

Mark Retreat



Morris Park House Church
9–11 December 2005
Carmel, NY

Schedule

	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8 am		Breakfast	Breakfast
9.00		Intro. / Prayer	Prayer
9.30		Survey I	Survey V
10.30		Discussion	
11.00		Survey II	Discussion, Communion
Noon		Lunch	Lunch
1 pm		Recreation / Prayer	Debriefing, Prayer
2.00		Survey III	
3.00	Clean, Set up	Discussion	
4.00		Survey IV	
5.00		Discussion, Lesson Prep Intro.	
5.30		Lesson Prep	
6.30	Dinner	Dinner/Lesson Prep	
8.00	Games	Campfire/ Prayer/ Show & Tell	
9.00	Movie		
10.00		Games	
11.00	Prayer		

Mark Retreat Handbook

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Credits

- Numerous interpretive ideas taken from Tom Robinson's 1997 booklet, *An Overview of the Gospel of Mark: A Companion to Reading the Gospel*.
- Some images courtesy of www.HolyLandPhotos.org.
- Woodcuts by Julius Schnoor von Carolsfeld, copied from *Das Buch der Bücher in Bildern*, distributed by World Mission Collection at http://www.wels.net/wmc/html/clip_art_graphics.html
- Photo of the Eastern Gate by Becky Foster.
- Cover image, "THE BEHOLDER OF GOD, MARK THE EVANGELIST, SAINT AND MARTYR" from http://tasbeha.org/content/hh_books/Stmark/
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Our prayer is that this work will enrich the lives of those interested in Jesus Christ and the life of discipleship.

9. What does this passage say about Jesus?

10. What does this passage say about you?

11. What does this passage mean to you? Why did you choose it?

12. Where and when might this passage make a difference in your life?

5. In this passage, what are the people around Jesus saying or doing?

6. In this passage, what are the people around Jesus feeling or thinking?

7. Why did Mark include this passage in his book?

8. What does this passage say about God?

Introduction to Mark

The first Christians anticipated Jesus' return at any time: they saw no need to write down what they had learned of him. There was little time for debate over doctrine: there was simply time to proclaim the good news and move on. As Jesus delayed his return, however, materials began to be written down. Mark's collection of material about Jesus is the earliest reliable source we have for the life and message of Jesus.

Introduction to this Study Guide

This study guide aims to enable you to study the book of Mark largely on your own. It contains:

Five Surveys

The survey questions simply intend to help ensure you understand what's going on in the text. For each of the surveys, please read the relevant passage in its entirety before answering the questions. If you have difficulty with a particular question, helpful passages are suggested in parentheses after the question. Some questions will require that you recall what you have read in a previous section.

Five sets of Life Application Questions

These are questions for personal meditation. They are also intended to guide our discussions between surveys.

Five sets of Notes and Prayer Pages

Use the notes pages to write down any thoughts you have while reading each section. The prayer pages are intended to assist you in praying about what you have read. The prayer page, especially, is for your personal use, only to be shared at your discretion. Please take advantage of the Prayer pages: they may be the most important part of this booklet.

One Show & Tell Guide

This is designed to assist you in preparing a short (2–10 minute) "Show & Tell" of a passage in Mark you find particularly striking.



Show & Tell Guide

1. Choose your passage. Short passages are best. Make sure your choice contains a single story. If a single paragraph or a single verse get the same message across, even better! What is your chosen passage? What name would you give it if you were telling the story all by itself?

2. What is the context of the passage? What's happening outside of the few verses you chose? How do they fit into the larger story Mark tells?

3. In this passage, what is Jesus saying or doing?

4. In this passage, what is Jesus feeling or thinking?

Survey I: Jesus Appears (1.1–3.6)
or “Followers and Forgiveness”

1. What kind of book is this and about whom was it written? (1.1)

Gospel comes from a Greek word which meant “A reward for good news” and later just “good news.”

2. What did John do? What did his activity mean? (1.4)

Baptize comes from a Greek word which means to sink, like a ship in the sea. Ceremonial washing (baptism) was an important Jewish ritual.

3. What did John teach? To what was he looking forward? (1.7–8)

4. Was Jesus baptized? What happened to him next? (1.9–12)

5. What did Jesus teach? (1.15)



The Resurrection of Christ as painted by Todor Mitrovic.

Notes after Survey V



Ruins of the synagogue in Capernaum: this is the very site in which Jesus taught.

6. Who did Jesus call to follow him? What was their response?
What did they leave behind? (1.16–20)

7. How did Jesus compare to those who usually taught in
Capernaum? What did the people think of him? (1.21–34)

Prayer after Survey V

Jesus said to the twelve, as he handed them bread and wine, *“Take; this is my body. This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many.”* (14.22, 24 ESV)

In the space below, write a prayer about what it means to you today that Jesus died for you so that you might have new life in him.

8. After a long and tiring day, what does Jesus do in order to recharge and prepare for the beginning of a new day? (1.35)

9. What was Jesus’ mission? Why had he come? (1.38–39)

10. How and by whom was Jesus identified in these opening verses? (1.1, 1.7–8, 1.11, 1.18, 1.20, 1.24)

11. What kinds of miracles was Jesus performing? (1.23–42)

12. For what was Jesus becoming known? How was this a hindrance to the work he wished to accomplish? (1.43–45)

13. Did Jesus force the spirits to do what he wished? Did he force people to do what he wished? (1.25–27, 1.34, 1.43–45)

14. How did the paralytic reach Jesus despite the crowd? (2.4)

15. Why do you think Jesus dealt with the man's spiritual condition before his physical problem? (2.5–12)

16. Why was it considered strange that Jesus would call Levi to follow him? (2.13–17)

17. In the discussion about fasting, who is the bridegroom and who are his guests? (2.18–20)

18. Why is it inappropriate for the disciples to fast while Jesus is with them? (2.18–20)

19. How was the Sabbath misunderstood by the Pharisees? (2.23–3.6)

20. Why did the Pharisees want to kill Jesus? How did it come about? (3.6)

Life Application Questions for Survey V

A. What are the most important things for you to do in life? (12.28–34)

B. How does it make you feel to not know when the end will come? Does Jesus' admonition, "Watch!" (13.37) make you want to change your life in any way? How and why?

C. Note how Jesus was always in control throughout the whole story of the passion. Everything went according to his predictions and he showed no regret or desire to stop it. What does that say to you?

D. Jesus' friends and followers abandoned him and denied him when things got hard. How have you done that in your own life? Has God ever abandoned you?

85. When Mary Magdalene finally managed to tell the others that Jesus was alive, how did they respond? (16.9–11)

Mark 16.9–20 were not part of the original book of Mark, but became accepted as a longer ending around 300 years later. What is communicated by the original, shorter ending?

86. Who were some of the slowest to believe in Jesus' resurrection? (16.14)

87. What is Jesus' final command to his disciples? (16.15)

Life Application Questions for Survey I

A. What kind of nets are you holding onto which keep you from following Jesus?

B. Do you live with guilt over things you've said and done (or not said and not done) in the past? Do you need the forgiveness Jesus offers? Explain.

C. Do you think Jesus is willing to make you clean? Why or why not?

D. Are you sick enough (or "enough of a sinner") to hear God's call and respond to it? Are you desperate enough? Why or why not? (2.17)

Prayer after Survey I

Jesus said (1.15): *Now is the time! You are standing at the door to God's kingdom! Turn away from everything secondary and grab onto what's most fundamental in life!*

In the space below, write a prayer asking for help to understand what his call means to you, in your life. Ask for clarity of understanding and healing from the hard things in life that prevent you from answering his call. Be as specific as possible.

83. Which of Jesus' disciples were present in Jesus' hour of death? (15.40–41)

84. Which of Jesus' disciples were the first to learn of his resurrection? What mission was given to them? How did they accomplish it? (16.1–8)



Notes after Survey I

76. What is surprising about Jesus' announcement on the Mount of Olives? (14.27–31)

77. What does Jesus ask in prayer? What does he want most? What is God's response? (14.32–42)

78. What is the crime for which Jesus is arrested? What is the charge for which he is prosecuted? (14.53–65)

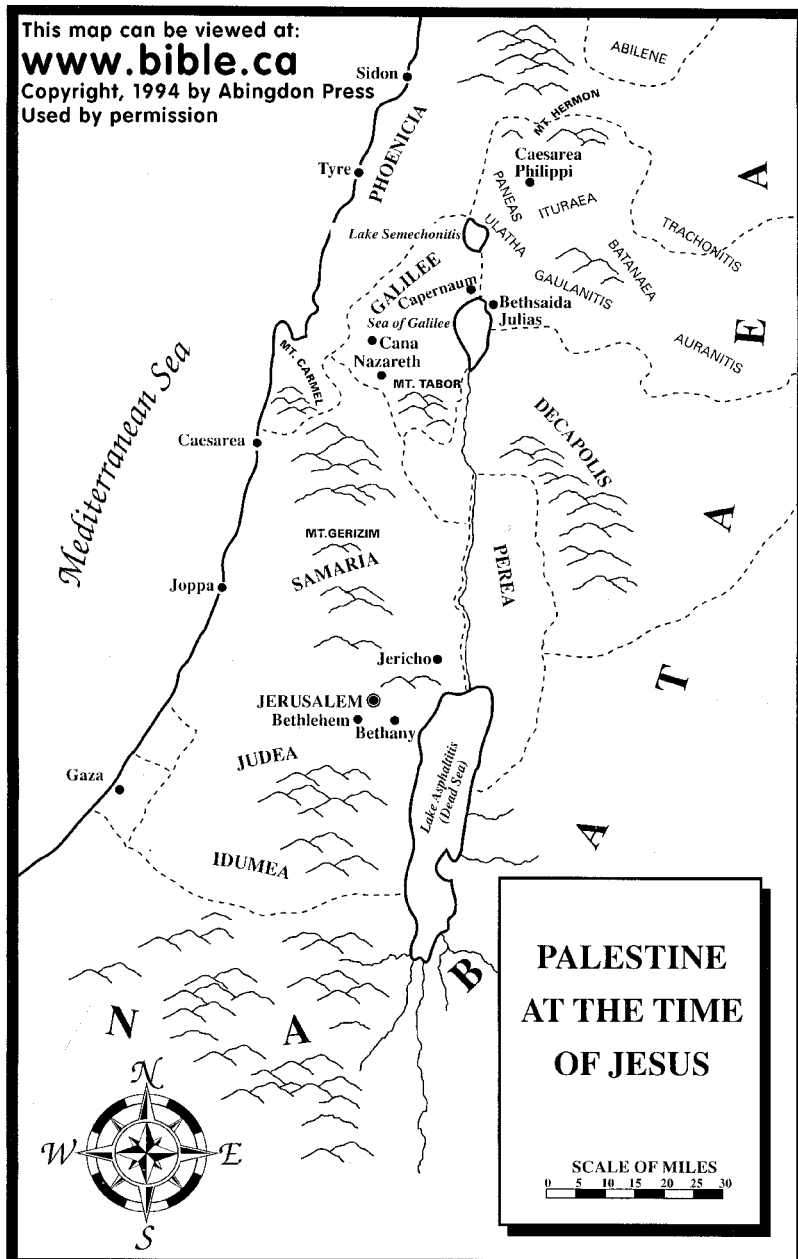
Compare 14.61 with Mark 1.1.

79. Why doesn't Jesus argue his case in 14.61 or 15.4–5?

80. Where was Jesus crucified? (15.21–32)

81. Shortly before his death, Jesus quotes from a Psalm. Which Psalm and why? (15.33–34)

82. Who was the first to confess Jesus' divinity after his death? (15.35–39)



70. What does Jesus want to show in his question to the people at the temple? (12.35–40)

71. Whose gift to the temple treasury was most valued out of that day's offerings? Why? What does Jesus mean? (12.41–44)

72. When will "the end" come according to Jesus? (13.1–8, 13.32–37)

73. How will people know that the end truly has come? (13.21–26)

74. Which of Jesus' disciples arranged to betray him in exchange for silver? (13.10–11)

75. What is surprising about one of the participants in the very first sharing of the Lord's Supper? (14.12–26)

The Passover is one of the biggest parties of the Jewish year. Probably the disciples were having a great time until Jesus' disturbing announcement.

64. What did Jesus do on his second day in Jerusalem? (11.12–19)

65. Why won't Jesus answer the priests' question? (11.27–33)

66. What does Jesus suggest about the priests and officials in his story of the vineyard? (12.1–12)

67. What is the trap the Pharisees and Herodians set for Jesus? How does his answer upset their expectations? (12.13–17)

Caesar was the ruler of the Roman Empire, an occupying power much hated by the Jews. The Roman rule over Palestine was sometimes harsh and the Jews were looking for a Messiah who would liberate them from foreign control.

68. What did the Sadducees intend to show with their question to Jesus? How did Jesus confound them? (12.18–27)

69. What did the individual teacher want to know from Jesus? How did Jesus answer? (12.28–34)

**Survey II: Ministry in Galilee (3.7–6.6)
or "Fear and Faith"**

21. Who are the twelve apostles? (3.13–19)

22. Why does Jesus' family think he's crazy? Why do the Pharisees? (3.20–35)

23. How does Jesus respond to the Pharisees? How does Jesus respond to his family? (3.20–35)

24. Whom does Jesus claim as family? (3.31–35)

25. Jesus tells a parable about a farmer sowing seed. What are the four different kinds of soil on which the soil falls? What are the results of each? (4.1–9)

A *parable* is a story told in order to communicate a deeper message. Often, a *parable* is used to get around mental blocks and to teach something one might otherwise resist or not understand.

26. What do the seed and the different kinds of soil represent?
(4.10–20)

27. In what other ways can the kingdom of God be described with
images from a garden? (4.26–35)

28. Did Jesus choose his disciples because of their mature, robust
faith? What was their understanding of Jesus? (4.38, 4.41)

29. In contrast, who *did* recognize Jesus and believe in him? (5.7,
5.41)

30. How do the evil spirits torment the man in the region of the
Gerasenes? What does Jesus do? (5.1–20)

31. Why doesn't Jesus allow the healed man to go with him? (5.18–
20)

Survey V: Jesus in Jerusalem (11.1–16.8)
or The Passion

63. What did Jesus do on
his first day in
Jerusalem? How did he
enter? Where did he
stay the night? (11.1–11)

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!
Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you,
righteous and having salvation,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
—Zechariah 9.9 (NIV)



*The Eastern Gate of Jerusalem, through which Jesus entered during the week of his death
and through which it is anticipated he will enter again. See Ezekiel 44.1–3.*

Notes after Survey IV

32. What does Jairus ask of Jesus? (5.21–43)

33. How long had the woman suffered from a hemorrhage? How was she healed?

34. How old was Jairus' daughter? What does Jesus do for her? (5.41–43)

35. Demons, birth defects and even death could not stop Jesus' ministry of healing. What stopped him? (6.1–6)

Life Application Questions for Survey II

A. What kind of soil are you? Why? (4.15–20)

B. Jesus cast out an entire legion of demons from one man (5.8–9). Do you think Jesus has the power to quiet the storm or remove the demons from your life? Are you ready to let go of those things?

C. Are you bold enough to pursue God's healing touch no matter the consequences? (5.27–28)

Prayer after Survey IV

Jesus said (8.35–36): *Whoever thinks he can save his own life is mistaken. But whoever gives up that ambition and devotes his energies to me will find that I will save his life for him. What use are wealth and possessions if the end is death? You can never pay enough to save your own life.*

In the space below, consider write a prayer about giving everything in your life over to God: your ambitions, your job, your relationships, etc. Everything which you try to control is that which God can do better. If you're not ready to make such a prayer, that's OK. Instead, ask God to show you why you *should* do such a crazy thing.

Life Application Questions for Survey IV

A. Who do you say that Jesus is?

B. Are you ready to deny yourself, take up your cross and follow him? (8.34) What would this change about your life?

C. What in your life do you need to get rid of because it stands between you and God's kingdom?

D. How could you become a great disciple of Jesus?

Prayer after Survey II

To the father of the dead girl, Jesus said, *"Do not fear, only believe."* (5.36 ESV) This is Jesus' call to you.

In the space below, write a prayer asking Jesus to give you the courage to know him. Ask him to deal with specific issues in your life which may be paralyzing you with fear and preventing you from responding to him.



Jesus' hometown, Nazareth, today.

Notes after Survey II

57. What is Jesus' teaching on divorce? Is divorce an option to be chosen by a Christian? What is the sinful behavior Jesus declares off-limits for Christians? (10.2–12, especially 10.10–11)
58. Why was Jesus perturbed when the disciples shooed away those who would bring their children to meet Jesus? (10.13–16; remember 9.33–37)
59. What stood between the rich man and eternal life? What did he want most deeply in his heart, eternal life or wealth? (10.17–22)
60. Why were Jesus' followers surprised and frightened as they headed out for Jerusalem? (10.32–34)
61. What does Jesus say a disciple must do in order to be great? (10.43–44)
62. What does Jesus do for Bartimaeus? (10.46–52)



Survey III: On the Road (6.7–8.21)
or “A Demonstration of Power”

36. What mission did Jesus give to his disciples? (6.7–13)

37. What preparations did Jesus and the disciples make for their journey? (6.8–9; 1.17, 3.14–15, 4.11, 6.7)

38. How did John the Baptist die? (6.14–29)

39. When the crowd gathered after the disciples returned to Jesus, how did Jesus overcome the apparent limits of their available resources to take care of them? How much food did they have? How many people ate enough? (6.30–44)

40. After dismissing the crowds, why was Jesus all alone? (6.45–46)

54. Who appeared with Jesus on the mountain top? Whom did God point out as the most important authority for the disciples? (9.1–8)

55. Is the father’s faith in Jesus perfect? How does he seek to be perfected in his faith? (9.21–24)

56. How does Jesus describe greatness according to the standards of God’s kingdom? Does Jesus match up to this description? (9.33–37)

41. Why were the disciples terrified when they saw him walking toward them? (6.47–52)

42. Why was Jesus antagonistic toward the traditions of the Pharisees? (7.1–13)

43. According to Jesus, what makes a person unclean? (7.14–23)

44. Why was Jesus reluctant to heal the Greek woman's daughter? (7.24–30)

45. Whom did Jesus heal in the Decapolis? Did Jesus already know anybody in that region? (7.31–37; remember a previous account in Mark 5)

46. In 8.1–10, Jesus feeds another large crowd of people. How many people were there, how much food was there to begin with, and how much food was left over?

47. Why did the Pharisees demand a sign in 8.11? Was not Jesus giving many such signs all along?

**Survey IV: Healing the Blind; Discipleship (8.22–10.52)
or "Taking Sides"**

49. Was the blind man's healing perfect at first? Did he see clearly in the end? (8.22–26)

50. Was the disciples' understanding of Jesus perfect at first? (compare 6.52, 8.21) Did they see clearly in the end? (8.27–30)

51. After Peter recognized Jesus as the Christ, what did Jesus then explain about his mission? (8.31–32)

52. What was Peter's reaction to Jesus' predictions? What was wrong with it? (8.32–9.1)

53. What is Jesus' demand to those who would follow him? (8.34)

Notes after Survey III

48. What did the disciples fail to understand in 6.52 and 8.21? What things had they witnessed? What do these events suggest to you?



A reconstruction of the kind of boat in use during Jesus' life.

Life Application Questions for Survey III

A. When you think about Jesus and his power, do you:

- shake in fear
- drop everything and run to him
- debate him
- stop thinking because you're confused

Why?

B. What is it that you want from Jesus?

C. How have you seen God working in the world? How has that affected your view of God?

D. Do you ever feel like things would be different if you just saw one more big sign? Why do you think you haven't seen it (yet)?

Prayer after Survey III

Jesus said to his disciples, "*Don't you see? Don't you understand? Why don't you get it?*" (8.17)

In the space below, write a prayer asking God to open your eyes to how he is working around you and in your own life. Ask him to open your mind to what he wants you to learn about him today, and that *he* will do the work of opening your heart to him.