

The King has come

Bible Studies on MARK

St Andrews, Roseville

Term 1, 2026

Small Group's will follow the sermon series below ...

Wk	Date	Mark	Topic
1	Jan 25	8:31-38	Identity
2	Feb 1	1:1-20	The King has come
3	Feb 8	2:1-12	Our Greatest Need
4	Feb 15	4:1-34	The Word of God come down
5	Feb 22	7:1-30	Foundations of the Gospel
6	Mar 1	8:27-9:13	The Messiah!
7	Mar 8	10:32-45	Two Ways to Live
8	Mar 15	11:1-33	Let Jesus be Jesus
9	Mar 22	13:1-36	Watch!
10	Mar 29	14:1-31	The Power of True Beauty
11	Apr 3	15:1-39	Jesus bears our judgment
12	Apr 5	16:1-8	Resurrection changes everything

NB: Scroll down to find the latest bible study.

May God stir and form our hearts as we encounter his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ in Marks biography.

Mark 1 – Bible Study

For the first week (THIS week), feel free to have a social get together and pray together. But if you wanted to inject some bible, here is the suggestion.

Talk together about your response to Mark 1 and James' sermon from Sunday. I've listed a summary of the 5 points. Read through them and share your reflections on why each point is important and how they impact on you.

From Mark 1 we see that Christianity is ...

1. **Biographical:** Christianity is about a person (1:1 '*about Jesus*') not a philosophy or set of principles or list of commands.
2. **Historical:** Christianity is rooted in real time and space. The word 'Gospel' (1:1 '*the good news*') means 'Newsflash!' It is public news about a public event.
3. **Jewish:** Christianity is not the opposite of Judaism it is its fulfilment. The OT promise was all about the coming Messiah (1:2 '*as it is written ...*'). His name is Jesus.
4. **Universal:** Christianity is not just for Jewish people, but the whole world, and indeed cosmos. The '*Kingdom of God*' (1:15) Jesus declared is about the restoration of all things. It is about everyone and everything. It is not merely private but public and universal.
5. **Personal:** Jesus calls US to 'follow' him (1:17). How will we respond to the King's summons?

Pray together

Mark 2:1-12 – Bible Study

For Starters

- Give examples of having a real need that is not necessarily a felt/presenting need

Read Mark 2:1-12

1. As you read, what details stood out to you? Where did you feel any tension or surprise?
2. How does Jesus overturn everyone's expectations? How might each group have felt?
 - The paralysed man and his friends
 - The religious leaders
 - The watching crowd
3. How can we treat Jesus as a divine vending machine for our external problems and temporal needs?
4. Why would announcing forgiveness be interpreted as a claim to divinity? (V7)
 - Dan 9:9
 - Ps 51:4
 - Ps 103:2-3
 - Ex 34:6-7
5. Complete the logic:
 - Premise 1: *Only God can forgive sins*
 - Premise 2: *Jesus forgives sins*
 - Conclusion: *Therefore, Jesus is _____?*
6. Jesus needs to back up his claim to share God's authority. But before he proves his claim, he presents a little riddle (v9). Which is easier to say and in what sense?
 - *'Your sins are forgiven'*
 - Or
 - *'Get up, take your mat and walk'*
7. Why does Jesus heal the man? What does he want them/us to know? V10



The key background text for the 'Son of Man' is **Daniel 7:** ¹³ *"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."*

The Son of Man is a human figure who shares the very authority of God and is worshiped by all nations forever.

8. Through this episode, what does Jesus want to reveal to us
 - About himself?
 - About us?
 - What category shifts might we need to make?
9. For many people 'forgiveness of sins' is far from their minds, and yet Jesus indicates it is our greatest need
 - Do you believe this? Why?
 - How would you explain this to a friend who didn't share your assumptions?
10. Did you resonate with the description of faith as 'aching in Jesus' direction'? What about it appeals to you? What would it look like for you to 'ache in Jesus' direction' this week?

Pray together

Mark 4:1-30 – Bible Study

For starters

- Let's start with a riddle: "You throw away the outside and cook the inside. You eat the outside and throw away the inside." What is it?

Read Mark 4:1-9

1. What does the seed represent?
2. What is the common problem with the first three soils?
3. What does Jesus want people to do with his teaching? (Mk 4:3, 9, 23, 24, 7:14)

Read Mark 4:10-12

4. What is the purpose of Jesus speaking in parables? (Jesus quotes from Isaiah 6:8-10)
5. In what sense do the parables polarise people? What does this reveal about their heart attitude to Jesus?

Read Mark 4:13-20

6. Which soil best describes your current spiritual state? Why?
7. In what sense have any troubles, worries, wealth, or desires for other things weakened your resolve to follow the King?
8. What can we do to withstand these influences and foster a deeper walk with the Lord? What helps you fight these influences and be more like the fourth soil?

Read Mark 4:21-25

9. The means God has chosen to reveal his truth to us is through our careful listening. More light will be given to those who lean in and listen well.
 - So how is your listening going?
 - What can help God's word go deep rather than stay surface-level?

10. 'As we work on God's word, God's word works on us' Discuss.

11. Have you considered signing up to our Lent reading plan?

- It begins this Wednesday and the link is found in the newsletter (or try this <https://standrews.net.au/blog-post/lent-reading-plan/>)

Read Mark 4:26-32

12. What do all these 'seed' parables teach us about what to expect as we go about sharing the message of Christ with people?

13. At the centre of the gospel message stands the ultimate seed and light, the Lord Jesus himself.

- John 12:24
- John 1:4-5
- Given this, how should we personally respond to him?

A prayer in response:

Almighty and gracious Father,
Thank you that what was once hidden you have revealed in Jesus.
Give us ears to hear.
Sow your word deep within us.
Guard us from hardness, shallowness, and distraction.
Fix our eyes on Christ — the Seed who died and rose,
the Light who cannot be covered,
the King who came down for us.
Amen.

Mark 7:1-30 – Bible Study

For starters

- In what ways do we (as individuals and a society) like to project ourselves as 'clean' and 'orderly'?

Read Mark 7:1-23

1. Share your initial impressions ...
2. What is the essence of the religious leader's objection (v5)?
3. What is the essence of Jesus response to them (v6-13)?
4. Have you ever gone through 'religious motions' without really engaging with God? Why do we fall into this, and what can help us to wake up?
5. How can we subtly raise our own ideas/words above God's ideas/word? Give examples ...
6. Can you name any customs/habits Christians have constructed which are not explicitly mentioned in the bible? When are these ideas problematic and when are they helpful?
7. In v14-23 Jesus' point is that performing religious regulations don't clean the heart. They are mostly external solutions to an internal spiritual problem. Our hearts.
 - Does Jesus description of the human heart make sense to you? How so?

Jesus has described the problem and what can't fix it! So, what is the solution?

Read 7:24-30

8. How would you contrast the religious leaders in 7:1-4 with this woman and her daughter?
9. What is Jesus doing in his carefully constructed response to her request (v27)?
10. How would you characterise this woman's attitude towards Jesus?
11. What about her reply do you think Jesus likes (v29)? In what sense is she a model for us?
12. Many non-Christians think that Christianity is a religion of rules to obey so that you make yourself acceptable to God. How could we get across to our friends the truth of the gospel more effectively?
13. What do you appreciate about Jesus in Mark 7? What is a key take away for you?

Pray Together

Mark 8:27-9:13 – Bible Study

For Starters

- What story about 'the good life' do you think our culture tells most loudly?

Read Mark 8:27-33

1. What is so significant about Peter's declaration in v29?
2. What does Peter get wrong and why? (v32-33)

Read Mark 8:34-38

3. Explain in your own words what Jesus means by ...
 - Denying yourself
 - Taking up your cross
 - Following him
4. In 8:35-37 Jesus frames discipleship in terms of ultimate gain and loss. Do you find His reasoning compelling? Why or why not?
 - What assumptions about life does Jesus challenge here?
 - Why can't we gain the whole world AND save our soul?
5. Where do you find it most challenging to deny yourself and carry your cross as you follow Jesus?
 - How can we recognise the goodness of this call and even find joy in it?

Read Mark 9:1-13

6. The climactic moment occurs when God the father speaks in v7-8. Why does God reaffirm Jesus' identity here (see Mk 1:11), and why is that significant after 8:27-37?

7. God instructs the disciples to ‘listen to him’ – the one at the epicentre of the Bible’s story and at the centre of the universe. What other influential voices vie for our attention and subtly disciple us?
8. How do the voices and values that shape us influence the way we hear and follow Jesus?
9. How can we grow in awareness of the influences shaping us?
10. How do our desires for comfort, success, love, security, political hope, and cultural belonging shape the way we listen to and follow a crucified Messiah?”
 - What helps us trust that Jesus’ story is better?
11. What practical step can you take this week to intentionally “listen to him” — through Scripture, prayer, obedience, or surrender in a specific area?

Pray together

Mark 10:32-45 – Bible Study

For Starters

- What does greatness look like in our culture? What does it require?

Read Mark 10:35-41

1. Describe the nature of James and John's request. What inspired them to make such a request?
 - What do you want from Jesus?
2. What are they assuming/imagining by answering Jesus in the affirmative in v39-40?
3. In what sense will they drink the cup and be baptised? V39
 - Acts 12:1-2
 - Revelation 1:9
4. Why do you think the other disciples were indignant with James and John?
5. Can you think of instances when you have quietly been resentful of someone else's ambition or promotion?

Read Mark 10:42-45

6. Contrast the nature of worldly power with Jesus' vision for leadership

Way of the world	Way of Jesus
v42 Being powerful	Being ...
v43 Being great	Being ...
v44 Being first	Being ...

7. How does v45 add to the significance of Jesus teaching here?
 - Given who the Son of man is (Dan 7:12-14) why is this an astonishing thing to say?

8. Jesus key command is in v43 “NOT SO WITH YOU!” He’s saying our thinking about, and exercise of authority must not be like the rest of the world, but shaped by him ... So, let’s explore this together using the categories from Sunday’s sermon:

Self-seeking v Self sacrificing

- Where do you see the temptation toward self-seeking in your own life (work, family, church, reputation/approval etc)?
- What might it look like this week to choose self-sacrifice instead?

Power v service

- In what areas do you like to ‘be the boss’?
- How could you intentionally practice servant-hearted leadership in a place where you currently have influence? Be specific

Security v suffering

- What kinds of security or comfort are hardest for you to let go of in order to follow Jesus faithfully?
- How does knowing that Jesus gave his life as a ransom for you change the way you think about sacrifice or hardship?
- How should we respond when others ‘recognise’ and ‘elevate’ and ‘approve’ of us?

A suggested prayer

Our loving heavenly Father,
Thank you for sending your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
Though he had all authority and glory, he did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Forgive us for the times we are like the disciples,
seeking honour for ourselves, grasping for power, and clinging to comfort and security.

By your Holy Spirit, shape our hearts to follow the way of Jesus.
Teach us to choose self-sacrifice instead of self-seeking,
service instead of power, and faithfulness even when it leads to suffering.

Help us to remember that because Jesus has ransomed us, our worth and security are already settled in him.
Free us from striving for status so that we may gladly serve others.
May our lives reflect the cross-shaped love of our King,
for his glory and for the good of those around us.

In Jesus’ name,
Amen.

Mark 11:1-25 – Bible Study

For Starters

- How can you tell if someone's faith is real/genuine or not?

Read Mark 11:1-10

1. Who is Jesus publicly claiming to be with this action?
 - Zechariah 9:9-10
2. Do you think the crowds understood the significance of the Donkey? What kind of King did they think they were welcoming?
 - "Hosanna!" basically means 'Salvation is here!'
 - They cite Psalm 118:26 which is about the agent God sends to deliver them from their enemies.
3. Is it possible to treat Jesus as a helper for my plans and issues rather than the majestic King he is? How can this express itself?

Read Mark 11:11-21

4. Keep in mind Mark's 'sandwiching' technique, where the outer elements provide commentary on the middle element
 - Fig tree cursed v12-14
 - o Temple cleared v15-18
 - Fig tree withered v20-21
5. How do the two fig tree moments provide vivid commentary on the state and fate of the temple worship? Check out these Old Testament allusions ...
 - Jeremiah 8:12-13
 - Micah 7:1-2
 - Hosea 9:10 & 9:16
6. According to Jesus (v17) what is the problem with the temple ministry?
 - Isaiah 56:7
 - Jeremiah 7:9-11
7. Do you think Jesus actions are justified? What do we learn about him in this episode?
8. Where might our faith look active but be lacking in fruit?

Read Mark 11:20-25

9. Given the meaning of the fig tree cursing and withering (v21) how is Jesus' response in v22 fitting?

10. Jesus uses a vivid metaphor and strong language to encourage faith in God's ability to do big things! What is the big thing that only God can do in Mark's gospel?

- Mark 2:7
- Mark 2:17
- Mark 10:25-27
- Thus, the key application he provides is 11:25

11. How can we help each other avoiding empty religion and fruitless faith?

Pray together

A suggested prayer

Lord Jesus,
You are the true King.
Expose the places in my heart where my faith is empty or performative.
Produce real fruit in my life—faith, prayer, love, and forgiveness.
Teach me to trust you fully and worship you sincerely.
Amen.

Mark 13 – Bible Study

For Starters

- If we knew Jesus was returning next year, what change would it make in our life this year?

Read Mark 13:1-4

1. Why is judgment coming on the temple? And is it fair? (11:15-17)

Read Mark 13:5-13

2. Jesus talks about the destruction of the temple in terms of 'the end' (v7). What will characterise life leading up to this time?

Read Mark 13:14-23



Verses 14-19 seems to focus in on the distress at the time of AD70, when the Romans destroyed the Jewish temple. The 'Abomination that causes desolation' is much debated in scholarship. The expression comes from Daniel (9:27, 11:31, 12:11, 12:1) and is a veiled way of saying something shocking is going to take place in the temple which will force Jewish sacrifices to cease. This broadly fits with what happened in AD70.

Around that time the temptation would be to desire a political saviour and so Jesus warns them. If a false Christ arises (promising political and military victory) then they should reject him since the true Christ has already come (v21-23).

Read Mark 13:24-27

3. This section seems to describe events AFTER AD70 (v24 *But in those days, following that distress ...*).
 - a) What does the cosmic imagery refer to?
 - Isaiah 13:9-11
 - Isaiah 34:4
 - Joel 3:14-16



The reality is, these signs of a fallen creation have been with us in varying degrees since Genesis 3. There have always been upheavals, such as false prophets, wars, natural disasters, persecutions etc. These things are not the end, but signs that we need an end and a new beginning! They are all signs of a fractured world in need of repair. And judgment day will be the beginning of the restoration, when all evil will be removed.

Romans 8:20-22 puts it this way: *For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*

4. Amid the ‘signs’ and upheavals that characterise life before judgment day, Jesus assures us with 4 truths:

a) Jesus is with us by his spirit enabling us to be vigilant and on mission (v10-11. See also Mt28:20, Jn14:16-18)

- What is one key thing that would help you take a step toward sharing the good news with someone?

b) Jesus promises salvation for those who stand firm (v13)

- While it is God who preserves us to the end (1Cor1:8-9), he uses our spirit enabled effort to stand firm (2Pt1:5, 10-11)
- What does “standing firm” look like in your daily life, what pressures challenge it, and what helps you remain steady in your faith?

c) Jesus limits evil (v20)

- Where do you need to trust that God is in control, even when things feel chaotic?

d) Jesus has prepared us (v23)

- What does it look like for you to be prepared rather than panicked?

Read Mark 13:28-36

5. Jesus wants us to ‘learn’ a lesson (v28). What is it? Summarise the points he makes in your own words.

6. What task has Jesus left us with? (v34-37)

- a) What sorts of things distract or discourage us, so we lose our passion for Jesus and his agenda?
- b) How can we help each other to stay alert and not nod off?
(See Appendix for other related scriptures).

Pray together that God would:

- Help us stay alert and faithful as we serve and promote Jesus
- Give courage in difficult moments
- Keep us hope anchored in Jesus' return
- Use us to share the gospel in a chaotic world facing judgment

APPENDIX: Being alert! (other related verses)

- **1 Thessalonians 5:1-8.** Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ²for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labour pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. ⁵You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. ⁶So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.
- **1 Peter 5:8-9.** Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.
- **Romans 13:11.** And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.
- **Revelation 3:2-3.** Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. ³Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.
- **2 Peter 3:11.** Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives
- **1 Corinthians 16:13.** Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. ¹⁴Do everything in love.
- **Luke 12:35-37.** "Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. ³⁷It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes.

Mark 14:1-31 – Bible Study

For starters

- Where do our loyalties lie apart from Jesus? (What do I instinctively prioritise, protect, or cling to?)

Read Mark 14:1-31

1. Look at the different responses to Jesus. What motivates them. How do their actions reveal what they believe about Jesus?
2. What contrasts do you see between Judas and Mary in this passage? What motivates Judas' actions? What motivates Mary's actions? How do their responses reveal what they truly value?
3. Where in our life might we treat Jesus as useful rather than Lord?
 - a. Are there areas where following him feels costly (comfort, reputation, control, relationships, ambitions etc)?
4. What exactly makes the woman's actions 'beautiful'?
5. Jesus gives all, the woman gives lavishly, Judas takes for himself. Where do you see yourself in this spectrum?
6. Do you see evidence of a Judas heart (in yourself/others)?
 - a. In what small or large ways are we tempted to deny and betray Jesus each day? (e.g. choosing comfort, reputation, ambition, or approval over obedience).
7. Do you see evidence of Mary's heart (in yourself/others)? How have you grown in your devotion over the years?
8. What is beautiful about the death of Jesus?

- a. Consider Mark's mention of the 'Passover lamb' (v12. Cf. Ex 12:1-13)
 - b. Consider Jesus own words during the Lord's supper (v22-24)
9. What would it look like for you to treasure Jesus more like Mary?
- a. What would wholehearted sacrificial worship look like in your life right now?
10. "We become like Mary not by trying harder, but by seeing Jesus more clearly. His beauty, His mercy, and His sacrifice for sinners." (James Smith).
- a. What specifically about Jesus in this passage do you find most compelling or beautiful?
 - b. How can you intentionally grow in seeing Him more clearly this week (Scripture, prayer, praise, reflection, journaling, repentance, obedience, an encouraging podcast etc)?

Suggested Prayer

Lord Jesus,

We see in this passage such different responses to you, and we confess that our hearts can be divided. At times we are like Judas, holding back, choosing our own way, or valuing other things more than you. Forgive us for where we have treated you as useful instead of honouring you as Lord.

Thank you that you are the true Passover Lamb, who gave your body and shed your blood so that we might be forgiven and set free. Thank you that your love is not based on our worth, but on your mercy.

Give us hearts like Mary, hearts that see your beauty and respond with joyful, sacrificial devotion. Help us to treasure you above comfort, reputation, and control.

Open our eyes to see you more clearly this week. Shape our desires, our choices, and our lives so that they reflect your worth.

May our lives be a beautiful offering to you.

Amen.