

Dear Church Family,

I am so excited you are joining us for the “Follow Me” study!

A while back someone told me they grew up as a “CEO Christian.” Huh? “Christmas and Easter Only” they explained. I began reflecting on all they miss out on if they only come to church twice a year. All they hear about is Christ’s birth, death, and resurrection. They miss out on the Life of Jesus! I don’t want you to miss out on that! It is so important and inspiring. That’s why I am so excited that you will join us for “the stuff in the middle.”

From Christmas until Easter, the C3 Family will study the gospel of Mark (2nd book in the New Testament, but the first gospel written), tracing the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. What did he teach? What did he do? Why did he do it? What does it all mean? In particular, we will study what Jesus invites us to do: “Follow Me.” What does that mean? What does it look like in today’s world?

The studies in this book will correspond with the preaching at C3 on Sundays. We invite you to join us for worship on Sunday morning and discuss these questions with a life group during the week. This book will help you reflect, dig deeper, discuss with others, and apply what you learn to your life.

If you would like information on joining a life group, please email Sue at suem@c3milpitas.org. She would love to help you connect!

I pray this will be a season of deep spiritual growth for you as you seek to respond to the Lord’s invitation: “Follow Me!”

Matt Robbins

Senior Pastor, Christ Community Church of Milpitas (C3)

Follow Me: Week 1

Jesus by the River

Mark 1:1-13

OPEN

1. Welcome anyone new to your group and get to know one another.
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Using information from the sermon, your own knowledge, or your Bible's introduction to Mark, answer the 5 questions below:
 - a. Who? What do we know about Mark?
 - b. What? What type of book is Mark?
 - c. When? When was it written?
 - d. Where? Who is the audience?
 - e. Why? What is the purpose of Mark?
5. Read Mark 1:1-3
The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God,² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:
*"I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way"—*
³*"a voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.'"*
6. Some of your Bibles will say "the beginning of the **gospel**" rather than "**good news**" in verse 1. What is the difference between "**the**" gospel and "**a**" gospel? Which is Mark using here?

7. How does Mark describe Jesus in verse 1? Remember that he is writing to the Christians in Rome. What do you know about Romans and their gods that would support Mark's strong statement?
8. The quote in verses 2 and 3 comes from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3. Both Old Testament prophets are speaking about John the Baptist and Jesus who would live hundreds of years after them. What is Mark announcing about this prophecy?

9. Read Mark 1:4-8

⁴And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

10. What is John the Baptist doing to prepare the way for Jesus?
11. What do these verses tell us about the situation Israel and the world were in and what kind of King they would need?

12. Read Mark 1:9-13

⁹At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

¹²At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, ¹³and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

13. What happened at Jesus' baptism?
14. The quote in verse 11 comes from Psalm 2 and Isaiah 42:1-4. Read those two passages aloud. How do they together describe Jesus as both the King of Kings and the suffering servant?

REFLECT AND PRAY

15. In question 11, we discussed the ways in which Israel needed Jesus, the King of Kings. How is our present world also stuck or captive, in need of a Messiah? Have you experienced this yourself?
16. God looked at Jesus and said, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." What is it like for you to recognize that God looks at you the same way? Can you imagine him seeing you as you are in Jesus Christ? What would it mean for you to hear God say that to you?
17. What will you take with you from the study this week?
18. Close with a time of prayer. You might have each person in the group share both a praise and a prayer, with a focus on your identity as a child of the King.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 2

Jesus in Capernaum

Mark 1:14-2:12

OPEN

1. What is an important characteristic of someone who follows Jesus?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Read Mark 1:14-20

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. ²⁰Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

5. What does Jesus announce in verse 15? What is the core message of the "good news"?
6. In verses 16-20, Jesus calls his first disciples. For Simon and Andrew as well as James and John, what training have they had to become

disciples of Jesus? Is there a test Jesus uses to determine whether they are qualified to be disciples?

7. If Jesus hadn't already trained and tested Simon, Andrew, James and John before calling them, what must be true about Jesus' belief in their ability to be his disciples? What do they need to do?
8. Instead of testing them, what does Jesus ask them to do in verse 17? In that same verse, what does he say he will do for the men?
9. Read the following sections from Mark 1, stopping after each to answer the questions below.
 - Verses 21-28
 - Verses 29-34
 - Verses 35-39
 - Verses 40-45
 - a. What is the miracle?
 - b. What does this miracle tell us about Jesus' power? What specifically does he have power to control?
 - c. Is there anything else you learned from these verses?
10. After hundreds of years of silence following Malachi, Jesus is teaching in the synagogue. What amazed the people? What has changed?

11. Read Mark 2:1-12

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ² They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

⁶ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷ “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸ Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? ¹⁰ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the man, ¹¹ “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” ¹² He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

12. The friends of the paralyzed man took him to Jesus. How were they demonstrating their faith as followers of Jesus? How are their actions different from how we might expect Christians to behave now?
13. How did Jesus respond to the paralyzed man and his friends?
14. Jesus “knew in his spirit” what the teachers of the law were thinking. What did he mean by his question in verse 9?

REFLECT AND PRAY

15. We saw in 1:16-20 that Jesus asked the men to follow him and also said that he would make them fishers of men. What does this mean for us as we follow him? Are we required to do something spectacular before we can follow Jesus?
16. As you have followed Jesus, what has changed about you? How are your thoughts, actions and speech imitating his?
17. Is there something in your life that distracts you from following Jesus? Is there something you can do about that distraction?

18. The friends carrying the paralytic man were very bold and creative. Is there some area of life where you believe God might be calling you to be bold and creative in your faith?
19. In the scriptures we read today, we saw multiple instances of Jesus healing. We all have places where we need healing (spiritual, physical, emotional, relational). Share an example of one you have brought before Jesus. What was the experience like?
20. You might consider setting aside prayer time for those in your group to pray for the healing they need. Alternately, you could form groups of two or three and pray for one another.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 3

Jesus in the Synagogue

Mark 2:13-3:6

OPEN

1. What parts of Jesus' teaching and following him are easy to adopt? What parts are harder?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Read Mark 2:13-14
¹³Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. ¹⁴As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.
5. In these two verses, Jesus calls Levi (also known as Matthew, who wrote the gospel of Matthew) to follow him. Pastor Matt called this an act of grace. Why is this grace? Consider Levi's occupation and the common beliefs about tax collectors.

Now we will look at four arguments that the Pharisees, "teachers of the law", make against Jesus' decision to call Levi to follow him.

6. Read Mark 2:15-17 (Argument #1 – the company)
¹⁵While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶When the teachers of the law who were

Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹⁷ On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

7. Where is Jesus having dinner and who are the other guests?
8. Why do the Pharisees object to this celebration and the company Jesus keeps?
9. What do they believe about tax collectors? Who receives the taxes they collect?
10. What question do the Pharisees ask the disciples? How does Jesus answer?

11. Read Mark 2:18-22 (Argument #2 – fasting)

¹⁸ Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, “How is it that John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?”

¹⁹ Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. ²⁰ But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.

²¹ “No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. ²² And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.”

- 18 As they did with many aspects of the law, the Pharisees thought more fasting showed their holiness. Jesus was emphasizing the

motive behind the fasting. What point is Jesus making with the illustrations of the wedding feast and the wineskins?

19 Read Mark 2:23-28 (Argument #3 – Sabbath)

²³ One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. ²⁴ The Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?”

²⁵ He answered, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? ²⁶ In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.”

²⁷ Then he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

20 The Pharisees were known for taking a law and making it more and more strict. Why were they objecting to the actions of his disciples?

21 How did Jesus answer their objections? What did he mean when he said, “The Sabbath was made for man”? Who was meant to benefit from a Sabbath? How would they benefit?

22 Read Mark 3:1-6 (Argument #4 – healing on the Sabbath)

Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. ² Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. ³ Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, “Stand up in front of everyone.”

⁴ Then Jesus asked them, “Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they remained silent.

⁵ He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. ⁶ Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

- 23 What did the Pharisees hope to see in the synagogue? Why was it important to them?
- 24 Why did Jesus ask the questions in verse 4? What point was he making with the Pharisees?
- 25 How did the Pharisees respond in verses 5-6? What is ironic about their scheming with the Herodians? (Hint: Why were they upset that Jesus called Levi?)

REFLECT AND PRAY

- 26 The Pharisees liked rules. Jesus was showing them by his actions that he was focused on relationships. Consider what we learn about Jesus in the gospels. What does he teach us about our relationships with others?
- 27 Share a specific example of a transformation in a relationship in your life caused by your relationship with Jesus.
- 28 Is there an area where you need to stretch and grow in your compassion for and relationship with people?

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 4

Jesus by the Sea

Mark 3:13-4:34

OPEN

1. Check in and share a high point and a low point from your week. How might you follow Jesus in the midst of this?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Jesus has stepped into a world with many conflicts and tensions. These include political, racial and economic tensions. There are also tensions caused by differing values and practices. Name as many of these conflicts or tensions as you can.
5. Crowds often gather around Jesus, trying to test him, to see if he will take sides. What are some examples of this we have already seen in Mark?
6. Read Mark 3:20-35

²⁰ Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. ²¹ When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

²² And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons."

²³ So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. ²⁷ In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man’s house. ²⁸ Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.”

He said this because they were saying, “He has an impure spirit.”

³¹ Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. ³² A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.”

³³ “Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked.

³⁴ Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”

7. In this passage, Jesus continues to behave in ways that are outside expectations. This causes his family to want to “take charge of him”. What are their concerns? What do you think they want to do?
8. What is the accusation made by the teachers of the law?
9. Jesus answers with a parable. Who is the strong man? Who is the robber? What is the plunder?
10. If we are held captive by Satan, we live in his world. What does that mean we are surrounded by?

11. When Jesus frees us, we enter his world. What are we now surrounded by?
12. At the end of the passage, in verses 34-35, who does Jesus declare to be his family? This doesn't mean that our biological family can't be part of our spiritual family. Instead, it means that we have a huge spiritual family which loves us.

REFLECT AND PRAY

13. What does it look like for you to follow Jesus in a way that is counter cultural in your relationships?
14. Does following Jesus cause you to be counter cultural with your time and treasure? Give some examples.
15. Jesus is even challenging family loyalty with his words and actions. Have you run into situations where your identity as a believer has caused conflict within your family? How do you handle that?

Bonus Study (if time allows, or you can do at home)

16. Read Mark 4:1-20
Where do you see yourself in this parable. Now, or in the past, what type of seed are you? Have you seen a progression in your life? It's also possible that you are one type of seed in certain circumstances.
17. Read Mark 4:22-25
What is the purpose of a lamp? With an oil lamp, what happens when the oil runs out? If we are to be a light to those around us, we also have to be filled up. What are some things that fill you up so that you can be a light to those around you?
18. Read Mark 4:30-34
How is the power of a mustard seed described? If this tiny seed represents God's Kingdom, what is Jesus telling us? We are part of this kingdom being built.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 5

Jesus on the Other Side of the Sea

Mark 5:1-43

OPEN

1. As you feel comfortable, share about a situation in your life that felt hopeless and how you emerged from it.
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Read Mark 5:1-20

They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. ² When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³ This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴ For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. ⁷ He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" ⁸ For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!"

⁹ Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

“My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.”¹⁰ And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

¹¹ A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. ¹² The demons begged Jesus, “Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.” ¹³ He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

¹⁴ Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. ¹⁵ When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ¹⁶ Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. ¹⁷ Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

¹⁸ As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹ Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” ²⁰ So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

5. Describe everything we know about the demon-possessed man.
 - a. Where did he live?
 - b. How was he treated by his community?
 - c. What does the name he gave tell us about the extent of his torment?
 - d. In what ways is this man an outsider?
6. Read Mark 5:21-24 and then 35-43 (We will return to 25-34)
7. Describe everything known about Jairus and his daughter.
 - a. What is Jairus’ standing in his community?

- b. In spite of Jairus' position, why might he still feel desperate and hopeless?
- c. How does the bleeding woman interrupt Jesus and Jairus? What happens during the time Jesus is interacting with the woman?
- d. In verse 35, what message does some of Jairus' men bring to him?
- e. How does Jesus respond?
- f. When they arrive at the house, do the people there have any hope?

8. Read Mark 5:25-34

²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

³¹ "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

9. Describe everything we know about the bleeding woman.
- a. What is her situation?
 - b. Describe her suffering.

- c. As a bleeding woman at that time, what would her life have been like?
 - d. How is this woman an outsider?
10. Now look at the three stories together.
- a. In each case, what did the onlookers expect to happen?
 - b. Why were they surprised?
 - c. What does Jesus' actions say about the people he healed?
 - d. How did he heal them? Did he announce that they were healed from a distance, as he definitely could have? Was he reluctant to approach them?
 - e. How does Jesus' actions teach onlookers, give them hope, and correct their assumptions?

REFLECT AND PRAY

11. Are there things in your life that you think are beyond God's ability to heal and no longer worth praying about? Do you believe God no longer cares about those areas needing healing?
12. Do you need to make an adjustment in how you see those around you who appear to be on the "outside?" How can you see them as God sees them?
13. What do you need to be freed from in order to have hope again?
14. End your time by playing the song *Clean* by Natalie Grant.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

FOLLOW ME: Week 6

Jesus in the Villages

Mark 6:1-56

OPEN

1. Ask those in the group to share about a time when their plans were interrupted and how they responded.
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Take turns as a group and read through all of Chapter 6 aloud. This chapter is about Jesus sending his disciples. We will look at three aspects of discipleship that Jesus teaches his disciples.

The Rhythm of Discipleship

5. Mark began with Jesus calling his disciples. In Mark 1:16-20, Jesus called Simon (Peter), Andrew, James and John. He continued to call his disciples until Mark 3:13-19, when he gathered the twelve and designated them as apostles, which means "sent ones".
6. In Mark 6:6b, Jesus takes the disciples with him as he moves around, teaching. Then what does Jesus do?
7. What do we learn in Mark 6:12-13 about what the disciples did?
8. Think about being one of these disciples. What do you imagine they were thinking and feeling about their experience of going out and doing these things?

9. After some time passed, what do the disciples do in Mark 6:30-32? Why does Jesus send them to a solitary place?
10. We are seeing the beginning of a rhythm of discipleship that Jesus is teaching. Describe what this rhythm looks like.

The Risk of Discipleship

11. In Mark 6:8-11, we learn about some of the risks of discipleship. What were the risks Jesus asked his disciples to take?
12. What do Jesus' instructions to his disciples tell us about the kind of ministry they were to have?
13. In what ways can going out to make an impact feel risky today?
14. Do you always feel prepared for the interactions you have with people that center around faith?

The Reward of Discipleship

15. We read in Mark 6:12-13 about what the disciples were able to accomplish the very first time they were sent out. They also report to Jesus in 6:30. What were they able to do?
16. What had Jesus given them that enabled them to do these things?
17. What were they able to experience and witness because they overcame their doubts and went out as apostles?

REFLECT AND PRAY

18. Jesus taught a rhythm of discipleship that includes the importance of sitting with him and soaking in his presence. Then we go out to have an impact on others.
 - a. What happens if those two practices are out of balance?
 - b. Is one of those practices easier for you? Is the other one harder?
 - c. Do you feel challenged to grow in one of these areas?

19. What specifically do you do when you are sitting with Jesus? What fills you up?

20. Do you know someone who lives this balance well? What do you see them doing?

21. Are there actions you feel are risky in your own discipleship? What are a few?

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 7

Jesus on the Road to Jerusalem

Mark 9 and 10

OPEN

1. If your house were on fire, what three items would you try to save?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. In the opening question, you thought about what three things you would take from your house if there was a fire. At a time like that, how would you make decisions? What is your motivation?
5. We are moving forward in Mark toward the events in Jerusalem. During this time, Jesus continues to teach. This week, we will study the idea of a divided heart.
6. Read Mark 9:14-29, the full story of the demon-possessed boy. Then go back and look at verses 21-24.
²¹ Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered. ²² "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."
²³ "If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."
²⁴ Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"
7. What is the situation? How is the father feeling?

8. What is happening in the exchange between Jesus and the boy's father in verses 23-24? What is Jesus questioning?
9. What is Jesus saying about the father's divided heart? What is the father recognizing about his belief?
10. Read Mark 9:33-35

³³ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all."
11. As they were walking along as a group, Jesus heard what was being discussed. When Jesus asked them what they were arguing about, they were silent. Why were they silent? How do you think they were feeling?
12. They had divided hearts, wanting Jesus and _____. How do you imagine they might fill in that blank?
13. Read Mark 10:1-12

Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them.

² Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

³ "What did Moses command you?" he replied.

⁴ They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away."

⁵ "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. ⁶ "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' ⁷ 'For this reason a man will leave his father

and mother and be united to his wife,⁸ and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh.⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

¹⁰ When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. ¹¹ He answered, “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. ¹² And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.”

14. The Pharisees are challenging Jesus’ opinion on divorce. Rather than arguing law, Jesus speaks about the covenant of marriage. What does he say?

15. Marriage is a beautiful expression of commitment, but it can also be a challenge. For those who are married, would you agree that at times, you are challenged to grow, even after years of marriage, to be a better spouse? What are areas that can need growth?

16. Read Mark 10:17-25

¹⁷As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁸ “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”

²⁰ “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

²¹ Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

²² At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

²³ Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

²⁴ The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “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 someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

17. What kind of answer do you think the ruler might have been expecting from Jesus? What was Jesus’ message to him?

REFLECT AND PRAY

18. If we don’t want a divided heart, but want Jesus, what would you be disappointed to be without?
19. If you are married, look back at Mark 9:24, *“I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”* Do you ever think, “I love my spouse and hold to my covenant, but help me with my heart that looks for escape?” Is there something your group can pray about for you?
20. If Jesus were to evaluate your life, what would he say holds you back from being totally committed to God?
21. Lift up these requests and concerns for each person in your group.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 8
Jesus in the Upper Room
Mark 14:1-25

OPEN

1. Share about a really special meal you have had. What made it special?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. This week, we are jumping ahead in the story a little to talk about Communion. Next week, we will go back to Mark 11.
5. Read Mark 14:1-2
Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. ² "But not during the festival," they said, "or the people may riot."
6. Consider the meaning of Passover for Israel (Exodus 12). What are they celebrating?
7. Why are the chief priests and teachers of the law scheming to kill Jesus?
8. We are going to look at three types of "breaking" in this passage and how they relate to one another.

The Breaking of a Jar by Mary

9. Read Mark 14:3-9

³While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. ⁴Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? ⁵It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly. ⁶"Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷The poor you will always have with you and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. ⁸She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. ⁹Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

10. John 12:3 tells us that the woman in these verses is Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus. What does she do?
11. Many of the guests are shocked at the extravagance displayed. Consider something worth a year's wages being used like this, rather than given to someone in need or being invested. Can you understand their shock and objections?
12. How does Jesus react?
13. Look for words in this passage that are very similar to those we use during Communion. What do you notice?

The Breaking of Trust by Judas

14. Read Mark 14:10-21

¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. ¹¹ They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over. ¹² On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" ¹³ So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. ¹⁴ Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' ¹⁵ He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." ¹⁶ The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. ¹⁷ When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. ¹⁸ While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me." ¹⁹ They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely you don't mean me?" ²⁰ "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who dips bread into the bowl with me. ²¹ The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

15. Consider the value Mary placed on Jesus compared to the value Judas placed on Jesus. Remember that Judas was among those who criticized Mary for her extravagance.

16. Thinking back to last week's study, how do you see evidence of a divided heart here?

The Breaking of Bread

17. Read Mark 14:22-25

22 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." 23 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. 25 "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

18. As Jesus says these words, what does he know about betrayal by Judas, Peter and the rest of the disciples? What will happen in the coming days?

REFLECT AND PRAY

19. Why is the betrayal of a friend so much harder? (See Psalm 55)
Have you been betrayed by someone close?

20. What about each of us individually? How are you broken?

21. We know that in a very short time, there will be a 4th breaking, the breaking of Jesus' own body, the pouring out of his blood because of his amazing love for each of us. How does the context of the first three breakings inform your understanding of the 4th breaking?

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 9

Jesus in the Temple

Mark 11-13

OPEN

1. How did Jesus show his love for God? How can we follow his example?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Read Mark 12:1-12

*Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. ²At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. ³But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. ⁵He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. ⁶"He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.'
⁷"But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'
⁸So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. ⁹"What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰Haven't you read this passage of Scripture:*

*“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
¹¹ the Lord has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”*

¹² Then the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.

5. If you look back in Mark 11:27-33, you see the religious leaders challenging Jesus’ authority. Then Jesus tells them this parable in chapter 12. What does Mark 12:12 say about what the religious leaders understand? With that understanding, what do they plan?
6. Identify all the parts of the allegory:
 - a. Who planted the vineyard?
 - b. What did the vineyard represent?
 - c. Who are the tenants who are supposed to be caring for the crop?
 - d. Who are the servants, sent to the vineyard by the owner?
 - e. Why were the servants sent?
 - f. Who is the son, sent last after the servants were killed?
7. Overall, what is the message of the parable?
8. What was it that was so important to the vineyard owner that he was willing to lose his servants and eventually his son in the process of retrieving it?
9. Read Mark 12:28-34

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ 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: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”³² “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.³³ To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

10. What is the most important commandment? The second most important?

11. This is the fruit Jesus wants to see in us. Why is God willing to sacrifice so much to see this in us?

12. Read Philippians 2:1-4

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

13. How does this passage explain loving your neighbor as yourself?

REFLECT AND PRAY

14. Review the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*
Is there a particular one that represents an area where you would like to grow?

15. How about the command to love your neighbor as yourself. How is that a challenge for you?

16. Take time to pray for one another about these areas where you would like to grow.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 10

Jesus in the Garden

Mark 14:27-52

OPEN

1. How did you handle failure when you first began to follow Jesus? Did you have higher expectations of yourself because of your faith?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Read Mark 14:27-31
²⁷ "You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered."²⁸ But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."²⁹ Peter declared, "Even if all fall away, I will not."³⁰ "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times."³¹ But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.
5. Consider the fact that Jesus knows all of the coming events, but he is intent on preparing the disciples. What is he telling the disciples they will all do? Why do you think he is telling them this?
6. How do you imagine the disciples feel about this declaration from Jesus?

7. What is Peter's response the first time Jesus predicts what he will do? What is his reply the second time Jesus tells him what will happen?
8. What does Jesus remind them of in verse 28? Can you imagine how difficult all of this is for them to take in?
9. Read Mark 14:32-42
³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." ³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." ³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹ Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him. ⁴¹ Returning the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"
10. Look back in verses 17-26 to remind yourself of what had taken place just before these passages. How do you suppose the disciples are feeling?
11. What do you see in Jesus in verses 33-34? Does this surprise you? What do you imagine it is like for Peter, James and John to experience this with Jesus?
12. What is happening in verses 35-36?

13. Jesus goes back to the disciples to find them sleeping. How many times does this happen?

14. Read Mark 14:43-52

⁴³ Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." ⁴⁵ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁴⁶ The men seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁴⁷ Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸ "Am I leading a rebellion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." ⁵⁰ Then everyone deserted him and fled. ⁵¹ A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, ⁵² he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

15. The time comes for Judas' betrayal of Jesus and his arrest. What do all the disciples do in this moment?

16. What do we know about the relationship between the disciples (other than Judas) and Jesus after the resurrection? How is this an encouragement for you?

REFLECT AND PRAY

17. Jesus can fully understand each of us and the hardships that we go through. He has suffered deeply and can empathize with our pain. Have you ever been able to empathize with someone else's pain and comfort them because of your own similar experience?

18. At the beginning of the passages we looked at today, Jesus said all the disciples would fall away. Even though they had been with Jesus for some time, watched him perform miracles and learned from him, they ran away. How does this help you show compassion towards the failure of other Christians? How about compassion for your own failures?

19. Close your group time with prayer.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 11

Jesus on Trial

Mark 14:53-15:15

OPEN

1. Have you ever hidden your faith because you feared the opinion of others?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Read Mark 14:53-54
⁵³ They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together. ⁵⁴ Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire.
5. In this section of Mark 14, the story separates into two scenes. Jesus is taken upstairs to face the high priest. Peter stays downstairs near the fire in the courtyard. We will stay with Peter's story and then come back to the upstairs story with Jesus.
6. What does verse 54 say that Peter does? What do his actions tell you about how he is feeling? Why do you think he follows at a distance and then went into the courtyard rather than follow Jesus upstairs?
7. Read Mark 14:66-72
⁶⁶ While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. ⁶⁷ When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. "You also were with that Nazarene,

Jesus,” she said. ⁶⁸ But he denied it. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said, and went out into the entryway. ⁶⁹ When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, “This fellow is one of them.” ⁷⁰ Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” ⁷¹ He began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know this man you’re talking about.” ⁷² Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

8. Downstairs, Peter is questioned by a servant girl and then others. How does he answer their questions? What did he physically do as the questions became more forceful?
9. After the rooster crows for the second time, what does Peter realize? What does he do?
10. When have you, like Peter, wept over revealed sin in your life?
11. How do you see yourself in Peter’s story?
12. Read Mark 14:55-65

⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. ⁵⁶ Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. ⁵⁷ Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: ⁵⁸ “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.’” ⁵⁹ Yet even then their testimony did not agree. ⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” ⁶¹ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” ⁶² “I am,” said Jesus. “And you

will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”⁶³ The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. ⁶⁴ “You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?” They all condemned him as worthy of death. ⁶⁵ Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

13. Upstairs, Jesus was questioned and accused. How did Jesus respond in verses 55-59?
14. When asked by the high priest, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”, Jesus did answer. What did he say?
(If you have time, look up the three scriptures this quote comes from: Exodus 3:14, Psalm 110, Daniel 7:13-14)
15. How did the high priest respond?

REFLECT AND PRAY

16. We all have failures in our faith journey. It’s important to realize that this is not all of Peter’s story. He recognizes his sin here and feels great remorse. His story of restitution and changed behavior come later. His speech at Pentecost in Acts 2 is one example.
17. At the time when the rooster crowed and Peter realized what he had done, do you think he believed he could be forgiven?
18. Do you believe you can be forgiven for your worst moments or actions?
19. Read Isaiah 53:1-7 as a conclusion.
Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
² He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

⁴ Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Follow Me: Week 12
On the Cross, Out of the Tomb
Mark 15:16-16:8

OPEN

1. Who is Jesus to you?
2. Open your group time with prayer.
3. Share something that stood out to you from Sunday's sermon.

DISCUSS

4. Read Mark 15:16-32

¹⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹ A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"). ²³ Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

²⁵ It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

²⁷ They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself!" ³² Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

5. Read Mark 15:33-39

³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). ³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah." ³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said. ³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. ³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

6. Other gospels record more of what Jesus said while on the cross. Mark chose to record only one phrase, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" This is Aramaic and means "My God my God, why have you forsaken me?" This phrase is from Psalm 22, The Psalm of the Cross. How does this phrase capture the suffering Jesus endured for our sake?
7. What happens in verse 38? The curtain in the temple separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple room. Who was able to go

into the Holy of Holies? What does the tearing of the curtain symbolize? Why do you think it was torn from top to bottom? What did Jesus' death make possible? If you have time now or on your own later, read through Hebrews 9. It gives a wonderful explanation of this.

8. At the end of this passage, who recognized who Jesus actually was? Why is this meaningful?
9. Israel had waited centuries for the Messiah to come and rescue them. Jesus didn't initially appear to be that Messiah. He wasn't a warrior in the typical sense. What does it mean to you, now, that Jesus is the Messiah?
10. Read Mark 16:1-8

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ²Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" ⁸Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

REFLECT AND PRAY

11. Why did the angel appear to these women in particular? What mission was given them?
12. In verse 7, the angel told the women to tell the disciples and then included the phrase “and Peter.” Why was this additional phrase added? Wasn’t Peter one of the disciples?
13. The oldest manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark end after the words, “they were afraid.” It is such an abrupt ending that some theorize that the scroll must have been torn at this point and the ending was lost. Others suggest that this abrupt ending was intentional. What do you think?
14. If the abrupt ending was intentional, why? What affect might it have on a reader?
15. Who do you want to share this story with?
16. Do you ever shrink back from telling people about Jesus because you are afraid?
17. How will you overcome your fear and fulfill your mission?

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

NOTES AND PRAYER REQUESTS