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Class Notes

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Discovering Christ:

The Gospel
of Mark

Introduction to the Four Studies

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to give people who have very little knowledge of the Bible the basic information they will need to trust Christ as their Savior. All four lessons are based almost exclusively on the Gospel of Mark, though we will occasionally use additional verses from other places to supplement. The reason for this focus on Mark is simplicity; we believe that the Holy Spirit has given Mark as a sufficient basis for saving faith in Christ, and we want seekers to know where to turn to if they lose any guide we may give to them.

The Gospel of Mark is chosen because it is the shortest, with the simplest vocabulary and the simplest theological treatments.

This course is intended to be very basic. We will not go thoroughly through every part of the Gospel of Mark. Still less will we be seeking a comprehensive lesson in Christian theology. Just the basics!

Four Lessons

Week 1: Jesus' Identity (Mark 1)

Week 2: Jesus and Sin (Mark 2)

Week 3: Jesus' Death for Sin (Mark 15)

Week 4: Jesus' Resurrection from the Dead (Mark 16)

Practical Tips for Leading the Course

Allaying fears

Before beginning the first study, it is important to make people feel comfortable and to overcome any fears they may have. Generally, people have three main fears:

- They will be asked to answer questions and their ignorance will be exposed
- They will be asked to pray
- They will be asked to read aloud.

Therefore, we begin by allaying all these fears. No one will be forced to say a word if they don't want to! However, there will be ample opportunity for volunteering and for open discussion and for them to ask their questions.

Time for Each Session

Each session will take one hour; thirty minutes worth of content if there were no discussion. But since (as we just said) discussion is to be fostered, that will take up about half the time allotted.

Study 1

Jesus' Identity – The Son of God

Mark 1

Object

The object of this study is to introduce people to Jesus, especially in his early ministry. This means establishing his identity as the **Son of God**. Central to this is looking at his **authority** in many spheres of life.

The First Study

1. Four Opening Statements

- The title of this course is *Discovering Christ*
- Jesus Christ is the center of Christianity
- The only records of Jesus' life are the four "biographies"—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
- Over the next few weeks we will be looking at one of these, the Gospel of Mark. (Give out New Testaments and enquirers to find Mark).

2. Study

- The GOOD NEWS about Jesus Christ

Mark 1:1

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The word "gospel" means "good news." We will see what good news it is that Jesus Christ has come into the world!

Mark 1:9-11

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

This passage tells us that God spoke from heaven about Jesus calling him "my Son" and that he loves him! What does it mean to say the Jesus is the Son of God? The Gospel of Mark is written to help us understand the answer to that question. Jesus Christ's identity is the focus. We will see that it means Jesus is a person with authority—the authority of God, his Father. Let's look at some examples:

a) Jesus' Authority as a Teacher

Mark 1:21-22

And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. ²² And they were

astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus spoke powerful words about God and humanity, and his teachings were unlike anyone who ever spoke. His words are pure truth and give life.

b) Jesus' Authority Over Demons

Mark 1:23-28

And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴ "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷ And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸ And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Demons are powerful spiritual beings, invisible and active, doing evil. They are still around today. Jesus had absolute authority over them, and they feared him.

c) Jesus' Authority Over (All) Diseases

Mark 1:29-34

And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. ³¹ And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them. ³² That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. ³³ And

the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

There was no disease Jesus could not heal. His healings were 100% effective, effortless on his part, and instantaneous.

d) Jesus' Authority Over Nature

Mark 4:36-41

And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. ³⁸ But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹ And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹ And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

e) Jesus' Authority Over Death

Mark 5:22-23

Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet ²³ and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live."

Mark 5:35-43

While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" ³⁶ But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not

fear, only believe.”³⁷ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James.³⁸ They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly.³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, “Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping.”⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was.⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, “Talitha cumi,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.”⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.⁴³ And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

- **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Jesus’ authority to forgive sins (we’ll talk about that next time! Mark 2:1-11)

Mark 2:10
the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins

- **Jesus’ compassion for people**

Mark 1:40-41
And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, “If you will, you can make me clean.”⁴¹ Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, “I will; be clean.”

Jesus was a very kind, compassionate, tender-hearted King. All his healings were done out of compassion for suffering people. Jesus genuinely cared for hurting people.

- **Jesus’ authority to call us as a King**

Mark 1:14-15

Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Mark 1:16-18

Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”¹⁸ And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

This is the point of the whole Gospel of Mark. Jesus calls people to follow him into the Kingdom of God. They do this by repenting of their sins and believing the good news about him—his death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead—means forgiveness of all sins and eternal life.

Summary: Today, We Have Seen...

- Jesus is the Son of God with great power and great authority;
- His claim to be God in a human body;
- The need to come to a decision about him.

Homework

- Read Mark, chapters 1-6. People should note any passages which they do not understand or which they would like to discuss. There will be a time for discussing these questions at the beginning of next week’s study.

Study 2

Jesus and Sin

Mark 2

Object

The object of this study is to build upon the previous week and to show that Jesus did not only have authority as a teacher and a healer. The central work of his mission was salvation from sin. So, in order to understand Jesus' mission in the world culminating in his death and resurrection, we have to understand what sin is and how great a threat it is to us eternally. That's the focus of this week's study.

Homework Review

Members were asked to read Mark chapters 1-6. Ask if they have any questions arising out of this reading or any other questions about some aspect of the Christian faith. Allow some time for the discussion on the passages of Mark. If any additional questions remain, write them down and set up another time to answer them.

First Study Review

Go back over the facts of the previous week briefly: Jesus' identity is established as the Son of

God. This means he has great authority: authority to teach, authority over demons; authority to heal every disease and sickness he faced; authority over nature (the wind and waves); authority over sin and death (more today and next week!).

The Second Study

- **Jesus the Savior...** Sent to Save Us from Sin and Death

"Savior" always refers to a great danger. For us to understand why Jesus came into this world, we have to understand the great danger of sin and the death penalty connected with it.

Unfortunately most people have no idea what sin really is in the sight of God.

This study will establish the authority of Jesus to forgive sin, and along with that a clear definition of what sin really is and how much danger our sins have put us in.

- **Jesus Has Authority to Forgive Sin**

Last time we saw Jesus established as the “Son of God.” This means he has authority:

Authority as a teacher; authority over demons; authority to heal all diseases; authority over nature; authority over death; and authority to call us to follow him as King. Today, we’re going to zero in on Jesus’ authority to forgive all our sins.

Mark 2:1-12

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. ³ And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” ⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ⁸ And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” ¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”

But... What Is Sin?

• Understanding Sin

1. Heart Corruption Leading to Life Defilement

Mark 7:20-23

“What comes out of a person is what defiles him. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

Sin is not merely external, some bad thing you do that gets you into trouble with people if they find out. Sin comes from the **heart** and makes us unclean in the sight of God.

What is the “heart”? It is the internal part of you; the part that thinks, feels, chooses, loves. Sin is a heart disease in which we think wrongly, feel wrongly, choose wrongly, and love wrongly in the sight of the God who made us.

2. Breaking God’s Commandments

Mark 12:28-31

[One of them] asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Sin is breaking the commandments of God. There were hundreds of commands in the Bible for the people to follow. Jesus summarized all of these in two great commandments... vertical (love for God) and horizontal (love for other people).

- No one is good! Everyone breaks God’s commandments:

Mark 10:17-19

*A man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”¹⁸ And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? **No one is good except God alone.**¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’”*

- **Understanding Sin’s Penalty: Eternal Condemnation in Hell**

Mark 9:43-48

And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire.⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell.⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell,⁴⁸ ‘where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’

There is nothing more terrifying than this. If this is the fate of all sinners unless they receive forgiveness of sins from God, nothing could possibly be more important or valuable than the forgiveness of sins.

- **So... How Valuable is Forgiveness of Sins?**

Mark 8:36-37

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his soul?

Based on this statement by Jesus, everyone’s soul is worth more than the whole world. It would be foolish for anyone to trade his/her eternal soul

for any amount of worldly wealth or power or success. This shows the infinite worth of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Christ is willing to give his life to redeem (buy) our souls.

- **The Basis of Forgiveness: Faith in Jesus... Who Has Authority to Forgive**

Mark 2:5

*And **when Jesus saw their faith**, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”*

Mark 2:7

“Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

Mark 2:10-12

But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic—¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.”¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out

In these verses, it is plain that the basis of forgiveness of sins is faith. God is the only one who has the right to forgive all sins. Jesus as the Son of God has that authority. He forgives sins based on people having faith in him.

- **Once Again: Jesus’ Call**

Mark 1:14-15

Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Jesus’ call in the Gospel of Mark is plain: **repent** of all sin and **believe** the good news of forgiveness of sins based on faith in Jesus. If you do that, you will enter the Kingdom of God.

What does “repent” mean? It means to turn away from sin and toward God... like a U-turn when you’re driving. Because (as we’ve seen) sin is a heart issue, repentance is something done with

the heart. A genuine turn **in the heart** from all sin and toward God.

What does “believe” mean? In this case, it means to rely on the gospel as absolutely true, and to base your life on it.

Summary: Today, We Have Seen...

- Jesus has the authority to forgive sin
- What sin is: heart corruption leading to life defilement; breaking God’s commands
- Sin’s penalty: death... physical death but also eternal death in hell
- How valuable forgiveness of sins is: worth more than all the riches of the world
- The basis of forgiveness: faith in Christ

Homework

- Read Mark, chapters 7-11. People should note any passages which they do not understand or which they would like to discuss. There will be a time for discussing these questions at the beginning of next week’s study.

Study 3

Jesus' Death for Sin

Mark 15

Object

The object of this study is to build upon the previous two weeks and to show that Jesus' authority to forgive sins was based on his mission to die on the cross for our sins. His death was possible because he was fully human, and it was infinitely valuable because of his identity as Son of God.

Homework Review

Members were asked to read Mark chapters 7-11. Ask if they have any questions arising out of this reading or any other questions about some aspect of the Christian faith. Allow some time for the discussion on the passages of Mark. If any additional questions remain, write them down and set up another time to answer them.

The First and Second Studies

The first week we saw that Jesus is the Son of God, fully human and fully God, with authority to teach and do amazing miracles, including healing every disease and stilling a storm.

Last week we covered Jesus' authority to forgive sins. We saw that sin is a heart issue, flowing from deep inside us, corrupting the way we live our lives. Sin is breaking God's commands, especially the two great commands: love God and love others. Sin's penalty is death, ultimately eternal death in hell. Jesus has authority from

God to forgive all sins based on repentance and faith in him.

The Third Study

Jesus did not come merely to be a great teacher or do amazing miracles. His death on the cross in our place paid the death penalty our sins deserved and opened the way for us to have a close relationship with God. Jesus' death and subsequent resurrection are crucial to a basic understanding of the Christian faith.

• Jesus Predicted His Own Death

Mark 8:31

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Jesus was not surprised or trapped into his death. He came specifically to die in our place.

• The Purpose of Jesus' Death

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom in the place of many.

• The Facts of Jesus' Death

1. Jesus Condemned to Death

a) By the Jewish leaders

Mark 14:61-64

the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"⁶² And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."⁶³ And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need?⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death.

b) By Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor

Mark 15:15

So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

2. Jesus Crucified

Mark 15:22-27

And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull).²³ And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it.²⁴ And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take.²⁵ And it was the third hour when they crucified him.²⁶ And the inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."²⁷ And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left.

Mark 15:33-37

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you

forsaken me?" ...³⁷ And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last.

3. Jesus Buried

Mark 15:42-47

And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath,⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead.⁴⁵ And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph.⁴⁶ And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid.

• The Aftermath of Jesus' Death

1. The Curtain Torn from Top to Bottom

Mark 15:38

And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

2. The Centurion's Statement

Mark 15:39

And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

• The Achievements of Jesus' Death

Jesus' death was the most powerfully effective moment in all of human history, changing the eternal destinies of countless millions of people.

So... what does the Gospel of Mark say Jesus' death achieved?

1. Ransom paid

Mark 10:45

*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a **ransom** in the place of many.*

The word "ransom" is important. In ancient times, kings or important soldiers who had been captured in battle could be "ransomed", bought back with a price of gold or silver. In the same way slaves could be bought out of slavery by the payment of a price. And those kidnapped by raiders could be ransomed by the payment of a price. This is a picture of what Jesus achieved by his death—buying us out of danger by the payment of a costly price... his death.

But why were we in such danger? We saw last time that our sins are deep and many, and the Bible makes it plain that sin deserves the death penalty. Essential to our salvation is the idea that the death penalty can be paid by a substitute.

Jesus literally said he came to give his life as a ransom in the place of many. The word "in the place of" is vital... it is a substitution of his life for the other; this clearly implies the death penalty. Our sin deserves the payment of a death penalty. Jesus' death on the cross satisfies that.

2. Access to God

Mark 15:38

And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

- a) When Jesus died, the curtain in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom.
- b) This curtain separated the Holy Place (where all priests went every day to offer their sacrifices) from the Most Holy Place (where God dwelt symbolically above the Ark of the

Covenant and where only the High Priest could go and only once a year)

- c) The curtain represented a barrier between sinful humanity and the holy God
- d) Only God had the right to remove this barrier; the fact that the moment Jesus died, the curtain was torn in two from top to bottom shows that God himself has removed that barrier on the basis of Christ's death
- e) We now have the ability to come into the presence of God as forgiven people

3. Book Illustration: The Transfer of Guilt

Book, held in the left hand, represents the full record of our sins, from the first sin we ever committed to our last. The ceiling high above our heads represents God. The verse cited below (Colossians 2:13-14) speaks of the record of our legal debt in God's sight. Our sins separate us from God. We have a lot of sins written in his perfect record book. The right hand represents Jesus. Jesus had no "book," no record of sins against him. He lived a perfect life. He had a pure heart of love toward God and toward everyone else. He never broke any of God's laws.

While Jesus was on the cross, God took the sins of people in every era of history who would believe in him and transferred them to Jesus. [Move the book from the left hand to the right.] In this way, Christ became the most sinful man in the history of the world though he himself had committed no sins. God in his justice had to punish those sins with the death penalty. Christ died in our place to pay that penalty.

That's why he cried out while dying:

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Jesus was forsaken by God as our sin substitute. That means he paid the death penalty we

deserved. So, the empty left hand represents the fact that no sin is left to hinder our relationship with God! We are seen to be pure in his sight.

Two verses sum this up:

Colossians 2:13-14 God forgave all our trespasses by cancelling the record of our debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he [God] made him [Christ] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- **Jesus' Call**

Mark 1:14-15

Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Jesus is telling us that the time is NOW... the Kingdom of God is here! If we repent of our sins and believe that Christ's death is sufficient to pay for them in the sight of God, we will be forgiven and we can enter the Kingdom of God where we will live forever.

Summary: Today, We Have Seen...

- Jesus' death was in some ways the central purpose for his coming to earth
- Jesus predicted his death, so it was not some unfortunate accident; he intended to die
- The purpose of Jesus in his death was to give his life as a ransom in the place of many
- The historical facts of Jesus' death are accurately recorded in the Gospel of Mark

- The achievements of Jesus' death are infinite: sins forgiven for everyone who repents and believes in him.
- The ransom has been paid in full; we are rescued from the danger of hell
- The curtain in the Temple being torn open by God shows that he welcomes sinners like us into his holy presence

Homework

- Read Mark, chapters 12-16. People should note any passages which they do not understand or which they would like to discuss. There will be a time for discussing these questions at the beginning of next week's study.

Study 4

Jesus' Resurrection

Mark 16

Object

The object of this study is to complete the four-week presentation of the person and work of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Mark by discussing his amazing bodily resurrection from the dead. This culminates the three facts which a person must believe in order to be a Christian and saved from sin:

- His person as the Son of God
- His atoning death
- His physical resurrection

Homework Review

Members were asked to read Mark chapters 12-16. Ask if they have any questions arising out of this reading or any other questions about some aspect of the Christian faith. Allow some time for the discussion on the passages of Mark. If any additional questions remain, write them down and set up another time to answer them.

The First Three Studies

The first week we saw that Jesus is the Son of God, fully human and fully God, with authority to teach and do amazing miracles, including healing every disease and stilling a storm.

The second week we covered Jesus' authority to forgive sins. We saw that sin is a heart issue, flowing from deep inside us, corrupting the way

we live our lives. Sin is breaking God's commands, especially the two great commands: love God and love others. Sin's penalty is death, ultimately eternal death in hell. Jesus has authority from God to forgive all sins based on repentance and faith in him.

Last week, we discussed Jesus' death on the cross as a ransom in our place for our sins. We saw that his death resulted in the curtain in the Temple being torn in two by God, signifying that sinners were now welcome into his holy presence because of the death of his Son.

The Fourth Study

Today we are going to look at the greatest miracle in world history, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, as a historical fact. It also is the basis of our hope for eternal life beyond the grave and proof that 1) Jesus is who he claimed to be and 2) God has accepted Jesus' death on our behalf.

• Jesus Predicted His Own Resurrection

Mark 8:31

*And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and **after three days rise again.***

Mark 9:31

saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, **after three days he will rise.**"

- **When Jesus Was Buried the Women Saw Where**

Mark 15:42-47

And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. ⁴⁵ And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. ⁴⁶ And Joseph] bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid.

- **The Resurrection Account**

Mark 16:1-14

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴ And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶ And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You

seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸ And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

⁹ Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons.

¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. ¹² Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. ¹³ These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either.

¹⁴ Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

- **The Significance**

1. Proof that Jesus is the Son of God, validating all his claims
2. Proof that the death penalty for sin has been paid in full, accepted by God
3. Hope for our own eternal life in heaven

- **Jesus Sends Them Out with the Gospel**

Mark 16:15-16

[Jesus] said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

- **Jesus' Call**

Mark 1:14-15

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

As we have seen every week, Jesus is calling us NOW to repent of our sins and believe in the good news of his death and resurrection for our salvation. In so doing, we will enter the Kingdom of God where we will live forever, even beyond our own death.

Summary: Today, We Have Seen...

- Christ rose from the dead physically on the third day!
- His tomb was empty
- He appeared physically to eyewitnesses
- In this way, Christ is unique among all leaders in all history; no one else has defeated death!

OK... What Now?

- There is a lot more to say about salvation, and about following Christ
- If you are interested in continuing, simply let the leader know and more study can be arranged!