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MARK 1–7

BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

LES BRIDGEMAN

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Mark 1–7: Bible Study Lessons, PDF

BibleBridge: Bible Study Lessons

Academic Bible Studies with a Devotional Emphasis for ages 14 and up

bible-bridge.com

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Cover design by Sam Pitts

They were terrified and asked each other,
“Who is this?
Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Mark 4:41

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible is the world's best-selling book and its ideas have influenced millions of people throughout the centuries. Therefore, the Bible deserves our attention, both mentally and emotionally.

But understanding the Bible requires effort and assistance. The books of the Bible were written in ancient Hebrew and Greek 2,000–3,000 years ago. If effort and help is needed to understand Charles Dickens who wrote in English 100 years ago, how much more so with the Bible? This guide has been written to help readers understand the Bible and engage with its contents on an intellectual and emotional level.

These lessons are for you if you are looking for the following:

- an intellectual *and* devotional study of Mark 1–7,
- interpretation challenges, including translation issues, addressed honestly and kept in perspective,
- interaction with other parts of Scripture (Old and New Testament),
- exposure to different views, without indoctrination on the one right view, and
- personal questions to engage the heart.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Mark 1–7: Bible Study Lessons is an intellectual and devotional exploration of the first seven chapters of Mark's Gospel incorporating insights from history, ancient literature, and famous works of art. Readers will wrestle with difficult questions of interpretation and reflect creatively on the meaning of Mark's Gospel for their own lives. This in-depth self-study course includes 33 lessons, 4 quizzes, 2 tests, and an answer key.

Lessons usually include a brief review of a concept or fact found in the previous lesson, questions to be answered, and comments on specific verses. **Bold superscript numbers** in the lessons, quizzes, and test indicate answers in the Answer section. Please be sure to read the Answer section because it contains important information. The **footnotes** (indicated in the lessons with roman numerals) mostly contain bibliographic information.

While there are many good English Bible translations, this course primarily uses the New International Version. (Since this study covers Mark 1–7, the entire text of Scripture is not included in this guide. However, you can find many free online Bible versions at biblegateway.com.)

This is a self-study course so the pace of completing the lessons is up to you. There are 33 lessons and 2 tests so if you do five lessons each week, this course will be completed in 7 weeks. If you do 3 lessons each week, this course will be completed in 12 weeks.

How you take the quizzes and tests is also up to you (e.g., open notes, closed notes, or a combination). Space is provided in the lessons, quizzes, and tests for answering the questions, but if you need more space please use a personal notebook along with this study guide.

ABBREVIATIONS

General

= precedes a definition

v(v) – verse(s)

OT – Old Testament

NT – New Testament

CEB – Common English Bible

CEV – Contemporary English Version

NASB – New American Standard Bible

NIV – New International Version

NLT – New Living Translation

NRSV – New Revised Standard Version

Old Testament Books

Gen – Genesis

Exod – Exodus

Lev – Leviticus

Num – Numbers

Dt – Deuteronomy

Ps – Psalms

Prov – Proverbs

Isa – Isaiah

Jer – Jeremiah

New Testament Books

Mt – Matthew

Mk – Mark

Lk – Luke

Jn – John

Rom – Romans

1 Cor – 1 Corinthians

2 Cor – 2 Corinthians

Gal – Galatians

Phil – Philippians

Heb – Hebrews

Rev – Revelation

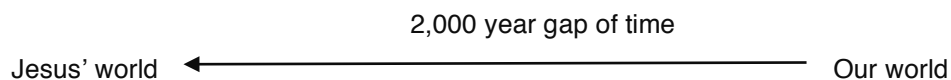
Lesson 1: A Different Time

Welcome to our study of the Gospel of Mark chapters 1–7! Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels and many believe it was the first one to be written. The Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—are the first four books in the New Testament and our primary sources for the life of Jesus.

1. Let's begin with a word association activity. Take two minutes and write down words or phrases that you associate with Jesus.

2. Place your words from item #1 into categories.

3. Before we begin reading the Gospels, it's important for us to recognize the distance between Jesus' time period and ours. When we study the Gospels, we're going back in time two thousand years.



4. This huge gap of time doesn't mean we have nothing in common with people back then. In fact, we have most of the important things in common. What major things do we have in common with people who lived two thousand years ago?¹

5. We should also acknowledge that there are differences between our world and Jesus' world. Many of the major changes in technology and civilization took place in the 1800s and early 1900s. That means daily life was similar for most people throughout human history until the last two hundred years. With the arrival of new technology, major distinctions that used to govern life became blurred such as the changing seasons, night and day, and work and leisure.ⁱ How would you describe the world we live in today?²

6. Throughout human history most people worked the ground, but due to modern-day technology, most of us are far removed from the soil. Because we're not outside working the ground, the changing of the seasons doesn't have as big of an impact on our daily lives. Which inventions decreased the impact of seasonal change? (Think of why we can buy certain food items even if they are not in season in our area.)³

ⁱ Geoffrey Blainey, *A Very Short History of the World* (London: Penguin, 2004), 429–440.

7. With the invention of artificial light, the distinction between night and day also became blurred. People stayed awake later and continued their daytime activities into the night. What time do you go to bed? What time would you go to bed without artificial light?
8. If we exclude Jesus' trip to Egypt when he was a baby, the farthest he traveled from where he was born was about one hundred miles (less than a two-hour car ride). All of our major transportation vehicles were invented less than two hundred years ago. How would your life be different without trains, cars, or airplanes?
9. The telegraph (predecessor to the telephone), radio, gramophone (record player), and television were all invented in the last two centuries. Prior to these inventions, all communication was done in person or through mailed letters.
10. New technology made manual labor more efficient and easier so working hours decreased. And a decrease in working hours meant an increase in leisure time. With more leisure time came an increased interest in entertainment and sports.ⁱⁱ
11. Now, let's move into our time period. What modern-day inventions (late twentieth or early twenty-first century) could we add to the list of things that have significantly changed daily life?⁴

ⁱⁱ Blainey, 438.

12. Imagine going back to life before all of the inventions listed in this lesson—life without mass farming equipment, artificial lights, refrigerators, cars, trains, airplanes, TVs, telephones, and computers. Write a journal entry or poem entitled “My life before the 1800s” describing daily life at that time. Make sure to include how you feel about your life.

Lesson 2: A Different Place

Review: List two ways that Jesus' world was different from our world.

1. We're still trying to appreciate the differences between our world and Jesus' world. Jesus was a Jew, who lived two thousand years ago, and spent most of his life in Israel, which was under Roman rule. Do you think Jesus should have been born earlier (or later) in world history? Why or why not?
2. According to Paul, the author of Galatians, Jesus was born at just the right time. Here are some specific details of the world in which Jesus lived. Write out Galatians 4:4–5.

Roman Influence

3. **Pax Romana** = Roman peace. After many successful conquests, the Roman Empire ceased its expansion efforts, resulting in a time of relative peace. One of the regions Rome had conquered was Palestine or the land of Israel. While Jews were free to practice their religion, they were under Rome's authority and, therefore, required to pay taxes to Rome. This tax was offensive to many Jews who believed that they had a divine right to live in the land. Jesus' enemies tried to trap him by asking if they should pay taxes to Caesar (Mk 12:14). Type "roman empire map first century" into your online search bar and find a map of the Roman Empire. Trace the basic outline of the map below and label the land of Israel or Judea.
4. **One major language** throughout the Roman Empire. Alexander the Great's (356–323 BC) conquests began the process of Hellenization. **Hellenization** = the spread of Greek culture and language. About 100 years before Jesus was born, the entire OT was translated into Greek and that translation is known as the Septuagint or LXX. By the time Jesus was born, Latin was still used, but Greek was the major language (lingua franca) of the Roman Empire. Every book of the New Testament was originally written in Greek. What does Westernization mean?⁵

5. **Good infrastructure** – the Romans built high-quality roads making travel much easier. This was a great help to many of the first Christians who traveled extensively and spread the gospel wherever they went. Some of these roads and bridges are still in good shape.
6. **Slavery** – approximately 25 percent of the entire population of the Roman Empire was enslaved as a result of war and debt. If you didn't see slaves in your home or neighborhood, you would have seen them in the marketplace on a daily basis.
7. **Polytheistic** = the belief and worship of many gods. "The majority of first-century Greeks and Romans probably still gave lip service to the old mythology."ⁱⁱⁱ We see this polytheistic worldview in the book of Acts. In Acts 14, people referred to Barnabas and Paul as Zeus and Hermes. In Acts 19, a riot occurred at the temple of Artemis. In addition to Greek mythology, the Roman emperors were deified beginning with Julius Caesar in 27 BC. This made the next emperor, Augustus, a "son of a god." The emperor Nero, who began his rule in AD 54, was the first to enforce the worship of himself.^{iv}

Hebrew Heritage

8. While Jesus' world was influenced by Rome, his primary influence was Jewish. Jesus' Jewish heritage included the following:
 - **Father Abraham** – The story of the Hebrew people goes back to Abraham (c. 2000 BC). God called Abraham out of his homeland and promised to give him descendants and land. And Abraham obeyed.
 - **The Exodus** – The Hebrews were enslaved in Egypt for four hundred years. God used Moses and the ten plagues to set his people free.
 - **The Ten Commandments** – God gave Israel rules to live by.
 - **Wandering and Settlement** – After wandering in the wilderness for forty years, Israel entered the land God promised to give them.
 - **Exile** – God drove Israel out of the land for repeatedly disobeying him over the course of several centuries.
 - **Restoration** – After seventy years of exile in Babylon, God brought Israel back to the land (c. 500 BC).
 - **One God** – Jews are monotheistic. **Monotheism** = the belief and worship of only one God.

ⁱⁱⁱ Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville: Broadman, 1997), 29.

^{iv} Blomberg, 37.

- **Sacred Scriptures** – The Jews of Jesus' day believed that God inspired certain writings. These writings are the books of our Old Testament. The Old Testament was the only Bible Jesus and his followers had.

9. Since Jesus was born as a Jew, he came first to the people who had a long history with God, and who possessed the sacred writings. But at that time, the Jews were in direct contact with the Gentiles who ruled over them. As a result, Jesus' world was greatly influenced by both Hebrew and Roman (Gentile) culture.
10. Now let's focus on our world and more specifically your own personal world. Describe each of the following categories of your world: family, religion, education, lifestyle, and geographical location.

Lesson 3: The Writers

Review: List two facts about the Roman influence in Jesus' world.

1. In this lesson, we'll focus on the Gospel writers and their writing process. If you were going to write a biography, who would you want to write about? Why?
2. What basic components of the person's life would you include in your biography?
3. Why would people want to write about Jesus' life?⁶
4. The four Gospels are the earliest and best sources for the life of Jesus. Christians around the world and throughout time have relied on Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John for the information they convey about Jesus. Strictly speaking, the four Gospels are anonymous. The authors don't identify themselves in their writings. But we have comments from ancient writers attributing the four Gospels to their purported authors. Read the following statements, then make a list of what you learn under each.

Matthew also issued a written gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel preached by him. Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.^v

—Irenaeus (c. AD 180)

The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. Luke, the well-known physician, after the ascension of Christ, when Paul had taken with him as one zealous for the law, composed it in his own name, according to [the general] belief. Yet he himself had not seen the Lord in the flesh; and therefore, as he was able to ascertain events, so indeed he begins to tell the story from the birth of John. The fourth of the Gospels is that of John, [one] of the disciples.^{vi}

—The Muratorian Canon (c. AD 170)

^v Several online sources and quoted in Mark D. Roberts, *Can We Trust the Gospels? Investigating the Reliability of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), 41.

^{vi} Roberts, 42.

Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not in order, whatsoever he remembered of the things said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but afterward, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely . . . So then Matthew wrote the oracles in the Hebrew language, and every one interpreted them as he was able."^{vii}

—Papias (c. AD 130) quoted in Eusebius (c. AD 300)

-
5. While the Gospels are strictly anonymous, we have the statements above and a long tradition of ascribing them to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Some, however, believe the Gospels are **pseudonymous** = written under a fictitious name. However, why would the church have made up Mark or Luke as authors when they weren't even Jesus' disciples? There are other so-called Gospels that are widely acknowledged to be pseudonymous. While those books bear the names of important leaders in the early church, such as the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Gospel of Thomas*, and the *Gospel of Mary*, they were written after the deaths of their named authors. In addition, the early church rejected those Gospels because of their false teachings.
 6. The four Gospels also don't include the dates they were written and we don't have the original books to examine. By using internal and external clues, scholars try to determine the date of their composition. Most scholars today believe the Gospels were written between thirty to sixty years after Jesus' death or AD 60–90. According to the majority view, Mark was written first and John was written last.

^{vii} Roberts, 42–3.

7. We don't have the original writings, but we have hundreds of ancient copies or manuscripts. Currently, the oldest manuscript found is Papyrus 52 or P⁵² containing only five verses—John 18:31–33, 37–38. The earliest Gospels were written on papyrus leaves. **Papyrus** = paper made from a papyrus plant and rolled up into a scroll. Many scholars believe P⁵² should be dated to around AD 125. If these scholars are right, P⁵² confirms that the Gospel of John was written prior to AD 125 because it was found in Egypt, which means time must have passed for it to be copied and taken to Egypt. Look up an image of P⁵² online then draw a sketch below.

8. Because Matthew, Mark, and Luke are very similar, they are called the Synoptic Gospels. **Synoptic** = common point of view. Several of the stories in the Synoptic Gospels are nearly identical, making them easy to compare with each other. John, on the other hand, tells the story of Jesus very differently from the first three.

9. Where did the writers get their information? According to tradition, Matthew and John were two of Jesus' disciples so they would have had first-hand experience. Mark traveled with Peter and learned from him, and Luke says he carefully investigated the events. Read Luke 1:1–4.

Lesson 4: The Beginning (Mk 1:1)

Review: What is P⁵²?

1. We have considered some background information and we are almost ready to begin with Mark. But before we do we should keep in mind that the culture of Jesus' day was an oral culture. People entertained each other by sitting around and telling stories. From what we know, silent reading wasn't commonly practiced. If you were reading, you read so other people could hear. This wasn't only a matter of preference, but courtesy because literacy rates were low. Since the Gospels didn't originally include chapter or verse divisions they were probably read aloud in large portions. So while we may read a chapter a day silently, they would have read half of the book or even the whole book out loud. What are the benefits of reading the Bible silently one chapter a day?

2. What are the benefits of reading or listening to large portions of the Bible out loud?

3. Write out Mark 1:1 then list your own observations on it. (What details do you notice? What questions do you have?)

4. Memorize the following definitions:

- **Gospel** = good news. Of the four Gospels, Mark is the only one to call his book a Gospel.
- **Jesus** = the Lord saves. The name Jesus was a popular name in the first century. Jesus is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew name Joshua.
- **Messiah** = anointed one. The word Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word Messiah. The anointed one in the Old Testament was the person who was officially set apart for special service, such as a king or priest. This official recognition was done by pouring oil on the person's head. A Christian = a follower of Christ.
- **The Son of God** = the one who shares the nature of God and has a father-son relationship with God. It doesn't mean that God gave birth or that God impregnated someone.

5. Did you notice the footnote in your Bible for Mark 1:1? As we have learned, no one has the original book of Mark, which was written in Greek. Instead we have hundreds of Greek copies (or manuscripts) and not every copy has the phrase "the Son of God" in Mark 1:1. Why? Before the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century, everything was copied by hand. Sometimes the copyists made accidental mistakes and sometimes they made corrections because they thought what they were copying was a mistake. This resulted in copies that were not identical. So if we have copies with differences, how can we know what was originally written?

First of all, many of the differences in wording are insignificant, such as the difference in word order. For example, "Jesus Christ" or "Christ Jesus" is a common manuscript difference (or variant). Second, as with any ancient text, the copies are compared by scholars known as textual critics. **Textual critics** compare the wording in the copies to determine the original wording. Third, we have thousands of copies of the books of the New Testament. And in general, the more copies textual critics have to work with, the more certain they can be of the original wording.

However, in a relatively small number of cases, the findings of textual critics are inconclusive. After conducting their comparison for Mark 1:1, the textual critics saw strong evidence for viewing the phrase, "the Son of God" as Mark's original wording, but they also saw strong evidence for viewing it as a later addition to Mark's original wording. Fortunately, as in most of the uncertain texts, determining whether the phrase "the Son of God" is original in Mark 1:1 doesn't matter much because ten verses later the same point is made when God calls Jesus his Son (Mk 1:11).

6. Read the beginning of each Gospel (the first ten to twenty verses) and briefly summarize how each Gospel begins.⁷

Lesson 5: John the Baptist (Mk 1:1–8)

Review: Define gospel.

1. Take two minutes and write down words or images that you associate with the word confession.

2. Read Mark 1:1–8 and make a list of what you learn about John the Baptist.⁸

3. What things might the people have confessed?

4. Why is it so hard to confess our sins?

5. Write out James 5:16.

6. The phrase ***lectio divina*** is Latin for sacred reading. Lectio divina is an ancient approach to Bible reading that focuses on internalizing or inwardly digesting the text. As Jeremiah said, “Your words were found, and I ate them” (Jer 15:16). Sacred reading is probably the most important way to read the Bible. If we spend all of our time analyzing and dissecting a passage but never actually internalize it, we won’t get nourished. What good will your food do for you if you cut it up into nice little pieces, but never chew and swallow? Here are the steps for practicing lectio divina:

- Read the passage out loud and slowly three times, pausing between each reading. (You can also summarize a narrative in your own words, e.g., the disciples get into the boat, a violent storm arises, . . .)
- During the pauses between each reading, silently meditate on the words.
- After the last reading, turn your thoughts into a prayer.

7. Write out 1 John 1:9 then use it to practice lectio divina.

Lesson 6: Jesus' Baptism (Mk 1:9–11)

Review: Define lectio divina.

1. Read and summarize Mark 1:9–11.

2. What does Jesus' baptism show us about Jesus?⁹

3. Read the four baptismal accounts below and underline the distinctive features of each account. (For example, underline the unique details that only Matthew records.)

Matthew 3

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (vv. 13–17)

Mark 1

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

Luke 3

When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (vv. 21–22)

John 1

Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." (vv. 32–34)

4. What differences do you see between the four accounts?

5. One of the examples that's been used to support the claim that the Bible contradicts itself is the voice at Jesus' baptism. Did the voice say, "You are my Son" as in Mark or "This is my Son" as in Matthew? Would you call that difference a contradiction? Why or why not?¹⁰

Lesson 7: Jesus' Temptation (Mk 1:12–13)

Review: ____ True or False. Only Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism records John trying to deter Jesus from getting baptized.

1. After Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, Mark writes:

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. (1:11–12)

2. Although God the Father has expressed love for his Son, he let him go through a difficult time. Have your parents ever allowed you to go through a difficult/painful experience? When? Why?
3. God not only allowed Jesus to go into a time of testing, the Spirit sent or drove Jesus into the wilderness (v. 12). The same Greek word that is used of Jesus *driving out* evil spirits (1:34) is used of the Spirit *driving* Jesus into the wilderness. Why would this gentle dove drive Jesus into the desert to be tempted by Satan?¹¹
4. In the Bible, the number forty is often connected to a time of testing. Summarize the following references to the number forty:
 - Genesis 7:12 –
 - Exodus 34:28 –

- Numbers 14:33–34 –

5. What essential information did Mark leave out in Mark 1:12–13?¹²
6. Matthew shows us that Jesus overcame temptation by quoting Scripture. While Satan also used Scripture, he misquoted and misapplied it. Read Matthew 4:1–11.
7. In just thirteen verses Mark has set the stage for the beginning of Jesus' ministry by making immense claims about Jesus. Who is Jesus according to Mark 1:1–13? (List at least three items.)¹³
8. Review Mark 1:1–13 and Lessons 1–7 for a quiz in the next lesson. Make sure you know how to define the words we have covered such as synoptic, gospel, Jesus, Messiah, monotheistic, lectio divina, Pax Romana.

Lesson 8: Quiz 1; The Kingdom of God (Mk 1:14–20)

Quiz 1 (10 pts. each)

1. Define gospel –
2. Which Old Testament prophet does Mark quote in this section?
3. John the Baptist did not think he was worthy to do what for Jesus?
4. The voice said, “You are my _____, whom I _____; with you I am well _____” (Mk 1:11).
5. T or F Mark says that Jesus was praying when the Spirit descended on him.
6. Define synoptic and list the Synoptic Gospels.
7. Abraham lived about _____ years before Jesus.
8. Define Christ –
9. The number _____ symbolizes a time of testing in the Bible.
10. T or F Scholars in Israel are able to study Mark’s original Gospel.

Answers¹⁴

The Kingdom of God

1. Enter “Israel in Jesus’ time” into your online search bar then click on images. Choose one of the maps and trace the basic outline of Israel below. In addition, label the following places on your map: Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Sea of Galilee, Jordan River, Dead Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Capernaum.
2. Read Mark 1:14–20 then record each phrase Jesus speaks. Beside each phrase state what it shows about Jesus.¹⁵

3. Most organized groups, and especially companies, have a slogan. List a few popular slogans from advertisements.

4. Jesus talked about the same thing, almost as if it was his slogan. He began his preaching by announcing God's kingdom (Mk 1:15), during his ministry he used parables to describe the kingdom of God (Mk 4), and before he ascended into heaven he was talking about God's kingdom (Acts 1:3).
The kingdom of God = God's rule over his creation. Human beings have rejected God's rule and have chosen to live for themselves. Jesus came to bring us back under God's rule, but we must turn or repent from our **autonomy** = self-rule. God rules both in heaven and in the hearts of his people. Draw a diagram below to display the concepts of God's rule and human autonomy.

Lesson 9: A Day in the Life of Jesus (Mk 1:21–39)

Review: Define the kingdom of God.

1. We rarely get a glimpse of a day in Jesus' life, but this section gives us just that. It starts from the morning of the Sabbath day (our Saturday) and continues until the following morning. Read and outline Mark 1:21–39.¹⁶
2. What does Mark 1:21–39 emphasize about Jesus?¹⁷
3. Why did the people come to Jesus “after sunset” in verse 32?¹⁸

4. This section of Mark has a couple of references to Jesus driving out demons or evil spirits. In the preface to *The Screwtape Letters*, which is a fictitious dialogue between two evil spirits, C.S. Lewis warns that there are two equal errors that we must avoid. First, we must avoid disbelieving in the existence of evil spirits or as he calls them devils, and second, we must avoid believing in them with an unhealthy interest. Do you agree or disagree with Lewis's statement? Why?

5. M. Scott Peck is a psychiatrist and author who has written on his encounters with human evil. As a trained psychiatrist he firmly believes in mental disorders, but he came to the conclusion that some cases of human evil should be attributed to supernatural powers. If you're interested see his books *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil* and *Glimpses of the Devil: A Psychiatrist's Personal Accounts of Possession, Exorcism, and Redemption*. Do you think evil spirits can be one source of mental illness? Why or why not?

6. Write a journal entry or poem for one of the disciples in Mark 1:21–39. (Reflect on the events of the day and include your feelings.)

Lesson 10: Healing Leprosy (Mk 1:40–45)

Review: Define authority.

1. In order to appreciate this next story in Mark, we need to begin with Leviticus 13. Read Leviticus 13:45–46 and list five things that lepers were required to do.¹⁹

2. Read and summarize Mark 1:40–45.

3. How many times does the word clean or forms of it appear in Mark 1:40–45?²⁰

4. If Leviticus 13 was still in effect, this leper had an isolated and lonely life.^{viii} Have you ever felt lonely? Have you ever felt like an outcast? What if people stopped shaking your hand, giving you hugs, and patting you on the back? What if you could sense that people didn't want to be near you and were trying not to touch you? How would you feel?
5. While most of the Greek manuscripts say Jesus was moved with "compassion" in verse 41, a few manuscripts say Jesus was "indignant" or "angry." Does the minority reading that says Jesus was angry, make sense to you? Why or why not?
6. Read about Jesus' anger in the following passages and state what Jesus was angry about in each:
- Mark 3:1–5 –
 - Mark 10:13–14 –
 - Mark 8:31–33 –

^{viii} Contrary to what many people think, leprosy doesn't eat away at the flesh; instead it destroys the sense of pain, which over time leads to the deterioration of the limbs. (For example, think about how you would damage your fingers if you couldn't feel heat.) This man, however, may not have had literal leprosy as we know it. The footnote at the bottom of the NIV Bible says, "The Greek word traditionally translated as *leprosy* was used for various diseases affecting the skin."

- Mark 9:17–24 –

- Mark 11:12–19 –

7. Do any of the references above give you insight as to why Jesus may have been angry in Mark 1:41?²¹
8. Notice that Jesus “reached out his hand and touched the man” (v. 41). You can almost hear the gasps as Jesus did the unthinkable.
9. How does the end of the story show a role reversal between Jesus and the leper?²²
10. Review Lessons 8–10 for a quiz on Mark 1:14–45. You should memorize Jesus’ words in Mark 1:15 and 1:17 and be able to reproduce the labeled map (in Lesson 8).

Lesson 11: Quiz 2; The Pharisees

Quiz 2 (10 pts. for #1–7, 30 pts. for #8)

1. Define the following words/phrases:

- Authority –
- Kingdom of God –
- Repent –

2. Write out Jesus' words in Mark 1:15 and 1:17.

3. The people were amazed at Jesus' teaching because he taught with _____.

4. The leper told Jesus, "If you will, you can make me _____."

5. Name Jesus' first four followers in Mark.

6. List three things lepers were required to do according to Leviticus 13.

7. Jesus commanded people to follow him. How can people do this even when they can't see him?

8. Draw the map of Israel and label the following places: Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Sea of Galilee, Jordan River, Dead Sea, and Mediterranean Sea. (5 pts. for each labeled item)

Answers²³

The Pharisees

1. The Pharisees were one of the major religious groups in first-century Israel. The name Pharisee probably meant “separatists” or “separated ones” because they sought to keep their distance from everything that could defile them. The Pharisees were known for their scrupulous observance of both the written Law and the oral tradition. (The written Law was the Hebrew Bible and the oral tradition was the official interpretation of the Law.) Their goal was to create a fence around the written law with their own interpretations. The Pharisees had rules for many areas of life including dining company (Mk 2:16). Read the following passages and list what you learn about the Pharisees in each passage.²⁴

- Mark 2:16–3:6 –

- Mark 7:1–5

- Matthew 23:1–7

2. How are the Pharisees described in the passages above?

Lesson 12: Opposition Begins (Mk 2:1–3:6)

Review: List one of the faults of the Pharisees.

1. So far everything has been going well for Jesus. He successfully overcame temptation, healed the sick, and drove out a demon. But in Mark 2, Jesus begins to face opposition. In Mark 2:1–24, there are four main questions asked of the disciples and Jesus. Write out the four questions along with the verse reference for each. Then identify who is asking and who is being asked each question.²⁵
2. Summarize Mark 3:1–6 and explain how opposition to Jesus increases from Mark 2:1 to 3:6.²⁶

3. Make a list of problems the religious authorities had with Jesus in Mark 2:1–3:6.²⁷

4. What do you think about the religious authorities in this section? How would you describe them?

Lesson 13: Healing Paralysis and Forgiving Sin (Mk 2:1–12)

Review: What is one question asked of Jesus and/or his disciples in Mark 2?

1. Read Mark 2:1–12 then either summarize it or draw a picture of a scene below.

2. In Mark 2:1 we learn that Capernaum had become Jesus' home. Find pictures of Capernaum online.

3. Instead of going up to the roof and tearing it open, how else could the four men have responded to the obstacle of the crowd?

4. What words best describe the four men who brought the paralytic to Jesus?

5. The first thing that Jesus said to the paralyzed man was, “Son, your sins are forgiven” (v. 5). During this time, most people believed that those who suffered deserved it. Imagine being paralyzed and knowing that others think of you as a huge sinner. Jesus first addressed the man’s spiritual need by

saying “your sins are forgiven” and then he moved on to his physical need. **Forgive** = to remove an offense so that it no longer affects the relationship. But we can only be forgiven by the one we have offended. If we have offended God by sinning against him, who else can forgive us but God? The teachers of the law realized that Jesus was taking God’s place here (vv. 6–7). When is the last time someone forgave you?

6. “Son of Man” is Jesus’ favorite way of referring to himself in the Synoptic Gospels. It’s a strange phrase that is rarely used elsewhere in the Bible. Many scholars think it’s a reference to the heavenly figure of Daniel 7:13–14. Write out Daniel 7:13–14.
7. Write a journal entry or poem for the paralyzed man after his healing. (Imagine that you are him and after your healing you go home to write in your journal about what happened.)

Lesson 14: Feasting and Fasting (Mk 2:13–22)

Review: Define forgive.

1. Read Mark 2:13–22 then summarize it by drawing three sketches under the following captions:
“Jesus calls Levi,” “Jesus eats at Levi’s house,” and “Pharisees question disciples.”

2. While we mainly eat with friends and family, back then it was even more important to only eat with the right people. Eating was only done with people you were close to. But Jesus was eating with tax collectors and sinners. Tax collectors were considered to be thieves because they often demanded more than was required, and traitors because they were collecting taxes for Rome. Sinners were people who didn’t keep the law. What would you have thought about Jesus if you lived back then and saw him eating with tax collectors and sinners?

3. The Pharisees regularly fasted twice a week, on Monday and Thursday. **Fasting** = to abstain from eating for a spiritual purpose. Fasting humbles us and enables us to focus on other things besides food. However, Jews were only required to fast once a year on the Day of Atonement, which was the national day of repentance. Have you ever fasted? If so, how was that experience?

4. When the Pharisees asked why Jesus' disciples were not fasting, Jesus responded by comparing himself to a bridegroom and his disciples to friends of the bridegroom (Mk 2:19–20). Since the bridegroom was with his friends, it wouldn't be appropriate for them to fast. But when the bridegroom would be taken away then they would fast. What is Jesus' point in Mark 2:21–22?²⁸

5. The word **disciple** = student, learner, or pupil. Jesus, John, and the Pharisees all had disciples. How many times does the word disciple appear in Mark 2:13–22?²⁹

6. Jesus is questioned in this section regarding two issues: his dinner company and his disciples' practice of not fasting. Jesus didn't care about maintaining traditions if they interfered with more important things. People, even tax-collectors and sinners, need God's love and forgiveness. So Jesus broke with the traditions of his day to reach out to those who were on the fringe of society. Imagine Jesus eating with a group of tax collectors and sinners then practice lectio divina with the verse below.

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." (Mk 2:17)

Lesson 15: Controversy on the Sabbath (Mk 2:23–3:6)

Review: Define disciple.

1. Mark 2:23–3:6 contains two stories that take place on the Sabbath. The Sabbath is observed as a day of rest from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. Keeping the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:8–11) and it is one of the defining marks of a faithful Jew. In both stories, controversy arises because the religious leaders believe Jesus and his disciples broke the Sabbath. Read and summarize Exodus 31:12–17.
2. Read and summarize Mark 2:23–3:6.

3. What is Jesus saying about himself and the Sabbath in Mark 2:27–28?³⁰
4. Mark 3:1–6 takes place in a synagogue. Jesus has already been to a synagogue in Mark 1:21–27, where he drove out the impure spirit. **Synagogue** = a building dedicated to the worship of the God of Israel. Worship in synagogues didn't include animal sacrifices because sacrifices were restricted to the temple. Find pictures of an ancient synagogue on the internet then draw a basic diagram of a synagogue below.
5. Review Lessons 11–15 for a quiz in the next lesson. As a review, try to list from memory how Jesus and his disciples irritated the religious authorities in Mark 2:1–3:6.³¹

Lesson 16: Quiz 3; Abiathar or Ahimelech?

Quiz 3 (10 pts. each)

1. Define forgive –
2. Why were tax collectors considered to be traitors?
3. Probably the most important reference in the Old Testament for understanding the phrase “Son of Man” is the book of _____ chapter _____.
4. Jesus said, “It is not the _____ who need a doctor, but the _____” (Mk 2:17).
5. The name Pharisee probably means _____.
6. Define disciple –
7. T or F John did not have his own disciples.
8. T or F When Jesus saw the paralytic’s faith, he said, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”
9. List three things about Jesus and/or his disciples which irritated the religious authorities in Mark 2:1–3:6.
10. Jesus said, “The Son of Man is _____ even of the Sabbath” (Mk 2:28).

Answers³²

Abiathar or Ahimelech?

1. Mark 2:26 contains a famous problem which you should be aware of. The story that Jesus refers to in verse 26 is found in 1 Samuel 21. Read and summarize 1 Samuel 21:1–6.
2. In light of 1 Samuel 21, what's the problem in Mark 2:26?³³
3. This problem had a profound impact on one New Testament scholar named Bart Ehrman. Ehrman says he became a born again Christian in high school, went on to study the Bible at two conservative Christian schools then began a doctoral program at Princeton University. While studying at Princeton, he wrote a research paper on the problem in Mark 2:26. Ehrman's paper, containing a detailed solution, was returned with a comment from his professor that said, "Maybe Mark was wrong." That comment made a lasting impression on Ehrman. He eventually concluded that Mark was wrong and then he started to see errors in other parts of the Bible. Ehrman is now a best-selling author who highlights problems and errors he sees in the Bible. He considers himself to be an agnostic.^{ix}

^{ix} Bart Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 9.

4. List possible solutions to the discrepancy between 1 Samuel 21 and Mark 2:26.³⁴
5. If Mark 2:26 contains a mistake, what should we make of it? To rephrase the question, if this is an error, how big of an error is it?
6. Hopefully, this has taught you that calling something an error in the Bible is often a judgment call. An error according to modern standards doesn't necessarily equal an error according to ancient standards.

Lesson 17: Review

1. The next lesson is a test on Mark 1:1–3:6. To review for the test, scan through Mark 1:1–3:6 and look for the following items. Make sure to place the verse reference beside each item.

- Jesus' titles (5 items)³⁵

- Jesus' journeys – cities or regions (4 items)³⁶

- Jesus' emotions (5 items)³⁷

2. Review Lessons 1–17 and especially Quizzes 1–3 for a test in the next lesson.

TEST 1 (MARK 1:1–3:6)

Define the following (3 pts each):

1. Gospel –
2. Kingdom of God –
3. Christ –
4. Authority –
5. Forgive –
6. Disciple –
7. Repent –

True or False (3 pts each)

- _____ 8. Jesus' ate with tax-collectors in this section of Mark.
- _____ 9. Simon and John were brothers.
- _____ 10. The word Messiah means the same thing as the word Christ.
- _____ 11. According to Mark, Jesus was tempted by Satan and then baptized by John.
- _____ 12. The regulations about skin diseases are given in the book of Leviticus.
- _____ 13. The Sabbath begins on Saturday night.
- _____ 14. James and John were brothers.
- _____ 15. There is no mention of angels in Mark 2.
- _____ 16. When Jesus saw the paralytic's faith, he said, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

_____ 17. Jesus was angry in Mark 3.

_____ 18. This section of Mark ends with people plotting how to kill Jesus.

Fill in the Blank (2 pts. each)

19. So far, Jesus' ministry has focused on the northern region of Israel called _____.

20. The main theme of Jesus' message was the _____ of _____.

21. The Pharisees' main concern was to create a _____ around the Torah.

22. Tax collectors were considered to be _____ and _____.

23. Jesus' favorite title for himself was _____ of _____.

24. The number _____ indicates a time of testing in the Bible.

25. "The Son of Man is _____ even of the _____." (Mk 2:28)

26. "The Son of Man has _____ on earth to _____ sins." (Mk 2:10)

27. The voice from heaven said, "You are my _____ whom I _____" (Mk 1:11).

28. The leper said, "If you are _____ you can make me _____" (Mk 1:40).

29. John said, "After me comes the one more _____ than I" (Mk 1:7).

Short Answer (5 pts each, 10 pts for #32)

30. List four things that Jesus did which challenged the religious authorities of his day. What does this show you about Jesus?

31. Circle one lesson that made a big impression on you from Mark 1:1–3:6 then explain why.

- A Different Time
- A Different Place
- The Writers
- The Beginning (1:1)
- John the Baptist (1:1–8)
- Jesus' Baptism (1:9–11)
- Jesus' Temptation (1:12–13)
- The Kingdom of God (1:14–20)
- A Day in the Life of Jesus (1:21–39)
- Healing Leprosy (1:14–45)
- Opposition Begins (2:1–3:6)
- Healing Paralysis and Forgiving Sin (2:1–12)
- Feasting and Fasting (2:13–22)
- Controversy on the Sabbath (2:23–3:6)
- Abiathar or Ahimelech? (2:25–26)

32. Draw a map of Israel and label the following ten locations: Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Sea of Galilee, Jordan River, Dead Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Nazareth, Capernaum, and Jerusalem.

Lesson 18: The Chosen Twelve (Mk 3:7–19)

1. Read and summarize Mark 3:7–19.
2. According to Mark 3:14–15, what were the three reasons Jesus appointed the Twelve?³⁹
3. **Apostle** = sent one. What possible reason may Jesus have chosen *twelve* apostles?⁴⁰
4. Why did Jesus choose twelve *men*?⁴¹

5. Make four lists of names in vertical columns from the following passages: Mark 3:16–19; Matthew 10:2–4; Luke 6:12–16; Acts 1:13.⁴²

6. How are the lists similar and different?⁴³

7. According to Revelation 21:14, the wall of the New Jerusalem has twelve foundations and on the foundations are written the names of the twelve _____ of the Lamb.

Lesson 19: Falsely Accused (Mk 3:20–35)

Review: Define apostle.

1. Read Mark 3:20–35 then list the main points of the passage.⁴⁴

2. To **accuse** = to blame or to find fault. In this passage people accuse Jesus of being 1.) “out of his mind” or crazy and 2.) “possessed by Beelzebul” or demon-possessed. Jesus’ family accuses him of being out of his mind when they hear how he and his disciples have such great crowds around them that they can’t even eat (3:20–21). His family was so worried about him that they went to “take charge of him” as if he was incapable of running his own life. The Greek word for “take charge” is the same one used in Mark 12:12 where it’s translated “arrest.” Jesus’ family members were aggressively trying to help him.

The teachers of the law accuse Jesus of being possessed by Satan (3:22). **Beelzebul** = the prince of demons or Satan. The idea is that instead of running wild, demons are being directed by a leader. And Jesus was accused of being possessed by the ruler of darkness.

3. Have you ever been falsely accused? If so, summarize your story.

4. Paraphrase Jesus' response to the teachers of the law who accused him of being possessed by Beelzebul in Mark 3:23–29.⁴⁵

5. Notice that Jesus does not merely refute their accusation by denying that he was possessed by Beelzebul. That would have been a “No, I’m not,” “Yes, you are” type of argument. Instead Jesus shows them the error in their way of thinking. How have you refuted an accusation by pointing to the flaw in that way of thinking?

6. What was the crowd expecting Jesus to do when they told him that his mother and brothers had arrived?⁴⁶

7. In this passage we learn that:
 - Jesus knows what it’s like to be falsely accused and to have family problems.
 - Speaking evil of God and his Spirit is a serious sin.
 - God’s mercy is immense but there’s a line we shouldn’t cross.
 - Obeying God is what it means to be in Jesus’ family.

Lesson 20: Blasphemy (Mk 3:28–29)

Review: What did Jesus' family accuse him of in Mark 3?

1. What does blaspheme mean?⁴⁷

2. Summarize the following passages and be sure to mention the references to blasphemy:

- Leviticus 24:15–16 –

- Mark 2:7 –

- Mark 14:61–64 –

3. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit is mentioned in three places in the Bible. Although it sounds easy to understand, it has caused a lot of controversy. Summarize the following passages:

- Mark 3:28–29 –

- Matthew 12:30–32 –

- Luke 12:10 –

4. In Mark 3:28, Jesus begins with the phrase “Truly I tell you,” which is a translation of the word “amen.” Jesus used this word in a unique way—at the beginning of his statements rather than at the end. We use almost the exact same expression today, “I’m telling you the truth; I saw it happen.” When we say “amen” to something we’re saying we agree to it or “may it certainly be as you say.” So Jesus is serious about what he says here. The problem is that there have been different interpretations of what Jesus said about blaspheming the Spirit. Here are a few of those interpretations.

- Speaking evil of the Spirit in Jesus’ day. To see Jesus perform miracles in person and then speak evil of the Spirit who was behind those miracles is unforgivable.
- Speaking evil of the Holy Spirit in any time period. People today who malign Jesus’ Spirit cannot be forgiven. (Some heavy metal rock bands have literally spoken evil of the Spirit in their lyrics.)
- The general sin of unbelief. Everyone in hell will “never be forgiven” either.
- A combination of any of the above.

- Jesus is using hyperbole so we shouldn't interpret his words literally. **Hyperbole** = exaggeration for effect.

5. Which interpretation do you think is correct? Why?

6. Remember the context. Jesus spoke these words in response to the religious teachers who were claiming that he was empowered by an evil spirit. Did Jesus say the teachers of the law were guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit? Did he say, "You did it, you just committed the unforgivable sin"?⁴⁸

7. Why would you speak evil of God or his Spirit in the first place?⁴⁹

Lesson 21: Parables of the Kingdom (Mk 4:1–34)

Review: Define blasphemy.

1. So far, Mark has not given us much of Jesus' actual teaching. We have seen Jesus giving commands and responding to criticism, but we have not heard him teach in depth. In Mark 4, we get to sit in the audience and listen to Jesus teach. Jesus was a thought-provoking teacher who drew large crowds. He may have confused you with his teaching, but he wouldn't bore you. He taught in a way that people could relate to by using parables. What is a parable?⁵⁰

2. In Mark 4, Jesus teaches using four parables. Three of the four parables mention seeds and growth. Remember that Jesus lived in an agricultural society where most people worked the ground. What kind of experiences have you had on a farm or working in a garden?

3. Read Mark 4:1–20 then list what each of the following represent: ⁵¹
 - Birds –

 - Sun –

 - Thorns –

4. Using Mark 4:1–20 fill in the chart below for the four types of soil/ground. (If nothing is stated write N/A.)⁵²

Type of soil/ground	Obstacles to growth	Final result

5. Jesus' audience, including his disciples, didn't understand the meaning of his parable in Mark 4:3–9 so Jesus had to explain it in verses 13–20. What different ways might Jesus' audience have responded to the common story Jesus told about seeds and growth?⁵³
6. What obstacles to growth do you need to remove so that the seed of God's word can flourish in your life?
7. Jesus' statement in Mark 4:12 is a quote from Isaiah 6:9–10. What is your first reaction to Jesus' words in Mark 4:11–12?⁵⁴

8. Read Mark 4:21–25 then explain how it connects with the previous parable.⁵⁵

9. Read Mark 4:26–32 then list what you learn about God's kingdom.⁵⁶

Lesson 22: Calming the Storm (Mk 4:35–41)

Review: What does the sun represent in Jesus' parable in Mark 4?

1. Read Mark 4:35–41 and practice lectio divina. (Divide the scene into segments and slowly meditate on each segment. For example,
 - Jesus says to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.”
 - While they are in the boat, a huge storm begins and waves are breaking over the boat.
 - They wake up Jesus.
 - Jesus gets up, and rebukes the wind and waves by saying, “Quiet! Be still!” And the wind died down.
 - Jesus asks his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”
2. Find the following famous paintings of this scene online:
 - *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee* – Rembrandt
 - *Christ on the Lake of Gennesaret* – Eugene Delacroix
3. List the big ideas of Mark 4:35–41.⁵⁷

4. How does this story help you?

5. Controlling the waves was the prerogative of God. Write out Psalm 89:8–9.

6. Review Lessons 18–22 for a quiz in the next lesson on Mark 3:7–4:41. Memorize Mark 3:35.

Lesson 23: Quiz 4; Lord over Demons (Mk 5:1–20)

Quiz 4 (12 pts. each)

1. Name six apostles.
2. From Mark 3, list one reason Jesus appointed disciples.
3. Name two things Jesus was accused of in Mark 3 and state who accused him of each.
4. Define blasphemy –
5. “Why are you so _____? Have you still have no _____?” (4:41)
6. Write out Mark 3:35.
7. List three things that obstruct the seed of God’s word from growing in our lives according to the parable in Mark 4.
8. After Jesus stilled the storm, the disciples asked “_____ is _____?”

Answers⁵⁸

Lord over Demons

1. Mark 5:1–20 is the longest exorcism story in the New Testament. **Exorcise** = to expel a demon. Read Mark 5:1–20 then either summarize it or draw a picture of the story.
2. Imagine having this guy run through your neighborhood. He's naked, crying out, and bleeding. What kinds of sounds was he making at night? He must have instilled fear in the community. So the men banded together and tied him up frequently, but he continually broke free (Mk 5:1–5).
3. It appears that demons are not limited by physical space. Many demons were living inside this man (v. 9). **Legion** = thousands. A Roman legion = thousands of soldiers.
4. Mark 5:11 says that there were a "large herd of pigs," which probably indicates that this was a Gentile region because observant Jews wouldn't raise pigs (see Lev 11:7). What does the herd of pigs rushing down the steep bank add to the story?⁵⁹

5. Record the description of the man before he met Jesus in verses 3–5.
6. Record the description of the man after Jesus healed him in verse 15.
7. Why do you think the people asked Jesus to leave in verse 17?⁶⁰
8. Why did Jesus command the man to share what happened to him (v. 19) when he told others to be quiet (1:44)?⁶¹
9. The New Testament refers to demons or evil spirits acting on humans in two ways:
 - to *have* an impure spirit (e.g., Mk 1:23; 5:2)
 - *daimonizomai*, which is translated “demon-possessed” (Mk 1:32; 5:15). However, some suggest the best translation of *daimonizomai* is “demonized.”

10. Read the following quote then summarize it in your own words:

Many who are involved in deliverance ministry today object to the term *demon-possessed*, arguing that it should be replaced by the word *demonized* because 'possessed' suggests that the victim is completely under the control of the demon. The word *demonize* is itself unobjectionable, since it is so similar to the Greek word . . . but it is so imprecise that it lends itself to being applied to a wider range of afflictions than those experienced by the demoniacs in the New Testament. They suffered from a distinct condition, and the traditional terminology has the advantage of making this clear.^x

11. Do you think demons can inhabit inanimate objects such as idols?⁶²

12. In many parts of the world, people sacrifice to the spirits out of fear. What we've seen so far in Mark is that evil spirits are terrified of Jesus. Therefore, Christians shouldn't fear demons.

^x Sydney H.T. Page, *Powers of Evil: A Biblical Study of Satan and Demons* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 138. Page also makes the point that demon-possession in the Bible is not something that people repent of, rather it is something that is healed (159).

Lesson 24: Lord over Disease and Death (Mk 5:21–43)

Review: Define legion.

1. Read Mark 5:21–43 and make a list of what Jairus was probably thinking at various points throughout the story.⁶³
2. Notice how the reassuring voice of Jesus comes to Jairus's rescue. The most repeated command in the Bible is "Do not fear." One voice says, "it's over" another says "just believe." Jairus could have listened to the men and walked away in utter despair. When have you chosen to listen to hopeful words over hopeless words?
3. Jesus' life-giving words to the young girl made such an impression that Mark preserved them in the language in which they were spoken—Aramaic—and then translated them into Greek (5:41). Write out Jesus' words in Aramaic and English in verse 41.

4. The woman with the bleeding problem was desperate. Imagine her fighting through the crowd to get to Jesus. Where did the woman with the bleeding problem get the idea to touch Jesus' clothes? Perhaps from someone else who had been healed in that way. Write out Mark 3:10.
5. Why was the woman so afraid in Mark 5:33?⁶⁴
6. Both the woman and Jairus demonstrate their absolute need for Jesus. Notice that Jairus (v. 22) and the woman (v. 33) fell at Jesus' feet. We can begin the Christian life like Jairus and the woman, with a deep sense of desperation and need for Jesus, but it can quickly diminish if we're not careful.

Lesson 25: A Journey of Faith (Mk 6:1–13)

Review: What language did Jesus use when speaking to the dead girl?

1. By comparing Mark 5 with other references, a pattern emerges in Jesus' behavior. Summarize the following verses:

- Luke 7:36 –

- Luke 11:37 –

- Luke 24:28–29 –

- Mark 5:17–18 –

- Mark 5:22–24 –

- Revelation 3:20 –

2. What is the pattern of Jesus' social behavior?⁶⁵

3. Read Mark 6:1–13 then list the main points below.⁶⁶

4. If you were Jesus, and you wanted your followers to carry on your mission, what instructions would you give them before they went on a mission trip?

5. List Jesus' traveling instructions in Mark 6:7–11.⁶⁷

6. The final instruction of shaking the dust off their feet conveyed the following significance:

Shaking the dust from the feet was a symbolic action normally performed by a Jew who had been abroad on his re-entry into Palestine: foreign dust must not contaminate Jewish soil . . . Such an action on the part of the disciples was clearly meant to indicate that the village or town which had rejected them was no longer to be regarded as part of the Jewish nation.^{xi}

7. What do you find especially strange about Jesus' instructions?
8. Jesus' instructions show that he was requiring his followers to go on a journey of trust. Would you go on a trip if you were not allowed to bring money or food?
9. "They went out and preached that people should _____" (Mk 6:12). John the Baptist (1:4), Jesus (1:15), and the twelve apostles all preached that people should repent. **Repent** = turn around. What do people need to repent or turn from?

^{xi} Morna Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark: Black's New Testament Commentaries* (London: A&C Black, 1991; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999), 157.

Lesson 26: Review

Review: What pattern did we see in Jesus' behavior in the previous lesson?

1. Practice lectio divina with the verse below.

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. (Rev 3:20)

2. List three facts about each lesson listed below then draw a quick sketch or diagram related to each. (Try to do this from memory, but if you need to, look at the previous lessons.)

- The Chosen Twelve (3:7–19)

- Falsely Accused (3:20–35)

- Blasphemy (3:28–29)
- Parables of the Kingdom (4:1–34)
- Calming the Storm (4:35–41)

- Lord over Demons (5:1–20)

- Lord over Disease and Death (5:21–43)

- A Journey of Faith (6:1–13)

3. Write out two or three verses from Mark 3:7–6:13 that you would like to memorize.

Lesson 27: John's Death (Mk 6:14–29)

Review: “Whoever _____ God’s _____ is my brother and sister and mother” (Mk 3:35).

1. The Herods were the Jewish rulers over Palestine during the New Testament times. (Herod was the family name.) They were appointed by Rome (Gentiles), and therefore, supported the Roman Empire, but they also had to show sympathy to the Jews. The two most prominent Herods in the New Testament are Herod the Great and Herod Antipas. Here are a few facts about each.

Herod the Great (37 BC—4 BC)

- Ruled over all of Palestine
- Ordered the massacre of the male children two years and under in Bethlehem (Mt 2:16)
- Responsible for massive building projects – rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, aqueducts, the city of Caesarea (named in honor of Caesar)
- Pursued an active policy of Hellenization
- Executed two of his sons and his favorite wife
- Left his kingdom to three of his surviving sons: Archelaus, Antipas, and Philip

Herod Antipas (4 BC—AD 39)

- Ruled over Galilee during Jesus’ lifetime
- Acted like a good Jew—e.g., celebrated the Jewish festivals in Jerusalem
- Founded a new capital in AD 17 and called it Tiberias in honor of the Emperor Tiberius. The city was built on an old Jewish graveyard, which didn’t please loyal Jews.
- Married his half-brother Philip’s wife (Mk 6:17)
- Responsible for the death of John the Baptist (Mk 6:27)
- It was reported that he wanted to kill Jesus (Lk 13:31)
- Jesus called him a fox (Lk. 13:32)
- Glad to see Jesus because he wanted to see him perform a sign (Lk 23:8)
- Questioned Jesus (Lk 23:9)
- Treated Jesus with contempt (Lk 23:10)
- Didn’t find any reason to condemn Jesus (Lk 23:14–15)

2. Search online for a map showing the territories of Antipas, Philip, and Archelaus then trace it below.

3. Read Mark 6:14–29 then put the facts in this story related to Herod in chronological order.⁶⁸

4. What life application ideas can you derive from Mark 6:14–29?⁶⁹

5. Many see the story of John's death as a foreshadowing of Jesus' death. Both John and Jesus are innocent, righteous men who speak the truth, yet die at the hands of the wicked.

Lesson 28: Feeding Five Thousand (Mk 6:30–44)

Review: Who are the two most prominent Herods in the New Testament?

1. The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle Jesus performed during his public ministry that is recorded in all four Gospels (Mt 14:13–21; Mk 6:30–44; Lk 9:10–17; Jn 6:1–15). The text says, “The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand” (v. 44), so if women and children were not included in the count, the total number may have been fifteen to twenty thousand.
2. Read Mark 6:30–44 then imagine that you are a person in the crowd and write a journal entry using your five senses. (What did you see, smell, hear, taste, touch?) Or draw a picture instead of writing a journal entry.

3. What are the big ideas in Mark 6:30–44?⁷⁰

4. Write out Jesus' words in Mark 6:31 and Matthew 11:28.

5. What do you do to relax and rest?

6. Do you know anyone who is a workaholic? What's the remedy for workaholics?

7. What plans have you made that didn't work out? How did you respond?

8. Who have you recently felt compassion for? What did your compassion lead you to do?

9. Read Psalm 23 and list the similarities between that chapter and this story in Mark.⁷¹

Lesson 29: Walking on Water (Mk 6:45–56)

Review: List two big ideas from the story of Jesus feeding five thousand.

1. Write out Mark 6:45–56 below. (I know it's a few verses, but imagine the ancient scribes who hand copied the entire Bible. And many people say that writing out the Bible has helped them engage with the meaning of Scripture on a deeper level.)

2. You may noticed Mark's tendency to use the word "immediately" (v. 45). He used it six times prior to 6:45 (1:30, 42; 2:8; 5:29, 42; 6:27). Since things happen quickly or "immediately" in Mark, it has become known as the action-packed Gospel.
3. In Greek "shortly before dawn" in verse 48 is literally "about the fourth watch of the night." The night was divided into four watches:
 - 1.) evening (6 p.m.—9 p.m.)
 - 2.) midnight (9 p.m.—12 a.m.)
 - 3.) cockcrow (12 a.m.—3 a.m.)
 - 4.) dawn (3 a.m.—6 a.m.)
4. Using biblegateway.com list how four other English Bible versions translate the time indicated in Mark 6:48.⁷²
5. The disciples struggled in the night, but Jesus came to them just before the morning. In the Bible there's something special about the break of day. What happens at daybreak in the following verses?
 - Genesis 32:22–28 –
 - Psalm 46:5 –

- Mark 16:1–7 –

6. David wrote, For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. (Ps 30:5)
7. Why was Jesus about to pass by the disciples in verse 48?⁷³
8. In verse 49, Mark is showing us that life can get difficult obeying Jesus' commands. The disciples must have been exhausted just trying to obey Jesus and this wasn't the first time obeying Jesus put them in the middle of a storm (see 4:35–41). However, unlike the previous storm, Jesus wasn't with them in the boat. Instead they were by themselves on the lake, straining to row their boat in the wind, in the middle of the night, and then they saw what they thought was a ghost walking toward them. Could it get any worse? Have you ever felt like your situation couldn't get any worse?
9. In Greek "It is I" in verse 50 is literally translated "I am." So Jesus is saying, "Take courage! I am. Don't be afraid." "I am" is the name God used for himself in Exodus.

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exod 3:14)
10. The disciples should have been expecting the miraculous by now, but their hearts were hardened. Perhaps they were too busy serving the crowd to reflect on where the food came from (6:51–52). How can you keep your heart sensitive to what God is doing in your life?

Lesson 30: Where's your Heart? (Mk 7:1–23)

Review: True or False. The disciples understood that Jesus miraculously multiplied the bread.

1. Jesus teaches that our hearts can be set on two things that can harm us: human traditions and evil. Before we begin, here are a few definitions for this lesson.

- **Tradition** = a pattern of behavior passed down from one generation to another. It literally means “what is handed on.”
- **Hypocrite** = actor, someone who puts on a mask to play a part
- **Corban** = a gift devoted to God
- **Nullify** = to make invalid or void
- **Defile** = to make unclean

2. Read Mark 7:1–13 then answer the following questions.

- The word “tradition” is used _____ times in Mark 7:1–13.⁷⁴
- What traditions are mentioned in Mark 7:1–13?⁷⁵
- What is the primary problem with human traditions according to Jesus?⁷⁶

- List a few Christian traditions. Do these traditions interfere with God’s commands?

3. Read Mark 7:14–23 then answer the following questions.

- What does the expression “garbage in, garbage out” mean? From Mark 7:14–23, do you think Jesus would support that statement?⁷⁷

- Copy the items on Jesus’ list of evil in Mark 7:21–22.⁷⁸

- Make at least two observations on Jesus’ list of evil.⁷⁹

4. In this passage, Jesus reminds us that being clean is not a matter of following outward rules and human traditions; it’s a matter of the heart. Our hearts are easily prone to focus on observing traditions, even when they lead us away from God’s will. Additionally, Jesus teaches that food doesn’t defile us before God. The things that defile us are much deeper—in our hearts.

Lesson 31: The Evil Inside (Mk 7:21–23)

Review: List three things on Jesus' list of evil.

1. We have been seeing that Jesus can be tough. He called the religious leaders hypocrites and he exposed evil in the human heart. Take two minutes and write down words or concepts that you associate with the word evil.
2. Write out the following verses:
 - Proverbs 20:9 –
 - Jeremiah 17:9 –
3. Read and summarize Romans 7:14–20.

4. David, Solomon, Jeremiah, Paul, and Jesus all taught that the human heart is evil. We're not battling to keep sin from finding a way in. Sin is already there. Does your internal experience and your observations of others match that assertion? Why or why not?

5. If there was a line separating good from evil, the entire human race would be on the evil side. While there are different levels of evil, we're all on the wrong side of the line. So evil resides within and it leads us in the wrong direction. That's why John, Jesus, and the apostles all preached that people should repent or turn around. Here's how one author put it:

If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart.^{xii}

6. Finally, it's important to balance this idea of human evil with the idea of human goodness. In Genesis 1, God created everything, including humans, and he declared all of it, "very good" (v. 31). So our existence is good. In fact, our existence is "very good" because we were made in God's image (Gen 1:26–27). But we have turned from our source of goodness, and in so doing, have become evil. So we are both good in one sense, and evil in another sense.

^{xii} Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956*. (English trans.: New York: Harpor & Row, 1974), 168.

Lesson 32: Demon-Possessed Girl and Deaf Man (Mk 7:24–37)

Review: Our existence is “very _____” because we were made in God’s image.

1. Read and summarize Mark 7:24–37.

2. The first story (Mk 7:24–30) sounds strange because Jesus seems to be rude and even offensive, but keep in mind:

- This is the first time Jesus has gone outside the borders of Israel in Mark and it’s the first Gentile (non-Jew), who is explicitly mentioned in Mark. In general, Gentiles worshiped false gods (see Judges 10:6), while Jews worshiped the one and only true God. The Jews were the one people group on earth that had a special relationship with God and that relationship began with Abraham.
- Notice the word “first” in Mark 7:27. Instead of denying the woman’s request, Jesus is telling her to wait her turn. However, this delay is unique in Mark because up to this point Jesus has only been granting requests. The Jews are first because of God’s relationship with them (Mt 10:5–6; 15:24; Rom 1:16). When God sent his Son to earth, he sent him first to the Jews, the people he had a special relationship with. This woman stands outside of that special relationship, and therefore, she wasn’t Jesus’ priority at the time.

- Notice the woman's persistence in verse 28. Martin Luther believed that God's ultimate yes is hidden in his preliminary no. Jesus taught his followers to be persistent (Mt 7:7–8). Perhaps God wants to see how badly we want what we ask him to give us. How else could the woman have responded to Jesus' statement in verse 27?⁸⁰
 - While the story shows a distinction between Jews and Gentiles, now because of Jesus' death and resurrection, the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles has been destroyed (Rom 3:10; 10:11–13; Gal 3:28; Eph 2:14; Col 3:11).
3. In the second story (Mk 7:31–37), Jesus travels to the region of the Decapolis. **Decapolis** = ten cities. What happened the last time Jesus visited the Decapolis (see Mk 5:17–20)?
4. What possible explanation is there for Jesus' rejection and then warm reception in the Decapolis?⁸¹
5. Why did Jesus "put his fingers into the man's ears" then "spit and touched the man's tongue" in verse 33?⁸²

Lesson 33: Review

1. As a review of Mark 3:7–7:37, list three facts about each lesson listed below then draw a quick sketch or diagram related to each. (Try to do this from memory, but if you need to, look at the previous lessons.)
- John's Death (Mk 6:14–29)
 - Feeding Five Thousand (Mk 6:30–44)
 - Walking on Water (Mk 6:45–56)

- Where's your Heart (Mk 7:1–23)
- The Evil Inside (Mk 7:21–23)
- Demon-Possessed Girl and Deaf Man (Mk 7:24–37)

Congratulations! You have completed the 33 lessons on Mark 1–7. If you would like to see what you remember, review Lessons 18–32 on Mark 3:7–7:37 then take the test in the next section. Revelation 3:20 is a memory verse on the test.

*If you have enjoyed this study, please check bible-bridge.com for more studies.

TEST 2 (MARK 3:7–7:37)

Define the Following (3 pts. each):

1. Legion –
2. Blaspheme –
3. Apostle –
4. Exorcise –
5. Tradition –
6. Hypocrite –

Fill in the Blank (2 pts. each)

7. “There is no one _____, not even _____.” (Rom 3:10)
8. “It is I” is literally translated as _____.
9. Jesus’ list of evil starts with our _____.
10. Jesus said, “_____ let the children eat all they want” (Mk 7:27).
11. Jesus said, “Come with me . . . to a quiet place and get some _____” (Mk 6:31).
12. Jeremiah said, “the _____ is deceitful above all things” (Jer 17:10).
13. Jesus asked, “Why are you so _____ ? Have you still no _____?” (Mk 4:40).
14. The disciples exclaimed, “Even the _____ and the _____ obey him!” (Mk 4:41).
15. In Mark 5, Jesus shows that he is Lord of _____, _____ and _____.

16. The names of Jesus' twelve apostles are listed in Mark chapter _____.
17. The apostles went out and preached that people should _____.
18. Jesus said, "Whoever does _____ is my brother and sister and mother" (Mk 3:35).
19. Herod _____ ruled over Galilee during Jesus' lifetime.

True or False (2 pts. each)

- ____ 20. The sun represents Satan in the parable of the sower.
- ____ 21. According to Mark, Jesus had brothers and sisters.
- ____ 22. The teachers of the law committed the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.
- ____ 23. Peter is always placed first in the lists of apostles.
- ____ 24. Jesus' family accused him of being possessed by Beelzebul.
- ____ 25. The Syrian-Phoenician woman was a Gentile.
- ____ 26. Jesus spoke to the little girl in Arabic.
- ____ 27. Jesus was amazed at the great faith in his hometown.
- ____ 28. Jesus allowed his apostles to take a staff for their journey.
- ____ 29. Herod the Great was responsible for the death of John the Baptist.
- ____ 30. Herod Antipas thought Jesus was John raised from the dead.
- ____ 31. The feeding of the five thousand is recorded in all four Gospels.
- ____ 32. Jesus' list of evil is found in Mark 6.

_____ 33. David said, "Surely I was sinful at birth."

Short Answer (6 pts. each)

34. Write out Revelation 3:20 then state Jesus' pattern of social behavior in the Gospels.

35. What is unique about Jesus' command to the man who was demon-possessed in Mark 5? Does that strategy seem to have been successful? Why or why not?

36. List three obstacles that keep the seed of God's word from growing in our lives.

37. Explain how the following quote challenges you: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me" (Mk 7:6).

38. Circle one lesson that made a big impression on you from Mark 3:7–7:37 then explain why.

- The Chosen Twelve (3:7–19)
- Falsely Accused (3:20–35)
- Blasphemy (3:28–29)
- Parables of the Kingdom (4:1–34)
- Calming the Storm (4:35–41)
- Lord over Demons (5:1–20)
- Lord over Disease and Death (5:21–43)
- A Journey of Faith (6:1–13)
- John's Death (6:14–29)
- Feeding Five Thousand (6:30–44)
- Walking on Water (6:45–56)
- Where's your Heart (7:1–23)
- The Evil Inside (7:21–23)
- Demon-Possessed Girl and Deaf Man (7:24–37)

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ANSWERS

- 1 Like people today, people then grew up in a family, ate, slept, dreamed, loved, argued, felt guilty, worried, hoped, got sick, and died.
- 2 Hi-tech, fast paced, global village, well-traveled, rich and poor, materialistic.
- 3 Steamship, railway, factories, refrigerators
- 4 T.V., computer, internet, GPS, cell phones . . .
- 5 The spread of Western culture and the English language.
- 6 The writers believed they had a great story to tell and they believed Jesus' life could positively affect others.
- 7 Matthew – a genealogy that starts with Abraham (c. two thousand years before Jesus)
Mark – starts with John the Baptist & Jesus (when he's about thirty years old)
Luke – begins with the birth of John the Baptist and the birth of Jesus
John – "In the beginning" (before creation)
- 8
 - Isaiah prophesied about him (vv. 2–3)
 - baptized people in the desert region (v. 4)
 - practiced a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (v. 4). (John wasn't the first to baptize. By Jesus' day, baptism was a requirement for entrance into Judaism and cleansing with water was required for defiled Jews.)
 - successful and popular (v. 5). (Mark seems to be using hyperbole here with the word "all." It's like saying "everyone was at the party." Hyperbole = exaggeration for effect.)
 - wore camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist (v. 6; cf. 2 K. 1:8)
 - ate locusts and wild honey (v. 6)
 - his message was about someone who was
 - coming after him
 - more powerful than him
 - more worthy than him
 - going to baptize people with the Holy Spirit (vv. 7–8)

9

- His humility. During a time when people were confessing their sins, Jesus went out to John and stood in line with everyone else, even though he had nothing to repent of. Jesus identified himself with sinners at the start of his ministry (baptism) and at the end of his ministry (crucifixion).
- His divinity. God the Father announced that Jesus was his Son. The Son has the same nature as the Father.

10 While the voice speaks in slightly different words, the point is the same—Jesus is God’s Son, so it cannot be a contradiction.

11 We can only speculate, but perhaps the idea is that Jesus has to do battle with Satan at the beginning of his ministry if he’s going to conquer Satan throughout his ministry.

12 He doesn’t tell us who won. Mark basically says, “Jesus went out to the desert to be tempted by Satan, wild animals and angels were there.” Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark also doesn’t tell us that Jesus was fasting, or give details of the temptation. This is characteristic of Mark’s writing; he gets to the point quickly. He assumes we can figure out who won. For more information we have to read Matthew or Luke. (John doesn’t have the same temptation story.)

13

- Jesus is the Lord who has a path prepared for him according to the prophecy (vv. 2–3).
- Jesus is the one who is more powerful than John (v. 7).
- Jesus is the one who God acknowledged as his Son (v. 11).
- Jesus is the one who is led by the Spirit (v. 12).
- Jesus is the one who defeated Satan in the wilderness (v. 13).

14 Quiz 1

1. good news
2. Isaiah
3. untie Jesus’ sandals
4. Son, love, pleased
5. False
6. common view; Matthew, Mark, Luke
7. 2,000
8. Anointed one
9. 40
10. False

15

- “The time has come” – He knows the divine timetable.

-
- “The kingdom of God has come near” – He’s focused on the rule of God.
 - “Repent” – He knows that people are going the wrong way. The Son of God steps into our world and his first command to us is repent. **Repent** = turn around. We’re all like cars driving in the wrong direction.
 - “Believe the good news” – He commands people to believe something.
 - “Come, Follow me” – He knows where he’s going and commands people to follow.
 - “I will send you out to fish for people” – His goal is for us to reach out to others.

16

- A. Jesus goes to the synagogue (1:21–28)
 - 1. Taught
 - 2. Drove out a demon
- B. Jesus goes to Simon and Andrew’s home (1:29–34)
 - 1. Healed Simon’s mother-in-law
 - 2. Healed many and drove out many demons
- C. Jesus goes to a solitary place to pray (1:35–38)
 - 1. Simon and friends look for and find Jesus
 - 2. Jesus announces his plan to preach in the other towns
- D. Jesus travels throughout Galilee preaching and driving out demons (1:39)

17 His authority. Jesus teaches with authority and he drives out demons with authority. **Authority** = the right to command action and belief.

18 Because the Sabbath ended at sunset. When the Sabbath ended Jewish people were free to travel and work.

19

- 1. Wear torn clothes
- 2. Have unkempt hair
- 3. Cover the lower part of his face
- 4. Cry out “Unclean! Unclean”
- 5. Live alone, outside the camp

20 Four

21 If Jesus was angry here, it could be because the leper questioned his willingness to heal.

22 The story began with a lonely leper, but by the end Jesus has to stay “outside in lonely places” (v. 45).

23 Quiz 2

1. The right to command belief and action; the rule of God; turn around
2. See Mark 1:15 and 1:17
3. authority
4. clean
5. Simon, Andrew, James, John
6. see Answer #19 above
7. We follow his teachings and the example of his life.
8. See an online map.

24

Mark 2:16–3:6

- Questioned Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners
- Fasted
- Questioned Jesus' disciples for picking heads of grain on the Sabbath
- Plotted how they could kill Jesus

Mark 7:1–5

- Didn't eat unless they gave their hands a ceremonial washing
- Observed many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers, and kettles
- Questioned Jesus about why his disciples didn't follow the tradition of washing their hands

Matthew 23:1–7

- Sat in Moses' seat
- Did not practice what they preached
- Placed heavy burdens on people
- Did things to impress people

25

1. "Why does this fellow talk like that?" *Teachers of the law thinking to themselves* (2:7)
2. "Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" *Pharisees ask disciples* (2:16)
3. "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?" *Some people ask Jesus* (2:18)
4. "Why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" *Pharisees ask Jesus* (2:23)

26 Opposition to Jesus begins with a thought in Mark 2:7 then turned to outright hatred and the desire to kill Jesus in Mark 3:6. Everything was going well for Jesus in Mark 1. But things have quickly turned for the worse by Mark 3:6. Who is opposing Jesus? The religious authorities were Jesus' primary opponents. Why? Because he challenged their authority by his teaching and behavior. Jesus wasn't a conformist; he wasn't content to simply go along with the traditions of his day. That doesn't mean Jesus

opposed everything. He kept the Jewish festivals and probably received a typical Jewish education. But he definitely had a strong backbone and wasn't afraid to disagree with the authorities when necessary.

27

- He forgave sins (2:7)
- He ate with tax collectors and sinners (2:16)
- His disciples didn't fast (2:18)
- His disciples picked heads of grain on the Sabbath (2:24) (Regarding eating heads of grain from someone else's field read Deut 23:25.)
- He healed on the Sabbath (3:2, 6)

28 The new movement Jesus is starting is not going to fit with the old ways of doing things. The new unshrunk cloth cannot be sewn onto the old cloth. And the new wine cannot be poured into old wine-skins.

29 Five

30 Human life is more important than keeping the Sabbath. Since Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, he has the right to make the judgment on what violates the Sabbath.

31 See Answer #26

32 Quiz 3

1. to remove an offense so that it no longer affects the relationship
2. They collected taxes for the Roman Empire who were occupying the land, but Jews believed the land was given to them by God.
3. Daniel 7
4. healthy, sick
5. separated ones
6. student, learner, pupil
7. False
8. False
9. Forgave the paralytic's sins; ate with tax collectors and sinners; his disciples didn't fast like John's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples; his disciples picked heads of grain on the Sabbath; he healed on the Sabbath
10. Lord

33 Jesus says Abiathar was the priest, but in Samuel we read that Ahimelech was the priest.

34

- Mark's phrase "in the days of Abiathar the high priest" doesn't mean when Abiathar was the actual high priest, but it refers to the general time period when Abiathar lived. Abiathar served as a priest with his father Ahimelech (1 Sam 22:20–23; 23:6). Jesus referred to the son (Abiathar) instead of the father (Ahimelech) and they were both working closely together as priests so how much does the difference matter?
- There is a difference between Mark and 1 Samuel, but it shouldn't bother us because it wouldn't have bothered the ancient readers. Without recording machines, video cameras, printing machines or even quotation marks, the standards of accuracy weren't as high as they are today. The reason modern readers have a problem with this passage is because we have higher expectations of accuracy.
- 1 Samuel is wrong. It wasn't Ahimelech; it was Abiathar as Mark says.
- Mark (or Jesus) is wrong. It wasn't Abiathar; it was Ahimelech as Samuel says. (If you want more information on this issue, including technical details on the ancient manuscripts, see the article written by Daniel B. Wallace at <https://bible.org/article/mark-226-and-problem-abiathar>)

35

- Messiah or Christ (1:1)
- The Son of God (1:1)
- My Son (1:11)
- The Holy One of God (1:24)
- Son of Man (2:10)

36

- Nazareth (1:9)
- Capernaum (1:21)
- Throughout Galilee (1:39)
- Capernaum (2:1)

37

- Serious – spoke sternly (1:25)
- Moved with compassion (or anger) (1:41)
- Serious – gave a strong warning (1:43)
- Angry (3:5)
- Deeply distressed (3:5)

38 Test 1 (Mark 1:1–3:6)

1. good news
2. the rule of God
3. anointed one

-
4. the right to command action and belief
 5. to remove an offense so that it no longer affects the relationship
 6. pupil, student, learner
 7. to turn around
 8. True
 9. False
 10. True
 11. False
 12. True
 13. True
 14. True
 15. True
 16. False
 17. True
 18. True
 19. Galilee
 20. kingdom, God
 21. fence
 22. traitors, thieves
 23. Son, man
 24. 40
 25. Lord, Sabbath
 26. authority, forgive
 27. Son, love
 28. willing, clean
 29. powerful
 30. forgave the paralytic's sins; ate with tax collectors and sinners; his disciples didn't fast like John's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples; his disciples picked heads of grain on the Sabbath; he healed on the Sabbath
 31. Personal answer
 32. See map online

39

1. that they might be with him
2. that he might send them out to preach
3. and to have authority to drive out demons

*Notice what comes first. Jesus wanted them to spend time with them before they went out and did things for him.

40 No one knows for sure, but probably because there were twelve tribes of Israel (Num 1:20–46). Notice how there are twelve plus one (Jesus). Jesus stands over the Twelve, who represent the new Israel.

41 It would have been scandalous in Jesus' time to have female disciples. The culture was very patriarchal. Men weren't even supposed to talk with women who weren't relatives. But Jesus broke free from those cultural constraints by speaking to the woman at the well (Jn 4) and by having close female followers (Lk 8:1–3).

42 The names of the Twelve: Simon, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Thaddaeus/Judas son of James, Judas Iscariot

43

- Peter is always first and Judas is always last.
- Mark gives more nicknames.
- Matthew the only one to state, "the tax collector."
- Luke's account emphasizes prayer.
- The words "became a traitor" are only found in Luke.
- Two James', two Simon's, two Judas' in Luke's account.
- Thaddaeus must be another name for Judas son of James.
- The Twelve were not from one particular group. Jesus chose fishermen, a tax collector, and a zealot.

44

- Jesus' family goes to "take charge of him" (vv. 20–21)
- The scribes accuse Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebub (v. 22)
- Jesus responds (vv. 23–29)
- Jesus' family arrives (vv. 31–32)
- Jesus responds (vv. 33–35)

45 That makes no sense. Why would Satan oppose himself by driving out demons? If that's what's happening then Satan's kingdom is ready to fall. Satan is not approving of what I'm doing, rather I've tied up Satan and I'm now plundering his house. But be very careful about what you're saying because those who speak against the Holy Spirit won't be forgiven.

46 It seems like they were expecting him to go and see them right away.

47 **Blaspheme** = to speak evil or irreverently of God

48 No. The line of blaspheming the Holy Spirit isn't easy to cross because God is extremely patient. Apparently these teachers were on the edge of committing this act. Jesus' words seem to be a warning rather than a direct condemnation. The religious teachers were calling good evil, and calling the ultimate

good—the Holy Spirit—an evil spirit. Imagine saying that Jesus was a sorcerer, that he performed his miracles by black magic. It's difficult to see how their hearts could have been any darker or harder. Think of how Jesus only went around doing good, healing people, and teaching them to love one another and yet they dared to speak this way about him.

49 Evil speech is a symptom of something deeper—an evil heart. This is why some equate the unforgivable sin with the general sin of unbelief or rejection of God. Jesus' stern warning reminds us that God's mercy is immense, "all sins will be forgiven the children of man" (Mk. 3:28), but not infinite, "whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness" (Mk. 3:29). God runs out of patience at some point with human beings and that point is when we speak evil of his Holy Spirit, when we reject and malign the only one who can bring us to Christ. And again that rejection would have to come from a very hard heart. Most say if you're worried you've committed this sin, you haven't. Those who have, don't care, their hearts are too hard.

50 Parable = a story which uses an analogy to make a point.

51

- Birds = Satan (vv. 4, 15)
- Sun = trouble or persecution (vv. 6, 17)
- Thorns = worries of this life, deceitfulness of wealth & desires for other things (v. 19)

52

1. Path, the birds ate the seed, N/A
2. Rocky and shallow ground, sun scorched the plants, withered and died
3. Thorns, choked the plants, no grain
4. Good, no hindrances, produced a crop

53

- Think they understood it then walk away. These people didn't understand that there was a deeper meaning to the story.
- Walk away confused and disappointed thinking, "What's the point?" These people probably concluded that listening to Jesus was a waste of time.
- Ask him what his words mean. Notice that the twelve disciples and "others" asked Jesus for an explanation (v. 10). There was an opportunity for those who wanted to understand to hear the explanation directly from Jesus. (See Michael R. Cosby, *Portraits of Jesus: An Inductive Approach to the Gospels*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999. pg 26.)

54 Jesus' statement makes it sound like God doesn't want people to understand or even be forgiven, which doesn't seem right. In fact, Isaiah was sent on a mission to "make their ears dull and close their eyes" (Is 6:10). But these were people who had already turned from God and weren't listening to the call to repent, so God was solidifying them in their obstinance. In Mark 4, Jesus makes a distinction

between two groups: 1.) his disciples with “the others around him” and 2.) “those on the outside.” It was those on the outside who were the focus of the hard statement in verse 12. But notice that anyone who wanted to be in the first group—anyone who wanted to truly understand the parable—could have been. All that was required was that they stay behind and listen to Jesus’ explanation.

55 Remember the meaning of the parable was hidden from Jesus’ audience, but then he revealed it to his core group. If we connect that with Mark 4:21–25, he is saying that while things may be confusing or not fully understood, everything will be explained or “brought out into the open” (v. 22). And then he encourages them to make sure that they seek a true understanding by saying “Consider carefully what you hear” (v. 24).

56

- Mysterious growth (4:26–29). Notice the phrase, “he doesn’t know how” (v. 27). How amazing is it that a seed goes into the ground and becomes a giant tree? That’s what God’s kingdom is like.
- Massive growth from a tiny seed to a giant plant (4:30–32). For example, Jesus called twelve men to be his disciples and now there are two billion people who claim to be Christians. God’s kingdom also grows dynamically on a personal level. For some, it begins with hearing a Bible story or meeting a Christian, and then God’s rule exponentially expands in the human heart.

57

- The trip was Jesus’ idea (v. 35). Just because Jesus tells us to do something doesn’t mean we’ll have smooth sailing.
- The disciples had a near-death experience (v. 38). What if your airplane pilot said he had to make an emergency landing? How would you feel? Why did the disciples wake Jesus? The disciples didn’t go to Jesus for help; they went to tell him that they were going to die.
- Jesus was fully human. As a human, he needed sleep. And notice that he was “sleeping on a cushion.” Jesus didn’t refuse all creaturely comforts.
- Jesus was in control. He didn’t get stressed out. In verse 39, Jesus “rebuked” the wind. This is the same Greek verb used when Jesus rebukes demons (see 1:25; 3:12; 9:25).
- Fear is the opposite of faith. The most repeated command in the Bible is “Do not fear.” What are you afraid of?

58 Quiz 4

1. The names of the apostles are found in Mk 3:16–19.
2. “That they might be with him” (3:14)
3. Jesus’ family accused him of being out of his mind, the teachers of the law accused Jesus of being possessed by Satan.
4. to speak evil or irreverently of God
5. afraid; faith

-
6. see Mark 3:35
 7. 1.) Satan, 2.) troubles or persecution, 3.) worries, 4.) deceitfulness of wealth, 5.) desires for other things
 8. Who; this

59 It gives us a visible demonstration of the power of evil that was inside the man. Without that image it would be difficult for us to appreciate the evil force the man was struggling with.

60 Perhaps because they believed Jesus ruined their livelihood. What were they going to do now that all of the pigs were dead?

61 The people drove Jesus away, but he left a witness of his power behind. Jesus doesn't give up on the Decapolis; he returns to it in Mark 7:31.

62 In the Bible, demons are usually seen inhabiting human beings. This is the only story in the Bible where demons enter animals. If demons can inhabit inanimate objects, their preference seems to be living things, specifically humans.

63

- "Should I leave my daughter or stay with her? This may be her last few moments" (5:22).
- "He's the only one who can help me" (5:23).
- "My plan has worked so far. The miracle worker is on his way to heal my daughter" (5:24).
- "We're in a hurry, we've got to get to my daughter. I wish this crowd would leave us alone" (5:24b–34).
- "It's over. We're too late" (5:35)
- "What did he just say? What can he possibly do now?" or perhaps Jairus was full of faith, "He can raise up my daughter even if she's dead" (5:36).

64 According to Leviticus, the woman's bleeding problem made her unclean, and therefore, anything she came into contact with became unclean (15:25–27). Based on the rules, she shouldn't have been touching others.

65 Jesus goes where he's welcomed. He doesn't force himself on people. If you want him to leave, he'll leave, even though he's the Lord of the universe. If you want him to hang out with you, he will. Reflect on that thought for a minute or two.

66

- Jesus went to Nazareth, his hometown.
- He preached and many were amazed.
- He was rejected.
- He said that prophets are not accepted by their relatives

-
- He only did a few miracles because of their lack of faith, which amazed him (the only other place Jesus is amazed in the Gospels is Luke 7:9)
 - He then sent his twelve disciples out in groups of two
 - Before they left, he gave them traveling instructions
 - They went out, preached, drove out demons and healed many sick people

67

- Go out two by two (v. 7) The OT required at least two witnesses to substantiate a matter (Dt 17:6; 19:15).
- Drive out impure spirits and heal (in v. 7 and v. 13)
- Preach (implied in vv. 11–12)
- Take nothing for the journey except a staff (v. 8). The Greek word for staff “may refer either to a walking stick or to a staff used by shepherds to tend their sheep. If Mark means for us to understand *rhabdon* as a shepherd’s staff, why would Jesus give such an implement to fishermen and tax collectors?” (Cosby 30).
- Don’t take bread, a bag, or money (v. 8)
- Wear sandals (v. 9)
- Don’t wear two tunics (v. 9) – a tunic is a long undergarment
- Stay in the same house until departing (v. 10)
- Shake off the dust from your feet in places that don’t welcome you (v. 11)

68

- He was a king (v. 14)
- He married Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife (v. 17)
- He was reprimanded by John for marrying Herodias (v. 18)
- He arrested and imprisoned John for the sake of Herodias (v. 17)
- He feared and protected John, even though Herodias wanted John executed (v. 20)
- He knew that John was a righteous and holy man (v. 20)
- He liked to listen to John but was confused by what he heard (v. 20)
- He celebrated his own birthday by having a banquet for the leaders of Galilee (v. 21)
- He was pleased by the dancing of Herodias’ daughter (v. 22)
- He promised to give Herodias’ daughter whatever she wished (vv. 22-23)
- He greatly regretted his promise, but kept his word (v. 26)
- He had John beheaded (v. 27)
- He concluded that Jesus was John raised from the dead (v. 16) (probably shows a guilty conscience)

69

- Speaking the truth may cost us. John would not have been arrested if he didn’t speak against Herod’s marriage.
- Be careful not to make rash promises.

70

- **Jesus wants us to get our rest (6:31).** If we work, we should rest.
- **Sometimes our plans don't work out (6:31, 34).** Jesus wanted to get his disciples away from the crowds, but the crowds learned of the plan and met them on the other side of the lake. Notice how Jesus reacted. He wasn't upset at the crowd; he had compassion on them (6:34).
- **Compassion should lead to action (6:34).** Out of compassion for the crowd, Jesus taught and fed them. Notice that Jesus cares about the spiritual *and* physical aspects of life. He wanted his disciples to get their rest, and he made sure that the people were fed.
- **Some of Jesus' commands are impossible to do without his help (6:37).** "You give them something to eat" (v. 37) was an impossible command for the disciples. How could they possibly feed thousands of people?
- **Jesus can multiply our limited resources (6:41–42).** Give the little you have to God and watch him multiply it.

71

- "The Lord is my shepherd" (Ps 23:1) → The crowd was like sheep without a shepherd (Mk 6:34)
- "He makes me lie down in green pastures" (Ps 23:2) → He commanded all the people sit down on the green grass (Mk 6:39)
- "You prepare a table before me" (Ps 23:5) → "all ate and were satisfied" (Mk 6:42)

*Jesus is the good shepherd of Psalm 23.

72

- "early in the morning" (NRSV)
- "About three o'clock in the morning" (NLT)
- "about the fourth watch of the night" (NASB)
- "Not long before morning" (CEV)
- "Very early in the morning" (CEB)

73 It seemed like he was going out to help them, but then it says, "He was about to pass by them." That's a mysterious detail in the story. Maybe he expected them to make it to the other side because he commanded them to do so in verse 45. Or perhaps from the disciples' perspective it looked like Jesus was walking by.

74 Six (vv. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13)

75

- Ceremonial washing of the hands before eating (v. 3)
- Washing of cups, pitchers and kettles (v. 4)
- Claiming Corban so that children didn't have to help parents (vv. 11–12)

76 Traditions have the power to nullify or invalidate God's commands (v. 13). Human traditions can be like the word VOID on a bank check.

77 In Mark 7:14–23, Jesus says the garbage is already in, you don't have to put it there, and when it comes out, it makes us "unclean."

78

- Evil thoughts
- Sexual immorality
- Theft
- Murder
- Adultery
- Greed
- Malice
- Deceit
- Lewdness
- Envy
- Slander
- Arrogance
- Folly

79

- The list starts with thoughts. Our thoughts can be evil. There should be a little screening process in our brain that tells us when we're thinking something evil. Don't allow your brain to run wild. Say no to evil thoughts and confess evil thoughts to God. Thoughts lead to actions.
- Three items refer to sexual sins – sexual immorality, adultery, and lewdness.
- We can divide the list into two categories:
 - Actions – sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, lewdness, slander
 - Attitudes/thoughts – evil thoughts, greed, malice, deceit, envy, arrogance, folly

80 She could have been offended and walked away or she could have yelled at him for what he said.

81 The man who was delivered from the demons had been telling his testimony.

82 Jesus seems to be using sign language. Remember the man couldn't hear. If you couldn't hear and speak and someone touched your ears and tongue, wouldn't that communicate that your deficiencies were being addressed?

83 Test 2 (Mark 3:7–7:37)

1. thousands

-
2. to speak evil or irreverently of God
 3. sent one
 4. to expel an evil spirit
 5. a pattern of behavior passed down from one generation to another
 6. actor
 7. righteous; one
 8. I am
 9. thoughts
 10. First
 11. rest
 12. heart
 13. afraid; faith
 14. wind; waves
 15. demons, disease, death
 16. 3
 17. repent
 18. God's will
 19. Antipas
 20. False
 21. True
 22. False
 23. True
 24. False
 25. True
 26. False
 27. False
 28. True
 29. False
 30. True
 31. True
 32. False
 33. True
 34. See Revelation 3:20. Jesus goes where's he's welcomed.
 35. He told him to go and tell others what the Lord had done for him, whereas prior to this Jesus had been telling people not to tell others about what he did. In this case, Jesus' approach seems to have worked because when he returned to the region people approached him and asked him to heal a deaf and mute man.
 36.
 - Satan
 - trouble or persecution because of the word
 - worries of this life

-
- deceitfulness of wealth
 - desires for other things

37. Personal answer

38. Personal answer