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The Leader Worth Following



A Series of 6 studies from Mark



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8. What do we need to understand about what it means to follow Jesus?

9. In what ways can you serve others around you?

10. How does following Jesus fit in with your plans in life? In what ways are you putting others first before yourself?

LOOK back over some of the things you wrote down over the week that you would like to do/change.

PRAY that God will help you do them!

WHAT THE OT SAYS ABOUT JESUS

In verses 2-3, Mark quotes some Old Testament passages prophesying about the coming Messiah.

3. Read **Malachi 3:1-5**. What is God doing here and how will Israel be affected when Jesus comes?

4. Read **Isaiah 40:1-11**. What is God doing here and how will Israel be affected when Jesus comes?

WHAT JOHN THE BAPTIST SAYS ABOUT JESUS (vs4-8)

5. Mark introduces John as the '*messenger*' of the Old Testament prophecies. How does John the Baptist '*prepare the way*' for the arrival of Jesus?

6. How is Jesus portrayed as a better leader than John the Baptist?

Being first, being last

In the last study we saw that the disciples are like the blind man healed in two stages. They're beginning to see who Jesus is but they haven't got the full picture yet. They still don't understand Jesus' death – not only why he must die for us, but how his death is an example for us to follow as well...

In what ways does society tell us to put ourselves first?

Read Mark 9:33-37

1. What have the disciples not yet learnt about what it means to *follow* Jesus? (refer back to 8:35-36)

2. Why do you think they find this hard to understand?

Read Mark 10:13-31

3. We see that children are a good example of people who follow Jesus (vs15) but a rich man is an example of one who finds it difficult (vs22). Why do you think this is so?

10. What is the message Jesus preaches in verse 15? What do you think Jesus is talking about?

APPLICATION

11. Looking back on how Jesus is described by God and others, do you think these qualities make Jesus a good leader to follow? Why or why not?

12. If a non-Christian friend asked you, "Who is Jesus?", how would you reply?

13. From what we've discovered about Jesus in Mark's gospel so far, what would you expect Jesus to do next and why?

PRAY and give thanks to God for the good news about Jesus! Ask him to help you share the good news with everyone.

11. How can we help others recognise Jesus?

12. In what areas of your life do you need to deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Christ?

PRAY about your answers in the application section.

7. Why is understanding Jesus' death so crucial to recognising who he is? Why is it such an important part of his mission? (look up Romans 4:25 and 1 Peter 3:18)
8. What do you think it means to deny yourself and take up his cross and follow him? (vs34) What do you think this would involve?

APPLICATION

9. The disciples were, until now, just as bad as the Pharisees and Herod. They didn't look like they were rejecting Jesus but they weren't recognising Him either. How are people like this today?
10. How should we recognise Jesus in today's world?

Surprising priorities of Jesus

Mark told us up-front that Jesus is King – the Messiah. We see he has AUTHORITY and POWER from God to be the greatest leader this world will ever see. In this next section of Mark, we begin to see Jesus in action: mixing with his subjects and showing his royal power. We find that Jesus has surprising priorities in how he uses his power...

What sorts of things do you or others see as the biggest *problem* or greatest *need* in life?

THE FISHERMEN

Mark 1:16-20

1. What does Jesus ask these men to do?
2. What does this encounter tell us about Jesus' authority?

THE SYNAGOGUE

Mark 1:21-28

3. How does Jesus demonstrate his authority and how do people react to His authority?

THE SICK

Mark 1:29-39

4. In what ways is Jesus' authority shown here?

5. From Jesus' words and actions, discuss the reason why Jesus came to earth.

THE PARALYSED MAN

Mark 2:1-12

6. What miraculous thing does Jesus do before he heals the paralytic? (vs5)

7. What does this reveal about Jesus' authority?

Seeing Jesus clearly

Mark has been weaving a picture for us from three key strands:

- the AUTHORITY of Jesus (as Son of God – 1:1)
- the HOSTILITY of the religious leaders (rejecting Jesus)
- the BLINDNESS of his disciples (being slow to recognise who Jesus is)

This last strand is now developed more.

- i. Most people have an opinion about Jesus. What do people around you say who Jesus is?

- ii. How many of them do you think have checked out who he is?

Read Mark 7:31-37 and 8:22-26

1. In what way do you think these two healings are illustrations of the disciples?

Read Mark 8:27-9:1

2. Who did the people think that Jesus was? (vs28)

11. What does this show you about Jesus and what he's like?

APPLICATION

12. What sort of leadership do you look for and want to follow?

13. What things makes Jesus a leader worth following?

14. How can following Jesus give us hope and comfort?

PRAY that you will follow Jesus properly throughout your life. Pray that you will be someone who encourages others to do same alongside you.

8. What does this tell us about *our* greatest need and the real problem Jesus came to fix?

9. Some people were amazed by Jesus (vs12) but others felt angry (vs6-7). The teachers of the law said that only God can forgive sins which is correct, but what caused them to be upset and what haven't they recognised about Jesus yet?

FISHING FOR MEN

Mark 2:13-17

10. Mark says that Jesus told his first disciples that he would make them fishers of men (1:17). So when Jesus goes fishing again, what sort of person does Jesus now catch?

11. What does this tell us about the people Jesus was seeking? (vs17)

APPLICATION

12. From what we have seen so far in Mark, discuss what Jesus wants to offer those who follow him?

13. What is one area in your life where you **DON'T** give Jesus full authority? What are you going to do about it?

PRAY about your response to Jesus Christ and how you can help others respond to him.

Read Ezekiel 34:1-6, 11-16

8. What should the shepherds of Israel have been doing? What has happened to the sheep as a result?

9. What does God promise to do for his flock? Who will he send?

10. Use the table below to compare the similarities between the passages in Ezekiel and Mark.

Ezekiel	Mark	Similarities
vs12	vs34	
vs14	vs37	
vs15	vs39	
vs16	vs34	

3. How does Jesus respond to the woman after she touched his cloak? (vs30-34)

4. How is the faith of these 2 people demonstrated?

5. What is so special about Jesus' healing of Jairus' daughter and what does it show us about Jesus' authority?

Read Mark 6:30-44

6. What does Jesus tell the disciples to do and what is the problem they face? (vs37-38)

7. When Jesus saw the large crowd of people he 'had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.' (vs34). In what ways does Jesus care for them like a shepherd caring for his sheep?

How's your heart condition?

Mark has introduced us to Jesus and his authority, especially his incredible authority to forgive sins. Jesus is the one the Old Testament longed for. He is the one who will establish God's rule: the kingdom of God. He is the one who has come to fix the heart of the problem: human sin. But now we see that not everyone responds to Jesus' authority as they should...

What do people think of when they imagine a better future?

1. More people are starting to follow Jesus. But there are more also starting to oppose him. Fill in this table, thinking about what more it shows us about Jesus' authority:

Mark	Why is Jesus opposed here?	How does Jesus answer the opposition?
2:13-17		
2:23-28		
3:1-6		

Read Mark 4:1-20

Jesus has been going around preaching the 'good news of God' (1:14-15).

- 2. Draw a picture representing the four different kinds of soils in the boxes below.

Soil 1	Soil 2
Soil 3	Soil 4

- 3. Write down what each of the soils represent and the different responses given.

Soil 1 (vs15):

Soil 2 (vs16-17):

Jesus leads from the front!

Mark has introduced us to Jesus as a figure of authority. Most significantly, Jesus has the authority to forgive sins. This means he is the one who leads people back to God: he is the true shepherd, who brings God's sheep back into a relationship with him. Israel's leaders have failed to lead people to God - but Jesus truly does it well!

- i. In what ways do you measure the success of a leader?
- ii. Would Jesus measure up to your standards of a leader worth following?

Read Mark 5:21-43

- 1. Who is Jairus and what does he believe Jesus is able to do? (vs22-23)
- 2. The woman with bleeding was also powerless and beyond help of doctors or anyone else. What does she believe Jesus is able to do for her? (vs27-28)

Soil 3 (vs18-19):

Soil 4 (vs20):

4. Why does Jesus speak to the people in parables? (vs11-12)

5. What does the seed represent? (vs14)

6. What do you think is the purpose of Jesus telling this parable?
(refer back to Mark 1:38)

7. Who does Jesus reveal the meaning of this parable to? (vs9-11)
Why?

APPLICATION

8. As we try to imagine a better future, what does the message of Jesus say to us?

9. What are some possible reasons to stop you from following Jesus?

Next week...

Next year...

In 5 years...

In 10 years...

How can you guard yourself against these things?

10. In what ways can you help your Christian and non-Christian friends to become good soil?

11. What is the right way to respond to Jesus and how will this affect you...

at School?

at Home?

at Youth group?

with your friends?

by yourself?

PRAY about what you have learnt from Mark's gospel so far and ask God to help you to continue to grow as 'good soil.'