what sense is He his son?**---Jesus in His human form is descended from David. Luke gives His genealogy through Mary; ⁵⁶⁵ Matthew gives His genealogy through Joseph ⁵⁶⁶ but this is unnecessary since Joseph was not His father, but the Holy Spirit was. ⁵⁶⁷

v37: **The large crowd enjoyed listening to Him**---As long as He picked on the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees they enjoyed listening. When He made it personal, they shrank back. Ditto today with us.

Mark 12:38-40, In His teaching He was saying: "Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and like respectful greetings in the market places, ³⁹ and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets, ⁴⁰ who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation."

⁵⁶² John 17:23, "I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."

⁵⁶³ John 17:26, "...so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them..."

⁵⁶⁴ Matt 10:8, "Freely you received, freely give."

⁵⁶⁵ Luke 3:23-38

⁵⁶⁶ Matt 1:1-16

⁵⁶⁷ Luke 1:35, The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God."

v40: **These will receive greater condemnation**---This applies to anyone in a position of authority: teachers, pastors, elders, deacons, home-group leaders, Sunday school teachers, etc. ⁵⁶⁸ ⁵⁶⁹

Mark 12:41-44, And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the people were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. 42 A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. 43 Calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; 44 for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on."

v43: **this poor widow put in more than all**---She gave 100% (not a mere tithe). We need to acknowledge that God owns 100% of us.

⁵⁶⁸ James 3:1, Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

⁵⁶⁹ 2 Tim 2:15, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He created us (12:1)
2. He protects us (12:1)
3. He expects us to bear fruit (12:1)
4. He communicates with us (12:2, 4 and 5)
5. He sent His Son Jesus (12:6)
6. He loves Him (12:6)
7. He expects [and deserves] respect (12:6)
8. He will judge us (12:9 & 40)
9. He will make Jesus the cornerstone of our faith (12:10)
10. He does marvelous things (12:11)
11. He is truthful (12:14)
12. He is impartial (12:14)
13. He wants us to obey the civil law (12:14)
14. He knows everything (12:15)
15. He is amazing (12:17)
16. He has ordained a resurrection (12:27)
17. He is one God (12:29)
18. He wants our passionate love (12:29)
19. He wants us to love others (12:31)
20. He doesn't want burnt offerings (12:33)
21. He is willing to praise men when they do well (12:34 & 43)
22. He wrote the Scriptures (12:36)
23. He will put His enemies under Jesus' feet (12:36)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 13

Mark 13:1-2, As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" 2 And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down."

v1: **what wonderful stones**---One of these stones is 45 feet in length (13.6 meters), 13 ft. wide (4 meters), and weighs about 570 tons! How in the world was this moved before they had modern machinery?

v1: **what wonderful buildings**!---This temple was built on the same spot (Mt. Moriah) where God instructed Abraham to sacrifice Isaac ⁵⁷⁰ as a prototype of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. This was "the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite." ⁵⁷¹ Remember David captured this place from the Jebusites⁵⁷² and built the "city of David" just below this spot. The Lord didn't allow David to build the Temple because he had "blood on his hands" ⁵⁷³ but his son, Solomon, built the Temple (the "First Temple").⁵⁷⁴ Mt. Moriah ⁵⁷⁵ then was called "Mt. Zion." ⁵⁷⁶ This Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC and the Jews were deported. Later, Ezra returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the Temple ⁵⁷⁷ (the "Second Temple"). When Herod the Great wanted to curry favor with the Jews, he greatly expanded the Temple ⁵⁷⁸ and the Temple Mount (aka Mt. Moriah aka Mt. Zion). So it is this expanded Temple that impressed the disciples. Lots of people worshiped the Temple rather than the Lord it represented. We can fall into that same trap today with glorious church buildings.

⁵⁷⁰ Gen 22:2, He [God] said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you."

⁵⁷¹ 1 Chron 21:15, And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; but as he was about to destroy it, the Lord saw and was sorry over the calamity, and said to the destroying angel, "It is enough; now relax your hand." And the angel of the Lord was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

⁵⁷² 2 Sam 5:6-9, Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David. So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David.

⁵⁷³ 1 Chron 28:3, But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name because you are a man of war and have shed blood.'

⁵⁷⁴ 1 Kings 6:1, Now it came about ... in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel ... that he began to build the house of the Lord.

⁵⁷⁵ 2 Chron 3:1, Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

⁵⁷⁶ Micah 3:12, Therefore, on account of you Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the temple will become high places of a forest.

⁵⁷⁷ Ezra 6:15, This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

⁵⁷⁸ John 2:20, The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

v2: **Not one stone will be left upon another**---He is prophesying the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD by the Romans because the Jews did not acknowledge that He was the Messiah.⁵⁷⁹ Furthermore, since the Temple represents Judaism, He is also prophesying that the Old Covenant will be made obsolete by His death.

Mark 13:3-8, As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew were questioning Him privately, 4 "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" 5 And Jesus began to say to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. 6 Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and will mislead many. 7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; those things must take place; but that is not yet the end. 8 For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines. These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs."

v3: **the Mount of Olives**---This was one of Jesus' favorite places. The little town of Bethany was also here where Jesus often sojourned in the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. This is also the spot where He will return.⁵⁸⁰

v3: **Peter and James and John and Andrew**---The first three were Jesus' inner circle. Somehow Andrew got included. [I'm glad since that is my name. ☺]

v4: **when will these things be?**---We are still fascinated by this question. We can easily get sidetracked into this kind of study rather than concentrating on the one thing that really matters: abiding in His love and loving others.

v6: **Many will come in My name**---He is cautioning us that deceivers will come **and will mislead many**. Let's make sure that we are not deceived.⁵⁸¹

v7: **do not be frightened**---It's easy to become frightened when we listen to the news but Jesus is saying that we need not be afraid. He is in control. In fact, He says **those things must take place**---they are part of God's plan so we do not need to worry.

v8: **For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines**---This sure sounds like the beginning of the Tribulation.

⁵⁷⁹ Luke 19:44, "...and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

⁵⁸⁰ Zech 14:4, In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east.

⁵⁸¹ Matt 24:24, "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect."

v8: **These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs**---If these things are “merely” the beginning, just imagine how bad it will be in the second half of the great Tribulation! Hopefully, He will remove (“rapture”) all of the true believers before this. However, unfortunately there will be many who will not be ready for their Lord’s return who will have to go through the Tribulation in order to learn humility, love and true faith. Praise God for His mercy that this is so---it is better than being judged for their lack of faith. On the other hand, He may leave some of His faithful followers to instruct and lead those who were left behind.

v8: **birth pangs**---Dying physically but being born again spiritually.

Mark 13:9-13, "But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them. 10 The gospel must first be preached to all the nations. 11 When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. 12 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. 13 You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved."

v9: **"But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them**---during the first half of the Tribulation, the antichrist will curry favor with Israel by persecuting Christians. However, this will be a testimony to the Jews that they will remember in the second half of the Tribulation when the antichrist betrays them and turns against them. As a result of that testimony plus the testimony of the Two Witnesses and the 144,000 Jewish witnesses, they will all turn to Jesus in repentance and accept Him as their Messiah and redeemer (Hebrew “gaal”).^{582 583}

⁵⁸² Ruth 3:13, "Remain this night, and when morning comes, if he will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the Lord lives."

⁵⁸³ Ruth 4:3-6, Then he [Boaz] said to the closest relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. 4 So I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it before those who are sitting here, and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if not, tell me that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am after you.'" And he said, "I will redeem it." 5 Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance." 6 The closest relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, because I would jeopardize my own inheritance. Redeem it for yourself; you may have my right of redemption, for I cannot redeem it."

v11: **When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit---** the Holy Spirit will give us the proper words. However, we may be martyred. But that's OK.

v12: **Brother will betray brother to death---**It will be a really grim time and many will die physically but, as Jesus said, **do not be frightened** because we will live eternally spiritually with Him.

v13: **You will be hated by all because of My name---**Yes, but we will be loved by our Lord. So hang in there so **the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.**

Mark 13:14-23, "But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. 15 The one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house; 16 and the one who is in the field must not turn back to get his coat. 17 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 But pray that it may not happen in the winter. 19 For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. 20 Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days. 21 And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, He is there'; do not believe him; 22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. 23 But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance."

v14: **ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION---**This occurs at the mid-point of the Tribulation between the sixth and seventh Seals. ⁵⁸⁴ ⁵⁸⁵

v14: **where it should not be---**That is, in the Temple profaning the holy place of God.

v14: **flee--**It will happen rapidly at the mid-point of the Tribulation. If you are not prepared, it is too late.

⁵⁸⁴ Daniel 9:27, "And he [the antichrist] will make a firm covenant with the many [Israel] for one week [a "week" of seven years], but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

⁵⁸⁵ Matt 24:15-16, "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains..."

v19: **a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation**---It will be awful beyond imagination. It is not cruelty or God getting revenge; instead, it is God in His mercy allowing Satan to push people beyond their own capability in order to give them a chance to repent and be saved.^{586 587 588 589}

v20: **the elect, whom He chose**---He wanted us and chose us.

v20: **Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days**---this sure implies that some of us elect may remain behind to teach and lead new believers. Another possibility is that **the elect** are the new believers.

v22: **false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders**---The antichrist will arise and he will be killed yet he will have a miraculous resurrection.^{590 591 592}

Mark 13:24-27, "But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, 25 AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. 26 Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory. 27 And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven."

⁵⁸⁶ Rev 9:20-21, The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

⁵⁸⁷ Rev 16:8-9, The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

⁵⁸⁸ Rev 16:10-11, Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

⁵⁸⁹ Joel 2:32, "And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered."

⁵⁹⁰ Rev 13:3, I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed.

⁵⁹¹ Rev 13:12, And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

⁵⁹² Rev 13:14, And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

v24: **But in those days, after that tribulation**---He is still talking about the sixth Seal. ⁵⁹³ Isaiah ⁵⁹⁴ prophesied about this---so did Ezekiel ⁵⁹⁵---ditto Joel. ⁵⁹⁶ ⁵⁹⁷

v25: **the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken**---Are these the “principalities and powers” that are talked about in Romans 8? ⁵⁹⁸

v26: **Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS**--- Even though He is coming **with great power and glory**, He is still calling Himself “Son of Man”---a title that identifies with us and our frailty.

v26: As mentioned above [v:3], He is returning to the same place (the Mount of Olives) from which He ascended into Heaven **IN THE CLOUDS**.

v26: **with great power**---This occurs at the end of the Tribulation as He is coming for the battle of Armageddon. ⁵⁹⁹

v27: **will gather together His elect**---The Scriptures mention several “Raptures.” This one apparently is for those who accepted Him during the Tribulation.

⁵⁹³ Rev 6:12-17, I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. 14 The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

⁵⁹⁴ Isaiah 13:10, For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light. The sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light.

⁵⁹⁵ Ezekiel 32:7-8, "And when I extinguish you, I will cover the heavens and darken their stars; I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon will not give its light. All the shining lights in the heavens I will darken over you and will set darkness on your land," declares the Lord God.

⁵⁹⁶ Joel 2:10, The sun and the moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness.

⁵⁹⁷ Joel 2:31, "The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes."

⁵⁹⁸ Rom 8:38-39, For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

⁵⁹⁹ Rev 19:19-21 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Mark 13:28-32, "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 Even so, you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that He is near, right at the door. 30 Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. 32 But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."

v28: **the fig tree**---Remember how in Mark 11 Jesus cursed the fig tree because it bore no fruit. The fig tree is also mentioned in Revelation concerning the Tribulation.⁶⁰⁰

v28: **that summer is near**---He is using a simile that they are all familiar with: when a fig tree puts forth shoots, summer is near. Similarly, when they see the things happening that He prophesied, they will know that His return is near.

v30: **this generation**---Obviously everyone listening to Him has died physically. Therefore, a human physical lifetime can't be what He meant. Either He was speaking of spiritual life eternally or "generation" may mean something else. The word "generation" is the Greek word "genea" NT:1074 which means "generation" or "age" or "a period of time."⁶⁰¹ "This age" could refer to the two millennia of the church age.

v31: **Heaven and earth will pass away**---There will be a new heaven and a new earth⁶⁰² to replace that which is presently under the curse.^{603 604}

v32: **of that day or hour no one knows**---Many people have tried to figure out the exact date of Jesus' return but all such efforts are futile. **The Father alone** knows the date.⁶⁰⁵ If we knew He was going to return in a specific year, we probably wouldn't bother to get ready for Him until that date approached.⁶⁰⁶ He wants us to abide in Him now, moment by moment.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁰ Rev 6:12-13, I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

⁶⁰¹ Metaphorically spoken of the people of any generation or age, those living in any one period, a race or class (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

⁶⁰² Rev 21:1, Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.

⁶⁰³ Gen 3:17, "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life."

⁶⁰⁴ Rom 8:22, For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

⁶⁰⁵ Matt 24:36, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."

⁶⁰⁶ 1 Thess 5:2-5, For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor

Mark 13:33-37, "Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come. 34 It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. 35 Therefore, be on the alert — for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning — 36 in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. 37 What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

v33: **Take heed**---We have been warned, instructed, commanded. We should listen carefully and **take heed**.

v33: **keep on the alert**---How do we do this? Keep our lamps full of oil ⁶⁰⁸ [the Holy Spirit].

v33: **you do not know when**---He is reiterating that it is impossible for us to know the time He returns. So be ready all the time.

v34: **putting his slaves in charge**---We are His slaves (servants, stewards) and we should be doing His work until He comes.

v37: **Be on the alert!**---Be ready and expectant, eagerly anticipating His return.

pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day.

⁶⁰⁷ John 15:4, "Abide in Me, and I in you."

⁶⁰⁸ Matt 25:1-4, "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps."

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. All of history points to Him (13:2)
2. He knows everything---including the future (13:2ff)
3. He reveals the future to us (13:5, 23)
4. He warns us (13: 5ff)
5. He encourages us (13:7)
6. He is unconcerned about the power of man (13:8)
7. His Holy Spirit will tell us what to say (13:11)
8. He wants us and chooses us (13:20, 27)
9. He is unconcerned with Satan or the antichrist (13:22)
10. He has complete power over the universe (13:24, 25)
11. He is coming back (13:26, 35)
12. He will gather His elect (13:27)
13. He will make a brand new heaven and a new earth (13:31)
14. His words are forever (13:31)
15. He alone knows when (13:32, 35)
16. He wants us to be alert, expectant (13:37)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 14

Mark 14:1-2, Now the Passover and Unleavened Bread were two days away; and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to seize Him by stealth and kill Him; 2 for they were saying, "Not during the festival, otherwise there might be a riot of the people."

v1: **the Passover and Unleavened Bread**---These two feasts celebrated the exodus from Egypt. Passover, of course, showed God's mercy in sparing the Hebrew first-born when the Egyptian first-born (human and animal) were all killed by the angel of death.⁶⁰⁹ The lamb's blood (representing Jesus' blood) on the lintel of the Hebrews' doors⁶¹⁰ signaled the angel to pass by their house. The feast of Unleavened Bread celebrated the fact that they left Egypt so fast that they did not have time for their bread to rise. It also represents the fact that the Bread of Life (Jesus) has no sin (leaven) in Him.

v1: **two days away**---There is much debate and much confusion on exactly which day the crucifixion occurred: Thursday or Friday. Good arguments can be made for either. I used to think Friday because it says the next day was the Sabbath.⁶¹¹ However, this was the High Sabbath⁶¹² of the Feast of Unleavened Bread rather than the weekly Sabbath that occurred on Saturday. The High Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread can occur on any day of the week. I can make a strong argument that it occurred on Thursday that year.

v1: **By stealth**---Clearly this was something the leadership but not the people wanted. I'm surprised they did not just kidnap Him, kill Him privately and just have Him disappear. However, this would not have fulfilled the dozens of prophecies of Scripture that foretold His crucifixion. On the other hand, they would have been ceremonially defiled so they would not have been able to participate in the feast. This hypocritical action was more important to them than the life of an innocent man (a prophet, the Messiah).

⁶⁰⁹ Ex 12:29-30, Now it came about at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. 30 Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead.

⁶¹⁰ Ex 12:23, "For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you."

⁶¹¹ Mark 15:42-43, When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea came....

⁶¹² John 19:31, Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

v2: **a riot**---Again they are more concerned with the possible political repercussions from the Romans if a riot occurred. They might lose their precarious trappings of power, prestige, and position if that happened.

Mark 14:3-9, While He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining at the table, there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; and she broke the vial and poured it over His head. 4 But remarking to one another, "Why has this perfume been wasted? 5 For this perfume might have been sold for over three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they were scolding her. 6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you bother her? She has done a good deed to Me. 7 For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you do not always have Me. 8 She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial. 9 Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

v3: **Simon the leper**---Since lepers were ostracized (quarantined) from society, perhaps this is a person who had been healed by Jesus. On the other hand, He was not afraid to touch lepers.⁶¹³

v3: **costly perfume of pure nard**---(Spikenard) This spice was imported by camel caravan from northern India and was therefore very expensive. It was used to anoint a body for burial.⁶¹⁴

v3: **she broke the vial and poured it over His head**---She anointed Him as king and Messiah, showing her faith and love for Him. How beautiful! In the account in John, it says she poured the nard on His feet and wiped His feet with her hair.⁶¹⁵ I assume both are true: that she anointed both His head and His feet.

v4: **wasted**---This depends on your point of view. From a fleshly viewpoint where money is king, this is a waste; from a spiritual viewpoint, to honor Jesus is the most important thing to do---no matter what it costs.

⁶¹³ Mark 1:41-42, Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." 42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

⁶¹⁴ John 19:40, So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

⁶¹⁵ John 12:1-3, Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. 3 Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

v5: **some were indignant**---It is so easy to be indignant with others and to judge them. Jesus didn't. He praised her. They didn't realize who He was or they would have known that this was appropriate.

v5: **three hundred denarii**---This is a year's wages. Giving it to the poor would be an ostentatious way of drawing attention and saying how holy we are.

Mark 14:10-11, Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went off to the chief priests in order to betray Him to them. 11 They were glad when they heard this, and promised to give him money. And he began seeking how to betray Him at an opportune time.

v10: **Then Judas Iscariot**---Immediately after the perfume was "wasted," Judas went to the chief priests. Apparently he was one of the ones who were indignant because a year's wages could have been in his pocket as the keeper of the purse. This is clear from the parallel passage in John.⁶¹⁶

v10: **went off to the chief priests**---Perhaps because Jesus accepted the gift of perfume and did not allow Judas to take it and sell it, this was the last straw for him so he decided to betray Jesus.

v11: **promised to give him money**---Money seemed to be way too important to Judas. Jesus said we can't serve both God and money.⁶¹⁷ Security through money is fragile; security through Jesus is rock solid.

v11: **opportune time**---Away from the crowds, in secret, in stealth, by cover of night.

v11: **betray Him**---Jesus knew ahead of time who would betray Him (see verse 18 below). But He chose Judas anyway. Remember He had prayed all night⁶¹⁸ to the Father before selecting His disciples. The Father must have told Him to pick Judas and therefore Jesus was obedient, no matter what the consequences might be.

⁶¹⁶ John 12:4-6, But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?" 6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.

⁶¹⁷ Matt 6:24, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

⁶¹⁸ Luke 6:12-16, It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. 13 And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles: 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James and John; and Philip and Bartholomew; and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot; 16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Mark 14:12-16, On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare for You to eat the Passover?" ¹³ **And He sent two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him; ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is My guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'"** ¹⁵ **And he himself will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; prepare for us there."** ¹⁶ **The disciples went out and came to the city, and found it just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover.**

v12: **when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed**---Jesus is our Passover lamb. Isn't it appropriate that He was slain on this Feast day.

v12: **Where do You want us to go**---We should always ask Jesus what He wants us to do. Of course, He has already told us most things He wants us to do so we shouldn't expect a special revelation. For example, two chapters ago in verse 29 He told us the most important thing He wants: "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD, AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

v13: **a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water**---This is an amazing statement:

1. Jesus knew things at a distance that no mere man could know.
2. The man with the pitcher would meet them.
3. Only women carried water.

v14: **Where is My guest room**---This too is amazing:

1. It was Passover with a million pilgrims in Jerusalem.
2. Every room in town had already been rented for months except this one.
3. Such rooms would rent for a lot of money but this one was free.
4. Upper room symbolizing Heaven? Remember the Holy Spirit came on them here later^{619 620}

v16: **found it just as He had told them**---Of course. We should never doubt Him.

⁶¹⁹ Acts 1:12-13, "Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. ¹³ When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying."

⁶²⁰ Acts 2:1-4, When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

v16: **they prepared the Passover**---They prepared for Jesus' imminent departure; we should be prepared for Jesus' imminent return.

Mark 14:17-21, When it was evening He came with the twelve. 18 As they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me — one who is eating with Me." 19 They began to be grieved and to say to Him one by one, "Surely not I?" 20 And He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who dips with Me in the bowl. 21 For the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

v17: **with the twelve**---Even at this intimate moment, Judas was with Him. We know from the other gospels that Jesus even washed Judas' feet.^{621 622} Although Judas had every opportunity to see who Jesus was, he made the wrong choices. Our lives (and our eternities) pivot on choices.

v18: **reclining, eating**---Having meals together as a family is wonderful. No matter how busy we were, Marilyn worked it out so we could eat together.

v18: **one of you will betray Me**---In fact, they all did by abandoning Him at His hour of greatest need. It is easy to be critical of them but I suspect we would have done the same thing.

v18: **For the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of Him**---He is speaking of Himself and still relating to us as a human. Since it is written, it will happen. God knows ahead of time what will transpire.

v18: **woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born**---Wow! Is he saying that Judas is going to Hell? Actually, I don't think so. Another interpretation (my opinion, which many I respect do not share) is that he will suffer through Outer Darkness^{623 624 625} for a thousand years (while others are enjoying the Millennium) but Jesus

⁶²¹ John 13:10-11, Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."

⁶²² John 13:15, "I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'HE WHO EATS MY BREAD HAS LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME.'"

⁶²³ Matt 8:12, "...but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

⁶²⁴ Matt 22:13-14, "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

⁶²⁵ Matt 25:30, "Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

foreknows that Judas will never repent. Then at the last opportunity (the Great White Throne ⁶²⁶ judgment), Jesus foreknows that Judas will again make the wrong choice and be thrown into the Lake of Fire ⁶²⁷ and be exterminated. Since he hadn't believed in Jesus, he did not have eternal life ⁶²⁸ ⁶²⁹ and therefore would not suffer forever. So his final fate would be the same as if he had never been born (non-existence) but he would have suffered all that stuff needlessly.

Mark 14:22-26, While they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is My body." ²³ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." ²⁶ After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

v22: **Take it; this is My body**---He is the bread of life. ⁶³⁰ ⁶³¹

v24: **This is My blood of the covenant**---the New Covenant of grace was signed in blood---Jesus' blood. ⁶³²

⁶²⁶ Rev 20:11-12, Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

⁶²⁷ Rev 20:14-15, Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

⁶²⁸ John 5:24, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into [eternal] life."

⁶²⁹ 1 John 5:11-12, "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this [eternal] life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the [eternal] life; he who does not have the Son of God does **not** have the [eternal] life."

⁶³⁰ John 6:35, Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

⁶³¹ John 6:48-51, "I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

⁶³² 1 John 5:6-8, This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

v25: **I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God**---If Jesus is going to drink wine in Heaven, it must be OK stuff. Why are people so legalistic? The only thing wrong with wine is drinking it to excess.^{633 634} Almost all references in the Bible that mention wine commend it.

Mark 14:27-31, And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, because it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED.' 28 But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." 29 But Peter said to Him, "Even though all may fall away, yet I will not." 30 And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, that this very night, before a rooster crows twice, you yourself will deny Me three times." 31 But Peter kept saying insistently, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing also.

v27: **You will all fall away**---This applies to us too---all. I don't think anyone makes it through the Christian life without feeling: "Oh, what's the use---I can't do it." God uses this frustration to lead us into humility so we can't even be proud of how well we have followed Him.

v27: **'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED'**---This is a quote from Zech 13:7. Jesus frequently refers to Himself as the good Shepherd (in contrast to the evil shepherds of Israel castigated in Jeremiah and Ezekiel). We are as stupid as sheep and we need a Shepherd.

v28: **after I have been raised**---He was so confident of the Father's ability to raise Him from the dead that He was willing to part with His life. This reminds me of Abraham when he was getting Isaac ready to be sacrificed. In Hebrews 11:19-20 it says: "He [Abraham] considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type [of Christ]."

v29: **Even though all may fall away, yet I will not**---This we can say (and mean) but we are only human.⁶³⁵

v30: **this very night... you yourself will deny Me**---"This night"---not maybe some time in the future but this night. Yikes! We are weak.

⁶³³ Eph 5:18, And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit; (KJV)

⁶³⁴ 1 Peter 4:3, For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: (KJV)

⁶³⁵ Matt 26:41, "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 14:32-42, They came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed." 33 And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. 34 And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch." 35 And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. 36 And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will." 37 And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? 38 Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." 39 Again He went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40 And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. 41 And He came the third time, and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"

v32: **Gethsemane**---A peaceful garden on the Mount of Olives where Jesus liked to go with His disciples.

v34: **My soul**---Although He knew the awful physical suffering He would have to endure, the spiritual suffering was far worse. He even spent three days and three nights in Hades⁶³⁶ under Satan's merciless assaults.

v34: **My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death**---I'm sure He knew exactly what was coming and dreaded it but was willing to endure it out of love for us. Even though He clearly stated His desperate need of them, His disciples could not stay awake. We need to "stay awake" and "be alert" lest He find us sleeping when He returns.⁶³⁷

v35 and 41: **the hour**---This is why He came.⁶³⁸ This is the hour (the time ⁶³⁹) for which He came.^{640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647}

⁶³⁶ Matt 12:39-40, But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; 40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

⁶³⁷ Mark 13:33-37

⁶³⁸ John 12:27, "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour."

⁶³⁹ John 7:6-8, So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil. 8 Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come."

⁶⁴⁰ John 2:4, And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

v36: **All things are possible for You**---Since God the Father can do anything at all, Jesus is looking for some alternative besides the Cross. However, there was no other plan.

v36: **this cup**---it is full of the sins of the world. ⁶⁴⁸ ⁶⁴⁹ Remember, He became sin⁶⁵⁰ on our account.

v36: **yet not what I will, but what You will**---Wow! What an example He is to us.

Mark 14:43-52, Immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 Now he who was betraying Him had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him and lead Him away under guard." 45 After coming, Judas immediately went to Him, saying, "Rabbi!" and kissed Him. 46 They laid hands on Him and seized Him. 47 But one of those who stood by drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. 48 And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, as you would against a robber? 49 Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures." 50 And they all left Him and fled. 51 A young man was following Him, wearing nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body; and they seized him. 52 But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked.

v43: **who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders**---These are the leadership, the ones you would normally respect and emulate. I'm afraid that the greatest persecution of Christians will come from those in authority: World Council of Churches, etc.

⁶⁴¹ John 7:30, So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

⁶⁴² John 8:20, These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

⁶⁴³ John 17:1, Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You."

⁶⁴⁴ John 13:1, Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

⁶⁴⁵ John 12:23, And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

⁶⁴⁶ Matt 26:18, And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'"

⁶⁴⁷ Matt 26:45, "Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners."

⁶⁴⁸ John 18:11, So Jesus said to Peter, "...the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

⁶⁴⁹ Rev 17:4, ...a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality...

⁶⁵⁰ 2 Cor 5:21, He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

v47: **and cut off his ear**---Jesus restored his ear.⁶⁵¹ Jesus didn't allow resistance; this was God's will.⁶⁵²

v49: **Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me**---Evil deeds are not done in public where people will see them. They are done in stealth.

v51: **A young man was following Him, wearing nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body; and they seized him. But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked**---Many scholars believe this was Mark the author of this gospel.

Mark 14:53-59, They led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together. 54 Peter had followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire. 55 Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding any. 56 For many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony was not consistent. 57 Some stood up and began to give false testimony against Him, saying, 58 "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'" 59 Not even in this respect was their testimony consistent.

v54: **Peter had followed Him at a distance**---We tend to do the same thing.

v55: **kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus**---They looked carefully but **they were not finding any** legitimate thing with which to accuse Him. Would they if they looked at our lives?

Mark 14:60-65, The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" 61 But He kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" 62 And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." 63 Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? 64 You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. 65 Some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers received Him with slaps in the face.

⁶⁵¹ Luke 22:51, And He touched his ear and healed him.

⁶⁵² Matt 26:51-54, And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?"

v61: **He kept silent**---This is a fulfillment of prophesy.⁶⁵³

v61 and 62: **"Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said, "I am"**---Many ignorant people claim Jesus never said He was God but here it is. His answer: **"I am"** is nothing less than the answer God gave when Moses asked God's name.⁶⁵⁴

v63 through 65: Can you imagine them doing these things to God? Do we do these things? God in His mercy does not retaliate but in His love gives us more time to repent.

Mark 14:66-72, As Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came, 67 and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Nazarene." 68 But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." And he went out onto the porch. 69 The servant-girl saw him, and began once more to say to the bystanders, "This is one of them!" 70 But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders were again saying to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean too." 71 But he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this man you are talking about!" 72 Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had made the remark to him, "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And he began to weep.

v71: **I do not know this man you are talking about!**---Wow! I sure empathize with Peter; I have missed so many opportunities to stand up for Jesus.

v72: **And he began to weep**---We need to also.

⁶⁵³ Isa 53:7, Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.

⁶⁵⁴ Ex 3:14, God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He is not affected by social stigmas (against lepers 14:3)
2. He defended and praised a woman for her act of love (14:6).
3. No honor is too rich for Him (14:5).
4. He knows everything (14:13).
5. Even though He knows we will betray Him, He loves us anyway (14:20).
6. His fate was foretold in the OT Scriptures (14:21).
7. He has given us tangible ways to remember His sacrifices (14:22-24).
8. He explains to us the symbolism of the Last Supper (14:22-24).
9. He will drink wine in Heaven (14:25).
10. He is able to foretell the future (14:27).
11. He foretold His own death and resurrection (14:28).
12. Jesus and the Father communicate through prayer (14:32).
13. He has normal emotions like distress and trouble and grief (verses 33 and 34).
14. He is omnipotent (14:36).
15. Jesus submits His will to the Father (14:36).
16. He wants us to pray (14:38).
17. He is peaceful and accepting of the Father's will (14:49).
18. Jesus said "I AM"---He is God (14:62).
19. He was humble, He didn't retaliate, and He accepted abuse (14:65).

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 15

Mark 15:1-5, Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate. ² Pilate questioned Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him, "It is as you say." ³ The chief priests began to accuse Him harshly. ⁴ Then Pilate questioned Him again, saying, "Do You not answer? See how many charges they bring against You!" ⁵ But Jesus made no further answer; so Pilate was amazed.

v2: **Are You the King of the Jews?**---He answered "Yes!" Ignorant people who want to debate Christianity argue that Jesus never claimed to be God. Wrong! He answered "I AM" many times. ^{655 656 657 658 659 660 661}

Mark 15:6-15, Now at the feast he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested. ⁷ The man named Barabbas had been imprisoned with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the insurrection. ⁸ The crowd went up and began asking him to do as he had been accustomed to do for them. ⁹ Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰ For he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead. ¹² Answering again, Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" ¹³ They shouted back, "Crucify Him!" ¹⁴ But Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify Him!" ¹⁵ Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

v10: **For he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy**---Even though Pilate knew that envy was the motivation and that Jesus had done nothing worthy of death, he nonetheless condemned Him. What a wimp!

v14: **Why, what evil has He done?**---He had done no evil and Pilate knew that.

⁶⁵⁵ Matt 27:43, He said, 'I am the Son of God.'

⁶⁵⁶ Mark 14:61-62, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

⁶⁵⁷ Luke 22:70, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "Yes, I am."

⁶⁵⁸ John 6:51, "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven."

⁶⁵⁹ John 7:29, "I know Him [the Father], because I am from Him, and He sent Me."

⁶⁶⁰ John 8:58, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

⁶⁶¹ John 10:36, 'I am the Son of God'

v15: **Wishing to satisfy the crowd**---What a politician! An innocent man's life was forfeited in order to buy favor with a rowdy crowd. Do we also go along with the crowd?

Mark 15:16-21, The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort. 17 They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; 18 and they began to acclaim Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. 20 After they had mocked Him, they took the purple robe off Him and put His own garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him. 21 They pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross.

v17 and 20: **They dressed Him up in purple**---This is to mock Him as King!

v17 and 20: **twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him**---This too was to mock His Kingship!

v21: **They pressed into service a passer-by ... to bear His cross**---Jesus was too weak from the flogging to carry it Himself.

Mark 15:22-26, Then they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. 23 They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it. 24 And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take. 25 It was the third hour when they crucified Him. 26 The inscription of the charge against Him read, "THE KING OF THE JEWS."

v23: **They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh**---in verse 14 (chapter 25 above) Jesus said He would not drink any more wine until He drinks it again in Heaven.

v23: **but He did not take it**---The **wine** and the **myrrh** would have deadened the pain but Jesus refused it. He bore our pain undiminished. Likewise, we have many escape mechanisms in life to dull our pain but Jesus fully empathizes with us and fully experiences our pain.

v24: **divided up His garments**---This was prophesied in Psalm 22.⁶⁶²

v25: **the third hour**---9 a.m. since the hours were counted from daylight.

v26: **The inscription of the charge against Him**---It was common to put a sign on the crosses to say why someone was being crucified so others would be intimidated from doing the same crime.

⁶⁶² Ps 22:18, They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

Mark 15:27-32, They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left. 28 [And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with transgressors.]" 29 Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, 30 save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" 31 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. 32 Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!" Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.

v30: **come down from the cross!---**If He had,⁶⁶³ we would still be in our sins. But, praise God, because He was willing to stay on the cross and die, sin is no longer the issue.⁶⁶⁴

v32: **Let this [supposed] Christ, the [supposed] King of Israel---**as we saw in the previous verse, this was mocking sarcasm.

v32: **so that we may see and believe!---**Even if He had come down from the cross, they still would not have believed. This was proven when He rose from the dead.⁶⁶⁵

Mark 15:33-39, When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" which is translated, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" 35 When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, "Behold, He is calling for Elijah." 36 Someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink, saying, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down." 37 And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed His last. 38 And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. 39 When the centurion, who was standing right in front of Him, saw the way He breathed His last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

v33: **the sixth hour---**Noon.

v33: **the ninth hour---**3 p.m. Jesus was on the cross for six agonizing hours. The cross was designed to make death as slow and painful as possible.

⁶⁶³ Matt 26:53, "Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"

⁶⁶⁴ 1 John 2:2, He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

⁶⁶⁵ Luke 16:31, "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

v33: **darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour**---I have searched the NASA website trying to find a total eclipse that occurred around 30 AD near Passover but I have been unsuccessful. Perhaps it was the "Cloud of Covering" that darkened the sky?

v34: **WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?**---This occurred because Jesus was carrying the sin of the whole world.⁶⁶⁶ That made Him odious to the Father. In fact, He actually became sin on our behalf.⁶⁶⁷

v37: **And Jesus uttered a loud cry**---From the other gospels, we know what His **loud cry** was: And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT."⁶⁶⁸ Also: He said, "It is finished!"⁶⁶⁹

v38: **veil of the temple was torn**---We now have direct access to the Father because of this. It used to be that only the High Priest was allowed into the Holy of Holies and that only once a year.⁶⁷⁰ Now even we are allowed in any time we wish.

v39: **Truly this man was the Son of God!**---Amen! This was the testimony of an unbiased Gentile---a despised Roman. I wonder if this was the same centurion named Cornelius that Peter later had the privilege of leading to faith in Christ.⁶⁷¹

Mark 15:40-47, There were also some women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome. 41 When He was in Galilee, they used to follow Him and minister to Him; and there were many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

42 When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

44 Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead. 45 And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. 46 Joseph bought a linen cloth, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a stone

⁶⁶⁶ John 2:2, He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

⁶⁶⁷ 2 Cor 5:21, He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

⁶⁶⁸ Luke 23:46

⁶⁶⁹ John 19:30

⁶⁷⁰ Heb 9:7, ...but into the second [the Holy of Holies], only the high priest enters once a year.

⁶⁷¹ Acts 10

against the entrance of the tomb. 47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were looking on to see where He was laid.

v43: **waiting for the kingdom of God**---Joseph was awaiting the Messiah. He must have acknowledged that Jesus was that sought-after Messiah even though He didn't fit the anticipated warrior-king image of David.

v43: **and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus**---This took a lot of courage because Joseph was identifying himself as a follower of Jesus. He could have been arrested by the Romans and for sure he would be rejected by the Jews and probably thrown out of the Sanhedrin of which he was a **prominent member**.⁶⁷²

v46: **laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock**---This was the common burial practice for rich Jews. However, Jesus was not rich; He had no material wealth. So Joseph of Arimathea put Him in His own tomb. It was necessary to get Him buried quickly before sun-down⁶⁷³ because the Feast began at sunset. Furthermore, the Law said that a corpse must be buried within 24 hours, but not on a Sabbath. Therefore there was only a very short time to get Jesus buried.

Although tradition says Jesus was buried in Jerusalem under the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, it was also common that after a body had decayed, the bones would be gathered up and reburied in the person's hometown.^{674 675} Thus if we were looking for human remains, it would be in Nazareth of Galilee.

⁶⁷² Luke 23:50, And a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man...

⁶⁷³ Deut 21:23, ...his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day.

⁶⁷⁴ Gen 50:25-26, "...you shall carry my bones up from here." So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

⁶⁷⁵ Josh 24:32, Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the piece of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of money; and they became the inheritance of Joseph's sons.

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. He is King (15:2)
2. More than that, He is God (15:2).
3. He is meek; He doesn't even defend Himself (15:4).
4. His chief enemies are those who should be His chief friends (15:11).
5. He even submitted to being scourged without retaliating (15:15).
6. Furthermore He submitted to mocking and spitting (15:17-20).
7. He fulfilled all prophecies (15:24 & 28).
8. He didn't save Himself; He trusted the Father to do so (15:30).
9. He accepted taunts and insults (15:31 & 32).
10. Even nature testified that He was God (15:33 & 38).
11. He felt crushed and abandoned by the Father because of our sin (15:34).
12. He made access to the Father possible for us (15:38).
13. Even an unbiased Gentile Roman centurion testified that He was God (15:39).
14. Even His burial fulfilled Jewish law (verses 45 & 46).

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Mark 16

Mark 16:1-8, When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him. 2 Very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" 4 Looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was extremely large. 5 Entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed. 6 And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him. 7 But go, tell His disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you.'" 8 They went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

v1: **When the Sabbath was over**---Most people assume (correctly or incorrectly) that this means "when Saturday was over." However, although all Saturdays were Sabbaths, not all Sabbaths were Saturday. There were other Sabbaths such as the High Sabbaths that occurred the first and last days of the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread⁶⁷⁶ which is going on concurrently during this time.

v1: **bought spices**---Many commentaries think this is why they had to wait until the Sabbaths were over because the shops were closed so they couldn't buy spices. However, other verses say they prepared the spices before the Sabbath.⁶⁷⁷ By the way, Nicodemus also **brought spices**.⁶⁷⁸

v1: **so that they might come and anoint Him**---This was the custom of Jewish burials.⁶⁷⁹

v2: **Very early on the first day of the week**---There is zero ambiguity about what is meant by the term "the first day of the week"---it was Sunday.⁶⁸⁰ Notice that "it was still dark" and she saw "the

⁶⁷⁶ Lev 23:5-8, "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. 6 Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. 7 On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. 8 But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work."

⁶⁷⁷ Luke 23:56, Then they [the women] returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

⁶⁷⁸ John 19:39, Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight.

⁶⁷⁹ John 19:41, So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

⁶⁸⁰ John 20:1, Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

stone already taken away from the tomb"---Jesus was already resurrected before she arrived prior to daylight.

v2: **they came to the tomb when the sun had risen**---Mary came before daylight.⁶⁸¹ Then presumably she went and got the other women and they arrived **when the sun had risen**.

v3: **They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"** It was way too heavy for even several women to move.

v4: **they saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was extremely large**---Clearly "someone" very powerful had moved it.⁶⁸²

v5: **Entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe**---They did not realize at first that he was an angel.⁶⁸³

v5 and v6: **they were amazed**---Of course! How often do we see angels?

v6: **He has risen**---Hallelujah!!!!

v7: **But go, tell His disciples and Peter**---Perhaps Peter no longer considered himself a disciple since he had betrayed Jesus⁶⁸⁴ but God wanted him to know that even that had been forgiven.

v7: **He is going ahead of you to Galilee**---Why Galilee rather than Jerusalem? Could it be that the Jews would just have killed Him again? Could it be that He wanted His unbelieving family to see that He was who He claimed to be?

v8: **They went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them**---what a startling message the angel delivered. Notice that angels announced Jesus' resurrection just as they had also announced Jesus' birth.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸¹ John 20:1, Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

⁶⁸² Matt 28:2, ...an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it.

⁶⁸³ John 20:12, she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying.

⁶⁸⁴ Mark 14:72, Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had made the remark to him, "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And he began to weep.

⁶⁸⁵ Luke 2:10-11, But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

[The following verses are not in the earlier manuscripts]

Mark 16:9-13, Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, ¹⁰ She went and reported to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹ When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it.

¹² After that, He appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking along on their way to the country. ¹³ They went away and reported it to the others, but they did not believe them either.

v9: **He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.** ⁶⁸⁶

v9: **When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it**---after all, her statements didn't make sense to them. They were mourning for a dead man. They knew he was dead and they were distraught. They were terrified for their future. Perhaps they too would be arrested and crucified. Furthermore, the testimony of a woman was not believed in that culture.

v12: **After that, He appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking along on their way to the country**---this must have been the Emmaus road. ⁶⁸⁷

v13: **They** [the two on the Emmaus road] **went away and reported it to the others** [the disciples], **but they** [the disciples] **did not believe them** [the two on the Emmaus road] **either**---it was too incredible to believe. Jesus was unquestionably dead.

Mark 16:14-18, Afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen. ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶ He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. ¹⁷ These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

v14: **He appeared to the eleven**---Peter is now part of the group. Boy it must have been a shock to them to have Jesus suddenly appear. All the doors were locked for fear of the Jews⁶⁸⁸ so how did Jesus suddenly materialize?

⁶⁸⁶ Luke 8:1-2, Soon afterwards, He began going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God. The twelve were with Him, 2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out...

⁶⁸⁷ Luke 24:13-15, And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they were talking with each other about all these things which had taken place. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself approached and began traveling with them.

v14: **He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart**---He's chastising His disciples! They were the ones who had followed Him and lived with Him for three years! I certainly hope He never rebukes me like that although I know I certainly deserve it.

v14: **they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen**---we know that He has risen but many people (alas) will not believe our testimony either.

v15: **Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation**---this is the Great Commission. Some people act as if this were His only commission, but He also said the greatest commandment was to love God and to love others. Hopefully we share Jesus with others because we love Him and love them---not in order to earn points with God.

v16: **He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved**---the emphasis is on "believe" in Jesus resulting in salvation. Baptism is a beautiful act of obedience that shows the world that you believe but it does not earn you salvation. This is proven in the next clause:

v16: **he who has disbelieved shall be condemned**---disbelief in Jesus prevents salvation even if the person is baptized.

v17: **These signs will accompany those who have believed**---then He lists some amazing signs. Most of us have not experienced those signs. Could this be because we haven't believed? Could it be because we want these things for our own benefit rather than using them to facilitate His commission?

Mark 16:19-20, So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.

v19: **He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God**---Wow! I don't know what to say because this is so awesome!

v20: **they went out and preached everywhere**---They were confident the Lord would enable them.

v20: **the Lord worked with them**---we are not alone when we are doing the Lord's work.

v20: **confirmed the word by the signs that followed**---He authenticated their work with His signs.

[The following verse is only in much later manuscripts]

⁶⁸⁸ John 20:19, So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

What has God revealed about Himself and His character in this chapter?

1. God sends angels to do what we are unable to do (16:3-5)
2. Jesus was crucified and then rose from the dead for us (16:6)
3. He forgives and restores (16:7)
4. He informs us of His plan and tells us what to do (16:7)
5. He met them on the Emmaus road and expounded the Scriptures (16:12)
6. He reproaches us for unbelief and hardness of heart (16:14)
7. He wants us to preach the Gospel (16:15)
8. He will save us if we believe (16:16)
9. He will allow us to disbelieve and be lost (16:16)
10. He empowers us and gives validating signs (16:17)
11. He returned to Heaven (16:19)
12. He sits at the right hand of the Father (16:19)
13. He works with us (16:20)
14. He confirms His message with signs (16:20)

Now, go back and review this list one at a time and see how each of these truths impacts our lives.

Conclusion

What an incredible book! The Gospel of Mark is clearly “God breathed” and clearly shows us Jesus as “The Son of Man” and also as “The Son of God.”

No one who truly understands this book can help but love Jesus and be awed by His demonstrated love for us.

May God through His Spirit open our eyes to see who He really is. Amen.

Appendix 1---Miracles in the Book of Mark

The Book of Mark is a book of Miracles. Mark was awed by Jesus' power to do these miracles. They were signs that validated His authority that He had from the Father. One of my questions is, "can we do these miracles too?" ⁶⁸⁹

Scripture	Miracles
1:11	Jesus was baptized in the Holy Spirit. This was validated by the Father's voice from heaven saying, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."
1:13	Angels ministered to Jesus.
1:25-26	He rebuked a man with an unclean spirit and it came out of him.
1:31	He healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law.
1:32-34	He "healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak."
1:39	"He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons."
1:40	He touched and healed a leper.
2:3-12	He forgave sins and healed a paralytic.
2:8	He knew unspoken thoughts.
3:1-5	He healed a man's withered hand.
3:10	He healed many "with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him."
4:39	He calmed the wind and the sea.
5:1-13	He cast out thousands of demons from the crazy man "Legion." They went into the swine and drowned.
5:25-34	He healed the woman who had the issue of blood for 14 years.
5:35-43	He raised Jairus' daughter from the dead.
6:5	He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.
6:13	He gave authority to His disciples and "they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them."
6:38-44	He fed five thousand men with just five loaves and two fish.
6:48	He walked on water.
6:51	He calmed the wind.
6:53	He teleported them to their destination (John 6:21, "...immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.")

⁶⁸⁹ John 14:12-14, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. ¹³ "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it."

6:55-56	"...and as many as touched it [the fringe of His cloak] were being cured."
7:25-30	He healed the Syrophoenician woman's daughter (a gentile).
7:32-35	He healed the deaf and mute man.
8:4-9	He fed four thousand men with seven loaves and a few fish.
8:22-26	He heals a blind man who saw men "as trees walking."
9:2-8	He was transfigured along with Moses and Elijah.
9:7	Father God validates Jesus by saying, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!"
9:17-27	He healed the boy who was demon possessed and foaming at the mouth. He raised him from the dead.
10:32-34	He revealed the future.
10:46-52	He healed blind Bartimaeus.
11:2-7	He knew things no man could know.
11:7	He rode an unbroken colt without getting bucked off.
11:12-14	He cursed the fig tree and it withered.
12:13	He was wiser than the Pharisee, the Herodians, the Sadducees and the scribes.
13:2	He prophesied the destruction of the Temple.
13:5-7	He prophesied the Tribulation.
13:23	He said, "I have told you everything in advance."
13:27	He prophesied Armageddon.
13:27	He prophesied the Rapture.
14:12-16	He knew things no mere man could know.
14:18	He knew who was going to betray Him.
14:27	He knew who was going to abandon Him.
14:47	He healed a cut off ear.
16:6	He resurrected!
16:12	He walked on the Emmaus road with two disciples.
16:14	He materialized in a locked room.
16:19	He was "received into Heaven and sat down at the right hand of God."

Appendix 2---Questions for Teachers and Preachers

I'm excited that you are thinking of leading us through the book of Mark. This could be a high point in the growth and maturity of the church.

Even though Mark is short (it can be read in about an hour), it has a lot of depth and impact. I recommend that you tell the congregation that you plan to cover the book of Mark and suggest to them that they read it all the way through a couple of times to get the big picture.

I have several questions for you to consider:

- Are you going to preach from it or are you going to teach from it? [teach, I hope]
- Are you going to go verse by verse---even through the difficult sections? [Yes?]
- Are you going to bring in parallel verses from the other gospels?
- Are you going to go into the many quotes from the Old Testament that are referenced in Mark?
- Are you going to go into the many prophecies from the Old Testament that are fulfilled in Mark?
- Are you going to contrast John the Baptist's teaching (repentance and baptizing with water) versus Jesus' teaching (belief and baptism with the Holy Spirit) (1:8)?
- What is the core of Jesus' teaching in the book of Mark?
- What is the overall purpose of the book of Mark?
- What was the purpose of the many recorded miracles? (see Appendix 1)
- Can we really expect such dramatic healings today?
- The disciples (even the twelve) had no clue what He was saying because of "hardness of their hearts." (Mk 6:52; 8:17; 10:5; 16:14) How does this relate to us?
- Are there "unclean spirits" today? (Mk 1:23,26; 3:30; 5:2,8; 7:25; 9:17,20,25(2x)). What can we do about them?
- Why did Jesus repeatedly command them not to reveal who He was? (Eg: 3:12, 5:43)
- Why were the Jews angry that he made a man whole (3:6)?
- How come the list of apostles (3:16-19) is different in Mark than in other gospels? Is the Bible wrong? [No]
- Why did Jesus speak in parables? Wasn't that unfair? (Eg: 4:10-12)
- In the parable of the sower (4:3-8, 13-20), which category do we fit in?
- Is it fair for God to enlighten some but not others (4:12 and 4:25)?
- In 4:30 He says the mustard seed is the tiniest seed---not so. He says it makes a tall tree---not so. How do you deal with this inconsistency?
- Do we have the same resources as Jesus since He was 100% man?

- Were there 2000 demons in the man “Legion” (5:13)? There were 2000 swine. A legion consists of 3000-6000 soldiers.
- If we saw Jesus do a miracle, would we implore Him to go away? (5:17)
- Why couldn’t Jesus do any miracles in His own home town? (6:5)
- Why did Jesus’ disciples preach to people that they should repent (6:12)? Isn’t this the same message that John the Baptist was preaching? Aren’t we now under grace---not works? [Clue: the New Covenant was not yet inaugurated since Jesus was not yet resurrected.]
- Why is the story of John the Baptist’s beheading (6:14-29) given so much space?
- Also why is that story wedged in the middle of the story of Jesus’ disciples being sent out two by two? (6:7-12 and 6:30)
- Why were the disciples’ hearts hardened (6:52; 8:17)? Are our’s?
- Beautiful encouragement to live by in 6:50: "Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid."
- Do we substitute the traditions of man for the commands of God (7:7, 9, 13)?
- What things proceed from our hearts (7:21-23)?
- Jesus asks a crucial question in 8:18: “Do you not remember?” This is our problem too. The word “remember” is used 168 times in the Bible since it so important.
- In 8:29 Peter answers: “You are **the** Christ.” “**The** Messiah.” [definite article]
- In 8:31 Jesus’ refers to Himself as “the Son of Man.” Why? Isn’t He the Son of God? The term “son of man” is used 195 times in the Bible (14 times in Mark). The term “son of God” is used 43 times in the Bible of which only three of those are in Mark.
- Do we set our minds on man’s interests---not God’s (8:33)?
- Are we ashamed of Jesus “in this adulterous and sinful generation” (8:38)?
- What does Jesus mean by “the kingdom of God” (9:1)?
- Why were Moses and Elijah with Jesus at the transfiguration (9:4)?
- What would happen if we really listened to Jesus’ words as God commands us to do (9:7)?
- And Jesus said to him, "All things are possible to him who believes" (9:23). Really? All?
- Do demons really exist? Can we cast out evil spirits? (eg: 9:14-29)
- In 9:43 it talks about being cast “into Hell, the unquenchable fire.” What is the Biblical teaching on Hell [actually the word is “Hades”---the translation from Hebrew for “Sheol”---the temporary resting place of the dead since at the time Jesus spoke He had not yet been risen (He was the first fruits of the dead, 1 Cor 15:20, 22-23)---remember Lazarus “slept”]
- What did Jesus say about divorce (10:2-12)? Is this applicable today? In our culture?
- “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (10:17) Do we **do** anything? What?
- In 11:15 and in Matthew 21:12 (near the end of His ministry) Jesus clears the money changers from the temple. However, in John 2:15 (near the beginning of His ministry) Jesus clears the money changers from the temple. How do we resolve this discrepancy?
- Why did Jesus curse the fig tree? (11:13, 21) What does it represent?
- In 12:12 the Jews understood that Jesus spoke the parable against them yet they were not repentant and they refused to believe. Are we sometimes the same?
- In 12:28-24, the concept of love is clearly taught from Old Testament quotes.

- "...they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on." (12:44). We have been blessed with so much surplus. Should we not return at least 10% to the Lord?
- In 13:5-37 He foretells the end days. Therefore, what should we be doing (13:35)?
- In 14:25 Jesus says "I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Therefore, if Jesus has drunk wine here on earth and He is also going to drink wine in Heaven, is it wrong for us to enjoy it here?
- In 14:62 Jesus says: "I AM."
- Why did Jesus say in 15:33, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"
- What is the significance of the temple veil being torn in two from top to bottom (15:38)?
- Verses 9-20 in chapter 16 are not in the original. Why not?