


The Book of Mark



A 17-Week Look at the Life of Christ

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Week 1 Questions

Day 1: Mark 1:1-8 As Mark begins (and as we begin), it is important for us to acknowledge that Jesus was with God in the beginning, and that Jesus came to earth as an extension of God's constant movement toward us. God is not passive, and the arrival of Christ is not reflective of a Round 2 version of God's relationship with us. Jesus' very being was called for throughout scripture, long before his birth.

- Does it bring you comfort to know that Jesus has been a true reflection of God from the very beginning? Do you think of Jesus and God as being very different in terms of how they approach us?
- John the Baptist was super weird. He took essentially no steps to fit in, to gain respect, or to build a platform, but only moved out of a desire to be obedient to God and to do all he could to bring the kingdom of God to man. How does he influence you? Are you willing to align your actions and speech only with your understanding of who God is? Are you divided in who you live and work for?

Day 2: Mark 1:9-20

- Sit with the fact that Jesus was baptized by a guy in a river, and that God cracked open heaven to say, "I love this boy and am so pleased with him." God loves to mix wonder in with the mundane. Do you see God at work in your own life in mundane and outrageous ways? Have you know that God sees you and is pleased with you, or do you approach God from a place of shame and distance?
- Jesus first 2 months of public ministry were awesome and terrible. Being tempted for 40 days, isolated and struggling, was not fun. That time also created space for him to set his mind, aligning his actions with God's, which was crucial for the months ahead. It was as if he took that hard time to say, "I am not in this for me, and I am not here to get attention and satisfaction. I am here to give my life away." Can you say the same? How do you navigate hard times of isolation or temptation? Could you remember this the next time you enter into a season like this, asking God to clarify who you are and what you are doing here?

- Jesus' friend, cousin and early ally—John—gets arrested, and Jesus immediately goes to work, calling people to join him in His mission to expand the Kingdom of God to earth. Can you imagine Jesus calling you to walk around through life with him? Errrrr.....he has 😊

Day 3: Mark 1:21-28

- Are you hungry for the type of authority Jesus demonstrated? Who has such authority for you? Could scripture be that authority, or is it not the same....?

Day 4: Mark 1: 29-39

- When do you think about serving others? Is it a best case scenario, an afterthought, or a way of life? Consider this in light of how this woman responded and what she had been through; how could you learn from her?
- What are you bringing to Christ for healing in your own life? Not a BS answer, but for real! What should/could you bring to him?
- What do you need to do to be healthy in your life and to know how to respond well to the wants and needs of others? Why aren't you doing it?!

Day 5: Mark 1: 40-45

- Are you characterized by your agenda and efficiency or by your access to compassion and your responsiveness to others? Why? How does that line up with how Jesus functioned?

Week 2 Questions

Day 1: Mark 2: 1-12

- Ask God to show you who in your life desperately needs Jesus. How might your faith be used to heal them? Can you leave that idea open in your head and heart?

- Do you lose sight of the good being done because you get frustrated by who is doing it or how it's being done? Pray you can line yourself up with Christ and the friends, not the scribes.

Day 2: Mark 2: 13-17

- Are you drawn to the sick, “who need a physician” or repelled by them? Are those Godly instincts?

Day 3: Mark 2: 18-22

- Do you live (spend most of your time) in a season of “fasting” or “celebrating”? Are you missing out on part of living with Christ if you mostly focus on one side?

- Do you need a new season in your life? Is there a place where you are resisting the new? What perspective/advice does Christ offer you there?

Day 4: Mark 2: 23-28

- Do you have trouble taking care of yourself, or feel guilty when you do? Do you hold yourself to a high standard of obedience and performance or do you allow yourself to rest in the Spirit? What is Jesus telling you?

Week 3 Questions

Day 1: Mark 3:1-6

- Does Christ get angry when the people around him live by different priorities or does he grieve for them? How do you live with and respond to people who live under a different value system than you do?

Day 2: Mark 3:7-12

- When they heard what Christ was doing, “they came to him.” How could you talk about Christ in a way that draws people to Christ? Who in your life makes you want to come to Jesus? What draws you in?

Day 3: Mark 3:13-21

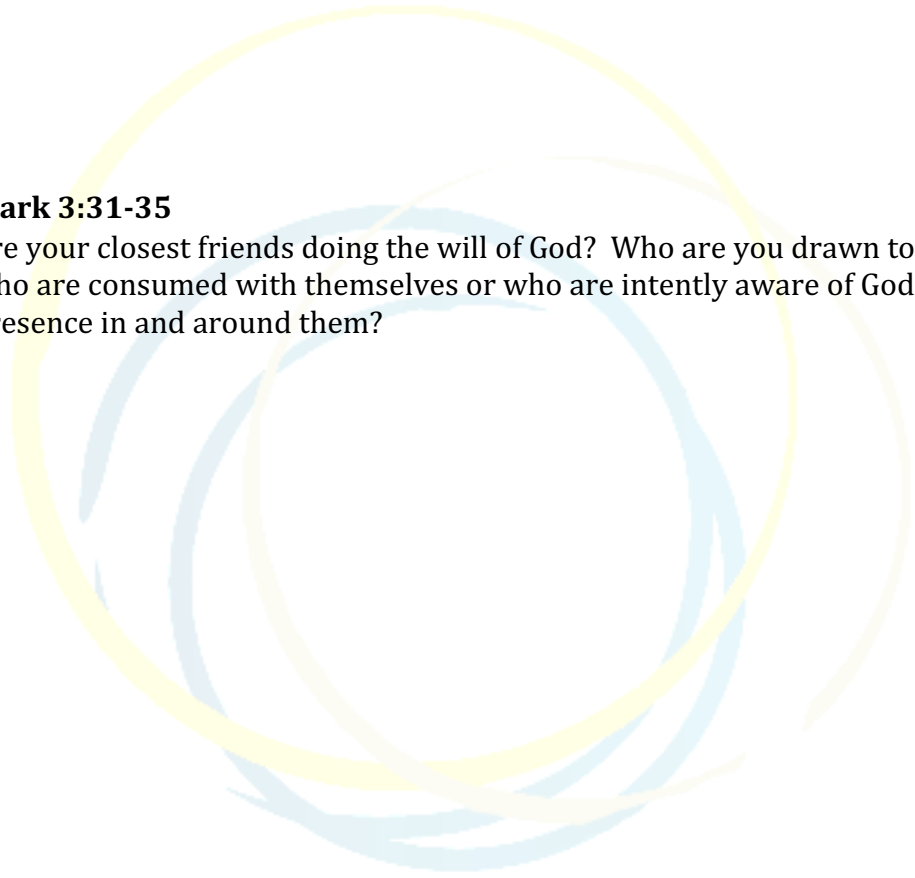
- Do you ever change your speech or behavior so people won't think you are crazy?! Why and around whom? Did Jesus change to fit his audience?

Day 4: Mark 3:22-30

- Reflect on your life. In what ways are your priorities divided? In what ways do you work against yourself? How can you begin to change those patterns?

Day 5: Mark 3:31-35

- Are your closest friends doing the will of God? Who are you drawn to, those who are consumed with themselves or who are intently aware of God's presence in and around them?



Week 4 Questions

Day 1: Mark 4:1-20

- The people flocked to Christ because he is the source of life. Reflect on your life; where do you spend most of your time? Is it a trusted source of life for you?

- Do you have compassion for others or do you blame them for the “conditions” of their lives? Apply this parable to your approach to others.

Day 2: Mark 4:21-25

- Are there areas of your life where you hide or diminish your light? Reflect and pray about which context of your life could best reveal your light. What can change?

Day 3: Mark 4:26-29

- You constantly scatter seeds, and are often powerless to make them grow in others. Is this frustrating or freeing to you? Can you intentionally invite God into your “scattering”?!

Day 4: Mark 4:30-34

- Sometimes you might only have a tiny seed to contribute; how often do you discount your small contribution to the growth of God’s Kingdom? Apply God’s vision to your investment. What needs to change?

Day 5: Mark 4:35-41

- Are you overwhelmed by a relationship or situation in your life right now? Let this passage remind you that Jesus is aware, with you in it, and committed to moving you through your life in a way that comforts you and strengthens your faith.

Week 5 Questions

Day 1: Mark 5:1-13

- What are your demons? What are those hidden messages in you that keep you from recognizing the image of God in you, and that destroy your ability to know true connections with God and others? Do you believe God has the power to drive them out of you?

Day 2: Mark 5:14-20

- What would be your story if Jesus told you to “go to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you” (v19)? Take some time to write it out.

Day 3: Mark 5:21-34

- When is the last time (or an ongoing time) when you felt desperate? What keeps you from being honest about that feeling? What would it take to ask for help?

Day 4: Mark 5:35-43

- Does God's timing frustrate you? What does it do in you when God doesn't deliver on your timeline? What does this story encourage in you?

- Where in your life do you need to replace fear with belief?

Week 6 Questions

Day 1: Mark 6:1-6

- Do you allow for and expect the people around you to grow? Do you ignore, celebrate, or “take offense” when people you know well try to change?

Day 2: Mark 6:7-13

- Christ’s Plan A, ideally, is desperate dependence on him AND on the community (of unbelievers) to meet their needs when he sends the disciples out. Seriously?!? Do you live like this at all?

- Why does Christ tell them to “shake the dust off”? Thoughts?

Day 3: Mark 6:14-29

- Is there a grudge or an overriding fear that lingers with you and affects your decisions? Can you bring it into the light and ask God to take that away?

Day 4: Mark 6:30-44

- Think about your relationship with rest. How does that need to change?

- Jesus essentially tells them to “own” other people’s problems. Why? What does it teach you about the Kingdom of God?

Day 5: Mark 6:45-52

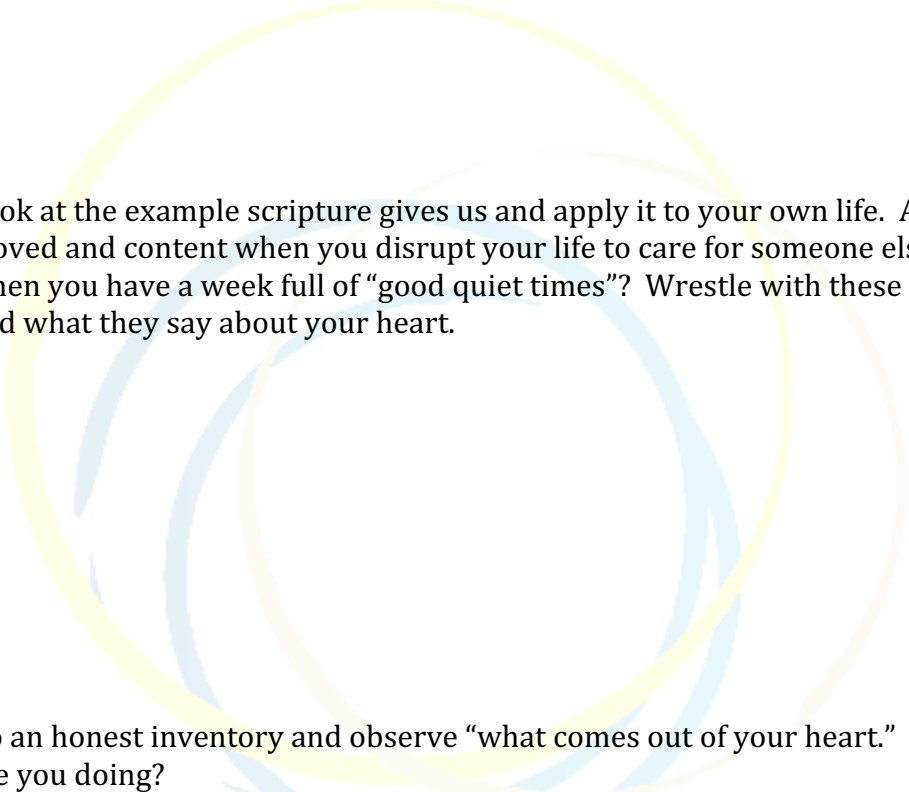
- Do you believe Jesus is moving toward you in whatever storm you are in? What do you need and want from him?

Day 6: Mark 6:53-56

- Can you develop eyes and compassion for people forced to lead with their weakness or brokenness? What if you had to live that way?

Week 7 Questions

Days 1-2: Mark 7:1-23

- God rejects the idea that following rules (and holding on to self-sufficiency and justification) will lead to healthy living. Can you pray that you will be appalled by your distraction rules? That you will loathe hypocrisy in yourself?
 - Look at the example scripture gives us and apply it to your own life. Are you moved and content when you disrupt your life to care for someone else or when you have a week full of “good quiet times”? Wrestle with these ideas and what they say about your heart.
 - Do an honest inventory and observe “what comes out of your heart.” How are you doing?
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Day 3: Mark 7:24-30

- Think about where you spend your thinking, praying and talking-energy. Do you spend energy pursuing God because you are convinced He is your only hope or distracted because you think/hope you deserve more?

Day 4: Mark 7:31-37

- Think about these stories, and reflect. What kind of friend are you to wounded people? What kind of friend are you to yourself when you are wounded? Do you bring yourself to God?

Week 8 Questions

Day 1: Mark 8: 1-10

- Reflect on Jesus and then ask: How do you respond to people who have made bad life choices?

- “And they ate and were satisfied” (v8). Where has God met a need in a way that left you satisfied? Where you thankful? Did you stop and notice? Do it now!

Day 2: Mark 8:11-21

- Are you still asking God to prove Himself (or His faithfulness, or provision) to you in some way? How would your life change if you started believing He loved you like He says He does?

- What is a tiny belief (the “leaven”) that is damaging many parts of your life? Can you replace it with scripture?

Day 3: Mark 8:22-26

- Are you more likely to notice your own “vision” is not perfect, or to notice how much your “vision” has improved? Do you see what God has done in and for you to bring you to wholeness? What about with others (yikes!!)?

Day 4: Mark 8:27-9:1

- Look at Jesus and Peter; are you careful about the voices you trust? Why is it hard to know the difference between the “things of God” and “the things of man” (v33)?
- Taking Jesus at His word, how are you “losing your life for Christ’s sake” right now (v35)?

Week 9 Questions

Day 1: Mark 9: 2-13

- God's timing is SO different than ours!! Do you beat yourself up when you lose sight of God's reality?

- Could it be that your script for the future is not the way God's kingdom works? Where do you need to surrender your vision and replace it with His?

Day 2: Mark 9:14-29

- Jesus balances frustration with compassion. How does he do this, and how do you line up?

- How does Jesus handle the man's unbelief? How do you think He handles yours? Confess your struggles with belief to Him now.

Day 3: Mark 9:30-37

- Is your vision of God's Kingdom that of a child, a servant, a sufferer, of one who is last? Deep down what do you strive for? What needs to change to square your vision with the one Jesus lays out here?

Day 4: Mark 9:38-50

- Jesus is much more interested with who is "in" than with who is "out!" Does His answer bug you? Why?
- Take a fresh look at how Jesus feels about sin. What is your approach and how does it need to change?

Week 10 Questions

This week we will read as Christ begins to prepare for His death. He starts to expose His true purpose to His closest friends, and He reveals that the life and purpose He has for us most often in contradiction to the cultural values of our world.

Day 1: Mark 10:1-16

- Jesus “taught them, as was his custom” (v1). The “custom” of Jesus is to pursue people outside of his inner circle and to teach them. What are your “customs”? Can you bring your language and interactions and speech before the Lord and ask Him to make you more like Him?
- They came to him asking how to break commitments and increase divides; Jesus argues that God’s best for us is to stay committed to each other. Where does Jesus find His answer to them? Are there places in your life where your faith might grow by becoming less complicated, simply asking Him to help you believe and accept what His Word has already given you?

Day 2: Mark 10:17-31

- This young man, based on his awareness of his need of Jesus, knew that the rule-checking-life was a terrible way to live, and yet he was drawn to it. Are there places in your life that you try to make “checking boxes” look like devotion, friendship, or worship? Acknowledge these!
- Many of us tend to love the rich young ruler, but at his core he was desperate for help AND unwilling to listen to good advice. How do you do talking to and loving stubborn, needy people? If anyone comes to mind than pray for them here, and commit to patiently telling the truth over and over 😊

Day 3: Mark 10:32-45

- The disciples, who live and play with Jesus, are a little terrified of Him! Are you a little terrified of God? Is that good or bad, and how do you hang onto that and secure faith at the same time?

- The disciples are still holding on to their old ways, but Jesus is focused on his purpose in a way that makes their striving for value ridiculous. Where are you with striving right now? What are you grasping for?

Day 4: Mark 10:46-52

- Oh, the desperation of Bartimaeus! Where are you desperate and who do you cry out for? What do you want God to do for you? Tell him, boldly! Be like Bartimaeus 😊

Week 11 Questions

Last week Jesus taught us to be desperate for Him, and this week He continues to teach us to live counter-culturally. As His message becomes more focused, He continues to move toward Jerusalem, and the death that awaits Him there.

Day 1: Mark 11:1-11

- Do you think this teaching helped prepare Christ to be faithful and obedient in the coming weeks? (Instead of just being for the benefit of the disciples?)
- Spend some time letting the intentionality of Christ and His death sink into you. Where does that take you?

Day 2: Mark 11:12-26

- Why do you think Jesus got so angry?
- Examine your heart and expose the parts of you that are cluttering up your relationship with the Lord. These might be belief systems, ways to find value, negotiating tactics, etc List any that come to mind.
- Can you throw them out?

Day 3: Mark 11:12-26

- How does Jesus tell us to access the fig tree “power”?
- He says that effective prayer only requires faith, but then also instructs us to cleanse our hearts. Does this confuse you? Take some time to think about what this teaching offers you.

Day 4: Mark 11: 27-33

- Is it easy for you to be like the chief priests: skeptical of what God is doing in others? Examine your heart. Are you full of skepticism that God is alive and active or do you believe?
- They really cannot understand Him! Perhaps neither can we! How do you balance the mystery and the intimacy of God? Are you more comfortable with one aspect of God than the other?

Week 12 Questions

The teachings of Jesus are confusing the disciples as their time together is drawing to a close. Yet, He is incredibly available to them and present with them! He is focused on preparing for His own coming struggle, while also relentlessly teaching them to value others.

Day 1: Mark 12:1-12

- How does Jesus respond to the betrayal of Israel and its people toward God?

- How do you respond to the hurt and betrayal of others? Does your heart expand, moving toward them, or contract? Is there a difference between forgiveness and trust?

Day 2: Mark 12:13-17

- Jesus lived with a reputation for not obeying cultural norms, and yet he was still deeply respectful of authority. How do you do with that balance?

Day 3: Mark 12:18-27

- Why don't you think Jesus will answer their questions?
- Jesus is reminding them that God is a present tense, always-with-us God. Does this comfort you, or is the mystery of heaven overwhelming?

Day 4: Mark 12:28-34

- What does it mean about the perspective and purpose of God that he connects these 2 commandments?
- Do they feel connected to you? If so, when are you most aware that they work together?

Day 5: Mark 12:35-44

- Who does Jesus seem to reject, and whom does He move toward? Is this freeing to you or terrifying?
- Understanding this about Jesus, can you believe this for yourself? For others? Pray that you could pay attention to who you value and why.

Week 13 Questions

We have seen how deeply counter cultural God is, and now we see Him giving us the right frame needed to survive the coming days.

Day 1: Mark 13:1-2

- Describe the way Jesus views our time in the world. Is it fleeting or permanent?
- Are there comforting and stable people and situations that feel permanent to you? Are there hard situations and people that feel insurmountable to you? How should you view them based on this teaching?
- Reflect on the fact that God's reality, the reality you were created for, is NOT the reality you are living in.

Day 2: Mark 13:3-13

- What does Christ tell you to expect in this world? How does that make you feel? Does it scare you or give you peace?
- How do you engage here and yet long for there? When do you live as if you were made for the place to come?

Day 3: Mark 13:14-27

- What is your vision of following Christ? Is it mostly hard and scary or easy and joyful?
- How do Jesus' words here impact you? How can these verses impact how you live and invest and hope day to day?

- What comfort does Jesus offer you?

Day 4: Mark 13:28-31

- Does Jesus describe the relationship between death and hope here? What is he telling them about the coming days?
- Do you believe that hope is real and that healing is coming? How does that affect hard times for you?

Day 5: Mark 13:32-37

- Why does Jesus urge them to "Stay Awake!" (v37)?
- How do you respond to this plea from Jesus? What does "staying awake" mean for you?

Week 14 Questions

As Jesus faces his final day of freedom, he spends a lot of time with his disciples. He has been teaching them about the end times, about the coming hard and then the coming hope. Here we get to see the character of God in relationships when every single support He has becomes threatened.

Day 1: Mark 14:1-2

- Was Jesus interested in defending himself? Why or why not? What does this suggest about him?

- How do you do with this? Are you interested in defending yourself (and in what contexts)?

Day 2: Mark 14:3-9

- List all the behaviors/decisions you see that Christ might be celebrating in the woman.

- How is He telling us to emulate her? Practically how can you be like her today? This week?

- In other Gospels Jesus argues that caring for those with nothing is like caring for Jesus. How can that notion affect the way you think about “worship”?

Day 3: Mark 14:10-21

- How is Jesus intentional in the time He spends with His friends?
- Do you take time to plan moments with the people you are following Christ with? What could a meaningful time look like?

- How does Jesus treat the person who will betray Him?
- What would that sort of love mean for your relationships? What is the lesson here for you?

Day 4: Mark 14:22-25

- Why are you thankful Jesus created this time of sacred ritual for us to remember His sacrifice? How is it meaningful to you?
- How is Jesus dealing with His coming death? Take a moment and notice what He is doing with His time and energy as the worst period of His life approaches.

Week 15 Questions

Day 1: Mark 14:26-31

- What does the failure of Peter, James and John teach you about the love of Christ?

- How does it remind you of yourself? What are the consequences of your own failings according to Christ's response to them?

Day 2: Mark 14:32-42

- Describe the open vulnerability of Christ before His friends and before God. Does this draw you to Him? Why?

- Are you even aware when your soul is weary? Do you ask for help? What would Jesus encourage you to do?

- The friends of Christ miss it. We have to show up for people!! Who needs you to show up right now? Write his/her name down and commit to following through.

Day 3: Mark 14:43-50

- How does Jesus handle the Judas situation? Could you handle it that way?
- Remembering all we have read, how is Jesus able to trust to such an extent that he does not defend himself?
- Have you ever prayed yourself out of a defensive posture? How did it work?

Day 4: Mark 14:51-65

- When does Jesus choose to speak?
- When you feel threatened or misunderstood, are you more likely to proclaim what you are, or argue about what you're not? Does this teaching have something to say about our responses?

Day 5: Mark 14:66-72

- Looking back over this chapter, examine your own heart. When are you most likely to distance yourself from a friend or from other believers? What does this chapter teach you about loyalty and abandonment?

Week 16 Questions

We have seen and continue to see the deep security of Christ, so rooted in His Father's love that He does not need to defend Himself before others. As you read about His injustice and abuse, ask God to remind you His love for you fueled His sacrifice.

Day 1: Mark 15: 1-15

- Who was Christ submitting to? Did that affect His behavior and responses to the jerkies?
- Are there times in your life when you should model Christ here, not defending yourself? Talk as specifically as you can (because I am TERRIBLE at this and want to learn from you!!)
- Did the people know their own thoughts and voices here? How does that happen, and how can YOU prevent it? Are there areas in your life where you just follow the strong opinions of others?

Day 2: Mark 15:16-32

- Why do you think Christ had to be mocked and humiliated?
- In your own life how does the mockery or disapproval of others impact your obedience to and focus on God?
- Sometimes following Christ means staying loyal to a person the world undervalues. Do you agree? How does this passage address that idea?

Day 3: Mark 15:33-41

- Who is watching Christ and what do they see?
- Does this encourage you? Perhaps we are never as alone as we feel?
- Can God take what feels like failure to you and use it to give life to someone else?
- If God used Christ's "failure" to redeem the world, how should you think and talk about your own failure with others?

Day 4: Mark 15:42-47

- Why do you think Joseph of Arimathea came forward?
- Why would Mark include that detail here? What does it teach you?
- Why do you think Mary and Mary Magdalene stayed to see him entombed?

Week 17 Questions

Mark's Gospel ends with utter despair, followed by disbelief, and, finally, shared community. As you read, remember that the power of the Holy Spirit is so real that even this rough start gave birth to the spreading of the story of the world's hope to the ends of the earth (namely, Nashville, TN)!

Day 1: Mark 16:1-13

- Why do you think Mary and Mary Magdalene were there at the tomb again, and why were they together?

- Do you have that kind of devotion and desperate thanks for Christ? It is easy to get distracted with small "stand-in" saviors instead. What distracts you from rushing to the One who rescued you and gave you life?

Day 2: Mark 16:1-13

- Why do you think Jesus chose to reveal Himself to Mary Magdalene? Does it surprise you (given what we have read in Mark's Gospel)?

- Are you supportive or skeptical of others' encounters with God?

Day 3: Mark 16: 14-20

- Why does Jesus send people to share that He has risen? Why doesn't he appear to each person individually?
- What might this tell us about His plans for us in our communities? How are we meant to walk with Christ?
- Are you sharing your walk with Christ with others? Through good and bad? Which is easier for you?

Day 4: Mark 16:14-20

- What does Christ's commission call us to do?
- These verses encourage the crazy brave acts of faith. How do you feel about them?! More importantly, why are they necessary, and what do they reveal about the way God explains Himself to us (verse 20 is the key)?
- Are you sharing Him with the "whole creation" (v 15)? Are your words and actions and devotion to God *consistent* before the "whole creation?" Is that part of what He is asking?