

## MARK

### Study 1 –Transfiguration: Listening and Believing

#### Live

If you could transform yourself in any way, what would it be? It can be small changes or big changes, physical changes or personality changes or maybe you even want to be able to fly! Anything!

#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, reflecting on the life of Jesus –what he did for us, his power, his love.

#### Grow

##### Read Mark 9v2-29

1. What is the significance of the presence of Elijah and Moses with Jesus on the mount?
2. In verse 7 God's voice is heard for a second time in Mark's Gospel, the first being in 1:11. What does God's affirmation here achieve?
3. Jesus descends the mountain and returns to his other disciples, only to find them in debate with the teachers of the law over their failure to exorcise a young boy robbed of speech (v. 14-18). Why do you think Jesus is so harsh in verse 19? Who do you think he is referring to when he says "faithless generation"?
4. What details in the account of the boy's healing parallel those in Jesus' prediction of his coming suffering and victory (seen in 8 v. 31-38)?

Let's think about applying this to our lives.

5. Which do you struggle with more - believing that Jesus can or that he wants to answer your prayers? Explain.
6. How can the dialogue between Jesus and the boy's father encourage you when your faith is weak? What does this show about his faith?
7. How can this passage encourage you in the midst of pain and suffering?
8. The statement in verse 7, "listen to him!" probably alludes to Deuteronomy 18:15-19. Explain how we can listen to Jesus today.

#### Build

Does this passage encourage you in your evangelism in any way? How? Perhaps the transfiguration gives a foretaste of heaven and reminds you of the people who you want to be there! Perhaps it gives you more confidence in Jesus' promise, as it may have done for the disciples.

### Prayer

Pray that God will help us in our unbelief, like the father in this study. Pray that we can be a channel of God's grace to those around us.



## Leader's Notes

1. Elijah and Moses were chosen because they represent those who are caught up with God. Moses represents those who die and go to glory and Elijah represents those who are caught up to heaven without death. Upon seeing Moses and Elijah, the disciples had direct evidence for life after death, which may have given them more confidence in Jesus' claim to resurrection. Moses also represents the Law and Elijah represents the Prophets.

4. The boy also experienced a death and resurrection. Victory over the devil was accomplished by Jesus' own death and resurrection.

6. It shows that he has faith. "Help my unbelief" is only something that can be said by someone who believes. Someone of no faith is not aware of their unbelief. This man had faith, but still thought it was too good to be true



## MARK

### Study 2 –Relating to Others



#### Live

If you had to follow one person (who is alive today) around the world, who would it be and why?



#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, reflecting on the life of Jesus –what he did for us, his power, his love.



#### Grow

##### Read Mark 9 v. 30-50

1. What do you think is going on in the minds of the disciples at the the beginning of this passage (particularly thinking about what has happened before)?
2. Why do you think the disciples weren't able to understand Jesus' teaching in v. 30-31. Perhaps think about what Jesus calls himself and whether the disciples would have understood this.
3. Why did the disciples ignore Jesus and not answer his question in v. 34?
4. Why do you think Jesus sat down with all twelve of them before speaking? Why was it so important for all of them to listen to this teaching?
5. Jesus makes a big point by taking a child and putting him "in the midst of them." What is the point he is making?
6. Why does Jesus tell the disciples not to stop people from using his name to do miracles? Why is he not worried about what other people are doing?
7. What issues does he say we should be concerned about?
8. Jesus has a drastic approach to sin in our lives, what is he willing to do to deal with our sin?
9. Are we to take Jesus' advice literally in v. 43-47. Why or why not?
10. How are the ways we are meant to deal with our own sin different to the ways we are meant to deal with the sin of our fellow Christians?



#### Serve

How can we help each other as a church to refrain from sin, as Jesus commands? Do we hold each other accountable?

#### Prayer

Pray that we would not lose our understanding of the seriousness of sin. Pray that God would help us to refrain from sin and to keep each other accountable.



## Leader's Notes

**There are probably too many questions to cover them all. Better to use only some of them but go deeper**

2. Jesus calls himself the Son of Man. The disciples may have been familiar with this title and knew he was referring to Daniel 7 v. 13-14 but they may have been confused that this divine person would suffer death. It was only after the resurrection that Jesus opened their minds that they would understand the scriptures (see Luke 24 v. 45).

5. "Now, a child has no influence at all. A child cannot advance a man's career, nor enhance a man's prestige. A child cannot give us things; it's the other way around. A child needs things. A child must have things done for him. And so Jesus is saying, "If a man welcomes the poor, ordinary people, the people who have no influence, and no wealth, and no power, the people who need things done for them, then he's welcoming me. And more than that, he's welcoming God," William Barclay.

9. Jesus does not expect us to take this advice literally –otherwise no one would enter life with two hand, two eyes or two feet! If we cut off one hand, we could still sin with the other –and how would we cut that one off! Jesus is telling us to sever our connection with sinful practices –don't take hold of sin, don't walk into sin and don't look at sin.

10. Jesus finishes by saying "Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another." We are to preserve ourselves from the moral decay and corruption of the world. We are to preserve the unity of the church by graciously cultivating a spirit of service to fellow Christians and a spirit of acceptance of fellow Christians.



## MARK

### Study 3 –Marriage and the Law



#### Live

If you could ask Jesus one (funny!) question, what would it be?



#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, perhaps about forgiveness or about how God cares for us. Encourage people to give their problems to God.



#### Grow

##### Read Mark 10 v. 1-12

1. Why did the Pharisees question Jesus about this?
2. What are your own views about divorce and remarriage?
3. What do you notice about Jesus' response in v.3?
4. Read Deuteronomy 24 v. 1 -this is the verse that the Pharisees would have based their beliefs on. What do you notice to be different about that verse and the answer that the Pharisees give to Jesus? What does this imply?
5. Do you know anything about the views at that time?
6. What do you think Jesus means in v.5 when he speaks of the "hardness of heart"?
7. What does the term "one flesh" emphasise to you?
8. Why do you think the disciples asked Jesus again about this matter?
9. What effect do you think this teaching would have had on the people of that time?



#### Serve

Relationships and marriages are hard! This is not new news, even in Biblical times there were relationship issues! Perhaps think of ways that we can support and help each other in any relationship issues that we're having.

### Prayer

Thank God that the Bible still relates to us today. Thank God that he cares about our lives and the problems that affect us and that he has given us answers in the Bible. Pray over any relationship issues we are having. Pray that the relationships we enter or are currently in will glorify God.

### Leader's Notes

1. The Pharisees were testing Jesus again, hoping he would slip up.
3. Jesus answers their question with another question. He also refers them back to Scripture –he did not answer the question out of his own authority, he upheld the authority of the Scriptures.



4. The Pharisees conveniently omit the condition that Moses said about the husband “finding some indecency” or “uncleanness” in the wife.

5. The debate amongst the rabbis was answering the question of “what constitutes uncleanness or indecency?” There were two main views at that time based on the teaching of Rabbi Hillel and that of Rabbi Shammai. Rabbi Hillel understood “uncleanness” to be anything that the husband saw as undesirable – burning the breakfast, raising her voice, speaking to a strange man, etc. This was the more popular view. The stricter and unpopular view was based on the teaching of Rabbi Shammai that understood “uncleanness” as sexual immorality.

6. It was because of the hardness of the people’s hearts at this time that divorce was granted. It was never commanded, but it was permitted because of hardness of hearts. The hardness of heart of the person who was cruel and unfaithful to their spouse and the hardness of heart of the person who couldn’t forgive their spouse for what they did.



## MARK

### Study 4 –Entering the Kingdom



#### Live

If you were on a desert island, what is one luxury item that you couldn't live without?



#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song about being a child of God or sacrificing in this life for God. E.g. "I am a child of God", "You're a good, good Father", etc.



#### Grow

##### Read Mark 10 v. 13-31

1. Why were the disciples annoyed that people were bringing their children to Jesus?
2. Jesus makes a point using children again. What point is he making this time and what aspect of a child's character is he highlighting? Jesus then is approached by a rich man.
3. The rich man calls Jesus "good". Jesus questions this, saying that only God is good. What does he mean?
4. Do you notice anything about Jesus' response in v. 19?
5. Jesus tells the man to see all of his possessions, give to the poor and follow him. Does this still apply to us today?
6. The disciples were amazed and astonished (v. 24 & 26). Why did this news shock them so much?

### Prayer

Reflect on obstacles in our lives that we have to overcome to enter the Kingdom of God. Pray for help with these obstacles. Ask that God would help us to be childlike in our faith.

### Leader's Notes

2. Jesus says we need to be more childlike in our faith and dependence on Jesus. Children are dependent. They rely on their parents and that is what Jesus wants us to do with him. Children are always ready to receive and don't feel that they have to earn everything they get. We must receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, because we won't enter it through what we do or earn.

3. Jesus is asking the man if he really understands what he is saying when he calls Jesus "good"? If he is good, then he must also be God! A lot of people will say they don't believe Jesus was the Messiah, but that he was a "good man". But this makes



no sense! He can't have been a good man and a liar! When we call Jesus good, we are also accepting that he is God.

4. He once again mentions the Scripture first, showing that he didn't come to overthrow the Law, but to fulfil it.

5. Money was this man's idol. The wealth he had made him less dependent on God. Wealth and money was his God. God asks us to surrender anything in our lives that we place importance on and depend upon.

6. It amazes the disciples because it was assumed that wealth was a sign of God's blessing and favour. The thinking was that if the rich aren't saved, then who is?!





## MARK

### Study 5 –Path of Servanthood



#### Live

If you could enhance one of your 5 senses (with no expense to the others) what one would it be and why?



#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, thanking Jesus that he came to serve.



#### Grow

Read Mark 10 v. 32-52

1. Why were the disciples amazed and afraid that they were heading to Jerusalem?
2. What do James and John ask of Jesus? What does this say about them and their understanding of Jesus' fate?
3. Jesus says in v. 45 that the Son of Man came to serve. What 2 things does Jesus do in this passage to show this?
4. Why did Jesus ask what the blind man wanted –surely he must have known?!
5. Look back at Mark 8 v. 22-26. What differences are there between the two healings?
6. What can we deduce about Jesus' reputation based on this healing?
7. What can we learn from Bartimaeus? What can we learn from Jesus?



#### Serve

Jesus encourages us to serve one another and the community around us. He demonstrates this in this passage. Think of ways that we can do this. Share ideas and vow to serve in one way or another this week.

### Prayer

Thank God that he sent His Son to serve us. Thank God for His mercy and love for us. Pray that he will help us to have a servant heart like Jesus.

### Leader's Notes

1. They were amazed at the courage of Jesus, as he headed towards Jerusalem despite knowing what would await him there. He didn't just walk towards Jerusalem with his disciples, he led the disciples. The disciples were also afraid of the fate that awaited them in Jerusalem.

2. James and John ask to be seated beside Jesus, indicating a position of power. Their request indicates their lack of understanding or lack of sympathy about what Jesus is



about to suffer. It also shows that power and ambition were very dominant in their lives.

3. He asks “what do you want me to do for you?” to both James and John and the blind man.

5. There are plenty of differences between the two healings. See the table below and discuss.

<b>Mark 8 v 22-26</b>	<b>Mark 10 v 46-52</b>
Unnamed man	Bartimaeus
People brought the unnamed man – perhaps he had no faith in Jesus	Bartimaeus asked Jesus himself
Unnamed man was silent	Bartimaeus cried out and shouted for Jesus to have mercy
It took 2 times for his sight to be fully recovered	Bartimaeus could see immediately

6. It suggests that his reputation had grown! In v. 47 when the blind man heard it was Jesus of Nazareth, he cried out! Jesus’ reputation must have preceded him and he was now a known healer



## MARK

### Study 6 –Coming of the King



#### Live

If you could have one person come to work with you for a day, who would it be and why?



#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, reflecting on the life of Jesus and the ultimate sacrifice.



#### Grow

### Read Mark 11 v. 1-26

Jesus tells his disciples that they will find an unbroken colt and that they are to untie it and bring it to him.

1. What do you think would be going through the mind of the disciples when they did, in fact, find an unbroken colt?
2. What does it say about Jesus that he entered Jerusalem riding upon a colt, rather than a great horse? Perhaps look back at the words of the prophet Zechariah 9 v. 9.
3. How do the people respond to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem? Look back at Psalm 118:26, this is what the people rejoice. Jesus sees a fig tree in leaf, but not bearing fruit. Mark informs us that it was not the season for figs. Jesus then curses the tree and when they return the tree has withered.
4. What is Jesus trying to teach his disciples about prayer through this?
5. What is Jesus symbolically saying about Israel through his cursing of the fig tree? Jesus then becomes very angry and cleanses the temple.
6. If you were in the temple courts when Jesus was cleansing it, what would you have thought? Would Malachi 3 v. 1-2 have come to mind?
7. What lessons do we learn from these verses 1-26?

### Prayer

Thank God for the life of Jesus. Thank God that he sent Jesus and that we can learn so much from him. Help us to be more like Jesus in our everyday lives.

### Leader's Notes

1. It would have taken a lot of faith from the disciples to trust that there would be an unbroken colt there like Jesus said. When they found it there, it probably would have confirmed that Jesus is in control of everything. He knows everything and has authority over all. It perhaps would have been a comfort to the disciples, knowing what Jesus' fate was.



2. It indicates his humble character. This is also demonstrated in Zechariah 9 v. 9.
3. The people respond by receiving Jesus as the long—awaited Messiah, hailing him as the “Son of David”. They quote Psalm 118 v. 26 and rejoice.
4. Jesus teaches them about the power of prayer through this.
5. Mark tells the reader that it was not the season for figs. This is an important piece of information. It makes us question why Jesus cursed the tree for not bearing fruit, when it wasn't the season for figs. In the Bible, the fig tree often represents Israel. Jesus is making the point that Israel is full of leaves but lacked any fruit, as it was full of religious observance but lacked any true devotion to God.
6. Perhaps the prophecy in Malachi would have come to mind, which says that the Lord would suddenly come to his temple as a refiner's fire.

## MARK

### Study 7 –Judgement on Israel

#### Live

If you had to go on Britain's Got Talent right now, what would you do as your talent?

#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, perhaps "Christ alone, Cornerstone", as this term Cornerstone is quoted in our passage.

#### Grow

Read Mark 11 v.27 to Mark 12 v.12

1. The Pharisees question the authority of Jesus. Do we still question the authority of Jesus today? Do we put our own authority above the authority of the Word of God?
2. Jesus answers the Pharisees' question with another question. Why do you think Jesus asks this question?
3. Why was this a difficult question for the Pharisees? Jesus then begins to speak to them in parables.
4. Read verses 1-8 and summarise in your own words. Sometimes this can make it easier to understand the point that is being made.
5. Look back at Isaiah 5 v. 1-7. How does this link with the parable?
6. What do we think the vineyard and other characters in the parable represent? The verses in Isaiah may give you some clues.
7. What do you think is the point of this parable, now knowing what each aspect symbolises?

### Prayer

Thank God for the life of Jesus and the ultimate sacrifice that he made for us.

### Leader's Notes

2. Jesus turns the question back onto the Pharisees, because in answering Jesus' question they would be answering their own.

3. This was a difficult question for the Pharisees as there was no good answer! If they said that John's baptism was from heaven, then people could turn on them for their constant harassment of Jesus. If John's baptism was from heaven, then it confirmed he was the one who paved the way for the Messiah, and that meant Jesus was the Messiah! If the Pharisees answered in this way, they could have been accused of blasphemy due to all their other actions towards Jesus. On the other hand, if they said that John's baptism was from man, then it would risk a possible uprising or worse, as the people held John in very high regard.



6. As we have just seen in Isaiah, the people of this time would have been familiar with the analogy of the vineyard representing Israel. The vineyard is the nation of Israel and the owner is God the Father. The tenants of the vineyard were the religious leaders of the nation of Israel. The servants who were sent to the tenants to collect fruit for the owner were the prophets, who were rejected by the nation throughout its history. The son of the owner is, of course, the Lord Jesus, God's final messenger to the nation

## MARK

### Study 8 –Life in the Kingdom



#### Live

If you could make up one new law, what would it be and why?



#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, perhaps reflecting on what life in the kingdom will look like and how thankful we are for that promise of eternity with God.



#### Grow

Read Mark 12 v. 13-37.

Jesus is asked three different questions by three different groups of people in this passage.

1. Who were the groups of people to question Jesus? What do you know about these groups of people?
2. What were the motives behind the questions from the three groups? Was it the same for each group?
3. Jesus says “give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and give to God what is God’s.” See Romans 13 v.1-7. What do we owe the government? What do we owe God?
4. What did the Sadducees not know? And therefore, what did they not understand about the resurrection?
5. What are the two most important commandments? What does the scribe add to Jesus’ answer?
6. What is Jesus asking and why?

### Prayer

Thank God for sending Jesus to bridge the gap. Pray for help in the areas that we need –whether that is devoting ourselves to God more or loving our neighbours well.

### Leader’s Notes

1.The Pharisees and Herodians, the Sadducees and a scribe questioned Jesus. The Pharisees and Herodians were very different, but they both wanted to rule Israel and oppose Jesus. The Pharisees wanted to rule as religious rulers through the temple and the Herodians wanted to rule through government. The Pharisees were a very strict religious group but were more representative of the common man. The Herodians were Jews, most likely prominent and influential men. They accepted Herod as king and worked with the Roman government, making them unpopular with the Jews. The Sadducees were another religious party, who denied and hated many of the doctrines held by the Pharisees. The Sadducees were conservative and only



believed the written law. The Sadducees were known for denying the possibility of a resurrection. The Sadducees consisted of people in higher classes and were not well liked by the common man. The scribes were experts at interpreting Scripture, some worked for the Pharisees, some for the Sadducees and some worked independently.

2. The Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus. They asked Jesus a question that had no good answer! If Jesus said that they should pay taxes to Caesar, he would lose favour with the Jewish people who hated the Roman government. But if Jesus said they shouldn't pay taxes to Caesar, there was the possibility the Romans would take action against him. The Sadducees were trying to demonstrate what they thought was the absurdity of the resurrection. When the seven brothers and one woman are resurrected, whose wife will she be? The scribe did not have a hidden agenda. He just wanted to ask Jesus that question.

3. We are required by God to live in submission to the ruling authorities and abide by the laws of the land, as long as they don't conflict with the law of God. We are required to pay taxes and honour those who are in positions of authority. We are to give God our complete devotion. We are to worship him alone and have no other Gods but him.

4. The Sadducees don't know the "Scriptures nor the power of God". They don't understand that the Old Testament Scriptures did in fact teach the doctrine of resurrection and they didn't understand that God had the power to accomplish the resurrection.

5. Jesus says the two most important commandments are to love God and to love your neighbour. The scribe adds that this is "much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." This addition to the commandment and Jesus' response shows that the scribe truly understands.

6. Jesus is asking, "how can Christ be the son of David if David calls him "Lord"?" In Jesus' day, a son might call his father or grandfather "Lord" as a term of respect, but never vice versa. Revelation 22 v. 16 makes this point again that Christ is "both the root and the offspring of David."



## MARK

### Study 9 – True Worship



#### Live

Do you prefer receiving gifts or giving gifts? What's the worst gift you received? Have you ever given a gift that you thought they'd love but they actually didn't?!



#### Love

Listen to or sing along to a worship song, perhaps about sacrificing all for God, e.g. "You make beautiful things"



#### Grow

#### Read Mark 12 v. 38-44

1. What does Jesus say about the scribes? Does he give a glowing recommendation?
2. What does Jesus condemn the scribes for? See Matthew 23 v. 23-28 for a more detailed description.
3. How does this contrast with the commandments Jesus had just given? What commandment are they breaking in acting this way?
4. What does Jesus say will happen to the scribes for their behaviour?
5. What motivates the widow to give so much to the offering? Is it honouring the commandments Jesus gave?
6. Why does Jesus say that she has given more than the rich?
7. Do we find this is true now –that those who have the least are often the most willing to give?

### Prayer

Thank God for all that He has given us. Think and pray about how we can sacrifice for God. Ask God to reveal how we can give or use what He has given us for His glory.

### Leader's Notes

1. He warns the people of them.
2. They are hypocrites. They are concerned with how they appear to everyone, while not actually being concerned with true matters of the heart. Their religion is external but not internal.
3. The scribes enjoy being the centre of attention and having positions of great honour. They aren't honouring God and loving him. They love to be honoured. They are violating the greatest commandment.
4. Jesus says that they will face great judgement and condemnation.



5. She honours the greatest commandment and gives all she had a in practical and radical way. She showed great love and trust in God.

6. She sacrificed more than the rich did. She had nothing but she gave all that she had.