

Core Themes to Watch For

As you move through the weeks, you'll notice Mark emphasizes specific aspects of Jesus' identity:

- **The Messianic Secret:** Notice how often Jesus tells people not to tell anyone who He is or what He did. Think about why He might want to control the timing of His revelation.
- **The Cost of Discipleship:** Mark doesn't sugarcoat things. He often highlights the failures of the disciples to show that following Jesus requires total surrender.
- **Authority vs. Tradition:** A recurring conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders regarding the "rules" versus the "heart."

3 Simple Journaling Prompt

You might try using the "S.O.A.P." method for one passage each week

S - Scripture: Write down a verse that jumped out at you.

O - Observation: What is happening? What does this tell me about Jesus?

A - Application: How does this truth change how I live today?

P - Prayer: Write a two-sentence prayer based on that verse.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

9 WEEK
READING
PLAN



CELEBRATION
Church



Week 1: Mark 1:1-1:45

■ *Overview: Introduction to Jesus and His authority.*

1. Mark starts with the word "Beginning." How does seeing Jesus as a "new beginning" for humanity change your perspective on your current circumstances?
2. In verse 17, Jesus calls the disciples to "follow" Him before they fully understand Him. What is one area of your life where God is asking for your obedience before He gives you total clarity?

Week 2: Mark 2:1-3:12

■ *Overview: Jesus challenges religious norms and establishes His authority.*

1. When Jesus heals the paralytic, He addresses his sins before His physical legs (2:5). Which "inner healing" are you currently prioritizing less than your outward circumstances?
2. Jesus identifies as the "Lord of the Sabbath." In your busy week, how are you practicing a rest that relies on His work rather than your own efforts?

Week 3: Mark 3:13-4:34

■ *Overview: Illustrates Jesus' teachings and the nature of the Kingdom of God to readers.*

1. In the Parable of the Sower, the "cares of this world" are described as thorns that choke out the Word. What specific "thorn" is currently competing for your attention and spiritual growth?
2. Jesus calls His "true family" those who do the will of God (3:35). How does this redefine your sense of belonging and community?

Week 4: Mark 4:35-6:6

■ *Overview: Demonstrates Jesus' power over nature and spiritual forces.*

1. When the storm hits, the disciples ask, "Do you not care that we are perishing?" (4:38). When has fear made you doubt God's character or His presence in your life?
2. In Nazareth, Jesus is "amazed at their unbelief" (6:6). Are there areas of your life where you have "boxed Jesus in" based on what you think you know about Him?

Week 5: Mark 6:7-7:23

■ *Overview: Highlights the impact of Jesus' ministry and teachings on the heart.*

1. The feeding of the 5,000 shows Jesus taking a small amount and making it "enough." What "meager" resource or talent are you hesitant to give to Him because you think it's too small?
2. Jesus teaches that defilement comes from the heart, not external rituals (7:15). If you did an "audit" of your heart today, what attitudes would you find that need His cleansing?

Week 6: Mark 7:24-8:38

■ *Overview: Focuses on faith and the revelation of Jesus' identity.*

1. Peter correctly identifies Jesus as the Christ, but then immediately tries to talk Him out of the Cross (8:32). When do you find yourself trying to "edit" God's plan to fit your own comfort?
2. Jesus says to deny ourselves and take up our cross. What is one specific desire or right you are being called to "lay down" this week for the sake of the Gospel?

Week 7: Mark 9:1-10:31

■ *Overview: Emphasizes glory, service, and the value of the Kingdom.*

1. In the Transfiguration, the Father says, "Listen to Him!" (9:7). Amidst the noise of your daily life, what practical step can you take to prioritize Jesus' voice above all others?
2. The rich young man went away sad because he had many possessions (10:22). What is the one "thing" you would be most afraid for Jesus to ask you to give up?

Week 8: Mark 10:32-11:26

■ *Overview: Preparing for the culmination of His mission and the nature of faith.*

1. James and John ask for positions of power, but Jesus speaks of the "cup" of suffering (10:38). Are you seeking Jesus for the "throne" (blessings) or are you willing to walk with Him through the "cup" (trials)?
2. As Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey, He defies expectations of a political king. In what ways is the "real Jesus" different from the "useful Jesus" you sometimes want Him to be?

Week 9: Mark 11:27-16:20

■ *Overview: The climax of Jesus' ministry culminating in His death and resurrection.*

1. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prays, "Not what I will, but what You will" (14:36). Where is the struggle between your will and God's will most intense right now?
2. The Gospel of Mark originally ended quite abruptly (16:8) with the women being afraid. If the story ended there, how do you respond to the reality of the Empty Tomb?