



Session 4

Jesus has come to announce the arrival of his kingdom and to call for a response of repentance and faith (1:14-15). But as we've seen so far in Mark, and as the parables of Mark 4:1-34 explain, there will always be a mixed response to Jesus. Some respond to him in faith while others reject him.

On the heels of the four parables come four miracle stories (4:35-5:43). As you read, be looking for what they teach us about Jesus' authority. (What do you see Jesus having authority over in each?) As usual in Mark's gospel, look at how people respond to these miracles, paying special attention to the role of faith in each.

Read Mark 4:35-5:43. Using the scripture pages at the back of the workbook, read this week's text in one sitting. Read the text a second time, writing down any initial observations you have. Be on the lookout when Jesus displays his *power* when people are most afraid. There are suggested annotations for each session on the scripture pages.

After you've read the text multiple times and made your own observations, work through the following questions.

1. Summarize your initial observations and/or your annotations. How did you see faith or fear revealed as Jesus' power was displayed?

2. What does Mark continually emphasize about the demon-possessed man in 5:1-5? How does this highlight Jesus' power in the verses that follow?

3. Consider how this man was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). In what ways do we see the demons *destroying* (or attempting to destroy) this image bearer? In what ways do we see Jesus *restoring* this image bearer? Make a list of things that Mark says about the man when he was demon possessed (5:1-15) and when the man was healed (5:16-20).

Demon-possessed man (destroying)	Healed man (restoring)

4. We see another Markan sandwich in 5:21-35 (see more about this literary device on page 18). On your scripture pages, put brackets around each section that you see making up the parts of the sandwich.

5. What significance is there in Mark telling these stories together like this? What connections do you see between the two? Look for repeated words or concepts that link the stories together.

6. Create subtitles for each of these passages:

4:35-41: Power over _____

5:1-20: Power over _____

5:21-43: Power over _____



Session 4 Application

Reflect and Respond

Use these four questions to pray and reflect on what you've read this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict and guide you during this time.

Reflect

What do we learn about God in this passage and how should we respond to God as a result?

Look for:

- *God's character, concerns, and conduct*
- *Things to praise and thank God for*
- *Sin to confess and repent of*
- *Promises and truths to believe*

What do we learn about people in this passage and how should we respond to others?

Look for:

- *How they reflect God's character in the text*
- *How they reject God and his rule in the text*
- *Examples or ways to love, serve, and care for others*

Respond

What will these truths look like in action for you this week?

What questions do I still have? How will I investigate this further?



Notes

Small group discussion | Large group teaching



Session 5

Beginning in chapter 6, Mark returns to the theme of *opposition*, starting with Jesus being rejected in his hometown (6:1-6) and showing that his followers can expect the same treatment (6:7-13). Note how the flashback to John's death (6:14-29) both reinforces this point and anticipates Jesus' own fate.

The stories of Jesus feeding the five thousand and walking on water (6:30-56) demonstrate that Jesus is far more than just a prophet and should be read with two Old Testament events in mind: 1) God providing food for the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16), and 2) God demonstrating his authority over the sea by leading the Israelites safely through the Red Sea (Exodus 13:17-14:31).

As you read Mark 7:1-23, look for how Jesus asserts his authority to the Pharisees. Consider also how this passage lays the groundwork for the gospel to go out to all nations, not just the Jews. Finally, re-read Mark 1:1-15. Reviewing Mark's prologue will be helpful as he continues to weave the theme of the wilderness throughout his gospel.

Read Mark 6:1-7:23. Using the scripture pages at the back of the workbook, read this week's text in one sitting. Read the text a second time, writing down any initial observations you have. Look out for the theme of opposition as well as key words or concepts you've seen in previous sessions. There are suggested annotations for each session on the scripture pages.

After you've read the text multiple times and made your own observations, work through the following questions.

1. Look at the bookend stories in Mark 6 (1-6; 53-56). What are key differences between these stories? Why then was "no mighty work" (6:5) done in Nazareth?

2. Identify the Markan sandwich starting in 6:7. Where do you see an “interruption” in the narrative? Make note of each of the three parts of the Markan sandwich by using the following chart.

Verses	Summary sentence of each section
v7-13	
v14-29	
v30-44	

3. Mark intentionally tells the story of two “banquets” back to back. We see that one banquet leads to death while one banquet leads to life. How would you describe each of these events, including the king in each story?

The banquet of King Herod: the beheading of John the Baptist (6:14-29)

The banquet of King Jesus: the feeding of the 5000 (6:30-44)

4. In the Old Testament, Israel's leaders were called to shepherd God's people (Numbers 27:17), and - in the absence of faithful leaders - the people were referred to as "sheep that have no shepherd" (1 Kings 22:17). This imagery is especially prominent in the book of Ezekiel.

Look at Ezekiel 34 and answer the following:

What does God accuse Israel's "shepherds" (leaders) of? (verses 1-6)

What will God do to the shepherds? (verses 7-10)

What will God do for the sheep? (verses 11-16, 23)

5. How do you see Jesus living out Ezekiel 34 in Mark 6:30-44?



Session 5 Application

Reflect and Respond

Use these four questions to pray and reflect on what you've read this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict and guide you during this time.

Reflect

What do we learn about God in this passage and how should we respond to God as a result?

Look for:

- *God's character, concerns, and conduct*
- *Things to praise and thank God for*
- *Sin to confess and repent of*
- *Promises and truths to believe*

What do we learn about people in this passage and how should we respond to others?

Look for:

- *How they reflect God's character in the text*
- *How they reject God and his rule in the text*
- *Examples or ways to love, serve, and care for others*

Respond

What will these truths look like in action for you this week?

What questions do I still have? How will I investigate this further?



Notes

Small group discussion | Large group teaching

Jesus' Ministry beyond Israel

Almost all of Jesus' ministry took place within the traditional borders of Israel in areas dominated by Jews. Yet Jesus also traveled to the region of Tyre and Sidon, where he healed a Gentile woman's daughter, and to the region of Decapolis, where he healed many people. It was also at the extreme northern border of Israel at Caesarea Philippi that Peter made his confession that "You are the Christ, the son of the living God," and Jesus declared, "on this rock I will build my church."



©2008 by Crossway. All rights reserved.



Session 6

In the previous session, Mark recounts an event that would have had special relevance to his Gentile (non-Jewish) readers. By teaching that people are defiled not by what goes into them (like certain foods) but by what comes out of their hearts, Jesus “declared all foods clean”, meaning that Gentiles were not at a disadvantage for not following Jewish food laws (7:14-23).

In this session, watch how Mark continues to focus on the Gentiles. This comes in the form of healings (7:24-37) as well as Jesus repeating his earlier miraculous feeding, but for a Gentile crowd (8:1-10).

Additionally, pay attention to how the “hardness of heart” theme shows up in Jesus’ interactions with the Pharisees (8:11-13) and his disciples (8:14-21). And consider how the story of Jesus healing the blind man serves to bridge the disciples’ lack of understanding (8:21) and Peter’s confession (8:29), a significant moment in Mark’s gospel.

Read Mark 7:24-8:30. Using the scripture pages at the back of the workbook, read this week’s text in one sitting. Read the text a second time, writing down any initial observations you have. Look out for needs that you see throughout this passage. There are suggested annotations for each session on the scripture pages.

After you’ve read the text multiple times and made your own observations, work through the following questions.

1. What are some of the physical and/or spiritual needs displayed in each story? How did Jesus respond to these needs?

2. In each story, identify if Jesus is ministering to Jews or Gentiles. (Note: If you are unsure based on context, refer to the map. When you see a location mentioned, this will typically help you to identify his audience. If there is no location change, assume they are in the same place.)

Passage	Person/s involved (Jew or Gentile)
7:24-30	
7:31-37	
8:1-10	
8:11-13	
8:14-21	
8:22-26	
8:27-30	

3. Jesus' ministry was first to the people of Israel with the understanding that it would extend to include the Gentiles (Romans 1:16). We see a significant context shift here as Jesus' ministry extends beyond the borders of Israel.

As you consider this context, determine what Jesus is saying here to the Gentile woman as she demonstrates her faith in him.. What do the following words from Jesus' short parable represent?

And he said to her, "Let the **children** (_____)

be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's **bread** (_____)

and throw it to the **dogs** (_____)."

4. How do we understand 7:28 in light of verse 27?

5. Refer back to your chart at the beginning of this session. Which story from this section is most like Peter's confession in 8:27-30 and why? Which story differs the most and why?

6. How would you summarize this section?

7. What needs do you have that only Jesus can meet? How has he met your needs in the last week?



Session 6 Application

Reflect and Respond

Use these four questions to pray and reflect on what you've read this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict and guide you during this time.

Reflect

What do we learn about God in this passage and how should we respond to God as a result?

Look for:

- *God's character, concerns, and conduct*
- *Things to praise and thank God for*
- *Sin to confess and repent of*
- *Promises and truths to believe*

What do we learn about people in this passage and how should we respond to others?

Look for:

- *How they reflect God's character in the text*
- *How they reject God and his rule in the text*
- *Examples or ways to love, serve, and care for others*

Respond

What will these truths look like in action for you this week?

What questions do I still have? How will I investigate this further?



Notes

Small group discussion | Large group teaching

