



## January - March 2024 | Trinity Church Golden Grove

Written by John Mark, who wrote his account from both Peter's sermons in the years after Jesus' resurrection and his own eye witness accounts, he compiles what scholars believe to be the earliest account of Jesus' life (Written in AD55), the shortest account (678 verses), the punchiest account (Mark says the word immediately over 40 times and begins with no birth account or genealogy, but opens right with Jesus and his ministry) and it's full of action (Mark records more stories about Jesus, than Jesus' teaching). And, perhaps most pointedly, the great drama of Mark's Gospel is people's blindness to Jesus' identity and mission and call. People see and hear, but just don't understand. It's a great Gospel for 21st century Adeladians as we come face to face with the amazing character and nature of God, as he's revealing himself through Jesus, showing us what life with him will be like and how he alone can forgive sins and restore us back to God, in a short, snappy package.

If it were a Netflix series, I reckon it would be divided into 2 episodes:

**Episode 1: Mark 1-8.** These chapters are set in Galilee, as Jesus travels around, revealing God's kingdom through mighty acts and showing us who he truly is. For all the action and suspense, Mark shows us that Jesus is in control of all things, at all times. This episode ends with Peter saying, "You are the Messiah!" Mark 8:29.

**Episode 2: Mark 9-16.** Jesus now heads towards Jerusalem and the Cross. Along the way, he explains what life as one of his followers is like and how it's marked with suffering and obedience. Just as Episode 1 ended with a confession of who Jesus really is, so does episode 2 when the

Roman soldier says, when looking at Jesus on the Cross, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"  
Mark 15:39.

In Mark's Gospel Jesus also like to call himself, "Son of Man". This title shows continuity with the Old Testament (Daniel 7:1, Psalm 8:4 and when God talks to Ezekiel the prophet) and, it shows us that Jesus the divine heavenly figure to come who identifies with humankind. What's more, this powerful miracle worker, is none other than the God in the flesh, come to die a lowly death, so that all humankind can wrestle with the claim of Mark 1:15, "The time has come," Jesus said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" All Jesus does and says is for this great purpose.

The Gospel of Mark is a great way to explore Jesus and what it means to follow him. My prayer is that we would come face to face with the Son of God over the course of these talks in a fresh way and be reminded about what it means to be his disciple as we follow Jesus, in Adelaide, in 2024.

*Luke Dahlenburg*

## Series Outline

#	Date	Talk Title	Passage
1	21-Jan	A Big Welcome	Mark 3:7-35
2	28-Jan	A Bigger Than We Expect God	Mark 6:31-56
3	4-Feb	Big Questions About Family*	Mark 10:1-16
4	11-Feb	Big News About Seeing God	Mark 10:32-52
5	18-Feb	Big News About True Religion	Mark 11:1-25
6	25-Feb	A Big Debate And True Devotion	Mark 12:18-44
7	3-Mar	Be Alert To A Big Ending	Mark 13:1-37
8	10-Mar	A Big Gesture Of Love	Mark 14:1-11
9	17-Mar	The Biggest Meal	Mark 14:12-31
10	24-Mar	A Big Betrayal and God's Big Purpose	Mark 14:32-52
11	29-Mar <i>Good Friday</i>	Meet Jesus. Find Forgiveness.	Mark 15:12-39 & Mark 10:45
12	31-Mar <i>Easter Sunday</i>	Meet Jesus. Find Life.	1 Corinthians 15:3-5

\* For more information on. Divorce and remarriage, see this talk by Australia John Woodhouse - <https://paa.moore.edu.au/resources/divorce-and-remarriage-an-exploration-of-my-understanding-of-what-the-bible-teaches-on-this-issue-by-john-woodhouse-03-02-14/>

# Trinity Kids Resources

<https://youtu.be/rVFQfPTJPq8> - **Dramatic Reading Of Mark's Gospel**

- You could show the weeks verses in the classroom from this video. It's a great rendition of Mark's Gospel, word-for-word from the NIV.

*The Tell-It-Together Gospel: Mark* - **All Ages Talk Ideas**

- Written especially to have kids and adults acting out Mark's Gospel it could be a great starting point for your All Ages talk if you are stuck.

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/mark> - **Video Over of Mark's Gospel**

## Community Groups

Our Community Groups will work through each passage before Sunday's talk. A good idea when looking at the passage prior to Sunday's talk is to get your group to outline the passage and look for the big idea after having read the verses, and, to then use the *COMA* method of looking at the Bible. Details below.

I've also prepared some simple questions for each week of Mark for the school term which is why we begin with talk #3 and end at #talk 10.

To help us work through Mark we've got a simple tool called *COMA* that is really well suited to using in Mark's Gospel. To be clear, the name *COMA* doesn't imply that is how you will feel at the end of the study! Instead, it stands for four simple questions to consider as we read a passage:

- C:** What is the context of this passage? So, we think about what Mark has already told us about Jesus, the details we're given about where he is at this point, or how this 'episode' might relate to the wider story of the Bible.
- O:** What do we need to observe in this passage? What are the details that stand out? What things does Mark seem to highlight? Who are the characters involved?
- M:** What does this passage mean? This might seem like the most obvious question and it's the one we want to jump to, but if we haven't looked closely at the passage in it's context we'll get this one wrong. On the other hand, we could spend hours unpacking all the fascinating detail of the text but there's very little point to that if we're not then considering what God is saying to us through this. Why did God have Mark write this the way he did? What does it mean?
- A:** How might we apply this passage to our lives? (or perhaps we should ask, how might we apply our lives to this passage) This can be quite broad: What does Mark want to shape about what we believe and how we think? What behaviour should change? How would he

have us speak with others in light of what we've read? Does this passage teach us things that should impact the way we pray?

## **General COMA questions for the Gospels and Acts <sup>1</sup>**

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### **Context**

- What has happened so far in the narrative? Have there been any major events, characters or themes?
- What has happened just prior to the section you are reading?

### **Observation**

- What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves?
- Is time or place significant in the events that happen in the passage?
- Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?
- Do you think there is a main point or theme in this section of the story?
- What surprises are there?

### **Meaning**

- Are there any 'editorial' comments from the author about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
- Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?
- What does the passage reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do? How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?

### **Application**

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
- Is there some attitude you need to change?
- What does this passage teach you about being a disciple of Jesus?

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<sup>1</sup> © Matthias Media. From *One-to-One Bible Reading* by David Helm. For more one-to-one Bible reading resources, or to purchase the book from which this page was extracted, please visit [www.matthiasmedia.com](http://www.matthiasmedia.com).

# Questions

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## **Talk 3: Big Questions About Family, Mark 10:1-16**

In these verses Jesus is tested and challenged by two cultural ideas about divorce and children. In the first, the Pharisees want to trap him and accuse him of being evil and wrong. In the second, the disciples are in the wrong with their attitude to children and God's Kingdom. In both instances the problem is that the people around Jesus don't understand God's heart and intent. Both are needed to understand divorce, the place of marriage, along with faith that is like a child.

1. How does Jesus' view of marriage challenge your view of marriage – and your pursuit of it or your attitude and behaviour within it? *Remember this isn't the only thing the Bible says on this topic.*
2. What quality does Jesus look for in faith this is like a child and What might it look like to "Receive the kingdom of God like a child"?
3. How do these verses remind us of God's grace and compassion to us in Jesus?

## **Talk 4: Big News About Seeing God, Mark 10:32-52**

1. Why do you think Jesus continued to tell the disciples what was ahead, and why did they continue to ignore his words?
2. What is the cup and the baptism Jesus refers to in 10:38?
3. What do these verses tell us about what Jesus' purpose was?
4. What does Jesus tell us about true greatness?
5. What don't James and John still not understand?

## **Talk 5: Big News About True Religion, Mark 11:1-25**

1. Explain the purpose of Jesus in entering Jerusalem this way. How would this differ from the expectation people had of Him as king?
2. What is the lesson of the fig tree?
3. The cleansing of the temple was a deliberate act on the part of Jesus. What were the issues that Jesus was protesting?
4. How might people today rely on rituals or other external things in their relationship with God? How can we make sure that prayer in particular is an act of devotion, not just a discipline to master?

## **Talk 6: A Big Debate and True Devotion, Mark 12:18-44**

1. Why does Jesus' identity matter so much?
2. How did Jesus answer the question about the woman who had 7 husbands.
3. What are the most important two commands and why?



4. What would it look like in your life to behave like the rich scribes? What would it look like to behave like the poor widow?

### **Talk 7: Be Alert To A Big Ending, Mark 13:1-37**

Jason Meyer, *Mark For You*, "This passage as a mix of both historical events and eschatological imagery. The main idea is that history consists of repeating cycles and patterns. Judgments in history foreshadow and prefigure a climactic final upheaval and judgment. The destruction of the temple in AD 70 is therefore inextricably linked to the final judgment at the second coming and the destruction of the world as we know it. Some of what Jesus says refers to one event; some refers to the other; some refers to both."

1. What is the main idea Jesus is getting at and what is the context in which he says this?
2. What do you find encouraging in what Jesus says here? Is there anything you find worrying?
3. In what ways do you sometimes find yourself drowsy or sleepy with regard to the reality of Christ's second coming?

### **Talk 8: A Big Gesture of Love, Mark 14:1-11**

1. Why was Mary so extravagant? Why did Jesus allow it?
2. Is the protest against Mary justifiable? How does Jesus correct their assumptions?
3. What event does this trigger in the mind of Judas?
4. How do these verses challenge your idea of wealth and devotion to Jesus and how we use our resources for the Kingdom of God and to care for others?

### **Talk 9: The Biggest Meal, Mark 14:12-31**

1. How is the Lord's Supper related to Passover?
2. What does Jesus mean by saying this is the blood of the covenant? What is he referring to?
3. What does Jesus mean when he says of the bread, "This is my body"?
4. What should you be thinking as you receive bread and grape juice when we celebrate Communion as a church and why do you think Jesus gives us bread and wine for communion?

### **Talk 10: A Big Betrayal and God's Big Purpose, Mark 14:32-52**

1. Why do you think Jesus was so deeply troubled as he approached death and what does he do to show it?
2. Look up Jeremiah 25:15-16, read Mark 14:36 and then discuss what the cup Jesus is referring to and when it will be poured out on him.
3. What do these verse teach about prayer?

# End Of Term Reflection

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Having come to the end of our time in Mark's Gospel for this year, take a moment to reflect on our last few months in God's word.

- What has God been teaching you?
- How have you been encouraged or challenged to see who Jesus – either as a reminder or perhaps for the first time?
- How have you grown in Christ?
- What are you thankful to God for?
- What are some changes that you would like to make in light of what we have learned from Mark? Aim for 1 or 2 that are specific enough that you can put them into action in the next few weeks.
- How have you seen God answering prayer in your group?
- Having seen more of who Jesus is, who is one person you want to pray for an opportunity to share the gospel with? In addition to praying, what is one specific action that you can take towards this goal?