

# Adult Quarterly Teacher's Guide

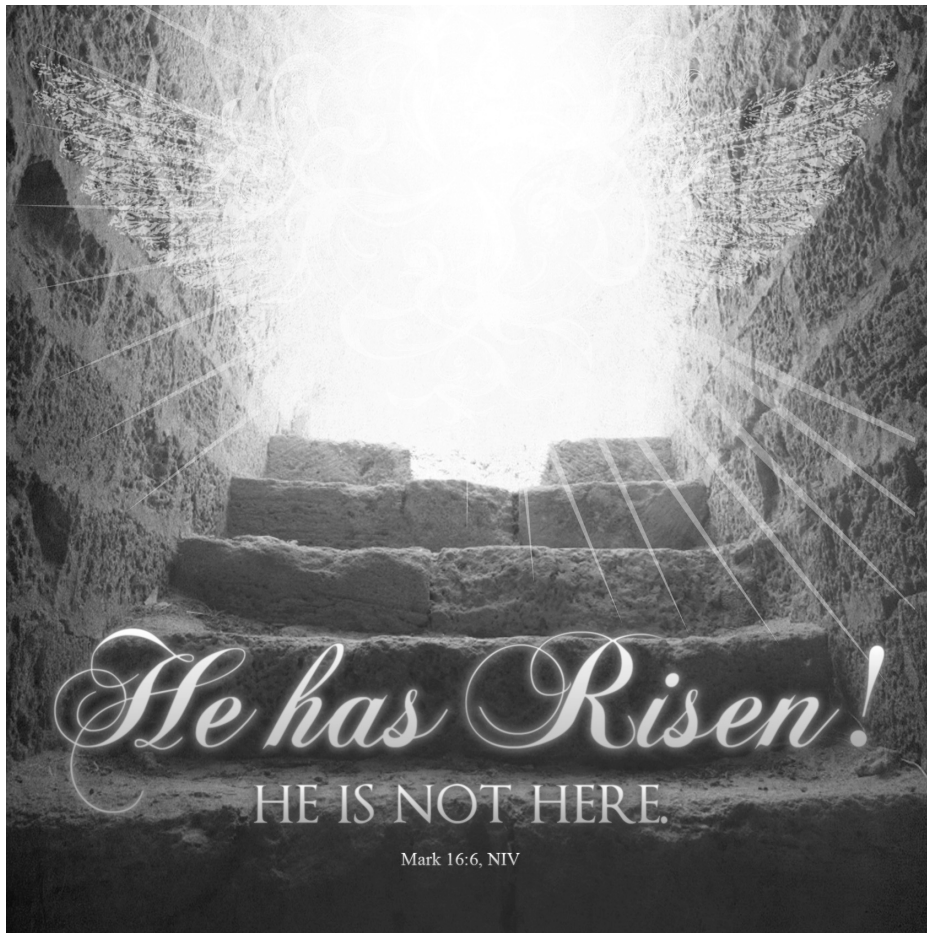
## Spring 2012

### Introduction

With this spring quarterly we finish the Gospel of Mark, meaning that we've spent three-fourths of a year studying it. It's interesting that the first readers of the shortest gospel probably read it or listened to it in one sitting. Some even think that it is short because it was intended to be memorized by the new Christians.

This quarter focuses on the events around the death and resurrection of Jesus. Nearly one third of the Gospel material covers the events from the Triumphal Entry to Jesus' ascension into heaven so this is certainly worthwhile for our study.

It is always helpful for the teacher to be looking ahead. A little work ahead of time will always pay big dividends when it comes to lesson discussion and application.



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### Lesson 1 March 4, 2012

#### Bethany to Betrayal Mark 14:1-25 (NKJV)

##### Lesson Aim

*To Know:* that Jesus remained focused on his mission at the cross while surrounded by people with mixed motives.

*To Respond:* by giving our all to Jesus as did the woman at the home of Simon.

##### Life Need

Option 1: Have your students list all of the events that they can think of associated with what is sometimes called the Passion Week. Highlight those that are in today's *Lesson Text*.

Option 2: Read and discuss the *Introduction*.

##### Bible Learning

Option 1: Read the *Lesson Text*. Have your students identify all of the characters mentioned: Simon the leper; the woman with the alabaster jar; those who were indignant, etc. Ask your class what role each character plays in the narrative.

Option 2: Use the *Bible Learning* section to amplify the *Lesson Text*. Discuss questions 1-3 in the *Questions for Discussion*.

##### Bible Application

Option 1: Ask what we learn about Jesus from the things he says in this passage?

Option 2: Discuss question 4.

##### Life Response

Option 1: In this passage we see the devoted response of the woman with the alabaster jar, the betrayal of Jesus by Judas and the conspiracy of Israel's leaders. Ask your students where they see themselves on this continuum. What would it take to have the devotion expressed in the anointing of Jesus?

Option 2: Discuss question 5.

##### Truths to Emphasize

1. Jesus accepted the woman's anointing even though it was costly.

2. Jesus will not drink of the fruit of the vine until he does so with his people in the Kingdom of God.

### Questions for Discussion

For your convenience the *Questions for Discussion* are copied into the Teacher Guide, below. Use any or all of them as you wish.

1. Discuss the New Covenant for Israel, its restoration to Jehovah, their God, and the importance of this for the gospel message (Jer. 31; Ezek. 36-37; Zech. 12-13).
2. Consider Jesus' life under the Law of Moses, including the laws he observed which we are not commanded to observe; compare the Passover and communion.

3. Discuss the New Covenant described in Hebrews 8-10.
4. Has the communion service become only a tradition? Has it been treated as a sacrament? Has it been restricted to being part of Sunday services? Has it been a time of remembering and fellowship of believers in the Son of God?
5. How much do we think about God's kingdom in our daily trials? How much does our hope help us overcome the evils of this world and keep us focused on being in God's kingdom?

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## Lesson 2 March 11, 2012

### "What is Written"

Mark 14:26-42 (NKJV)

#### Lesson Aim

*To Know:* that Jesus faced temptation but submitted his will to his Heavenly Father.

*To Respond:* by guarding ourselves against temptation and trusting Christ for strength.

#### Life Need

Option 1: Read and discuss the *Introduction*.

Option 2: Have your students think about something that they have really looked forward to. Ask how it affected their thinking, emotions and plans before the event. Then ask them to think about something that they dreaded. How did it affect them before the event: Could they sleep? Could they eat? What was life like?

#### Bible Learning

Option 1: Use the *Bible Learning* section to amplify the *Lesson Text*. Discuss questions 1 and 2 in the *Questions for Discussion*.

Option 2: Read the *Lesson Text*. Have your students list the things that Jesus said. Have them list what the disciples did.

#### Bible Application

Option 1: Read and discuss the *Bible Application*. Discuss question 3.

Option 2: If you have time, look at the other gospel records of Jesus' warning that he would be denied (Matt. 26:33-35; Luke 22:31-34; John 13:36-38). What is different in the four accounts? What does Mark emphasize in the way that he reports the event?

Ask your students to list the things that were giving Jesus stress: the disciples would flee, the disciples falling asleep, the cup that he would drink, etc. How does Jesus show his character in facing these things? What does it tell us about his relationship with his disciples?

#### Life Response

Option 1: Read and discuss the *Bible Application*. Discuss question 4.

Option 2: Have your students think about a time when they think they might have disappointed Jesus. Ask them, "How, in light of the way Jesus dealt with his disciples in today's text, would he deal with you? What does this tell us about Jesus' love for each of us?"

Have your students agree or disagree with this statement: Jesus knows everything about me and still loves me. Ask, "What difference does it make in my mind to know that Jesus always loves me?"

#### Truths to Emphasize

1. Jesus' faith was tested when he faced the cross.
2. He responded by going to his Heavenly Father in prayer and submitting himself to God's will.
3. Jesus knows our weakness.
4. Jesus knew that his disciples' faith would waver.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. How can we use Jesus' example as our own response to what awaits in the great tribulation?
2. What do you think caused Peter to respond to Jesus the way he did? Could that same thing be found in you?
3. Discuss how prayer can be the antidote to temptations.
4. Why is it, or is it not, important to realize that anyone is capable of any sin? Remember, the *Titanic* wasn't supposed to be able to sink.

## Lesson 3 March 18, 2012

### Jesus Arrested

Mark 14:43-72

**Golden Text:** Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” “I am,” said Jesus. (Mark 14:61-62)

**Key Thought:** At a time when Judas betrayed him, others brought false charges against him and Peter disowned him, Jesus professed the truth.

#### Life Need

To peak interest, tell the class: “Today’s text begins with a kiss in the garden and ends with bitter weeping. In between are betrayal, false testimony, condemnation and denial.”

Who wouldn’t want to read Mark’s account of Jesus’ arrest, which includes the actions of Judas, the Jewish religious leaders and Peter during a critical time in Jesus’ life? Standing in sharp contrast to the falsity of all others in our passage is Jesus – the way, the *truth* and the life. When others betray and blame, deceive and desert, abandon and attack, Jesus professes truth. When asked by Caiaphas if he was the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus replied, “I am.”

Read the *Introduction* aloud and ask the class if they feel it’s difficult to tell the truth. Do they feel it is difficult to remain true in times of crisis, or when wrongly accused? Is it easy to always stand for the Truth of God’s Word—to speak the truth in love?

#### Bible Learning

As you go through the material you may wish to read the *Lesson Text* a section at a time – it covers the betrayal of Judas (43-52), Jesus before the Sanhedrin (53-65) and the denials of Peter (66-72).

Be familiar with the parallel Gospel accounts and ready to discuss how John emphasizes that Jesus was in complete control of the whole situation.

Be prepared, or ask a student to be prepared, to share all the illegalities of Jesus’ trial. Perhaps ask, “Who is really on trial, Jesus or the religious leaders? Who won, and who lost?”

An aspect of Peter’s denials which you might wish to focus on is that he followed Jesus at a distance. That is not a good place to be! We need to follow closely, wholeheartedly all the days of our lives.

#### Bible Application

Read the *Bible Application* and ask class members if they have experienced ridicule for standing for the Truth. How necessary do they consider it is to believe that Jesus is the Son of God? You may wish to mention John’s commendation of Gaius in 3 John 3, and ask the class what all is meant by “walking in the truth.”

#### Life Response

Read the *Life Response* and discuss various ways in which Jesus is our Supreme Example.

#### Questions for Discussion

Regarding question 3, imagine how Peter felt to have been lovingly reinstated by Jesus (John 21). He had denied Jesus, not once but three times, but he was also able to thrice respond, “Lord, you know that I love you.” Ask the class, “What did Jesus mean when he asked Peter, ‘Do you truly love me *more than these?*’”

1. Matthew tells us that before Judas died, he was remorseful and returned the silver. Is this evidence that Judas was truly repentant?
2. Why is it so hard to follow in Jesus’ steps when we are falsely accused or put on the defense? How can we possess the wisdom to know whether it is *a time to be silent* or *a time to speak* (Eccl. 3:7b)?
3. Certainly, like Peter, we all have expressed our loyalty to God and to Jesus, only to later shed tears of disappointment/failure. What does it mean to you personally that Peter’s three-fold denial was countered by a loving restoration and reinstatement from his risen Lord (John 21)?
4. Jesus responded, “I am,” when asked if he was the Christ, the Son of God. Just how important is this profession? How necessary is it to know, walk in and profess this truth, as well as to work together to promote it?

## Lesson 4 March 25, 2012

### Jesus Before Pilate

#### Mark 15:1-20

**Golden Text:** For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving for you an example for you to follow in his steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth; and while being reviled, he did not revile in return; while suffering, he uttered no threats, but kept entrusting himself to Him who judges righteously; (1 Peter 2:21-23)

**Key Thought:** Jesus laid an example for each of us to follow. The truth is, this example is daunting. How well would we endure the events that Jesus dealt with? How would we respond to being taunted, spit on, and beaten? The behavior of the Jewish leadership exhibits deadly motive, and identifies the true nature of who they are.

#### Lesson Aim

*To Know:* That Jesus was teaching us, even through his most difficult trial.

*To Respond:* By searching our hearts for our true motives, and renewing our efforts to both walk and live by the Spirit.

#### Life Need

Class discussion should focus on the motivators Jesus faced. How have we felt if asked to present ourselves in a courtroom? Do we think of Jesus, and how he faced lies, abuse, and envy? How often do we see deceit used in the courtrooms of our country? Do we feel that we *know* what really went on? Jesus knew the outcome of his case before it was begun. He knew he would be unjustly accused, and opted to not answer some of the accusations.

#### Bible Learning

The *Bible Learning* discusses motivation for the poor treatment of Jesus, using Mark 15:10 and referring to Proverbs 16:2. The issue of motive is key for this lesson.

As time allows, draw in the verses mentioned in the *Life Response* section that investigate motives. Several are printed out, some you can ask students to look up – or perhaps print them out for your students from a website like biblegateway.com. It may be that students will find

they are involved with some of these motivators, and through being able to identify that will be able to release them.

Notice that James 4 shows the negative motives, while Galatians 5 shows positive motivators we can replace them with.

#### Bible Application

Consider the following questions:

What are some of the motivators that would cause us to get distracted from walking by the Spirit?

What can we do to remove those distractions?

Does envy ever *really* cause us to go so far as the Jewish leadership?

#### Life Response

The lesson includes a number of Bible verses (some printed, some only referred to) about motives. If you did not use them in the *Bible Learning* time, you can do so now. But look particularly at envy.

Ask your class: “How can we remove envy from our life, and keep our eyes focused on the true message of the gospel?”

#### Truths to Emphasize

1. Jesus really did live (and die) without sin, and expects us to attempt the same.
2. The trial that Jesus endured was motivated by envy. We need to realize what a deadly sin envy can be.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. The leadership of the Jews had decided to bring Jesus to trial. What were their true motives, and what other points did they bring up to keep their true motives hidden?
2. What emotions did the phrase “King of the Jews” bring out in the Jewish multitude and leadership?
3. What did the Romans do with the phrase “King of the Jews”?
4. Jesus answered some things, but not others. Why did he not answer in regards to the long list of accusations brought against him?
5. Are there times when it is better not to answer an accusation?

**Lesson 5 April 1, 2012**  
**Many Faces at the Cross of Jesus**  
**Mark 15:21-47**

**Golden Text:** He was numbered with transgressors (Mark 15:28)

**Key Thought:** Every face at the cross of Jesus had a story, some bitterly opposed to him, some devotedly in love with him, but all desperately in need of him.

**Lesson Aim**

*To Know:* that our response to every situation is a measure of our faith and devotion to our God and His Son, or lack of it.

*To Respond:* by exhibiting in our daily lives the kind of devotion shown by Jesus' followers as they mourned the unfortunate way in which he suffered and died.

**Introduction**

**Option 1** Ask the class if anyone is willing to share a story from their past that had a significant impact on how they live or view their lives today. If you know someone who has such a story to tell ask during the week if that person would be willing to briefly tell it to the class.

**Option 2** Agree, disagree – Give the class the following statement and ask them to vote on whether they agree or disagree with it: “People reveal the true nature of their hearts by the way they treat others.”

Ask some of the class members to share why they agree or disagree with that statement.

Following either *Option 1* or *Option 2* tell the class that those who caused or witnessed the sufferings and death of Jesus revealed the attitudes of their hearts toward him. Say: “Let’s see what we can discover, both good and bad, from these encounters.”

**Bible Learning**

In the textual account of Jesus’ suffering and crucifixion review first the four groups of people who reveal poor character traits. These are attitudes and behaviors we must avoid or put away from our lives.

Discuss them in the sequence provided in the lesson:

The Roman guard (vs. 22-25, also see Mark 14:16-20)

Pontius Pilate (v. 26)

The mockers (vs. 27, 29-32)

The thrill-seekers (vs. 34-36)

Tell the class: “If any of these traits abide in us we must seek strenuously to eradicate them from our mind and heart by allowing more favorable traits to take their place.”

Next, review the four groups of people who possess or represent really good character traits, the kind we need to absorb into the very fabric of our being. Again, discuss them in the sequence provided in the lesson.

Simon of Cyrene (v. 21)

The Centurion (v. 39)

Joseph of Arimathea (vs. 43, 46)

The faithful women (vs. 40, 41, 47)

**Bible Application**

Ask the class what qualities or vices they saw in examining the witnesses to and/or participants in the sufferings and crucifixion of Jesus? Ask: “What trait or characteristic you observed had the most impact on you, and why?”

**Life Response**

Ask your students: “What trait or characteristic, revealed in the discussions of the *Bible Application* questions and the lesson text, do you see as strongest in your life? What can you do to improve? What can you do to better use it to the glory of God?”

You might close out your class with these thoughts:

“Jesus provides the best example to us that trials can be faced and overcome. But some of the disciples, past and present, also show us the way. Jesus was hounded repeatedly by those who rejected his teachings, and who sought ways to put him to death. He lived many days without the comforts of a home. He wept tears of sorrow over the death of a good friend. And he suffered the anguish of a slanderous trial, ferocious scourging and bullying tactics from trained soldiers, without speaking a word. He suffered and died slowly, nailed to a cross as a traitorous criminal. We are commanded to be willing to follow in the steps of Jesus. That takes Christian maturity.”

**Truths to Emphasize**

1. Jesus suffered and died to remove the stain of sin (wickedness) from our lives.
2. All people give us examples of good attitudes and behaviors to follow and bad ones to avoid.
3. We must learn to focus on and practice the virtuous attitudes and behaviors.

**Lesson 6 April 8, 2012**  
**The Long Night, the Joyful Morning**  
**Mark 16:1-8**

**Lesson Aim**

*To Know:* that God's plan for the salvation from death He promises us could not be thwarted by wicked men putting Jesus to death.

*To Respond:* by living our lives in the full expectation that with God's help we can trust and know that no troubling dark night in our lives can completely overtake us.

**Golden Text:** He said to them, "Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him. (Mark 16:6)

**Key Thought:** For the Christian every dark night of sorrow has a bright new morning filled with joy. These moments of our lives follow the pattern established by Jesus in his suffering, death, burial, and resurrection.

**Introduction**

Choose either Option 1 or 2:

Option 1 Encourage a class member to talk about losing a pet to death. Have them try to explain the emotions it created.

Option 2 Ask, "What would be your reaction to a phone call in which you learned that a loved one was involved in an accident?"

Then tell the class that learning to deal with trying circumstances of any sort is part of gaining Christian maturity. Our lesson text focuses on women who allowed their thoughts to stray from the teachings Jesus gave them, and consequently they allowed their emotions to overwhelm their ability to recall what he taught them.

**Bible Learning**

This lesson can be divided into three parts:

1. The return of the women to the tomb of Jesus (vs. 1-4)

The main issue to be addressed in these verses is "As these ladies walked together to the tomb of their master, what can we imagine to be the thoughts in their minds (or, what was their state of mind)?"

2. The appearance and announcement of the young man in the tomb (vs. 5-7)

Consider with your class: "Who was this 'young man' the women found in the tomb? What did the women discover as a result of their encounter with this young man? Why was it necessary for this young man to be present in the tomb?"

3. The reaction of the women to the young man's announcement (v. 8)

Consider with your class: "What is expected and unexpected in the reaction of the women to the announcement made by the young man? What are we to make of the reactions of the women as recorded by Mark, illustrated in the words 'they fled . . . for trembling and astonishment had gripped them, they said nothing, they were afraid.'"

**Bible Application**

Consider with your class: "What had Jesus told all the disciples would happen to him following his ill treatment by wicked men? Why should his words have been a comfort to the disciples? Why did they not recall his words?"

Discuss this statement: "Our spiritual maturity is measured by how well we deal with the trials and tribulations of life."

**Life Response**

Discuss with your class: "Why should the teachings of God's word be a rich source of assistance to our gaining peace and comfort in heart and mind in spite of facing trying difficulties in our lives?"

Select two or three of the following verses and ask the class how they might apply to helping a believer overcome the trials in their lives:

Psalm 27:12-14; Proverbs 18:10; Isaiah 41:10; John 8:32, 36; 2 Corinthians 4:7-9; 2 Thessalonians 3:3

Introduce to your class Psalm 37:39, which says, "The salvation of the righteous is from Yahweh; He is their strength in time of trouble". Ask: "Why should the believer rely on Yahweh for 'strength in time of trouble'?"

**Truths to Emphasize**

1. Jesus' suffering, death, burial, and resurrection prefigure the pattern our daily lives follow when we face great trials and troubling times. Like Jesus, we can trust that such difficulties will end joyfully with our conquest of them.
2. The resurrection of Jesus from death is *the* witness of how God will save us from death and destruction.
3. God wants us to understand how to overcome the trials in our lives with peace and poise.
4. The "young man" who told the women the good news concerning Jesus' resurrection is the pattern we must follow to tell others about this gospel as well.

## Lesson 7 April 15, 2012

### Expectations

**Lesson Text:** everything that follows Mark 16:8 (four versions)

**Key Thought:** Sometimes we get uncomfortable about seeing ourselves in scripture and not liking what we see. Sometimes we get uncomfortable with questions about what the “Bible” *is*. But our trust needs to be put beyond our desires, whether desires to think well of ourselves or to have simple answers.

### Introduction

The *Introduction* does several things. It reminds students of where the story leaves off in Mark 16:8, suggests why Mark might have stopped with verse 8, and gets into why some readers would desire to add to Mark’s text. All of that is to set up a discussion of the texts which have been written by various authors to go after verse 8.

Of those alternate endings the *Bible Learning* has the most comments on the “longer” ending (v. 9-20) which is the most familiar to us. The abrupt “shorter” ending (just a verse 9, found in the lesson text) lacks even the merit of familiarity to have us take it seriously, and seems to exist simply to have Mark wrap up more clearly. Of course the version which combines the “shorter” and “longer” endings is particularly odd.

The “Freer Ending” is referenced as part of the *Lesson Text* but space was not devoted to commenting on it in the *Bible Learning*. Jerome reports that it existed in his time (when, as it says below, most copies of Mark which Jerome knew did not have verses 9-20). One Greek manuscript of Mark still exists which contains this section. It has been suggested that the author of the “Freer Ending” wanted to “soften the severe condemnation of the Eleven in 16:14” (Metzger, p. 125). The disciples get to defend themselves and they blame their situation on the devil. Interestingly in Mark 14:27 Jesus predicted that the Apostles would “all fall away”, but Luke 22:31 says “Satan has asked to sift you [a plural “you”] as wheat”, thus implying a role for the devil in their falling. Here again the added text for Mark 16 doesn’t depend on what Mark already includes.

Perhaps students in your class use a version of the Bible which includes Mark 16:9-20 (for example the King James Version). Such Bibles may have a footnote saying those verses aren’t in the oldest manuscripts, but whether or not it is noted some students may not have given much attention to the idea of these verses being “unofficial”. If so, the written *Introduction* may not hit the mark of what they need for the start of the lesson. You will need to decide if you should discuss some of the material below about the strong case for verses 9-20 not being from Mark.

### Comments on Mark 16:9-20

First, the connection of verse 8 to verse 9 is very awkward, it skips forward in time, it ignores the statement that the women *told no one*, and it reintroduces Mary as though she had not already been in the story of Mark (quite recently) while it drops the other women. The grammar in verses 9-20 doesn’t match the rest of Mark. The vocabulary is also unusual for Mark; those twelve verses use at least nine Greek words which do not appear elsewhere in the Gospel, one of which (the term for “deadly poison”) appears only here in the New Testament. And verse 10 has the phrase “them that had been with him” (*tois met’ autou genomenois*), which is never used elsewhere in the Bible to describe the disciples. (*A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, by Bruce M. Metzger, third edition, 1971, p. 125).

That is just some of the internal evidence for verses 9-20 not being from Mark’s original Gospel; we can also look at external evidence. The oldest two surviving Greek manuscripts of Mark (along with various newer manuscripts) lack any text beyond verse 8.

“Clement of Alexandria [about 150 to 215] and Origen [about 185 to about 254] show no knowledge of the existence of these verses; furthermore Eusebius [died 340] and Jerome [about 347-420] attest that the passage was absent from almost all Greek copies of Mark known to them. . . . The traditional ending of Mark, so familiar through the AV [“Authorized Version”, the text which King James authorized for publication, issued in 1611] . . . is present in the vast number of witnesses [“witnesses” meaning the old Greek manuscripts which still exist now] . . . . The earliest patristic witnesses to part or all of the long ending are Irenaeus [about 125 to about 202] and the Diatessaron.”

(Metzger, p. 123 and 124)

The Diatessaron (which basically means “Fourfold”) is a harmony of the four Gospels. It is attributed to Tatian, and he is thought to have written it in the 170s.

I’m not sure how much about a geographic spread of Mark 16:9-20 can be guessed from this, but Clement and Origen, both from Egypt, don’t mention those verses, and Irenaeus (in Asia Minor during his early life, and later a bishop in Gaul) and the Diatessaron (used in Syria) seem to use it.

Metzger thinks the text of 9-20 fits so poorly with the rest of Mark that it likely was not *created* to finish Mark, but was picked up from some other work and spliced into the book.

### Bible Learning

As your class works through the *Bible Learning* section you might help your students to consider the implications of our expectations about the Bible. Have they used Mark less often than the other Gospels because it does not

provide as clear of an ending, or perhaps because it does not include details they already know about from other Gospels? Aside from a situation like this Adult Quarterly which seeks to go through just the one Gospel, how often do they examine Mark or any other Bible book in isolation from other texts? In the end, how much does it matter to them whether Mark wrote verses 9-20, so long as the content of those verses seems to match what another part of the Bible tells us? Do we use Mark for itself?

### **Bible Application**

The lesson has its own set of three *Questions for Discussion*, but the *Bible Application* offers us some additional questions about our openness to tackle challenges in the scriptures. You might try to get a sense of whether your students actually wish to take that route or would rather stick to the clearest paths in the Bible.

### **Life Response**

Help your students to visualize that for the original readers of Mark's Gospel the point was not to provide non-believers with the text of the Bible and suppose that they would reach the conclusion that what was written was proven, taking up faith. Rather their lives were to be testimony to the truth of what was written. Here again we have a question within the text: "How will we demonstrate to others, who have yet to believe, that Christ is risen?" Your class could profitably brainstorm on this for a while.

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. What do you imagine about the people who wrote the added endings (their situations, their motives)?
2. What parts of the Bible do you most wish had commentary tracks?
3. What parts of the Bible would most tempt you to "fix" them, and how?

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## **Lesson 8 April 22, 2012**

### **Entry of Judgment**

#### **Mark 11:1-14 (NRSV)**

### **Lesson Aim**

To build an understanding of the purpose and timing of the visits that Christ makes to Jerusalem, and gain understanding of God's agenda for him and its meaning.

### **Life Need**

Consider the following question with your class;  
Does the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem grow your understanding of God's love for people?

### **Bible Learning**

Consider the following questions with your class;  
What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of Man? the only begotten Son of God?  
What does it mean when we call him Christ or Messiah?  
How do the actions of his life and the words that he spoke become connected to who he is?  
Why is the fulfillment of the Law so important to God?

### **Bible Application**

Consider the following questions with your class;  
Why are the figures of the record so important to understand?

Does the lesson help build the significance to you of Christ coming in judgment ?

### **Life Response**

Consider the following issues with your class;  
How can we change to become like Christ with the eternal purposes at the heart of what we do?  
What can we do to build up the body of Christ, the grafted limb onto the tree of Israel?

### **Truths to Emphasize**

1. God looks on the heart of man not the outward appearance.
2. Our lives need to reflect His love just as Christ loved us.

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. What is the basis of our relationships with God and His Son and how do we walk in accord with the purposes of God for our lives?
2. What does God base His judgment of the world on?
3. How do we change our thinking to see that God wants our hearts to be right with Him?



## Lesson 9 April 29, 2012

### The Authority of Jesus

#### Mark 11:15-33 (GNT)

##### Lesson Aim

*To Know:* that Jesus stood up against the religious corruption of his day.

*To Respond:* by boldly living our faith.

##### Life Need

Read and discuss the opening paragraphs of today's lesson. Ask, "How are our times today similar to Jesus' day? How are they different?"

##### Bible Learning

Read and discuss the *Lesson Text* using the comments under *Bible Learning* through the paragraph headed, "Confound questions and doubts." Discuss questions 1-5 in the *Questions for Discussion*.

##### Bible Application

Discuss the various scenarios described under, "Close to Home."

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## Lesson 10 May 6, 2012

### Jesus Teaches His Adversaries

#### Mark 12:1-17

##### Lesson Aim

*To Know:* How to view and use the things of this world as we prepare to inhabit the kingdom of God.

*To Respond:* By accepting an eternal view of worldly wealth that it has only a temporary quality and should be used to achieve eternal results not selfish ones.

##### Introduction

Read the quote from "Money and Motives". Then ask, "Why do you suppose there is so much written in the Bible about money and things related to money management?"

Let the class respond and discuss the issues. Then tell the class that today's lesson text gives two examples of issues related to money and the motives for acquiring wealth that interfere with one's ability to seek the things of eternal worth.

##### Bible Learning

Read verse 1 and have the class talk about the landowner and how he represents God. Read verses 2-8. Ask who the servants working in the vineyard represent and why? What is telling about the way the vineyard tenants treat the servants the landowner sends to collect a portion of the crop? What does the produce represent?

Who does the vineyard owner's son represent? Why is the son an important addition to the parable?

Read verse 9. What is the reaction of the vineyard owner to the behavior of the vineyard workers? What does this represent? Read verses 10-12. What is the reaction of the high priests, the scribes and elders who are listening to this parable? Why do they react as they do (in verse 12) to

##### Life Response

Discuss questions 6 through 8.

##### Truths to Emphasize

1. Jesus chased the moneychangers out of the Temple.
2. The authority of Jesus.

##### Questions for Discussion

1. Why did Jesus cleanse the Temple?
2. Why did he curse the fig tree?
3. What mountain would you like Jesus to remove into the sea?
4. What Scripture passages help you understand what is going on in today's lesson?
5. What is the deeper reason why Jesus refused to answer the question of his authority?
6. What are some answers to our tough times?
7. What is one thing you learned from today's lesson?
8. How will you use your life to make a difference because of this lesson?

Jesus' words in verses 9-11? What does the stone which the builders rejected represent?

##### Bible Application

Ask why people seek to obtain luxurious houses, fancy cars, gold bars, huge savings and investments, lush meadows beside tree-lined lakes with cool breezes, sunny Caribbean cruises, and quiet time-share resorts? What have these to do with seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Are we sinners when we seek these things? Is there any time when enjoying such things is appropriate for Christians? What attitude should we have about such things as these when we view the living conditions of our brothers in Christ in third world countries?

##### Life Response

How do you believe God views our accumulation of wealth to mainly expend it on ourselves and our families? What can we do, what should we do with the wealth that we accumulate during our lifetimes? What can we do to correctly view and use material wealth God helps us to acquire? What does Jesus say? "How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10:23)

##### Truths to Emphasize

1. The love of wealth is the root of all kinds of evil.
2. The pursuit of wealth is a sticky trap from which it is very difficult to escape.
3. God is not happy with those who use their wealth as a major tool to subject the poor under their power.
4. Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? (James 2:5)

## **Lesson 11    May 13, 2012**

### **Self-deceived Sadducees**

**Mark 12:18-27**

#### **Lesson Aim**

*To Know:* that a believer cannot hold a correct view of his salvation or godly way of life without rightly understanding the truth revealed in God's word.

*To Respond:* by taking the initiative to determine for one's self what the truth is that God has revealed in His Word.

#### **Introduction**

Introduce the historical fact of human misconceptions taught by respected scholars of their day. You may choose to talk briefly about the earth as the center of the universe, the flat earth belief, or the atom as the smallest particle in the universe. How has the revealed truth changed these beliefs and their effect on civilization?

Then read John 18:37 and ask, "To what did Jesus come to bear witness?"

#### **Bible Learning**

Read verses 18-23. Help the class to discover the levirate rule from Deuteronomy 25:5, and what was unique in the Sadducees' account. Ask the class, "Why do you suppose the Sadducees bothered to trouble Jesus with the story about the seven brothers all having the same wife?"

Ask, "What belief of the Sadducees was motivating them to tell the story as they did?"

Look up information about the Sadducees in a Bible dictionary and be prepared to share some pertinent details as they relate to this lesson. Understanding who the Sadducees were and what they believed helps in understanding their motivation in confronting Jesus as they did.

Read verse 24. Ask, "What was Jesus' summary response to the Sadducees' inquiry?" Jesus calls them

mistaken and charges that they do not know the power of God. Mark is very brief in what he reveals concerning Jesus' reply. Read verse 25 and ask, "What was the essential meaning of Jesus' response compared to the account proposed by the Sadducees? What does this tell us about the condition of life to be found in the kingdom of God?"

Luke 20:34-36 provides more information related to Jesus' response to the Sadducees on this occasion. If you have time you may want to discuss what more it reveals concerning the conditions of life to be found in the kingdom of God.

#### **Bible Application**

Point out that there are two basic lessons Jesus taught in responding to the Sadducees' story. The first concerns the Bible teaching of bodily resurrection. How does this teaching contrast with the Christian orthodox belief of the immortality of the soul? How does the immortality of the soul negate and/or dilute the power of God to save mortals from death?

The second lesson concerns the importance of truth to our spiritual lives.

#### **Life Response**

Ask the class what sources of truth they trust. What are ways in which they search for the truth?

Why is the doctrine of bodily resurrection so important?

#### **Truths to Emphasize**

1. Holding on to traditions in contradiction to truth from God's word leads to resisting the ways of God, fighting God and denying His way of salvation.
2. Jesus came to bear witness to God's truth.
3. Bodily resurrection is the only Bible teaching for salvation from death.

**Lesson 12    May 20, 2012**  
**Steps Toward the Kingdom**  
**Mark 12:28-44 (NKJV)**

**Lesson Aim**

*To Know:* that Jesus answered the questions of the scribes but challenged their expectations about God and His Messiah.

*To Respond:* by trusting in Jesus as God's Messiah and not living in hypocrisy as did the leaders of Israel.

**Life Need**

Option 1: Read and discuss the *Introduction*.

Option 2: Ask your class, "What is the most interesting question that you've ever heard?" After a time of discussion, share the following:

Questions are a very important part of the Jewish religious life. A key part of what is called the rabbinical teaching method is the asking of questions to one's disciples. Questions play an important part in the Passover service as four questions are addressed throughout the Seder meal.

Besides the traditional questions, the children in the family were allowed to ask questions. Tradition describes the family as having four sons, one wise, one evil, one simple and one that doesn't know.

In Mark's gospel, we see these questions in the setting of Jesus being questioned by the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees. Two questions occurred before today's text as Jesus was asked a wicked question to get him in trouble, i.e., whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, and then what proved to be a simple question about marriage in the resurrection. In today's text, Jesus is asked a wise question then turns the tables on the scribes by asking them a question that they can't answer.

**Bible Learning**

Option 1: Read the *Lesson Text* and use the *Bible Learning* to discuss the text.

Option 2: Read the *Lesson Text*. Have your students identify the two questions, one asked by the scribe, the other by Jesus. Ask, "What is the significance of Jesus' answer? of Jesus' question?"

How do these questions relate to Jesus' warning about the scribes?

**Bible Application**

Option 1: Discuss the *Questions for Discussion*.

Option 2: Ask the following questions:

1. What does Jesus' answer to the first question tell us about the purpose of God's people?
2. How would we answer Jesus' question about the Messiah?
3. What does the widow's mite teach us about giving?
4. How does our giving relate to our answer to the scribe's question?

**Life Response**

Option 1: Ask your students to each choose one event from today's *Lesson Text*. Ask, "What draws you to this text? What difference will it make in your faith if this text becomes real in your life?"

Option 2: Ask your students, "What aspects of our lives are described by our heart, our soul, our mind, and our strength? How can you love God more in each of these areas? What is one thing you can do this week to grow in at least one aspect of love for God?"

**Truths to Emphasize**

1. Jesus affirmed the Shema as the greatest commandment.
2. Jesus said the commandment to love our neighbor is the second greatest commandment.
3. David called Jesus Lord.
4. The widow who gave two mites is an example of the kind of giving that God wants.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. What is different between the Law of Moses for Israel and the Law of Christ for the Church? What is similar?
2. What does your church teach about sacrifice? Is the giving of 10% a commandment for the church? When is one blessed?
3. What is the church when it does not teach that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God? Is it fallen away?
4. How does the history of the Jews fit with Jesus' condemnation of their leaders?

**Lesson 13    May 27, 2012**  
**Jews, Jerusalem and Jesus' Disciples**  
**Mark 13:1-36 (NKJV)**

**Lesson Aim**

*To Know:* that Jesus gave signs of his return to encourage his disciples to be prepared for his coming.

*To Respond:* by being ready for the return of Christ.

**Life Need**

Read the *Introduction*.

**Bible Learning**

Read the *Lesson Text* and use the *Bible Learning* as a guide to further understanding. Use the *Questions for Discussion*.

**Bible Application**

Dig deeper into the text by asking your class the following questions:

1. How many questions did the disciples ask Jesus in this chapter? How could these questions be about both the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. and the coming of Christ at the end of this age?
2. What things in the text relate to Jesus' disciples and the first century, up through the destruction of the Temple? What things are concerned with the end of the age?
3. What things in the text appear to still be unfulfilled?

**Life Response**

Re-read the comments on verses 32-36. How can we watch for the return of Jesus today? How can *watching* be equated with *working*?

**Truths to Emphasize**

1. Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple and gave signs of the end of the age.
2. Jesus warned that his disciples would face persecution.
3. Jesus warned that no one knows the day or hour of his return.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. How does the history of the Jews relate to the prophecies of Moses in Deuteronomy 28-30?
2. What abominations did the Jews perpetrate against God which caused their first dispersion?
3. What is the relationship between the Jews and Jesus' disciples in the book of Acts?
4. What holocausts have the Jews experienced over the centuries of their dispersion?
5. How has the persecution of the Jews paralleled the persecution of believers in one God and Jesus as the son of God (Rev. 12)?
6. What tribulations will God's people (Israel) and God's people (Jesus' disciples) yet go through before Jesus comes (Zech. 14:1; Rev. 13:11-18)?