



DAILY BIBLE READING

REMARKABLE MARK

Tim Blagg

Read. Ask. Live. Love

Daily Bible Reading

What?

Sometimes we find it hard to read the Bible, don't we? At church we hear it all the time: "*read the Bible more.*" But how? Some of the devotionals on offer seem to have less Bible than story. Some of the Bible reading plans seem too big to take on all at once; what should I think about? How can I possibly know what questions to ask as I read through God's word?

It's in light of these questions that these daily bible readings have come into existence! The aim is to help you read God's word for yourself and ask some of the questions to comprehend what God is saying to you today through his living and active word, with the hope asking these sorts of questions for yourself as you read through the Bible in bigger doses that this has to offer. It's a tool, and hence it's only as valuable as our use of it.

My prayer for you as you use these - whether by yourself or with your family around the dinner table - is that God will work through his word to grow you into the fullness of Christ and bring you joy as you come to know him through his word.

How?

The way to approach it every day (as recommended) is:

- 1) Pray to God; it is his word we're reading, so ask him to help you understand it.
- 2) Read the passage once or twice.
- 3) Go through each question, looking back at the bible to think through them.
- 4) Pray about what you have learned, and live out the applications for today.

Want more?

If you want more studies like these ones, check out our online database at www.trinitycity.church/youth - just follow the links. Alternatively, if you're looking for more in depth bible reading plans, many can be found in study bibles or online. Chat to your bible study group leader or pastor for more information.

In Christ,

Tim

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Week 1 (Mark 1:1-20)

Monday

- Read Mark 1:1-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 20 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Who is this passage about?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Who is Jesus to you? Write this down today - record who Jesus is as far as you're concerned. Come back and look at it again later - I promise I'll remind you!

I think Jesus is _____

Tuesday

- Read Mark 1:1

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who is the gospel (which means good news) about?
2. Christ isn't just a surname; it means he is God's chosen King. Why is it good news that Jesus is God's King?
3. Who is Jesus (aside from God's chosen King)?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Look at how Mark introduces us to Jesus. How would you introduce Jesus to someone who has never heard of Him? Write down your answer (but take some time to do it!)

Wednesday

- Read Mark 1:2-8

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who is the Isaiah (and Exodus + Malachi) passage referring to in v.2-3? (hint: look at v.4)!
2. What did John preach?
3. How did John describe the one who was coming after him, and what this one would do?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Mark thinks that the Old Testament is important for Christians to read and understand, as it does point forward to Jesus. Do you think this way about it? Take

some time to talk to an older Christian this week and ask them to help guide you to read through the Old Testament; it will be worth it! It's all about Jesus.

Thursday

- Read Mark 1:9-13

- Think through the following questions:

1. What did Jesus see when He came up out of the water?
2. What did God say about Jesus?
3. Where did Jesus go after he was baptised?

- Remarkable for Today:

- In this part of Mark's Gospel, we see that Jesus is 100% both God and human. He's God - God himself proclaims it! And yet, Jesus was baptised. Jesus was tempted. If Jesus wasn't God, then he couldn't forgive us or die for us. And if Jesus wasn't human, then among other things, he wouldn't understand what we struggle with and are tempted by. But Hebrews 4:15-16 tells us plainly: because Jesus is fully human as well as fully God, he can sympathise when we are tempted. *"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Hebrews 4:16) How does Jesus humanity comfort you?

Friday

- Read Mark 1:14-15

- Think through the following questions:

1. When did Jesus go into Galilee to proclaim the gospel/good news?
2. What does Jesus say is near?
3. What does Jesus say is the right response to this good news?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Repent and believe. Repent means to turn away from something, and believe tells us what to turn towards. In this case, we are to turn away from our own wills - our own self-rulership - and turn to the Kingdom of God - to be under God's King! There is no other response to the great news of the Kingship of Jesus. When it comes to repentance, it's both a life-long process and a one-off. We repent and believe the good news and are saved. And we spend the rest of our lives repenting as we continually turn away from self-ruling and sit under Jesus' rulership. Can you think of any areas in life where you don't want Jesus to rule over you just as yet?

Saturday

- Read Mark 1:16-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where was Jesus walking when he called his first disciples?
2. What did he tell Simon and Andrew they would do instead of fishing?
3. Do you think it was hard for Jesus' first disciples to follow him? Why, or why not?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The call to follow Jesus demands *everything*. We don't just decide to follow Jesus one day; we follow him with all of our lives. Just like these first disciples, when we accept Jesus as our king, we promise to follow him with all of our lives. We hand over everything. For some Christians, that means quitting their jobs to spend time working for Church or going overseas as a missionary. For some Christians, it means choosing never to get married for the sake of serving Jesus. For some Christians, it means not playing sport on a Sunday so they can serve at Church. What does following Jesus look like for you?

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

_____.

- What do I need to change? _____

_____.

Week 2 (Mark 1:21-45)

Monday

- Read Mark 1:21-45

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 25 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Of all the things Jesus does or says, which one is the most surprising to you? Why?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Step inside the sandals of the people who were meeting Jesus and seeing all these things Jesus did. Who do you think they thought Jesus was? What about today? Who do people tend to think Jesus is? Why do they think that way? The truth is, we only get to know Jesus properly if we listen to what he has to say. Take some time to thank Jesus that we can know him because we can read his words and because his Spirit works in us.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 1:21-28

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where did Jesus go on the Sabbath day? Why did he go there?
2. How does the man who was possessed by an impure spirit/demon react when he sees Jesus?
3. How do the people react to Jesus? What impresses them the most?

- Remarkable for Today:

- One of the things that comes up in the Gospels a lot is Jesus confronting demons. A truth which we don't see as much in Western culture today is that there are spiritual forces both good and evil. But unlike Star Wars where the light and dark sides of the force are balanced, in reality God trumps any evil force. That means while we need to be real about demons (and many cultures around the world are), we don't need to be afraid of them. How does Mark 1:21-28 comfort us when it comes to demons today?

Wednesday

- Read Mark 1:29-34

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where did Jesus and his disciples go after he was finished preaching in the Synagogue?
2. Having a fever used to be a far more terrifying ordeal than it is today; it could be a death sentence in Jesus' day. How does Jesus react when he finds out Simon's mother-in-law has a fever?
3. How did Jesus react to the people who were sick?

- Remarkable for Today:

- One of the weird things that happens in Mark's Gospel is that we see Jesus telling demons not to speak about him (v34). This seems strange; doesn't Jesus want people to know who he is? What reason do you think Jesus could have for not wanting demons to confess that he is God's Son and is the Christ?

Thursday

- Read Mark 1:35-39

- Think through the following questions:

1. What did Jesus do early in the morning?
2. Why do you think everyone was looking for Jesus (v37)?
3. Why does Jesus say he has come?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus prayed. He was practical about his prayer - he went to a solitary place early in the morning. We probably don't have crowds chasing us, but chances are we still need to find a good time and place to pray regularly. What's your prayer routine? Is there anything you need to change in order to pray more consistently? Put it into practice today!

Friday

- Read Mark 1:40-42

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does it mean if someone has leprosy as far as being a part of God's people goes? (see Leviticus 13:45-46)
2. How does Jesus react when he sees the man with leprosy?
3. Normally if someone touched someone or something unclean, they would become unclean as well. What is different about Jesus touching this man?

- Remarkable for Today:

- When we look at Jesus, we can see very clearly God's love and God's goodness. The question the man with leprosy had for Jesus was not about whether Jesus was powerful to heal; it was if Jesus wanted to heal this man. And Jesus healed him. Jesus is good and Jesus is loving. Sometimes God doesn't heal us when we ask him to. And that can be very difficult. But we know that God is good and that God is powerful, which means that he has a good reason not to heal us yet. That's a hard truth for us to realise. Do you trust that God is good?

Saturday

- Read Mark 1:43-45

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus say to the man he has just healed?
2. Why does Jesus tell the man to see the priest? (Check out Leviticus 14:1-32)
3. Why can't Jesus enter towns openly anymore?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Over this week we've seen a lot of incredible miracles and healings that Jesus did. And very frequently, we've also seen that Jesus has forbidden people from speaking about the healing. This is a weird reaction, isn't it? We get a clue in v38: Jesus could have been very popular from healing people. But that wasn't his aim. Jesus wanted to proclaim the gospel to people; to proclaim his kingdom. And as good as healing people was, it was not why Jesus came. How do you feel thinking about this? It's important for us to understand: Jesus came first and foremost to bring about forgiveness for sins and to bring people into his Kingdom. Even the best healing was not his primary goal. And the same goes for us today. If we're healed. Or if our lives become better because we follow Jesus. These are great benefits. But we follow Jesus to be right with God forever. To be forgiven. To be part of his kingdom. Thank God for this today, and ask him to help you see things from his perspective.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 3 (Mark 2:1-17)

Monday

- Read Mark 2:1-17

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 17 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. What expectations did people have of Jesus that He didn’t meet/that He acted contrarily to?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus doesn’t necessarily act the way people would expect Him to! Think back through your own life - are there expectations that others have of Christians or Jesus that people have which aren’t true/right? Write up a list of things that people might expect Christians or Jesus to do, and see how you can tell people what Jesus is actually about instead.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 2:1-4

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where is Jesus now?
2. What did Jesus do when the crowd had gathered?
3. How important was it for the friends of the paralytic man to carry this man to Jesus? *Why do you think they acted the way they did?*

- Remarkable for Today:

- There is a big difference between being a part of this crowd and being a *real* disciple of Jesus. The crowds were just “getting in the way,” but the people who really wanted Jesus would do *anything* to reach Him! Four companions to the paralysed man dug a hole in the roof to reach Jesus - that’s faith in action! Is there anything in your life which is “getting in the way” of your relationship and love for Jesus? What are you going to do about it?

Wednesday

- Read Mark 2:5-7

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus say to the paralysed man?
2. Who did this upset?
3. Why did it upset them?

- Remarkable for Today:

- When you look at others, what do you think their deepest and most urgent need is? Jesus looked at this paralysed man - a man who had next to no hope of ever moving, let alone living a normal life! - and He didn't think this man's biggest need was for healing. What this man needed as far as Jesus was concerned was forgiveness. Do you look at your non-Christian friends this way? Do you pray whenever you think of them, that they might be forgiven by Jesus and enjoy a relationship with God? Today's a great day to start! Pray for them - pray that you will have an opportunity to share with them the wonderful news that Jesus can forgive them!

Thursday

- Read Mark 2:8-12

- Think through the following questions:

1. Which one do you think is easier to say - your sins are forgiven, or get up, pick up your mat and walk? (Hint: regarding how you can measure the success of the statement!)
2. What happened to the man?
3. How does the crowd respond? *Compare this to how Levi responds in v.14.*

- Remarkable for Today:

- Kristy tells you that she really likes going to church and hearing about Jesus. She thinks He seems like a nice guy who loved people, and who did lots of amazing things. She even thinks He must have been cute! But you also notice that she doesn't really care what He thinks of how she lives her life - she says to you "*I can live how I want to anyway. Jesus was all about people being free to live their lives however they wanted to!*" What would you say to her?

Friday

- Read Mark 2:13-15

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where is Jesus now?
2. What is Levi's (also known as "Matthew" - see Matthew 9:9-13 if you want to check!) response when Jesus calls him?
3. What does Jesus do this time that's so shocking?

- Remarkable for Today:

- When did Jesus love and accept the "sinners" and the tax collectors - before, or after they repented for what they had done? It's before they've repented! Jesus' love and acceptance to us means that our repentance is in response to this. We

respond - we love because Jesus first loved us! Now how about how you treat others - do you show them the love that Christ showed us, loving us before we were right with Him? Don't hold grudges. Don't wait for someone to apologise before showing them care and love. Not because they haven't done something wrong, but because Jesus didn't treat us that way. And be incredibly thankful that He didn't! If you have been holding a grudge or ignoring someone, forgive them!

Saturday

- Read Mark 2:16-17

- Think through the following questions:

1. What has Jesus heard?
2. What does Jesus say in response?
3. The Pharisees/Teachers of the Law need Jesus. Do you think they realise they do?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus diagnoses us all as being sinners - all of us are very sick before God. In fact, before God we aren't even sick/paralysed. We are actually spiritually dead. And it's in this state that God sends Jesus to save us! When we could do *nothing* for our own healing/salvation, Jesus saved us! That's what it means when Jesus says "sinners". No one is righteous before God *except Jesus*. Now when the day of judgement comes, do you want to be standing on your own, or standing behind Jesus and relying on Him? Many of the Pharisees would have confidently said "standing on our own!" But Jesus has very different thoughts about them. And what about you? Do you realise that you desperately need Jesus *every day* when it comes to you standing right before God?

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered:_____

- What was the sermon about?:_____

_____.

- What do I need to change?_____

_____.

Week 4 (Mark 2:18-3:35)

Monday

- Read Mark 2:18-3:35

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 46 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Do you think Jesus would have been good friends with the teachers of the law? How about how they felt about him?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus wasn't thought very highly of by the teachers of the law/Pharisees. Jesus is showing that he is more important to listen to than the teachers of the law - that He has authority to teach. Do you look at Jesus as a King who has authority in discussing with us how we should live? Practically today - is there anything that you are doing which Jesus says not to do? This might be the time to talk with God about it - repent of living in a way that doesn't match up with Jesus' standards. And then ask God to change your heart and to help you to live in a way that does seek God's glory.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 2:18-22

- Think through the following questions:

1. What were John's disciples and the Pharisees doing that Jesus and his disciples weren't?
2. What do you think Jesus is saying that the point of fasting is in relation to Jesus and worship?
3. In v.21-22, Jesus talks about how people think about the idea of fasting. They expect people to fast as they think about God's coming Kingdom (like John's disciples) or to fast as an old ritual to please God. However, Jesus is God's Kingdom that has come, and Jesus has removed the need for us to please God in and of ourselves, because He does! Therefore, the reasons for fasting are no longer necessary there. Why should we fast today - after Jesus has left?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Fasting isn't something we do very often in the western Christian world today. Part of this might be caught up in people not understanding why to fast. We fast to remind ourselves of God's grace, and that we are *really* dependent on God for every breath we take and for our “daily bread”. Are you lining yourself up behind

God in fasting? Look in your diary and choose one day in the next month in which you will fast to specifically spend some time in prayer with God and reading the Bible. (Be careful how you plan it - don't be doing heaps of exercise on the day! And drink water as well - fast from food until evening if you don't think you can pull off a full day).

Wednesday

- Read Mark 2:23-28

- Think through the following questions:

1. What were Jesus' disciples doing that was unlawful?
2. What did David and his companions do when they were hungry and in need that was "unlawful"?
3. What does Jesus mean when He says that the Sabbath was made for man?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Some Christians still live today as slaves to the Sabbath. They treat it as a sacred day which cannot be harmed or maimed. Although there is value in setting aside a whole day a week to rest, the point is never about keeping the day sacred. It is all about honouring God and following Him. When you look at your Sundays or Friday nights (or whatever night you have a Bible Study), are you treating it as sacred time - time when you have to be doing this specific thing? Or are you looking for opportunities to better follow God and worship Him in how you live?

Thursday

- Read Mark 3:1-6

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where was Jesus on this particular Sabbath day?
2. How did the teachers of the law respond when Jesus asked them if he should heal the man?
3. Why did the Pharisees want to kill Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- When you look at your life, have you allowed Jesus to be Lord of all of it? Or are there some areas that you are holding back and claiming that he doesn't have authority over? Jesus is King - whether you like it or not (and the Pharisees did not!). The question is are you willingly going to bow down before Him in how you spend your spare time, or your money, or how you talk, or what you watch? Or will you claim that he cannot change this in your life - that it's yours alone.

Friday

- Read Mark 3:7-19

- Think through the following questions:

1. Why did Jesus tell His disciples to have a small boat ready?
2. What two miraculous things was Jesus doing (v10-11)?
3. What three things described the twelve disciples that Jesus chose? (v14-15)

- Remarkable for Today:

- Carmen says "Back then they believed in demons and devils and that weird stuff because they didn't know any better. But modern medicine shows that they were wrong - there's no such thing as demons!" How would you answer her (based off both this passage and other passages)?

Saturday

- Read Mark 3:20-35

- Think through the following questions:

1. How did Jesus' family and the teachers of the law respond to Jesus?
2. What sins can people be forgiven for? What sin can they not be forgiven for?
3. Who does Jesus describe as His mother/brother/sisters?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Some Christians talk about being afraid of committing the "unforgivable sin". There is a challenge that people are concerned over this - that because they struggle with ongoing sin they will be rejected for eternity by God. However, what Jesus is talking about when it comes to this sin is that they have chosen to reject Jesus ultimately for eternity. If you have accepted Jesus as your saviour then you are saved and forgiven.

The other question is about your non-Christian friends. Have they accepted the gospel of Jesus or rejected it? Because if they reject it, they will not be saved by God. Without the gospel of Jesus in their lives, they cannot be saved. Pray for them to hear the gospel. Pray that you will have a chance to share the gospel with them. And then share bits of the gospel with them as much as you can!

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 5 (Mark 4:1-34)

Monday

- Read Mark 4:1-34

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 34 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. How do you feel when you hear these parables? (write down your feelings/ immediate reactions to them)

- Remarkable for Today:

- The first parable (v3-20) is a big one and one we need God’s help to understand - in fact, Jesus uses the word “hear” or calls people to listen 8 times! Take some time out today to ask God for his help in understanding his word for you as you read it - only God can *really* help you understand his word!

Tuesday

- Read Mark 4:1-8

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where is Jesus now?
2. What did Jesus do when the crowd had gathered?
3. What did the “farmer” in the parable do?

- Remarkable for Today:

- We can see who this farmer is as Jesus is speaking - it’s him! Jesus is the one who is sowing the seed (the gospel - as we see in v.14); Jesus is in charge of giving us his word! More importantly, he is in charge of making sure your friends hear his word. This means that it makes sense to pray and ask him to share his word with your friends by any way possible - and that includes you! Pray for opportunities to share Jesus with friends who don’t know him yet. Pray that they will hear and respond!

Wednesday

- Read Mark 4:9-13

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus tell His followers has been given to them (the twelve and the others around him)?
2. Who would have given this to Jesus’ followers?
3. Why is everything said in parables to those on the outside?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Derek mentions to you how glad he is that he has discovered who Jesus is by sitting alone with a Bible. He says that it was all because of his own hard work that he finally understands who Jesus is. Based on what you've read in Mark 4:19-13, would you agree with him that he understands Jesus because of his hard work? Why or why not?

Thursday

- Read Mark 4:14-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. What is the seed in the parable representing?
2. What causes the gospel to not bear fruit in the "rocky soil" people?
3. What do those who are like seed sown on good soil do when they hear the word?

- Remarkable for Today:

- There are four types of "soil" (i.e. people) described here - three different types of "outsiders" (v11) and one good soil. These are the people who respond to Jesus word ultimately by rejecting it; either because it's in one ear and out the other, or because they don't really understand it, or because they eventually care more about other things. This is a final decision; an ultimate decision against the word of God. Pray for your friends who don't know Jesus yet - pray that they won't make this decision! Pray that they will hear and respond to Jesus' word. Pray that they will have ears to hear, and that they will choose Jesus and respond as good soil!

Friday

- Read Mark 4:21-25

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus say we are meant to do if we hear God's word? (v21-22)
2. Why does Jesus say we should consider carefully what we hear?
3. Why would God take away from people who "do not have?" (v25)

- Remarkable for Today:

- In these parabolic sayings, Jesus is continuing to teach his disciples about how God's word divides crowds between the people who listen to Jesus and put his words into practice, and those who don't listen to him and don't live out his words. We aren't meant to hear God's word just once a week and then leave it behind; it's meant to shape our lives and shine out like a lamp in a room. As you reflect on God's word in your life, what ways do you think God is shining through your actions? Thank God for how he has worked in your life through his word.

Saturday

- Read Mark 4:26-34

- Think through the following questions:

1. In what way is the Kingdom of God like plants growing?
2. In what way is the Kingdom of God like a mustard seed?
3. Reflect on the parables we've looked at over the past week. Why has Jesus spoken in parables to the crowds? Why has he been more clear with his disciples?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The Kingdom of God is a big theme in Mark's Gospel. Because Jesus - God's promised King - is here, the Kingdom of God is near (Mark 1:14-15); it has started! But as Jesus shows in his parables, the Kingdom of God isn't completely here yet. It's like a mustard seed or a harvest; it's still coming and growing. The things promised in the Kingdom of God - freedom from disease and from pain and from suffering and eternally being with God - are also here (as we've seen in the Gospel) but not completely here yet (as we can see today). Think about your own life; in what ways is the Kingdom of God here today? In what ways isn't it here today?

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

_____.

- What do I need to change? _____

_____.

Week 6 (Mark 4:35-5:20)

Monday

- Read Mark 4:35-41

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 7 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Take a moment now to write down/record everything that you’ve seen Jesus has power over/power to do/authority over in Mark.

- Remarkable for Today:

- It seems pretty reasonable for the disciples to be feeling pretty scared during the storm, and yet when they look at Jesus they are terrified! He has power over nature! You don’t worship a “puny god”; you worship the creator and master of all creation. Take time now in prayer to reflect and adore God for His awesome power.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 4:35-39

- Think through the following questions:

1. What happened before this (i.e. during the day before the evening described in v35)? (Hint: look back over all of Mark 4).
2. What happened to the boat that Jesus was in during the “squall”?
3. How does Jesus tame the storm?

- Remarkable for Today:

- In Mark 1, we see the logic behind Jesus wanting to move onto other villages and towns. *“Let us go somewhere else - to the nearby villages - so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come.”* (Mark 1:38). Jesus is eager to continue preaching the gospel to the extent that they go for an overnight sail to the other side of the lake! Now if this is what Jesus prioritises - the preaching of the gospel - how about you? Are you prioritising sharing the gospel with others? Today, make it your aim to have 3 people which you will try to share something about your Christian faith with before next Sunday. Who could you be inviting to Fusion/ Church as Easter comes near?

Wednesday

- Read Mark 4:40-41

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus ask the disciples?
2. Why do you think they were afraid? Where do you think their faith was?
3. What do you think makes the disciples feel so terrified when they look at what Jesus did?

- Remarkable for Today:

- When you face difficulties, or challenges, or even struggles in this life as a Christian, there is an old saying that "God won't give you more than you can handle." **This is a lie.** God almost certainly will give you more than you can take - the disciples were certainly in this position. But God won't give you more than he can handle; he shows this in what Jesus accomplishes! So when you face difficulties, where do you look for strength? The only right answer to that is to Jesus and to God! Pray for God to help you depend on his strength.

Thursday

- Read Mark 5:1-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where did they end up landing the boat?
2. Summarise the events of these verses into one sentence.
3. Why do you think the people plead with Jesus to leave the region? (v17)

- Remarkable for Today:

- Once again we see that Jesus has authority over the forces of evil in this world. There seems to be a popular idea that Satan and his demons are the "rulers of hell". Once again, **this is a lie.** God alone is in charge of hell, and the Devil, his demons and all who reject Jesus will ultimately be sentenced to eternal death - hell. In this story, Jesus shows his absolute authority over the demons and casts them out of the possessed man. Now which one should you be more afraid of; Jesus or demonic forces? And whose side would you rather be on? If we're on Jesus side, there is *no need to fear the demonic powers*. Realise this today; Jesus is sovereign and powerful!

Friday

- Read Mark 5:1-13

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who came out to meet Jesus when he arrived in the region of the Gerasenes?
2. What did this man shout at Jesus at the top of his voice? Why?
3. Who was in charge - the man, the evil spirits, or Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Angela, a friend, talks to you one afternoon about “spirituality”. She is freaking out because she has heard all about the power that demonic forces have when she went to a friend’s church. She feels really scared and finds it hard to sleep at night. Could you talk to her about it from this passage? What would you say?

Saturday

- Read Mark 5:14-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. What did those who were caring for the pigs do when the pigs drowned?
2. What made the townspeople afraid?
3. What instructions does Jesus give to the man who he healed?

- Remarkable for Today:

- This man - who has only known Jesus for a grand total of less than a day - tells all his family, friends and neighbours within 10 different towns all that Jesus has done for him - and Jesus had just cast demons out from him and healed him for this life! Now look at your own life. You have known Jesus for longer than this man, and Jesus has forgiven you for eternity. You will be in heaven with God for eternity if you have responded to Jesus with faith. Now how important do you find it to tell other people that Jesus has saved you? How pressing is it for you to talk about all Jesus has done? Pray for opportunities to share what Jesus has done for you with friends, family and peers!

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered:_____

- What was the sermon about?:_____

- What do I need to change?_____

Week 7 (Mark 5:21-6:56)

Monday

- Read Mark 5:21-43

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who are the people who come to Jesus for help in Mark 5?
2. What is surprising to the disciples about Jesus' question in v30?
3. What do we see about Jesus' power and knowledge in Mark 5?

- Remarkable for Today:

- One of the big themes in Mark is a question of fear vs. faith, or fear vs. belief. Back in Mark 4:40, during the storm, Jesus asked his disciples, "*Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?*" Similarly, here Jesus tells Jairus to not be afraid, but instead to believe (5:36). But perhaps it's the woman who was suffering with bleeding for so long who is the best case for us to see this. She is healed by Jesus' power because Jesus is powerful and good and willing to heal. And when she comes up to Jesus and tells the truth, we see that she trembled with fear. But the key with her was that her faith in Jesus trumped her fear. What about us? Are we afraid that people will reject us for following Jesus? Are we afraid that Jesus doesn't really care or isn't really good? What wins in your life; fear, or faith? Ask God to help you overcome fear through faith in Jesus.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 6:1-6

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where was Jesus' hometown? How do you know? (check out Mark 1 again in case you're not sure)
2. Why did the people of his hometown take offence at Jesus?
3. Why couldn't Jesus do more miracles in his hometown?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus ability to do miracles is not proportional to the faith of Christians. This is really important for Christians to know; if we aren't healed from disease, it's not because of a lack of faith. That's a different case to what is happening in Mark 6:1-6. Here, Jesus is not able to do miracles because of the unbelief of the people in his hometown. These are people who reject him wholeheartedly and claim he is unable to heal; they don't believe that he is the Christ. Whether Jesus is unable because of their unbelief, or because of his reluctance to heal those who reject him, is a different question. But it's a truth that will last into eternity: those who reject Jesus will miss out on the blessings that he brings. How do you feel to hear that? Jesus can't force anyone into heaven if they don't accept him.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 6:7-13

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who does Jesus send out? What are their names?
2. What did Jesus send them out to do?
3. What did they do as they went out?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus sends out his followers to the towns he's about to visit in order to preach the good news which Jesus himself has been preaching. More than that, Jesus instructs them to rely on the people they are going to for food and for hospitality. This is really about them trusting God to sustain them as they serve him. And there is the stern warning too; for the people who reject the messengers and the message, they are to shake off the dust from their feet as they leave the town, saying "not even the dirt of your town will be received by God." It's a pretty strong message to send, isn't it? What does it look like for us today to be going out to share the gospel? In what ways do you think we need to trust God?

Thursday

- Read Mark 6:14-29

- Think through the following questions:

1. What did people say to Herod about Jesus? Who did they think Jesus was?
2. How did Herod treat John the Baptist?
3. What do you think about Herod (Antipas - the same Herod that was involved in Jesus' trial in Luke 22)? Was he the good guy who was just trapped by a promise? Was he a villain?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Serving God doesn't always mean people will have long, comfortable lives. In fact, the Bible promises the opposite. True service to God will involve suffering, persecution and sometimes, death. Being a follower of Jesus, like John the Baptist, means that we may well suffer here and now. How do you feel about that? Do you feel prepared to suffer as a follower of Jesus? Read through Hebrews 11:1-12:2 to remind yourself of why following Jesus is worth it through suffering.

Friday

- Read Mark 6:30-44

- Think through the following questions:

1. Why did Jesus want to sail away with his disciples by boat to a solitary place?

2. Why did Jesus want to care for the people who came to him?
3. What does Jesus do when his disciples cry that it would be impossible to feed the people?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus didn't provide a small amount of food; he provided a feast! Jesus shows us that God can do amazing things from unimpressive looking supplies (like the fish and bread, and like his disciples - like us!). Jesus also points us forward to the great feast to come in the new creation (Isaiah 55:1-2) - the feast where God invites us to come and be truly satisfied. A day when hunger will be done forever. And this little meal in Mark 6 is just an entree; an appetiser! It's the bread served before the meal begins. What are you looking forward to about the new creation, when we will be with God forever?

Saturday

- Read Mark 6:45-56

- Think through the following questions:

1. Why did Jesus not go with the disciples immediately to Bethsaida?
2. How did the disciples react when they saw Jesus walking on the water? What governed their response; faith, or fear?
3. How did the people react when they saw Jesus arriving at Gennesaret?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Ghost stories and ghost hunters can be mystical and strange worlds to hear about, can't they? We see it here - the disciples thought Jesus was a ghost. What we need to see here is that Jesus *doesn't* say "Silly disciples. There's no such thing as ghosts!" Chances are, we have friends who are from other cultures where ghosts are taken very seriously. Once again, we don't need to be afraid of ghosts or spirits or demons; Jesus is powerful over *everything*; nature, water, our hearts. Take some time to consider today: how big and powerful is the Jesus you worship?

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

_____.

Week 8 (Mark 7:1-30)

Monday

- Read Mark 7:1-30

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 30 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Think back over our time going through Mark. What have we seen that Jesus has authority over when it comes to the laws and religious teachings?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Throughout these verses, Jesus particularly critiques the idea that the Pharisees and teachers of the law (and many Jews of the day) held; that you became “unclean” or sinful before God through external things - things like food, or contact with non-Jewish people, etc. However, Jesus points out that sin is not external, but within our lives. The people believed that by following strict principles/laws, they would be saved from sin. Do you look at your life and think that by following certain laws or rules, you are more acceptable to God? Do you think that if you are sorry enough when you sin, God forgives you more? Or do you think that by doing something good, you cancel out the wrong? We can never be any more right with God than we have been made by Jesus. Therefore, we need to apologise to God for living by traditions to make ourselves “clean”, and depend on Jesus’ sacrifice entirely!

Tuesday

- Read Mark 7:1-8

- Think through the following questions:

1. What upset the Pharisees and the scribes who came from Jerusalem the most? Why did this upset them?
2. Who does Jesus quote when he critiques the Pharisees?
3. Is Jesus against tradition? Why, or why not?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The Pharisees and teachers of the law (scribes) were obsessed with the traditions that had been handed down to them throughout the years. The idea of clean vs. unclean was extended into the public life of Jews when they came into more contact with non-Jews (i.e. gentiles). They were incredibly concerned that because they had come into contact with non-Jews, they were unclean. It’s almost the idea of “cooties” or “girl germs/boy germs”! And yet, what about us? Do we ever fall in

love with traditions? Take some time to think through how much the Bible says about:

- Being baptised as a baby/being immersed when being baptised?
- Having to have church on a Sunday vs. other days of the week?
- Us needing to sing hymns in church vs. contemporary songs?

Wednesday

- Read Mark 7:9-15

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who does Jesus quote when he critiques the Pharisees and teachers of the law (this time)?
2. What did the Pharisees and teachers of the law teach (the word that Mark explains for us)?
3. What can make someone unclean according to Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- One of the things that the Pharisees can't do that Jesus does do in these verses is use the Bible to defend themselves. They have decided what they think is right and not wrong based off of their own thoughts rather than the truth of God's word. And this is true for all of us: if we want to live lives that are pleasing to God, then we will do it by the Bible. Do we live lives that honour God how he wants, or how we want? Do you say "I'll be a doctor for God" or "I'll be a professional video game tester - for God" or "I'll be a supermodel - for God"? God wants us to honour him with our entire lives as he has told us in the Bible. And number 1 on that list: read Mark 8:34. Reflect on it.

Thursday

- Read Mark 7:17-19

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who asks Jesus about the parable?
2. How does Jesus explain what is outside the body? Can it make you unclean?
3. What note does Mark add to the end of v19? Why do you think he added it?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jake - a Seventh-Day Adventist Christian - walks up to you and asks why you are eating a cheese and bacon roll. He tells you "The Bible said that we shouldn't eat bacon because it's unclean!" How would you respond to Jake? (Read Romans 14 to think through how you would respond, not just what the facts are).

Friday

- Read Mark 7:20-23

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where does what makes us unclean come from?
2. What list does Jesus give us of evils that make us unclean?
3. If what is inside our hearts is what makes us “unclean”, will rules/laws help us to become clean? What does the Bible say deals with our hearts?

- Remarkable for Today:

- This section of Mark leaves us in a desperate situation. If it isn't what's outside us that makes us unclean, then no amount of laws or rules will ever help us. If it's what's inside us that makes us unclean, then we need someone who can change what's inside of us. And this is what God promises will be done with the New Covenant - in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and in Ezekiel 36:24-29a. Read through these passages today. When does God fulfil these promises? (Hint: Check out Mark 14:24). Thank God for giving us new hearts through his King, Jesus.

Saturday

- Read Mark 7:24-30

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who came to Jesus when he was in Tyre?
2. Where was this woman from?
3. Why does Jesus drive the demon out from the woman's daughter?

- Remarkable for Today:

- As we remembered above, the Pharisees taught that you could become unclean by dealing with Gentiles, like the woman who approaches Jesus. Not only that, but when Jesus talks about “bread” he's using a metaphor to talk about the blessings promised to God's people, the Jews. Although the Old Testament showed promises of all the nations being included in God's plan of salvation, not many Jews paid attention to those. They thought that these promises meant that the nations would become Jewish followers of God, not that God would include them in his blessing without becoming Jews. So when Jesus talks with this woman, he's doing something amazing and radical. Even though the language sounds a bit harsh, Jesus is actually acting as the wise teacher who challenges his student's understanding by speaking with a parable. And unlike the disciples before her, this woman understands the parable and takes it further. The Gentiles may have to wait for the blessing God has promised, but they will receive it! And that includes you and me. Thank God today that us “dogs” are given his blessing.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered:_____

- What was the sermon about?:_____

_____.

- What do I need to change?_____

_____.

Week 9 (Mark 7:31-8:21)

Monday

- Read Mark 7:31-8:21

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 28 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. Where does Jesus do these things? When was the last time in Mark’s Gospel we heard about this place?

- Remarkable for Today:

- In Mark 7:24-30, we saw Jesus bring healing to a Gentile woman and her daughter, talking about how the blessing for Israel is not for the Gentiles first and foremost. But now, as we get into this week’s section of Mark’s Gospel, Jesus’ ministry in Gentile lands is going gangbusters! Jesus brings healing to Gentiles, he feeds a predominantly Gentile crowd and brings them the *same* blessings as he did to the Jewish people. Sure, the Gentiles get this after the Jews by a little bit. But Jesus is the Christ for all people; he is the Lord of all people. Isn’t that awesome? So take a moment now. Is there anyone you look at and think, “*They could never become a Christian. They are just too messed up/life is just too good for them to think the need God.*”? That was us! That was the Gentiles! Ask God to help you see people the way he sees us.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 5:14-20 (recap!)

- Think through the following questions:

1. Back when Jesus healed the man possessed by demons, how did the people of the city react to him?
2. How did the man who had been possessed by demons react?
3. Where did he proclaim what Jesus had done for him?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The man who Jesus healed has been busy! We don’t actually hear about him again, but given he was the *only* person who followed Jesus the last time Jesus came to the Decapolis area, we can see just how busy he has been telling everyone about what Jesus has done for him. If Jesus was to come to your school, or workplace, or next family reunion, how many people do you reckon would come out to meet him because of everything you told them about him? (This isn’t something to beat ourselves up about if we haven’t done a very good

job yet!) Talk to God today, and think through how you can best share the good news about Jesus with your friends and family in the coming weeks.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 7:31-37

- Think through the following questions:

1. What region does Jesus come to next?
2. How does Jesus heal the man who is deaf and mute?
3. What does Jesus tell the man to do? Does the man do it?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Read Isaiah 35, one of the Old Testament passages where God promises that he will save his people. Is there anything in Mark 7:31-37 that shows how Jesus is the fulfilment of Isaiah 35's promises? What does this mean about who Jesus is?

Thursday

- Read Mark 8:1-10

- Think through the following questions:

1. When was the last time Jesus fed a big crowd? Where was this crowd?
2. What is different about this time when Jesus feeds a crowd?
3. Where does Jesus go after he has finished feeding this crowd?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus' miraculous feeding of the crowd is just as significant here as it was for the Jewish crowd in Mark 6. Although there are some differences between crowd size and amount of leftovers, everyone in both crowds was full and satisfied! Everyone took part in this feast. Both Jews and Gentiles received Jesus' blessing as the King of the Kingdom of God. There is a real deep unity in the church family, whether Jewish or Gentile, whether blue collar or white collar, whether you went to a public or a private school, whether Uni or TAFE. So much of the New Testament is dedicated to reminding us about God's unifying work through Jesus. So here's a challenge: talk to someone this week at Church who you *don't* know. You have a lot more in common with them than you don't!

Friday

- Read Mark 8:11-15

- Think through the following questions:

1. What did the Pharisees do when they saw Jesus?
2. How does Jesus react to them?
3. What does Jesus tell his disciples to beware of? What do you think this means?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Have you ever had a friend say “I’d believe in God, only if he gave me a sign - something to prove he was there”? In this case, the Pharisees not only ask Jesus for a sign, but they want to test him and are questioning him. Their attitude is “I don’t really want to follow Jesus, and I’m asking these questions waiting to see him slip up so I can prove that I shouldn’t follow him.” And sometimes, that’s what people really mean. In our hearts, if God didn’t help us, we’d reject Jesus and even the most obvious sign or miracle would leave us unimpressed. The same crowds that watched as Jesus healed people called for Jesus to be crucified. Thank God for softening our hearts to accept Jesus. Pray that he will soften our friends hearts to know Jesus too.

Saturday

- Read Mark 8:16-21

- Think through the following questions:

1. How do the disciples react when Jesus tells them to beware the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod?
2. What do you think Jesus’ parable saying about yeast means?
3. What does Jesus remind his disciples about when it comes to literal bread?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The disciples very quickly forgot about Jesus’ real ability to provide food; they definitely forgot that he had fed well over ten thousand people over the past couple of months with a grand total of twelve loaves of bread. We can look at them quite easily and think “Silly disciples.” But we do the same thing. Jesus death for our sin was able to cover *all* our sins, past, present and future. When we sin as followers of Jesus, yes we need to repent. Yes, we need to deal with sin and work to put it to death. But we must never think, “I’ve done it this time. God can never forgive me now. I’m just too evil and too rotten.” How does this leave you feeling? Talk to God about it.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered:_____

- What was the sermon about?:_____

- What do I need to change? _____

_____.

Week 10 (Mark 8:22-9:1)

Monday

- Read Mark 8:22-9:1

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 18 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week.
3. How would you introduce someone else to Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- This story recorded for us in Mark serves to remind us of one very important fact: we can only know Jesus on *his* terms, not on your own terms. It isn't enough to say what others say about him, or to choose what you want to believe about him. Either you believe in him on his terms or not at all. And so what is remarkable for us today is the challenge for us to get to know Jesus on his terms - pray, read your Bibles, meet with other Christians. And then from there, go and help others get to know Jesus on his terms - pray for those who don't know Christ yet, that they will worship him. Invite them to read the Bible with you. Who could you be introducing to Jesus this week?

Tuesday

- Read Mark 8:22-26

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where does Jesus heal a blind man? Check out the map. Are we in Gentile country or in Jewish country?
2. The first time Jesus puts his hands on the blind man to heal him, how much is the man able to see?
3. The second time Jesus puts his hands on the blind man to heal him, how much is the man able to see?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus' healing of this man is amazing in and of itself. But Mark's Gospel wants us to see the important significance of this story to what comes next. The man who was blind (like the disciples were blind to who Jesus is!) is given sight in two stages. The first stage, he's able to see blurry. He has some sight, but isn't able to see clearly (just like the disciples when they say that Jesus is the Christ). The second stage, though, he is able to see very clearly (just like the disciples when they finally understand what it means for Jesus to be the Christ - something which doesn't come up in Mark's Gospel). Chances are, our friends who don't know

Jesus yet will also need some help and some time before they really understand who Jesus is. Pray that God will give you patience as you introduce friends to Jesus. Pray that they will come to know him for who he is.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 8:27-30

- Think through the following questions:

1. What questions does Jesus ask his disciples?
2. What is Peter's answer?
3. Why do you think Jesus warns them not to tell anyone about the truth of who he is?

- Remarkable for Today:

- William tells you that he knows all about Jesus being the Christ. He says that Jesus being the Christ means that Jesus is God's servant who will just love everyone and be soft and cuddly - he wouldn't be mean or judge people! Do you agree with William? Why or why not? How would you talk to him about who Jesus is as revealed in the Bible?

Thursday

- Read Mark 8:31-33

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus teach the disciples that he must do as the Christ?
2. Who would reject Jesus?
3. Why does Jesus respond so harshly to Peter's rebukes?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Why did Jesus come to die? Why did he say he *must* suffer many things? Reflect on this! Read Isaiah 53. And be thankful.

Friday

- Read Mark 8:34-38

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who is Jesus talking to in these verses? Who does it apply to today?
2. What does Jesus say people must do if they want to follow him?
3. What two "lives" are presented in v35-38?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Are you living a life in response to the fact that Jesus is the Christ - God's chosen King - the Lord of all the Universe? Jesus explains what it means to follow him - to deny yourself, to take up your cross daily and to follow him. Are you following

Jesus with all your life - willingly aligning yourself to Him above aligning yourself to this world and all that it could ever offer? Jesus' words are chilling. "*What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?*" Are you seeking to gain the whole world? Or are you seeking Jesus as King of your entire life?

Saturday

- Read Mark 9:1

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus say to the disciples and crowds standing there?
2. What will the people see before some of them die?
3. What does the kingdom of God mean? (think through what Jesus has been announcing and doing throughout the gospel of Mark)

- Remarkable for Today:

- This section is a challenging one. Has God's Kingdom come now? Is it still coming? Where do we stand with it? The answer is found in Jesus' promise - the Kingdom of God will come with power prior to many people in that time passing away. The Kingdom of God has come! This is great and glorious news. Jesus is God's King - his death and resurrection have achieved salvation for his followers. The time of Jesus being declared King by God and being set at the throne has come. The time in which Jesus will return to judge all is coming. The Kingdom of God came in power when Jesus died on the cross. And you - as a follower of Christ - have been invited to enter into this Kingdom. Will you live it out - your citizenship of this Kingdom?

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

_____.
_____.

- What do I need to change? _____

_____.
_____.

- Today, go back to day 1's Remarkable section. Is there anything you'd change or write differently about who Jesus is?

Week 11 (Mark 9:2-50)

Monday

- Read Mark 9:2-13

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who does Jesus take with Him up the mountain?
2. Who do they see Jesus talking with?
3. What does God's voice in the cloud instruct Jesus' followers to do?

- Remarkable for Today:

- We can sometimes find it really easy to be like Jesus' followers who were there on the mountain with Him. We get caught up in who we think Jesus should be, and forget to take Him *just as He is*. When you think of Jesus, what do you picture? For some of us, we find it much easier to picture Jesus being a human guy. That's good - He definitely was human! But, as Jesus reveals in a shocking way in these verses, He is also God. When you picture Jesus, do you see Him as this amazing, glorious God? Do you see Him as being the King of the World? How wonderful it is to have Him as our King! Take some time today to give thanks to God for revealing Himself in the person Jesus. Ask Him to help you to get to know Jesus for who He is as you read the Bible and pray.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 9:14-29

- Think through the following questions:

1. What's the big problem that the boy in these verses has?
2. Complete the father's sentence: "*I do _____; help me _____ my _____!*"
3. What happens to the child?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus' followers in these 16 verses show us something big; *Christians need God's help*. Jesus' followers couldn't drive out the spirit (v.19) because (v.28-29) they didn't pray. Prayer is how we say "I can't do this; God, I need you to do it." Prayer is us living out our faith in action. The father didn't wait until he could look back and say "*well, Jesus has healed x number of people, and He has a proven track record...*". The father made a declaration of faith in Jesus. He *prayed*, knowing that in his own strength he couldn't do anything to help his son. But looking at Jesus, he trusted Jesus. He put his faith in Jesus strength. So what about you?

When you're in a big, difficult situation, do you depend on your own strength? Or do you turn to God and pray? The truth is that we *always* need God. Make it your prayer today: "*God, help me to trust in you even more today than I did yesterday.*" And get to know why you can trust God to; keep reading the Bible.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 9:30-32

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus say is going to happen to the Son of Man?
2. What does He say will happen after three days?
3. Does this sound familiar to any other parts of Mark? What do you think Jesus is trying to teach His disciples?

- Remarkable for Today:

- What was Jesus born for? What did Jesus come to do? Jesus came to be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, to die on the cross, and to be raised to life again on the third day. It's very popular to say Jesus came to do something else, isn't it? That He came to be an example, or to correct false beliefs about God, or to care for the poor, oppressed and weak. These are all things Jesus did - and certainly they are important. But Jesus came to *die* for our sin, and to be raised to life again. Take some time to reflect on this. What does it mean for you that Jesus died for your sin? How could you respond to Him?

Thursday

- Read Mark 9:33-37

- Think through the following questions:

1. What were Jesus' disciples arguing about on the road?
2. What does Jesus say that whoever wants to be first should do?
3. Who do we welcome when we welcome others like Jesus welcomed others?

- Remarkable for Today:

- It's a scary thought; *whatever we do for/to the least, we do for/to Jesus, and we do for/to God*. In other words, if we treat the weird guy or girl at church or school or work like rubbish, we're treating Jesus like rubbish. Or when we care for the smelly person on the bus by saying "hi", we're being kind and welcoming like we would to Jesus. Who is there in your life who you might want to re-think how you welcome them and care for them? We care for people, not because of what they

can do for us, but because of what Jesus did for them. Talk to God about this. And live it out.

Friday

- Read Mark 9:38-41

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does John say to the man who was driving out demons in Jesus' name?
2. How does Jesus respond to what John says?
3. What does Jesus say will happen for those who really care about honouring Jesus? (v.41)

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus has one major concern here: that people have the right knowledge about who He is. He isn't concerned with how popular any one Christian is. His concern is that people respond to Him rightly. This other man who was driving out demons in Jesus' name was following Jesus and living accordingly. He wanted to make Jesus' name great. Whereas the disciples were concerned, because it wasn't making them look good! You might have friends or know people who believe in Jesus, but don't go to the same kind of church as you. If they care about people getting to know Jesus, then it doesn't matter that they're different! It doesn't matter if another church is bigger; Jesus needs to be known! Who do you know that you can encourage, even though they go to a different church?

Saturday

- Read Mark 9:42-50

- Think through the following questions:

1. What warning does Jesus have for those who might lead others to sin (i.e. lead others to reject God)?
2. What (metaphorical to suggest dramatic action!) warning does Jesus have for any area of sin in our own lives?
3. What is better than living a life without trouble or resistance? (hint: look at what Jesus says it is better to enter into!)

- Remarkable for Today:

- Here we hear some of Jesus' big instructions for those who follow Him. We aren't here to live a life of ease and comfort. We aren't meant to find everything easy. Anyone who wants to follow Jesus will go through tests (salted by fire - v.49).

Tests which will show whether we are living to follow Jesus, or if we're living for ourselves. For Jesus' followers, we're called to sacrifice. We are called to deny ourselves (Mark 8:34) and to follow Jesus. We are called to give up things which don't give honour to Jesus, and to instead try to honour Him with our lives. So take a moment to think about your life. Is there anything which you're doing that is trying to honour you instead of God? Talk to God about this. Be prepared to take dramatic action to make sure that your life honours God.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 12 (Mark 10:1-52)

Monday

- Read Mark 10:1-12

- Think through the following questions:

1. What opinion did the Pharisees have of marriage and divorce?
2. What opinion does Jesus have of marriage and divorce?
3. How important does Jesus think God's creation order is when it comes to marriage?

- Remarkable for Today:

- You might not be getting married right at this second, but what society thinks of marriage is definitely something you will have heard plenty about over this year! In the days of Jesus, marriage was also treated pretty casually, not too different to how some people view it today. The Pharisees looked at it as a casual contract which could be broken for a large variety of reasons. And in a similar way, today people view marriage as a contract with a meaning that is open to being changed. And yet, when you look at Jesus and how He responded, Jesus thought that the *most important thing to know about marriage was that God instituted it*. So how do we respond to our friends who don't believe this? We love them and care for them in the same way that Jesus did; by trying to bring them to know God. Who do you know that doesn't know God who's got marriage all mixed up? Pray for them, and think of ways to introduce them to God.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 10:13-16

- Think through the following questions:

1. What was the reaction the disciples to the people bringing children to Jesus?
2. How do you think the disciples thought of the children?
3. How does Jesus think of the children instead?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus says "*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it.*" Some people think that what Jesus means is that you have to be innocent, pure and spontaneous like children to be accepted by God. But that's not the point. The point is that little children - toddlers, infants, babies - they are all completely dependent. They are

small, powerless. They only have need. And they know it! That's Jesus' point. We can only receive the Kingdom of God if we recognise *exactly* how we are in front of God; completely in need; helpless. We need God to bring us into the Kingdom. Take some time out now - do you recognise your need before God? Do you recognise how much you need Him to bring you into His Kingdom through Jesus' death on the cross? Thank Him for providing for your need.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 10:17-31

- Think through the following questions:

1. What instructions does Jesus give the rich young man in order to inherit eternal life?
2. How does Jesus show His love for this man?
3. Fill in the blanks! "*Jesus looked at them and said, 'With _____ this is _____, but _____ with _____; all things are _____ with _____.'*"

- Remarkable for Today:

- For many people, there's a road block to believing in Jesus. The Bible's word for this is "idol" - something which we praise instead of Jesus. Something which gets our attention instead of Jesus. For this rich young man, it was his monetary wealth. He had lots of cash! But for many of us, there's other things that we could be idolising. For example, it could be reputation wealth - we are worried about what others will think if we praise Jesus. Or maybe it could be something else like relationships - you'd rather have that friend, or boyfriend or girlfriend, than have Jesus. Maybe it's not as dramatic as a one-off everything-or-nothing choice; maybe it's a gradual thing. And how sad it is for this young man. He walks away from Jesus. Is there anything in your life which could one day get in the way of following Jesus? Talk to God about it now. Ask Him to help protect you from making it into an idol. And take action to change it. Give away some of the stuff that's getting in the way.

Thursday

- Read Mark 10:32-34

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where were they going?
2. Who will Jesus be betrayed to?

3. He will be killed, and then what will happen after three days?

- Remarkable for Today:

- For the third time in Mark, Jesus predicts His death and resurrection (the previous two: Mark 8:31 and Mark 9:31). For Jesus, the most important component of who He is, is that He is going to suffer, be killed and be raised to life again. This is *fundamental* to who Jesus is. Is that how you think about Jesus? Do you recognise that it was essential to who He was to die for *your* rejection of God? That there was absolutely no other way for God to make you right with Him and save you for eternal life *than* for Jesus to die for you? Not only for you. But for your friends and family as well. Jesus *had* to die for them. There was no other way for them to be right with God. Take some time to think through how you can thank God.

Friday

- Read Mark 10:35-45

- Think through the following questions:

1. What do James and John ask Jesus to do for them?
2. Who prepares the places for people in Jesus' Kingdom?
3. Fill in the blanks! "*For even the _____ of _____ did not _____ to be _____, but to _____, and to _____ his _____ as a _____ for many.*"

- Remarkable for Today:

- What a contrast between God's Kingdom and the Kingdom of the World. The Kingdom of the World pushes for power and for control. It emphasises "what's in it for me?" It takes. But on the other hand, God's Kingdom is all about service and giving. God's Kingdom asks "how can I serve you? How can I love you?" It gives. Which Kingdom would you rather be a part of? How can you be living out service to other people who know God today? How can you be serving people who don't know God today?

Saturday

- Read Mark 10:46-52

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who was sitting by the roadside begging?
2. How does he address Jesus?
3. What is his response when Jesus heals him?

- Remarkable for Today:

- There is only one right response to Jesus. And that's faith. It's believing He is who He says He is. It's following Him. As the blind man does in these verses, we also need to trust who Jesus is. And a trust means taking action. It means "putting our money where our mouth is." To use the words of James, "...*faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*" (James 2:17). This is *not* saying that you have to do good stuff to be accepted by God. This is saying that true faith always comes with action. If you're abseiling down a cliff, it's one thing to say "yeah, I trust the rope." But it's another to actually start walking down the cliff and trusting the rope with your life. And in the same way, it's one thing to sit on the sidelines and say "yeah, I trust Jesus." But it's another to actually follow Jesus and trust Him with your life. So do you have faith in Jesus? Ask God to help you see how to live out this trust today.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

_____.

- What do I need to change? _____

_____.

Week 13 (Mark 11:1-33)

Monday

- Read Mark 11:1-33

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from Mark 11 - the things that are surprising or that stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 33 verses? Write them down, and pray over them and think through them in the next week.
3. Mark 11 takes us through a journey of three days. Take a moment now; write down what happened on:

Day 1: _____
_____.

Day 2: _____
_____.

Day 3: _____
_____.

- Remarkable for Today:

- How do you think you’d respond to Jesus if you were with Him over these three days? What kind of person would you think He was? When we answer this question, we’re telling people what our judgement of Jesus is. Why do you think you’d respond to Jesus in this way? Pray that as you spend the rest of this week reading about Jesus, God will help you to see Jesus for who He really is; the Son of God who is the way we can be in relationship with God. Also be praying for any people in your life who are currently rejecting Jesus.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 11:1-11

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where were they approaching (look at both v.1 and 11)?
2. How did people initially respond to Jesus in these verses?
3. Look at v.11. How many people continue to follow Jesus at this point after all the excitement?

- Remarkable for Today:

- It’s interesting how many people were excited and praising Jesus earlier, only to have this section end with Jesus standing alone. But it shows us something that

we can see is true. It shows us that people can be enthusiastic or passionate, but not be really following Jesus. It's a scary thought, isn't it? Jesus is not recognised as the true King in the middle of all this excitement. It's not until Mark 15:39 when He is recognised for who He truly is - the Son of God. Take some time out with God now in prayer. There's nothing wrong with being passionate for God! But we always need to be *really* following Jesus. That's the only way to truly honour this King. So when the enthusiasm fades. When the church service is over. When the epic camp comes to an end. Are you following Jesus? Ask God to help you to follow Him everyday.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 11:11-19

- Think through the following questions:

1. How does Jesus react the first time He enters the temple?
2. Jesus' response to the fig tree seems harsh! Look at v.11 and v.13. Are there any similarities between what Jesus does at the Temple and with the Fig Tree?
3. The original purpose of the outer court of the temple was for non-Jewish people (i.e. Gentiles) to be able to meet with God. However, it's all filled with a busy "stock-market" of animals and money-changers and extra sacrifice stands. These are all good things for the temple system. So why do you think Jesus takes action?

- Remarkable for Today:

- There's a big problem going on in the Temple, and Jesus isn't going to just let it go. Way back in Genesis 22:18, God made a big promise to Abraham. God promised that through Abraham's offspring, all nations in the world would be blessed. Fast forwarding to Isaiah 56:7, God shows that His temple was meant to be a house of prayer for all nations - that everyone on earth should be able to access God through His Temple. And now we get to the problem that's going on in Mark 11; people from all nations can't get into the Temple! They're being "blocked out" by Israel's spiritual leaders. This sounds kind of crazy, doesn't it? But when we look at our lives today, is there any way in which we "block out" people who don't know God from getting to know Him? Are there any people in your life who you look at and think "she'll never be a Christian!" Or people that you are too busy to talk to about Jesus? How could you be helping people to access God through a relationship with Jesus?

Thursday

- Read Mark 11:11-21

- Think through the following questions:

1. What was Jesus' reaction the first time He went into the temple?
2. Looking at Jesus' response to the way the Jewish leaders acted with the temple system, what do you think Jesus' action with the fig tree meant?
3. How do you think Jesus feels about the Temple being the place where people can meet with God? (hint: who is Jesus?)

- Remarkable for Today:

- Some people think that Jesus was super-angry in Mark 11. They think that His curse on the fig tree was really stupid, and shows that Jesus didn't have self-control. It can seem weird, can't it? But there's some evidence about Jesus' anger that it wasn't really as dramatic as we might make it out to be. First of all, He didn't act *immediately*; in v.11 we see that He goes to Bethany for the night before coming back and acting. And later, in Mark 14, when *anyone* could accuse Jesus of crimes, no one brought this up. Jesus cursing the fig tree is what is called an "enacted parable". He's showing us what the real situation is with the Temple and it's leaders in Jerusalem. Just as the fig tree wasn't doing what it was supposed to do, the Temple and it's leaders weren't doing what they were supposed to do. Take some time to thank God for sending Jesus to die on the cross so that we could meet with God properly.

Friday

- Read Mark 11:11-25

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where were people going to show their faith in God in v.12-19?
2. Look at v.22-25. Where *should* people go to show their faith in God?
3. Your friend, Sandy Beach, tells you that she thinks that v.23-24 mean that whatever you ask God for, He will give you. "*I'm asking for a boyfriend right now. And Matt just asked me out! I know he's not a Christian yet, but God must want me to date him!*" How would you respond to Sandy?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus starts this whole section by saying "have faith in God." The way we show faith in God is not by going to a Temple. It's by coming to Jesus. And based on us

coming to Jesus, we ask God for things in prayer. When we come to Jesus, we receive forgiveness. And that's why we forgive others. When we come to Jesus, we receive all that we need to follow God. And that's why we ask God to do the impossible - like bringing someone to faith in Jesus (Mark 10:27). The way we pray shows what our heart is like. If we pray selfishly, it shows we are selfish. If we don't pray much at all, it shows we don't think we need God for anything. And if we pray for the things God wants, it shows that we're following God with all our heart. How are you praying? Make a plan today to pray for the things God wants more.

Saturday

- Read Mark 11:27-33

- Think through the following questions:

1. What's the question that the teachers of the law etc. ask Jesus?
2. How does Jesus respond?
3. In v.33, the teachers of the law say "We don't know." Do you believe them? Why or why not?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Plenty of people would rather "keep an open mind" than make a strong decision about who Jesus is. Do you know someone like that? Pray for them today. Ask God to help them find Jesus, and to make a decision about who He is to them. And for yourself: finish this sentence. "Jesus is:_____

_____."

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered:_____

- What was the sermon about?:_____

_____.

- What do I need to change?_____

_____.

Week 14 (Mark 12:1-44)

Monday

- Read Mark 12:1-12

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where is Jesus when He's talking with the Jews?
2. Who do you think the vineyard owner was in Jesus' parable? The tenants? The son, who was beloved? Who/what do you think the vineyard was?
3. Who is in control in the midst of all this?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Do you feel surprised when you find out that the father still sent his son, even though he knew *exactly* what the tenants were like? It's amazing. And it's the same as Jesus with us. God knew *exactly* what humanity was like. He knew we would reject Jesus. And He still sent Jesus to die for us. Why? Because of His great love. Romans 5:8 says this "*God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" While we were God's enemies, Jesus died for us. Jesus died to bring us into right relationship with God. That is incredible! Take some time out to thank God for this now.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 12:13-17

- Think through the following questions:

1. Why did the Pharisees and Herodians ask Jesus this question?
2. What is their question?
3. What does Jesus' response mean about how we should do taxes?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus says that if a coin has Caesar's portrait/image on it, then it belongs to Caesar. And by the same logic, if something has God's image, it belongs to God. Of course, we know that all things belong to God, because He made everything! But what, in all of creation, has God's image on it? Genesis 1:27 tells us that man was made in God's image. And that means that we belong to God. What does it look like for us today to be giving to our teachers and parents what they deserve - housework, homework, respect - and for us to be giving God what belongs to Him - our hearts, minds and lives? Take time out today - think it through and pray.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 12:18-27

- Think through the following questions:

1. What Sadducees believe about death?
2. What two things does Jesus say that the Sadducees don't know?
3. In what ways will eternal life be different to life on this earth?

- Remarkable for Today:

- We don't think about death much, do we? It feels like it's really far away, and probably won't ever happen. But for many people, it's a very real fear. What's going to happen to us after we die? For many people, they'd like to answer "nothing; you just die." Jesus has a different answer. He shows us God's answer to what happens after death; *resurrection*. New life with God for eternity. How can we be sure though? The answer is Jesus. The only way we can know that there's life after death is if someone shows us. And Jesus, through His promises (like in John 11:25, where He declares "*I am the resurrection and the life.*") and His resurrection (Mark 16:1-8), *proves* to us eternal life. How do you feel to have this confidence? Thank God for the confidence you can have for eternity.

Thursday

- Read Mark 12:28-34

- Think through the following questions:

1. What attitude does the teacher of the law have towards Jesus?
2. What important statement and two commandments does Jesus refer to as being the most important?
3. How does Jesus respond to the teacher of the law?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Even though this teacher of the law had come to "judge" Jesus' thoughts and prayer, Jesus is the one who ends up passing judgement on him. After their good discussion, Jesus says to him, "*you aren't far from the kingdom of God.*" Jesus isn't judging him according to his knowledge of the Bible, but of his response to Jesus. We find the kingdom of God described in the Bible, but alive in Jesus. We come to God's Kingdom through Jesus. How have you responded to Jesus? Do you read the Bible to become "smarter" about it, or to know God better? Ask God to help you as you read through His word, and to help you to know Jesus better.

Friday

- Read Mark 12:35-37

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where is Jesus teaching (still)?
2. Jesus teaches us that the Christ/Messiah is the descendant of David. But, even more importantly, who's son is He?
3. Which teacher is "still standing" after all the questions are asked?

- Remarkable for Today:

- People in Jesus' day had a lot of expectations of what the Christ would be like. Among many other things, they believed that the Christ would be David's descendant who would be inferior to David. And yet, Jesus is challenging that. Jesus knows far better than *anyone* what the Christ is. What's kind of sad, though, is that people today still do the same thing! Many people today say they expect Jesus to be "meek", or "loving", or "a good teacher". But, like the Jews were doing, we are bringing our own thoughts and putting them on Jesus. It's not really fair, is it? Jesus knows far better who and what the Christ was than we do! We should listen to what He has to say, as God reminds Peter, James and John in Mark 9:7 - "*This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!*" Do you listen to Jesus? Do your friends listen to Jesus? Who can you be praying for to meet the *real* Jesus?

Saturday

- Read Mark 12:38-44

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus say to watch out for the teachers of the law?
2. How impressive to the world do you think the widow's offering was? How impressive was it to Jesus and His disciples?
3. What does this tell you about what God values?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The one poor widow does something which none of the scribes, teachers of the law or the wealthy crowds did. She gives her *all* to God. She holds absolutely *nothing* in her life back from being given to God. She is radical in her desire to honour God with her life. And what about us? Do you have something you "hold back" from God, while giving other, more visible, parts of your life to Him? Look at Jesus. He held *nothing* back from serving us (Mark 10:45), even dying on the cross for us. Is there *any* area in your life that you're holding back from God?

Maybe you could ask God to help you to see these areas in your life, and to help you to bring them before Him.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered:_____

- What was the sermon about?:_____

_____.

- What do I need to change?_____

_____.

Week 15 (Mark 13:1-37)

Monday

- Read Mark 13:1-37

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from Mark 13 - the things that are surprising or that stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 37 verses (*probably lots!*)? Write them down, and pray over them and think through them in the next week.
3. Jesus talks a lot about what’s going to happen throughout this chapter. Who does He say will be in control of it all?

- Remarkable for Today:

- When reading Mark 13, we are going to have lots of questions. Lots of it is confusing and there are lots of different opinions about what all the details mean. We like to know what’s going to happen in the future because it gives us a feeling of control. And because of this kind of attitude, we all leave Mark 13 feeling a little disappointed; it doesn’t give us specifics or make us feel in control! But there is one area which we are encouraged to be growing in. We are called by Jesus to be faithful. Pray to God as this week starts that He will help you to be faithful to Him; to be living out life as a Christian. And thank Him that He is the one who is in control over history.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 13:1-4

- Think through the following questions:

1. What do Jesus’ followers point out to Jesus as they leave the Temple?
2. How do you think they feel about the Temple?
3. Read Mark 8:11-13. Was the disciples’ question in Mark 13:4 a good one to ask?

- Remarkable for Today:

- One of the phrases that people might use is “*I’d believe in God if He just gave me a sign!*” What’s crazy is that God *has* given us a sign. In fact, He’s gone one better. God has given us His Son, Jesus Christ. In the person, Jesus, we get to meet God. It’s tempting to ask God for “one more sign” because it means that we are in control of God. We get to know God on our terms. But that’s not how God operates. In His great mercy, He has *already* given us more than enough signs about who He is. Thank God for sending Jesus so that we can know Him. And

think through this situation. How would you respond to a friend who says “*I need another sign from God before I’m sure He is the real God*”?

Wednesday

- Read Mark 13:5-13

- Think through the following questions:

1. What is the danger that Jesus tells His followers to watch out for?
2. What are the challenges that followers of Jesus will face from other people on earth?
3. Fill in the blanks! “*And the _____ must first be _____ to all _____.*”

- Remarkable for Today:

- In the Christian life, there is one thing which will bring on suffering and rejection from other people more than anything else. It’s when you’re standing up for Jesus by sharing the gospel. Jesus lets all His followers (us included) know that we will be rejected by some other people if we’re following Him. This does feel hard and it does hurt. So why should we continue to share the gospel? It’s because it’s news that *must* go out; v.13 lets us know that those who stand firm in the gospel of Jesus till the end will be saved. This means that people who don’t know the gospel won’t be saved. They can’t be saved. Based on this, all the suffering and rejection is worth it if it means that God saves people through us sharing the gospel. Do you feel ready if suffering comes for believing in God? Ask God today to help you be prepared, and to give you more opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus.

Thursday

- Read Mark 13:14-23

- Think through the following questions:

1. What instructions does Jesus give to His followers for when they see the **abomination** that’s mentioned in v.14?
2. Looking at v.22, what’s the difference between false Christs (or Messiahs) and the true Christ (Jesus)? (Hint: look back at Mark 8:11-13)
3. Based on this, what do you think is dangerous about expecting signs?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus warns His disciples about false Christs coming forward to try to trick people
- including followers of Jesus! It’s a scary thought that someone could convince

you that they are God's messenger. But there have been *lots* of people who have claimed to be the true Christ falsely. How can we protect ourselves from this? The answer is to know Jesus *really* well. Know the real Christ as well as you can. And the absolute best way to do this is to read your Bible daily. Spend time with other Christians who know Jesus well. Be involved at Church and Small Groups. These are all ways for you to continue to hear who Jesus is from the Bible. And test *everything* that people say about God against the Bible. And that way, we can follow Jesus' instruction in v.23. "...*be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.*"

Friday

- Read Mark 13:24-31

- Think through the following questions:

1. Unlike false Christs, who will appear in different places at different times, how will Jesus appear?
2. Unlike the Temple, which is failing to gather all people to come and be with God, where will Jesus gather people from to meet with Him (and God)?
3. Where do we find certainty that will last, even when everything else has been destroyed?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus emphasises that He will gather His people (the elect) to be in relationship with Him. Isn't that encouraging? But Jesus does it through His messengers (or angels). Looking back at v.10, we realise that the way Jesus gathers His people is through the preaching of the gospel. Jesus is the one who is gathering people to Himself. But it is through His gospel being shared with others, which is something we get the privilege of doing. This is very encouraging. It means that we are *not* ultimately the ones responsible for someone becoming a Christian. But it also means that when we share the gospel, *we are guaranteed that there will be people who respond by becoming Christian*. Who are you currently sharing the gospel with? Pray for them and ask God to save them. And pray that God will speak through you as you share the gospel with them.

Saturday

- Read Mark 13:32-37

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who knows the time that Jesus is talking about?
2. Since Jesus' followers (us included) don't know *exactly* when Jesus will return, what should we do/how should we live?
3. Fill in the blanks: "What I ____ to ____, I ____ to ____: '____'!"

- Remarkable for Today:

- The way we are told to live as followers of Jesus until He comes again is to keep watch. We are to pursue Jesus and to remain faithful while we wait for Him to return. What could this look like for you to be faithful in:
 - How you spend your spare time?
 - Your relationships with friends?
 - Your plans for the future?
- Make this your prayer today. *Dear God, please help me to be alert until Jesus comes back. Thank you that He will return. Thank you that I will be in relationship with you for eternity. Please help me not to get distracted by other things in this life, but to continue to seek Jesus and know Him better. Amen*

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____
- What was the sermon about?: _____

_____.
- What do I need to change? _____

_____.

Week 16 (Mark 14:1-65)

Monday

- Read Mark 14:1-11

- Think through the following questions:

1. What were the chief priests and the teachers of the law looking to do to Jesus?
2. The woman with the alabaster jar of perfume (worth more than a year's income!) breaks it on Jesus. Why does Jesus say she does this?
3. How valuable does Judas think Jesus is? How valuable does the woman think Jesus is?

- Remarkable for Today:

- How important we think Jesus is changes how much of our lives we offer Him. The chief priests, teachers of the law and even Judas all think very little of Jesus. He is not very important in their eyes, with the chief priests being *delighted* to buy Jesus from Judas' betrayal. To this woman, on the other hand, Jesus is *the most important* being in her life. She offers everything she could to Jesus; she didn't hold back. And the only reason she *could* serve Jesus was because of His upcoming death - His burial day (v.8). When you look at how much Jesus gave for you - His entire life - how does your offering to Him stack up? Does the way you live say that Jesus is *very* valuable to you, or not very valuable at all? Ask God to help you live in response to Jesus' sacrifice for you.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 14:12-26

- Think through the following questions:

1. When you read through these verses, who is in control?
2. How does Jesus say the disciples will treat him?
3. After Jesus' followers drink from the cup, how does He describe what it represented?

- Remarkable for Today:

- In v.21, Jesus says that He will go (to His death) just as it had been written about Him. Jesus isn't out of control in this situation. In fact, God is completely in control of all of history! There is no moment in the lead up to Jesus' death in which God isn't in control of. It is all part of God's plan. And yet. At exactly the same time, Jesus says "...*woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man!*" Just because it's part of God's plan and under God's control, it doesn't mean that God doesn't hold

us responsible for our actions or choices. If someone rejects God, is God in control? Yes. Will God hold them responsible for their choice? Yes. How can we know what God's plan is then? The best way is to get to know God better; what does He care about? Reading the Bible and praying are two great ways to do this better. Ask God to help you to get to know Him better and to care about what He cares about.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 14:27-31, 66-72

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus say will happen after He has been stricken (i.e. killed)?
2. What does Peter say will *never* happen in v.27-31?
3. How well does Peter go at keeping His word?

- Remarkable for Today:

- It's one thing to say "yeah, I'm going to follow Jesus" when times are pretty easy or comfortable. Peter (and all the other disciples) say to Jesus that they will never deny knowing Him or following Him. They say they are followers of Jesus. And then, when the "crunch time" comes, they turn back on it. In Mark 14, we see that *all* the followers of Jesus fled from Him when He was arrested. Even Peter, who keeps following Jesus from a distance, when he's recognised by a servant - not a soldier or a chief priest! - denies knowing Jesus at all. It's a solid reminder. We need God's help if we're going to follow Him properly. And the time to ask for it is now - when it isn't too hard to say that you're a follower of Jesus. Jesus refused to turn away from dying for people who couldn't follow Him perfectly. He died for sinners. Pray that God will help you to be faithful to Jesus. And pray for those other Christians around the world who *are* suffering lots for saying that they follow Jesus.

Thursday

- Read Mark 14:32-42

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus ask James, Peter and John to do while He prays?
2. What two requests does Jesus make to God?
3. Jesus says "*The hour has come.*" What hour is He referring to?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The author of Hebrews has this to say. "*Because he (Jesus) himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*" (Hebrews 2:18). Jesus asks God, if it is at all possible, to remove the cup of suffering for sin from Him. His death is enough for anyone to be afraid of. And yet Jesus is afraid of something *even worse than death*. Jesus submits *perfectly* to God's will. Jesus undergoes the most hardcore suffering imaginable. I find it very hard to imagine answering to God for just some of the bad things I do. Imagine answering to God for *all the wrong ever done in the history of the world*. That's what Jesus is going to do. Jesus is going to be judged by God for *every sin*. Because Jesus went through with this, you *don't have to be judged by God for your sin*. If you're a follower of Jesus and trust in His death for you, then your sin has already been judged. Thank God for this wonderful truth.

Friday

- Read Mark 14:43-52
- Think through the following questions:
 1. Who appears with Judas?
 2. What does Jesus say must be fulfilled?
 3. How many of Jesus' disciples stay with Him after all of their big promises to *never* abandon Him?
- Remarkable for Today:
 - *All* abandoned Jesus. The streaker in v.51-52 is a bit weird, isn't he? Regardless of who he was, he was more concerned with fleeing from Jesus than he was with how dressed he was. Dignity or none, the solid truth of the Bible is that *all* have turned away from God. We have all wanted to abandon God and pretend that we don't know Him. Our actions back this up. And yet, this great God died for us. He died so that we could be forgiven. He died so that we could be brought back into relationship with Him. We were reminded of this great truth yesterday. Who can you share this truth with today? Ask God to help you find someone to share it with. Be praying for them to hear the wonderful news of the gospel.

Saturday

- Read Mark 14:53-65
- Think through the following questions:
 1. What are the chief priests and the Sanhedrin hoping to do?

2. What accusation is made against Jesus that is true?
3. Who does Jesus confess to being? Is this the grounds for His death if it's true?

- Remarkable for Today:

- The High Priest charges Jesus with blasphemy. He's accusing Jesus of claiming to be equal to God by claiming to be God's Son. They haven't even considered if it could be true! There are lots of people today who will refuse to take Jesus on His terms. They might say that Jesus is a good teacher, or a nice guy, or a visionary. But by doing that, they are doing almost exactly the same thing that the High Priest does. *They don't listen to Jesus, and don't even consider Jesus could be who He says He is.* That's a bit of a cop out. The author of the Chronicles of Narnia, C.S. Lewis, has a really famous quote. *"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."* So who do you say Jesus is? Who do your friends say that He is? Ask God to help you to take Jesus for who He says He is, and to help you to share Him with others.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

_____.

- What do I need to change? _____

Week 17 (Mark 15:1-39)

Monday

- Read Mark 15:1-39

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from this text - the things that are surprising or stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 39 verses? Write them down, pray over them and think through them over the next week. _____

_____?
3. How do the various people throughout Mark 15:1-39 respond to Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- It can feel really sad and horrifying to read through the final nine hours of Jesus' life in Mark 15. He is rejected by all His disciples already - they're nowhere to be seen in these 39 verses! The crowds, who seemed to be amazed at Him throughout the rest of Mark, all reject Him and demand that He is crucified. The Chief Priests and the soldiers mock Him and oversee His death. Pilate hands Him over to be crucified. Jesus is *even* abandoned by God the Father. What could *possibly* make Jesus willingly go through with this? The answer is back in Mark 10:45, where Jesus says “...*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.*” Jesus came to serve us by giving His life as a ransom. Jesus died a horrifying death in gut-wrenching isolation under the horrendous weight of sin to pay the price for our rejection of God. You might like to take some time now to thank God for this.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 15:1-5

- Think through the following questions:

1. Who turns Jesus over to Pilate?
2. Why might Pilate (or any Roman official) be concerned with Jesus' title as “The King of the Jews”?
3. How does Jesus respond to all the accusations by the officials?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Jesus made three big predictions of His death in Mark - Mark 8:31, Mark 9:31 and Mark 10:33-34. In all of these predictions, Jesus lets us in on the fact that people will betray and reject Jesus - that He will be handed over or given over. But there's something else to this idea. Jesus is *actually being handed over by God*. All the way through Jesus' trial, God is in control. God is the one to whom Jesus has submitted Himself. Jesus is completely following God. God has handed Jesus over to die for our sins. He endured the pain of hearing His *One and Only Son* begging that if it were at all possible, to take away this suffering. How could God do this *for us*? In John 3:16, Jesus gives us God's motive. "*For God **so loved** the world, that He **gave** His One and Only Son...*" God so loved the world. God SO loved us. How do you feel in response to this love? Talk to God about it now. Maybe even write down how you feel.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 15:6-15
- Think through the following questions:
 1. What custom was held during the passover feast?
 2. Who does the crowd ask Pilate to release?
 3. How does Pilate respond to Jesus?
- Remarkable for Today:
 - "The ol' switcharoo" - you might've heard this phrase before! It's used when something or someone is swapped for something or someone else. In the case of Mark 15, Jesus is switched for Barabbas. The innocent man who doesn't deserve death is swapped for the guilty murderer who does deserve to be punished. What's scary is that we have a lot in common with Barabbas. Not many of us are necessarily convicted murderers. But all of us *are* guilty of rejecting God. All of us *deserve* death for rejecting Him. But the beauty of Jesus' death is that He gets what He didn't deserve so that we can get what we don't deserve. Jesus dies, even though He didn't deserve it, so that we could be freed from punishment to be in relationship with God, even though we don't deserve it. The Bible has another word for this gift from Jesus. "Grace". Thank God for the great swap He made to save you.

Thursday

- Read Mark 15:16-20

- Think through the following questions:

1. What did the soldiers put on Jesus?
2. What do the soldiers call Jesus? Why do you think they call Him this?
3. How do they respond to Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- In Philippians 2:10-11, there is a promise that God makes. *"...at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* On the day when Jesus returns to Earth, *every knee* will bow to Him. In these five verses in Mark, the soldiers are mocking Jesus when they bow to Him. But the truth is that one day *every knee* will bow to Jesus and pay homage to Him. The question is, will they do it willingly with joy that Jesus is Lord? Or will they do it in horror - realising that all their life they have lived a lie, believing that Jesus wasn't Lord? Those are the only two choices. And we all know people who need to hear that Jesus is Lord. Ask God to help you to see these opportunities and to take them. Pray for one of your friends who doesn't know that Jesus is Lord, and ask God to help you to share the great news of Jesus with them.

Friday

- Read Mark 15:21-32

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where is Jesus crucified?
2. Why is Jesus crucified (according to the charge)?
3. How do those around Jesus while He's on the cross respond to Him?

- Remarkable for Today:

- When Mark talks about Jesus' crucifixion, he isn't very concerned with explaining the details of crucifixion. His original audience who lived in Rome knew *lots* about crucifixion. It was a horrifying way to be killed. But Mark is far more concerned with the response of people to Jesus. People shout insults at Him. They reject Him. And the saddest irony is in v.31, when the teachers of the law mock Him, saying *"He saved others...but he can't save himself!"* This is a sad irony, because *by* Jesus dying, He *does* save others. Romans 5:8 says it even better. *"...While we were still sinners (i.e. while we were God's enemies), Christ died for us."* When we were God's enemies, He saved us by dying. How have you responded to God's love in sending Jesus to die for you?

Saturday

- Read Mark 15:33-39

- Think through the following questions:

1. What does Jesus cry out? What do you think it means?
2. What happens in the Temple when Jesus dies?
3. How does the Roman Centurion respond to Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- What does it mean for the curtain in the Temple to be torn in two from top to bottom? The curtain in the Temple separated the "holy of holies" - the central court of the Temple where God's presence was - from the outer courts. It was a barrier between people and the Holy God. It was a reminder that people could not access God because of sin. It was torn, meaning people *can* access God. And not only that. It was torn from top to bottom. God is the one who tore it. God is the way we can have access to God! Jesus' death on the cross means that we can access God. We can be in relationship with God. And God will never forsake us. Jesus was abandoned by God the Father so that we could have the opportunity to *always* be in the presence of God. We can *always* talk to God. We can *always* depend on God.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered:_____

- What was the sermon about?:_____

- What do I need to change?_____

Week 18 (Mark 15:40-16:8)

Monday

- Read Mark 15:40-16:8

- Think through the following questions:

1. What are the things that “jump out” at you from Mark 15:40-16:8 - the things that are surprising or that stick in your mind?
2. What questions do you have from reading these 16 verses? Write them down, and pray over them and think through them in the next week.
3. How does Joseph respond to Jesus? How do the women respond to Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Following Jesus requires action. When we follow Jesus, it involves our lips - what we confess - and our lives - how we act. As we saw last week, when the Centurion confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, he was confessing the truth. And here this week, we see two different groups. We see Joseph, who boldly acts to follow and honour Jesus. And on the other hand, we see the women, who stand at a distance, and are fearful in response to the news of the resurrection of Jesus. Take some time today to talk to God and ask Him to help you to respond in word and in action to His Son, and our Lord, the risen Jesus.

Tuesday

- Read Mark 15:40-41

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where were the women watching from?
2. What does the fact that Mark includes the names of Mary (mother of Jesus and James the younger), Mary Magdalene and Salome tell you about the reliability of Mark's account?
3. How does Mark say these women have treated Jesus?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Of all Jesus' followers - including His disciples who promised never to betray Him - only these three women are mentioned continuing to follow Jesus (even if it is from a distance) when He dies on the cross. For many of us, there will also come times when following Jesus is hard, or inconvenient, or even makes us targets for criticism. But followers of Jesus follow Him even when it's hard or difficult. Jesus didn't give up when it was difficult to go on the cross; He followed God perfectly! And by His holy Spirit, He can empower us to follow Him. He promises to keep us

in relationship with Him perfectly. It's not enough to wait until things get hard; make it your prayer today and your resolution to stick with God even when things get tough. To be like these women, and follow Jesus no matter what.

Wednesday

- Read Mark 15:42-45

- Think through the following questions:

1. What was Joseph of Arimathea waiting for?
2. How does he respond to Jesus?
3. Was there any chance that Jesus was still alive at this point?

- Remarkable for Today:

- It can be very easy for people to look back at how many of the Jews responded to Jesus and to think that they *all* hated Jesus. But, then we get people like Joseph, who are important Jewish people *and* honour Jesus. Joseph is 1/ waiting for the Kingdom of God to come, and he recognises that Jesus is the key. 2/ He asks Pilate for the body of Jesus - and he asks for it boldly! He lives out his devotion to Jesus by acting courageously - very different to how many of the other members of the Jewish ruling council acted. And finally, he shows that Jesus came to save Jewish people as well as Gentile people (like the Centurion). So what about us? Is there anyone in our lives who you think could never accept the gospel? That friend who is Muslim in a Muslim family? Or those people at school or work that diss Christians? Pray that God will work in their hearts and that you will have a chance to share the gospel of Jesus. Jesus died so these people could be saved too!

Thursday

- Read Mark 15:46-16:1

- Think through the following questions:

1. Where does Joseph place Jesus' body?
2. Who sees where Jesus was laid?
3. Is there any chance that these people went to the wrong tomb?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Some people would suggest that the women went to the wrong tomb - that they went to a tomb which Jesus was never buried in - and that's why they found an empty tomb. Unfortunately for them, this just simply isn't true. And to take it one step further, it doesn't make a lot of sense for Mark to mention that women were

the first ones to visit Jesus' tomb and find it empty *unless it was true*. In these times, women's testimonies weren't acceptable in Judaism. If you were to make up the story of the resurrection of Jesus, you *definitely* wouldn't say that the women were the first ones to find it! The only reason Mark records the women as being the first witnesses is because it's true. Take some time to reflect on what it means for you that Jesus' resurrection is *reliable and trustworthy*. And thank God that you can reasonably get to know Him!

Friday

- Read Mark 16:2-4

- Think through the following questions:

1. What day of the week were the women going to the tomb?
2. What were they discussing along the way?
3. Who rolled the stone away?

- Remarkable for Today:

- In Luke's and John's accounts of Jesus' resurrection, we see that He can *walk through walls*; he doesn't need to worry about doors (check out Luke 24 or John 20). Given this information, *have you ever wondered why the stone was rolled away*? Jesus certainly didn't need it to be rolled away in order to get out. It was rolled away for the followers of Jesus' sake. It was rolled away for our sake. God rolled the stone away so that we could see the empty tomb. God rolled the stone away to prove once and for all that Jesus was risen. The stone was rolled away for our benefit, that we could trust God to keep His promises. And one day, for all followers of Jesus, we too will rise. We won't be stuck in some smelly old tomb or coffin. We'll be risen to live with God in our new bodies - like Jesus - forever. What are you looking forward to when you think of that?

Saturday

- Read Mark 16:5-8

- Think through the following questions:

1. How do the women respond to the angel (the young man dressed in a white robe)?
2. What news does the angel report about the empty tomb?
3. What does he tell them to do? What do they do instead?

- Remarkable for Today:

- Here at the end of Mark's gospel, we see something strange. All throughout Mark, Jesus has told people not to speak in response to His miracles, and they have spoken. But here, when people are commanded to speak about Jesus being risen and the Lord of all, they are afraid and don't speak. Isn't it strange? But it shows us something very important. All signs - even the resurrection of Jesus from the dead - don't give people faith. People come to faith by God's work, through the gospel, in which they can personally encounter Jesus. When you think about someone getting to become a Christian, how do you think God wants to do it? What is truly remarkable is how simply God loves to act in making people followers of Jesus. It's by ordinary guys and girls sharing an extraordinary message. He has been raised. And we can be too. Praise God! Who might God want to share His extraordinary message with through you? Ask Him for help in this.

Sunday

- Church - Passage covered: _____

- What was the sermon about?: _____

_____.

- What do I need to change? _____

_____.

