

A LEADER WORTH FOLLOWING



THE BOOK OF MARK SERVANT KING

SERIES GUIDE
PART TWO



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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Our hope is that each week you will bring this guide with you. It's a way to dive deeper into the sermon by doing a short devotional before the sermon, taking notes and reflecting during the service, and then using the questions to discuss the sermon with your community group.

It's a way to keep your group in sync, help you unlock new riches in God's Word, and help you focus on what the Spirit may be calling you to do this week. We've also added some space for a prayer journal. Use this journal in your community group to remember and pray for your group throughout the week, or use it for other friends and family at Bethany.

As we study God's Word, our love for Christ grows greater each day. This is just another simple tool to help you study God's Word in new and God-honoring ways, as well as to connect to Scripture together with your community group.

You can also use the devotional page in this book each week to read the passage for the week before Sunday. Then answer the two questions to help you reflect on and apply the Word to your life each week.

WEEK 18

GOD'S SERVANT SHINES

MARK 9:1-13

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WEEKLY SERMON POST

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 9:1-13

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

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WK 18: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Can you think of a time when you wished you could stay in a moment forever? What was happening? Who were you with? What made that exact moment so special?

Discussion 1: Jesus is transfigured before Peter, James, and John, and they see Him in His glory. Why do you think Jesus gave this incredible view of His glory to these three disciples at this moment? How would this experience have shaped their understanding of who He really is?

Application 1: The disciples experienced a powerful moment of seeing Jesus' true glory. How can you intentionally create space to encounter Jesus through prayer, worship, or reflecting on His Word? Read 2 Corinthians 3:16-18. How does our view of Jesus transform us?

Discussion 2: Peter wanted to build tents and stay on the mountain, but God interrupted, saying, "This is my beloved Son; listen to Him." What do you think was going through Peter's mind when he suggested that? Why do you think we as humans have a desire to hold onto spiritual experiences instead of focusing on obedience in the moment?

Application 2: It's easy to always want the "mountaintop moments" of faith, but the Christian walk is marked by just as many valleys as mountaintops. How can we be content and thankful to God for the mountains and the valleys all the same? How does God use both in our spiritual formation?

Discussion 3: After the Transfiguration, the disciples ask about Elijah coming first. Jesus explains that Elijah has already come. Read Jesus' answer in v12-13. How does their confusion about Elijah also show their misunderstanding about the coming Messiah? How was Jesus trying to change their view of what the Messiah had come to do?

Application 3: Sometimes, like the disciples, we have certain expectations of how God should work. Are there particular ways God works that make it harder for you to trust Him? What are some personal experiences that you have in this area?

WEEK 19

GOD'S SERVANT CONQUERS

MARK 9:14-29

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WK 19: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Have you ever had a moment where you felt completely out of your depth — where a situation was just too big for you? What happened?

Discussion 1: Jesus expressed frustration by saying, “O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you?” Why do you think Jesus responded that way? Whom do you think He was speaking to — the disciples, the crowd, or both? What does this reveal about the role of faith in His ministry?

Application 1: Jesus’ words challenge a lack of faith even among those close to Him. Are there areas in your life where you rely more on your own ability than on God? Are there times when your faith feels weaker or stronger? Why do you think that is?

Discussion 2: The boy’s father expressed both faith and doubt in one sentence when he said, “I believe; help my unbelief.” Why do you think Jesus honored such an honest and conflicted statement? What does this teach us about the nature of real faith?

Application 2: Why doesn’t faith have to be perfect to be powerful? What does that show us about faith? Is there an area where you can honestly bring both your belief and your doubts to Jesus?

Discussion 3: Jesus makes a powerful claim about the possibilities of faith. What do you think He meant by “all things are possible”? How should we understand this promise in the context of God’s will and purpose?

Application 3: Jesus invites us to believe that with God, nothing is impossible. Is there a situation in your life right now that feels impossible or out of reach? How can you step forward in faith, trusting that Jesus can work even when things seem hopeless?

WEEK 20

GOD'S SERVANT

PREPARES

MARK 9:30-50

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WK 20: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Is there a game or activity that brings out your competitive side? What game is it and why?

Discussion 1: The disciples argued about who was the greatest. Jesus responded by placing a child among them and saying, “Whoever wants to be first must be last.” Why do you think Jesus used a child to make His point, and how does this challenge the disciples’ view of greatness? What is Jesus teaching about leadership?

Application 1: Jesus calls us to a life of humility and service instead of status. Where are you tempted to seek recognition or control? What is one way you can intentionally choose humility and serve others this week?

Discussion 2: John was concerned that someone outside their group was casting out demons in Jesus’ name, but Jesus told John not to stop him. What does this reveal about how we sometimes view others who serve God differently than we do? How does Jesus’ response reshape our understanding of who’s “on our side” in the kingdom?

Application 2: Jesus teaches that even the small acts of kindness we do in His name matter deeply. Are there ways you can serve that you have dismissed because they seemed too small? In light of Jesus’ encouragement here, how should we respond to other believers whom we may disagree with?

Discussion 3: Jesus gives strong warnings about taking sin seriously, using imagery like cutting off your hand and gouging out your eye. What do you think Jesus is communicating here about the seriousness of sin? How do Jesus’ words clarify what our focus should be? Are there general practical ideas we can take from Jesus’ warnings?

Application 3: Jesus calls us to take sin seriously and pay attention to how our actions affect others. Are there any habits, influences, or attitudes you need to “cut off” to grow in holiness and help others do the same? Look at 1 Cor 10:23. These may be “sin” but they may also be hindrances that aren’t necessarily sinful.

WEEK 21

GOD'S SERVANT HONORS MARRIAGE

MARK 10:1-12

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WK 21: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is something odd that you and your spouse do that others may not know about? If you aren't married, what is something odd you've seen a married couple do?

Discussion 1: The Pharisees tested Jesus with a question about divorce, but He responded by pointing back to God's original design for marriage. Why do you think Jesus chose to focus on God's intent rather than debate the law? What does this reveal about how Jesus views obedience and the law more broadly? (Look at Matthew 5:20)

Application 1: In our culture, relationships are treated casually and marriage conditionally. How is God's design for marriage radically different from our culture's view? How does viewing marriage as a "covenant," not a "contract," alter your view of marriage and divorce?

Discussion 2: Jesus highlights that from the beginning, marriage was about two becoming one flesh. Why do you think unity and oneness are so central to God's vision for marriage? What challenges this kind of unity today? (See Ephesians 5:22-33)

Application 2: Are there ways this passage challenges your views on divorce and marriage? Do Jesus' words give you a higher or different view of marriage?

Discussion 3: Jesus' teaching on divorce was both countercultural and deeply challenging. How do you think His audience received His words, and how should we wrestle with them today, especially in a culture of personal freedom that often rejects marriage?

Application 3: What do you think God's purposes for marriage are? Talk through and list them. (See Genesis 1:28, Genesis 2:24, 1 Cor 7:2, Ephesians 5:22-33). How does divorce twist these purposes?

WEEK 22

GOD'S SERVANT HONORS HUMILITY

MARK 10:13-45

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WK 22: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is a special memory you have from when you were a child? What made it special?

Discussion 1: The disciples tried to keep children away, but Jesus welcomed them and said, “Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” Why do you think Jesus emphasized childlike qualities as essential for entering the kingdom? What does this teach us about the gospel?

Application 1: Jesus calls us to approach God with the humility, trust, and openness of a child. In what ways do you struggle to rely fully on God? How can you intentionally practice childlike faith this week?

Discussion 2: When talking to the rich young ruler, why did Jesus say, “No one is good but God alone”? Why did Jesus say, “It is harder for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a wealthy person to enter the kingdom”? And, “With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible”? How does this apply to the request He made of the wealthy young man?

Application 2: Jesus calls us to surrender everything we might rely on for eternal life and come to God alone. What have you been tempted to trust besides the grace of Jesus in your life? Have you seen others come close to Jesus but still reject Him? Why do you think they chose that?

Discussion 3: James and John asked to sit at Jesus’ right and left in His glory, misunderstanding what following Jesus truly means. What does their request reveal about their expectations of Jesus’ kingdom? Why do you think Jesus responded with a question rather than a rebuke?

Application 3: Like James and John, we sometimes want following Jesus to be comfortable and “cushy.” Is there an area of your life where you’re asking God to elevate you or make things easier, rather than asking how you can serve? Do you struggle with suffering? Are you shocked by it? Do you find it hard to embrace it with joy (1 Peter 4:12-13, 2 Timothy 3:12, John 15:20)?

WEEK 23

GOD'S SERVANT RECEIVES PRAISE

MARK 10:46-11:14

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 10:46-11:14

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WK 23: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What's the most exciting crowd you've ever been part of — like at a game, concert, or event? What made it so memorable?

Discussion 1: Blind Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus despite being told to be quiet. Why do you think Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" even though his need seemed obvious? What does Jesus' response teach us?

Application 1: Bartimaeus boldly called out to Jesus and clearly expressed his need. Is there something you've been hesitant to bring honestly and persistently to Jesus? How can you approach Him this week with bold, faith-filled prayer? Is there something you need to ask for help with from someone in your church family?

Discussion 2: Jesus entered Jerusalem on a colt, and the people shouted "Hosanna!" hoping for deliverance. What expectations did the crowd likely have of Jesus, and how were those expectations radically different from what Jesus was there to accomplish?

Application 2: Sometimes we want Jesus to fix our circumstances, but we overlook the deeper transformation He wants to bring. Are there areas in your life where you need to let go of what you want to happen to make room for God's plan? (See James 1:2-7.) Could this be an area where God is working to change you rather than deliver you?

Discussion 3: Jesus cursed a fig tree that had leaves but no fruit. What does this symbolic act say about the importance of bearing fruit in our lives? What is the connection between this and what was happening in Jerusalem at that time?

Application 3: What kind of fruit can you see and celebrate in your life today? Are there areas in your life where you would like to see more fruit?

WEEK 24

GOD'S SERVANT

JUDGES

MARK 11:15-33

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WK 24: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What is your experience with growing plants? Do you have a green thumb, or do you struggle to keep things alive?

Discussion 1: Jesus drove out those buying and selling in the temple and said they had made it a “den of robbers.” Why was Jesus so passionate about purifying the temple? What had gone wrong in the way the temple was being used? How do you think the people reacted?

Application 1: Jesus’ cleansing of the temple shows His desire for worship to be pure and focused on God, not profit or appearance. Is there anything Jesus might want to “clean out” in your own heart so that it can be more centered on true worship? This may be a sin or a distraction.

Discussion 2: Peter noticed the fig tree Jesus cursed had withered. Why do you think Mark connects this story to the temple cleansing? What might the fig tree symbolize about the spiritual condition of Israel — or anyone who appears fruitful but isn’t?

Application 2: It’s possible to look spiritually healthy on the outside but lack real fruit. What happens to those who appear healthy on the outside but lack fruit?

Discussion 3: The religious leaders demanded to know where Jesus’ authority came from, and Jesus responded with a question they couldn’t answer. Why do you think they were so threatened by Jesus? What does this moment show us about their hearts?

Application 3: Sometimes we resist Jesus’ authority in our lives when it challenges our comfort or control. Is there an area of your life where you’re struggling to surrender to Jesus’ authority? What would it look like for you to trust Him more fully in that area?

WEEK 25

GOD'S SERVANT PREDICTS HIS REJECTION

MARK 12:1-12

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DEVOTIONAL

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WK 25: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you had to be a farmer, what types of crops would you want? How would you run your farm? (Or vineyard)

Discussion 1: In the parable, the tenants repeatedly rejected and harmed the servants sent by the vineyard owner, and ultimately killed his son. What do you think Jesus was saying about the history of Israel and the religious leaders through this story? Why would this parable have been so offensive to them?

Application 1: What are the consequences of rejecting God's Word and His Son? How can we lovingly warn others, just as Jesus is doing here, before it's too late?

Discussion 2: Jesus quoted Psalm 118 to show that rejection isn't the end of the story — the rejected stone became the cornerstone. What does this teach us about God's purposes in using what the world overlooks or rejects? (See 1 Corinthians 1:18-31)

Application 2: Jesus was rejected, yet became the foundation of salvation. How does this truth give you hope when you feel rejected, overlooked, or discouraged? How can you rest in the knowledge that God often works powerfully through what seems broken or dismissed?

Discussion 3: The religious leaders realized Jesus told the parable against them, but instead of repenting, they looked for a way to arrest Him. Why do you think conviction sometimes leads people to harden their hearts instead of turning back to God?

Application 3: When confronted with truth, we can either resist or repent. How can we stay soft-hearted and responsive to God, even when His conviction is uncomfortable?

WEEK 26

GOD'S SERVANT PRIORITIZES WORSHIP

MARK 12:13-44

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 12:13-44

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WK 26: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you could live in a different country for a year, which country would you choose and why? Which region of the country would you choose?

Discussion 1: The Pharisees and Herodians tried to trap Jesus with a political question, but He responded with wisdom: “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” What does Jesus’ answer teach about how we live as citizens of both God’s kingdom and the world? (See Romans 13:1-8)

Application 1: What things fall into the category of “Caesar” and what things into the category of “God”? What exceptions might there be to following laws and the rule of government? How can we support Christians standing for God’s work in the face of unjust laws?

Discussion 2: When asked which commandment is greatest, Jesus responds with love for God and neighbor. Why do you think He pairs these two together? What does this teach us about the connection between our relationship to God and how we treat others?

Application 2: Loving God and loving others are inseparable in Jesus’ teaching. How does our love for others show our love for God? Is it possible to love others and NOT love God?

Discussion 3: Jesus praised a poor widow who gave two small coins, saying she gave more than the rich because she gave “all she had.” What does this reveal about how God measures generosity and devotion?

Application 3: The widow gave sacrificially out of trust in God. What would it look like for you to give — not just money, but your time, energy, or attention — with that same kind of faith and surrender? How is this standard of giving different from religion or our culture?

WEEK 27

GOD'S SERVANT PROPHEESIES, PART 1

MARK 13:1-13

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WK 27: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you could know one thing about the future, what would you want to know and why? Would you tell anyone about it or keep it a secret?

Discussion 1: When a disciple admired the temple, Jesus responded by predicting its destruction. Why do you think Jesus responded this way? What might this moment teach us about placing our hope in religious structures or physical things?

Application 1: Are there “temples” in your life — things that feel secure or impressive — that you might be relying on more than God? What does it look like to shift your trust away from those things? How can we worship God without a “temple made with hands” (Acts 7:48)?

Discussion 2: Jesus warns about false messiahs, wars, and disasters, but says these are “the beginning of birth pains.” What do you think Jesus means by that phrase? How should believers respond in the face of a harsh world full of sin and pain?

Application 2: It’s easy to be overwhelmed by global events or uncertainty. How can you stay grounded in hope and truth when fear rises? What practical things help you remember that God is in control, even in chaos?

Discussion 3: Jesus warns that His followers will face rejection, betrayal, and hatred, but calls them to endure. Why do you think endurance is such a key part of being a disciple? How might this call have encouraged Mark’s first readers who were facing real persecution?

Application 3: Enduring in faith doesn’t always mean dramatic sacrifice — it can mean staying faithful in small, daily ways. Where in your life do you need endurance right now (even if mundane)? How can you lean on God’s strength rather than your own?

WEEK 28

GOD'S SERVANT PROPHEESIES, PART 2

MARK 13:14-37

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 13:14-37

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WK 28: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you could swap lives with a fictional character for a day, who would it be and why?

Discussion 1: Jesus describes His return in power and glory, promising that His words will not pass away. What hope does this promise offer, especially to people experiencing suffering today? How does Jesus' return shape how we live now?

Application 1: Jesus' return is certain, even if the timing is unknown. How can this promise motivate us to live with purpose and perspective today? What's one area of our lives that needs to be shaped more by eternal hope than temporary concerns?

Discussion 2: Why do you think Jesus emphasizes not knowing the time of His return? How does that uncertainty affect the way we live as His disciples? How should we view those who think they know the time?

Application 2: Are there habits or attitudes in your life that reflect passivity rather than alertness? What is one practical step you can take this week to live with greater spiritual readiness for the Day of the Lord?

Discussion 3: In what ways can we become passive or even distracted looking for the Lord's return? How does the image of servants at work (v. 34) reframe our idea of spiritual readiness as we wait for the Lord's return?

Application 3: Each servant in the parable was assigned a task while the master was away (vs. 34). Jesus insinuates that all believers have a task while they wait for His return. What "assigned task" has God given you in this season of life, and how can you be more faithful in carrying it out today, instead of waiting for a "better" time? Do you feel you have a task?

WEEK 29

GOD'S SERVANT PREPARES, PART 1

MARK 14:1-31

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 14:1-31

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WK 29: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What's the most extravagant or meaningful gift you've ever received — or given? What was the occasion? How did it impact you?

Discussion 1: A woman anointed Jesus with costly perfume, and some criticized her for it. Why did Jesus defend her? Do you think this woman understood more than even the disciples? What does it show about her heart for Jesus and her willingness to sacrifice for Him?

Application 1: The woman gave generously and boldly to honor Jesus. Read 2 Samuel 24:24 and Malachi 1:6-14. What do these passages teach about giving God our “leftovers”?

Discussion 2: Judas agreed to betray Jesus, and at the Last Supper, Jesus announced that one of the twelve would do it. How do you think the other disciples felt hearing this? Why do you think Judas was willing to betray Jesus?

Application 2: What would it look like for you to extend the same kind of unconditional love that Jesus showed to Judas? How can we love those who have betrayed us in the past? Is there a point where you say, “Enough”?

Discussion 3: Peter was confident that he would never betray Jesus until Jesus predicted his betrayal. What can we learn about Peter's character? Are there lessons we can learn from the disciples' abandonment and Peter's bold claims?

Application 3: What does it reveal about the nature of true faith — and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit — that the same men who abandoned and denied Jesus later became bold witnesses, even willing to suffer and die for Him?

WEEK 30

GOD'S SERVANT PREPARES, PART 2

MARK 14:32-42

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 14:32-42

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WK 30: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Have you ever fallen asleep at the wrong time, like during a meeting, movie, or important moment? What happened?

Discussion 1: Jesus prays in deep distress, asking if the cup can pass from Him, but ultimately submits to the Father's will. What is "the cup" that Jesus refers to in this passage? What does this moment reveal about both Jesus' humanity and His obedience? Why is it significant that He prayed honestly yet surrendered fully?

Application 1: Jesus teaches us to bring our raw emotions to God, but still trust His will. Is there a difficult area in your life where you need to pray, "Not what I will, but what you will"? How can you follow Jesus' example in surrendering with faith?

Discussion 2: Jesus returned to find His closest friends sleeping — three times. Why do you think they couldn't stay awake with Him in such a critical moment? What do you think Mark is demonstrating by showing their weakness during Jesus' distress?

Application 2: Like the disciples, we often struggle to stay spiritually alert. What are some habits or distractions that make you spiritually sleepy or disengaged? What is one step you can take this week to stay more spiritually awake and connected to Jesus?

Discussion 3: After intense prayer, Jesus rises with resolve, and it is clear that He faces His upcoming suffering with determination and even joy (Hebrews 12:2). Look at James 1:2, 1 Peter 1:6, and Romans 5:3. How are we called to face the suffering that God places in our lives?

Application 3: Jesus didn't avoid suffering; He embraced it with joy because of His love for us. How can we embrace suffering with joy as Jesus did, even amid the pain it often brings? How can we get help from the body of Christ in our suffering?

WEEK 31

GOD'S SERVANT BETRAYED

MARK 14:43-52

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 14:43-52

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

WK 31: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What was your dream job as a kid? What about that career excited you?

Discussion 1: Judas used a symbol of affection — a kiss — to betray Jesus. Why do you think this act of betrayal feels especially painful or personal? What does this moment teach us about the difference between outward appearance and inner loyalty?

Application 1: Sometimes we go through the motions of following Jesus, but our hearts are not fully surrendered. This week, how can you make sure your outward actions align with genuine love and loyalty to Christ?

Discussion 2: After the soldiers seized Jesus, the disciples abandoned Him. Why do you think they responded with fear? Even after Jesus had described what must happen to Him (multiple times) and prayed with him all night, why were the disciples still surprised?

Application 2: Fear and pressure can cause us to retreat from our faith. Is there a situation where you're tempted to shrink back or stay silent about your faith? How can we prepare our hearts to stand with Jesus amid pressures from the world around us?

Discussion 3: Mark includes the unusual detail of a young man who runs away, leaving his garment behind. Who do you think the young man is? Why do you think Mark included that in the biblical narrative? What might this tell us about the Bible as a document?

WEEK 32

GOD'S SERVANT TRIED, PART 1

MARK 14:53-72

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 14:53-72

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

[illegible]

WK 32: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: What's your go-to snack when you're feeling stressed or anxious?

Discussion 1: The Sanhedrin sought to condemn Jesus without a fair trial. What do you think motivated this miscarriage of justice? Read Isaiah 53:7. Why do you think Jesus didn't defend himself during the trial?

Application 1: Because Satan is the god of this world, we can expect to face injustice in the world. How should we respond when we face injustice? Read John 15:20. Why should we expect to face persecution just as Jesus did?

Discussion 2: In the midst of the trial, Jesus responded by saying, "I am." This echoes Exodus 3:14 and the covenant name of God given to His people. His response also echoes Daniel 7:13. Why did Jesus finally affirm His true identity? Why did He try to hide it earlier in the book of Mark? Why did the leaders respond the way that they did?

Application 2: Why is Jesus' true identity so important? Why is it so important in THIS MOMENT? How does Jesus' true identity change how you relate to Him personally (such as praying in His name and worshipping Him as God)?

Discussion 3: Both Judas and Peter betrayed Jesus. What do you notice about the differences in their reactions, attitudes, and outcomes? What makes their reactions so different from each other?

Application 3: The difference between Judas and Peter was that one returned to Jesus after his failure (see John 21), while the other wallowed in self-pity and thought he could never return to Jesus (see Matt. 27:3–5). How do you respond to failure in your life? Whom do you go to in the midst of failure? Do you have brothers and sisters in Christ you can confess your sin to (see James 5:16)?

WEEK 33

GOD'S SERVANT

TRIED, PART 2

MARK 15:1-15

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 15:1-15

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

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WK 33: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Would you rather be famous for something embarrassing or completely unknown but have done something incredible?

Discussion 1: Verses 11-15 tell us that the leaders of the Jewish nation were behind Jesus' arrest and that they handed Him over to Pilate. Read Psalm 118:22-24, Isaiah 8:14, and Mark 12:1-11. What does it mean that Jesus is the "Stone that the builders rejected"? Who are the builders?

Application 1: Why did the religious leaders reject Jesus? How could they reject Him in the face of the many miracles and works that He did? What does this reveal about the human heart? What does this show you about your heart?

Discussion 2: Jesus remained silent while speaking with Pilate, fulfilling prophecy and amazing the governor. Looking at verse 10, how did Pilate perceive that the leaders handed Jesus over because of envy? Who stirred up the crowd to cry, "Crucify Him"? Why did Pilate assent to the crowd's demands despite believing Jesus was not guilty?

Application 2: The religious leaders stirred up the crowd, and Pilate (the ruling authority) allowed the injustice to happen. What does this show us about following the crowd? Are there places in your life where envy, people-pleasing, or fear of rejection tempts you to go along with the crowd or stay silent? Where do you see this in our culture?

Discussion 3: Pilate gave in to the crowd and handed Jesus over to be crucified. This moment of injustice and substitution is central to the gospel. How does Jesus being given over to be crucified in place of Barabbas show us the truth of the gospel?

Application 3: Jesus took the punishment we deserved so we could be set free. Read 1 John 4:9-10. What does the word propitiation mean? How does remembering this truth impact how you view grace, God's love, and how you live each day?

WEEK 34

GOD'S SERVANT

SUFFERS

MARK 15:16-20

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 15:16-20

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How can I apply this to my life?

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WK 34: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Would you rather have a rewind button or a pause button for your life? Why? How would you use it?

Discussion 1: The soldiers dressed Jesus in a purple robe, crowned Him with thorns, and mocked Him as “King of the Jews.” Why do you think Mark includes these cruel details? What does this moment show us about the human heart?

Application 1: Jesus endured shame and mockery without fighting back, remaining faithful to His purpose. Hebrews 12:3 tells us to “consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.” How does considering the hostility of sinners against Jesus help us to not grow weary? What is the author of Hebrews instructing us to do here?

Discussion 2: How does this moment of Jesus being degraded and humiliated connect to His identity as the suffering servant? How does it challenge our ideas of power and authority? How does Jesus demonstrate servanthood and humility for us (see Mark 9:35)?

Application 2: Jesus was willing to be dishonored, mocked, and ridiculed for us. How can we follow Jesus’ example to be dishonored, mocked, or even ridiculed for the sake of the gospel? How can we live in the same humility that Jesus models in this passage?

Discussion 3: Take a moment to meditate on the suffering, shame, pain, and injustice Jesus endured in this passage — mocked by soldiers, struck, spat on, and humiliated. What thoughts or emotions come to mind as you reflect on what He willingly endured for you?

Application 3: As you sit with the reality of Jesus’ suffering, how does it deepen your understanding of His love for you? How might remembering His sacrifice shape your attitude toward sin? How might it inspire your worship? How might it drive you to the sacrifices God is calling you to in your life?

WEEK 35

GOD'S SERVANT

CRUCIFIED

MARK 15:21-39

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 15:21-39

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How can I apply this to my life?

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Blank lined paper for writing.

WK 35: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: If you could witness any historical event (but not change it), what would it be? Why?

Discussion 1: Simon of Cyrene was forced to carry Jesus' cross, and Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh, but refused it. What do these details reveal about how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy (see Psalm 22:1, 6-8, and 19, and 69:21)? Why are these details important?

Application 1: Isaiah foretold a Messiah who would be "despised and rejected," who would bear our griefs and be pierced for our transgressions (Isaiah 53). How does seeing Jesus fulfill this prophecy deepen your understanding of His love for you? Do you struggle with the fact that Jesus was despised and rejected for your sake?

Discussion 2: Even as He hung dying, Jesus was mocked. Why do you think Mark mentioned this mocking? How does this moment challenge our ideas of power and victory? How does Jesus' weakness fly in the face of the world's view of strength?

Application 2: Jesus stayed on the cross when He could have come down, choosing obedience and love over vindication. Are there times when you are tempted to vindicate yourself when you should remain silent? Are there times when you struggle to choose love over argument and defense?

Discussion 3: At Jesus' death, the temple curtain was torn in two, and a Roman centurion declared, "Truly this man was the Son of God." Why is it significant that the curtain is torn from top to bottom? What does this detail signify? What do you think convinced a Roman centurion to change his view so abruptly?

Application 3: The torn curtain means we now have direct access to God through Jesus. See Hebrews 4:16. How can you more fully live in that reality, approaching God with confidence and boldness? How can we become ambassadors to let people know the way is open?

WEEK 36

GOD'S SERVANT

RISES

MARK 15:40-16:13

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DEVOTIONAL

MARK 15:40-16:13

What is the author saying?

How can I apply this to my life?

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WK 36: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker: Would you rather never have to do laundry again or never have to wash dishes again? Or ... would you rather your yard always be perfectly maintained or never have to do another house project?

Discussion 1: Mark goes out of his way to show that Jesus was truly dead — confirmed by the centurion, seen by the women, and buried by Joseph of Arimathea. Why is the certainty of Jesus' death so essential to the gospel? What are the theological and personal implications if His death wasn't real (as some say)?

Application 1: Jesus' death wasn't just a historical event — it's meant to reshape our lives. Read Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20 and Philippians 3:10. What does it mean to be someone who has "died with Christ"? Why is it important that we are "crucified with Christ"? What are these passages calling us to?

Discussion 2: The women go to the tomb expecting to anoint Jesus' body, but instead hear that "He has risen!" Why do you think their first response was fear and silence, not joy and proclamation? Do you think they eventually shared the news?

Application 2: Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19. Why is the good news of the resurrection so important to the Christian faith? Read Ephesians 1:18-20. Why did Paul pray that Ephesians believers would understand the power "for us who believe ... when he raised Christ"? What is Paul saying in this passage, and why does he tie it directly to the resurrection?

Discussion 3: Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene and then to others, but the disciples didn't believe at first. Why do you think there was so much doubt among them? Why do you think they struggled to believe even after Jesus had predicted His death and resurrection?

Application 3: Jesus is patient with our doubts, but He still calls us to believe and have faith. Is there an area where you're still wrestling with doubt? Are you willing to share your doubts with God? Are you willing to share them with other believers? What might hold you back from sharing your doubts in a safe environment?

