



User Friendly Guide to

Mark

Festive

FE and Sixth Form Initiative

16, Crugan Avenue, Kinmel Bay, Rhyl LL18 5DG

01745-350107

www.festive.org.uk

info@festive.org.uk

Festive

FE and Sixth Form Initiative

Christian Support for Students & Staff

User friendly guide to Mark

Welcome to the adventure that is Mark's Gospel

Whether you are reading it for the first time or as a revisit you can be sure that you and your group will gain riches out of its treasure store. For this is God's very special message to us concerning His Son and all He said and did. But this is not just history; this is the living word of God, meant to achieve a purpose in our lives (check Isaiah 55 v 11 and Hebrews 5 v 12).

This guide is written especially for CU groups that

- Want not just to read God's word but live it.
- Want to get stuck into Mark from start to finish.
- Want to make a difference to their college or sixth form.
- Have only an hour or less for their meeting, which is normally at lunch time.
- Have few people able to lead the study so need ready to use material.

Some tips

1. There are 10 topics in this guide and they can be divided into 2 sets of 5.
 - 1-5 Jesus begins his ministry
 - 6-10 Jesus faces the cross
2. We have designed it like this because this is how the gospel itself is organized. Mark's gospel centres around the **identity of Jesus** and the crucial questions in Mark 8 v 19 "Who do you say I am?" From what he has experienced so far Peter knows that Jesus is the Christ, but he has to learn from then on that "The son of Man would suffer....."
3. The Bible version used in the guide is the NIV.
4. You should not need to adapt this at all because it has been tried and tested in CUs. However, that doesn't mean you don't need someone in the group to take the initiative and read it over beforehand and lead the time you spend together. You may decide that it would be great if everyone had a copy of the studies – they are easy to download www.festive.org.uk
5. Remember – hearing God speak through His word is exciting, so take time to acknowledge His presence and ask for His help (generally called prayer).
6. The Crossway Bible Guide to Mark by David Hewitt is good if you are looking for some help. You should be able to get one at a local Christian Bookshop, from a church leader or online from www.ivpbooks.com
7. If you want any assistance at all please e-mail info@festive.org.uk

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT ? IDENTITY

Key Verse

"This man really was the Son of God." (Mark 15.v.39)

Way in

Have you ever walked into a film halfway through and wondered what's going on? What information did you need to know to make sense of the film and how did you go about obtaining it? (And did you annoy people in the process??!!)

Read

Mark 15:37-39 - Jesus Dies

Questions to Answer

1. List some of the amazing things Jesus did during his life
For example: Feeding of the 5000.
2. If you had seen Jesus do these things what would you have thought about Jesus?
3. Would you have agreed with the Roman centurion in our story?
How do you think he knew who Jesus was?

We don't need to figure this out! Mark has actually told us right at the beginning of his gospel who the star of his story is. (look at chapter 1 verse 1)

Reflection & Action

Mark's gospel is all about "who Jesus is", and how we ought to respond to this...(check out Mark 8 v 29)

1. Who do you think Jesus is? What does He mean to you?
2. How does this affect your life?

Get the "Big Picture":

Try to read Mark's gospel all the way through this week- it should take you about an hour.

JESUS RISES FROM THE DEAD AN AWESOME SAVIOUR

Key verse

"You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who has been crucified. He has risen from the dead, he is not here."

Way in

We are used to the idea that Jesus rose from the dead, but take time to think together just how unbelievable it must have seemed at the time.

Read

Mark 16 v 1 - 8 Jesus rises from the dead

Questions to answer

1. Many people like to try and claim that Jesus never rose from the dead. Pick out all the very realistic descriptions of this account you have just read together.
2. Look carefully at the angel's message for there are lots of pieces of information in it. What are they all?
3. In his gospel Mark always tells how people react. Why did the women say nothing? What did they need to give them the calmness and boldness to share what they had witnessed ?

Reflection and Action

The message of the new testament is that "Jesus died, was buried and that he was raised from the dead on the third day" (1 Corinthinans 15 v 1-4).

1. How often do we share the message of the Risen Jesus with our friends ?
2. The same mighty power that raised Jesus is available to work in our lives and the lives of those who seek him. Take time to pray for each other, your CU and your college.

Just in case

You might wonder about the ending of the gospel or someone might ask you about it. The best answer is that Mark wrote as far as verse 8 leaving people as he did to react to what he had written. A disciple of his, feeling that this was a bit stark added a rounded ending using events Mark had spoken about. None of what we find here is new. We can find longer accounts of the same events in other gospels.

JESUS DIES
MAKING SENSE OF THE CROSS !

Key Verse

"My God, my God, why have you rejected me?" (Mark 15 v 34)

Way In

If you went out and asked the students you met: 'Why did Jesus die?' what answers would you get?

Read

Mark 15 v 21 - 41 - Jesus is crucified.

Questions to answer

1. Lots of people were gathered at Golgotha and Mark draws attention to each one.
What did the cross mean to them?
 - Simon of Cyrene
 - Soldiers
 - Two robbers
 - People walking by
 - Leading priests and teachers
 - Army officer
 - The women
2. How does the darkness over the land, Jesus' cry from the cross and the Temple curtain ripping from top to bottom help us understand that Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Timothy 1 v 15)?

Reflection and Action

1. Spend some time thinking together what it cost Jesus to die in our place.
2. How should we respond? What actions can we take to demonstrate our response?

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT US ?
THE CALL TO FOLLOW

Key Verse

"Come follow me, and I will make you fish for people." (Mark 1 v 17)

Way In

If you were starting a movement, with the aim of changing the world, how would you go about recruiting people to help you?

Read

Mark 1 v 14 - 20 Jesus Chooses some Followers

Questions to Answer

1. At the beginning of the passage Jesus shares his mission statement. What strikes you about it ?
2. Why does Jesus place so much emphasis on changing hearts and lives and believing in the good news of God ?
3. Why do you think the first people Jesus called to follow him were ordinary people and not religious leaders?

Reflection and Action

1. Do you think Jesus still calls people today ? Share some examples.
2. What does it mean for us to 'fish for people' ?

INTRODUCING PEOPLE TO JESUS
HOW DOES THIS AFFECT OUR FRIENDS ?

Key Verse

"When Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, 'Son your sins are forgiven'."
(Mark 2 v 5)

Way In

You have been praying for a friend for ages who comes to you and asks to know in no more than one minute, just who Jesus is and what he came to do. Share how you would respond.

Read

Mark 2 v 1 - 12 Jesus heals a paralysed man.

Questions to Answer

1. Think about the parable in a modern context. The paralytic had been that way from birth, pretty much a no hope case. Who are today's equivalents ? What would we want to say to them about Jesus ?
2. What is surprising about Jesus' response to the paralytic ?
3. Why does he go on to heal the man ?
4. Having looked at this passage, what does it tell us about how Jesus sees people's main need ? Does this make you alter the way you might answer your friend who asked you to tell you about Jesus in one minute ?

Reflection and Action

1. Do you find it easy to show people the full picture of Jesus - the one who came to deal with sin ?
2. Think of one or two people you know who don't know Jesus. Pray for them in the group now.

GETHSEMANE
SEEING THE HEART OF JESUS.

Key Verse

"But do what you want, not what I want." (Mark 14 v.36)

Way In

Have you ever had to own up to having done something wrong, knowing that you would be in trouble for it? How did you feel about it, and what happened??

Read

Mark 14:32-42 Jesus prays alone

Questions to Answer

1. Jesus is very "sad and troubled"- why?
2. Did Jesus deserve this punishment?
3. What does this tell us about Jesus?
4. How did Jesus know he had to go the way of the cross?
5. What does this tell us about Jesus' relationship to his Father... and to us?
6. Jesus asked his disciples to "watch and pray" with him- why?
7. What does the disciples' actions tell us about them?

Reflection & Action

1. Jesus was prepared to go through unimaginable torture and pain so that we might be able to enter the kingdom of God. What are we prepared to do to tell our friends about Jesus?
2. Jesus knew he couldn't do this alone and asked his disciples to support him- what are we going to do to support one another in this work?

A NEEDY WORLD
DON'T LOOK AT ME !

Key Verse

"But he replied 'YOU give them something to eat'." (Mark 6 v 37)

Way In

When the going gets tough what do we do ? Come on now - be honest.

Read

Mark 6 v 30 -44 More than 5000 fed.

Questions to Answer

1. Jesus and his disciples were going off to get some well earned rest. What do these opening verses tell us about the way Jesus did his ministry? (You might want to check out 1 v 35 - 39)
2. How did Jesus see the crowds that followed him ?
3. What problem did the disciples have ? How does what follows show us how we should deal with big problems ?
4. What does the miracle tell us about Jesus ?

Reflection and Action

1. Think of some of the situations you are facing as an individual or as a group. Share them and take them to Jesus in prayer, not forgetting to ask what part you should play in the answer !
2. Do we really care about the needs of our non christian friends - or do we only get interested if we think they might become believers?

WHAT REALLY MATTERS
THE THINGS THAT LAST

Key Verse

"Those who give up their lives for me and for the Good News will have true life."
(Mark 8 v 35)

Way In

Ever since the time of Jesus people have said "There is time enough for me to become a Christian. First I want to enjoy myself, really live, then I'll do this God thing."
What kind of things would you say to your friends who think like this ?

Read

Mark 8 v 27 - 9 v 1 Peter says Jesus is the Christ

Questions to Answer

1. What priorities does Jesus have for his life ?
2. What priorities does he expect from his followers ?
3. It might be great to follow Jesus with a "no cost option". Why is this not possible ?
4. Jesus says he is coming back with his father's glory and with the holy angels. How does this encourage you in the choices you make ?

Reflection and Action

1. It is really tough to tell people there is a cost to being a Christian.
2. Is it honest to skip this bit ?
3. How can we help people to weigh up the options ?

**THE LAST DAYS
KEEP WATCH !**

Key Verse

“Earth and sky will be destroyed, but the words I have said will never be destroyed.”
(Mark 13 v 31)

Way In

If you knew that Jesus was returning 6 days from now - how would you change your plans?

Read

Mark 13 v 20 - 37 - Jesus talks of his return

Questions to answer

1. Why are people tempted to believe false prophets?
2. How will we know it is Jesus when he returns?
3. Until that time when he returns, how are we to make sure we are ready?
4. What might it mean for a follower of Jesus to be “found sleeping” when he returns?

Reflection and Action

1. So if Jesus did return next week, would you be prepared? How can you help each other to be better prepared?
2. How do we cope with people telling us about prophets and great signs and wonders? What should cause us to rejoice and what should make us concerned?

**THOSE WHO DON'T LISTEN !
CAN WE HELP PEOPLE HEAR THE GOSPEL ?**

Key Verse

“They hear the teaching and accept it. Then they grow and produce fruit.” (Mark 4 v 20)

Way In

Have you ever taken a non Christian friend to hear the gospel and been disappointed at their lack of response ?

Why do people find it hard to believe ?

Read

Mark 4 v 1 - 20 A Story About Planting Seed, Jesus tells why he used stories, Jesus explains the seed story.

Questions to Answer

Imagine the scene, afternoon sunshine on the lake, loads of people and Jesus telling a story which he ends YOU PEOPLE WHO CAN HEAR ME LISTEN.

1. How does this fit in with the story ? What can he mean ?
2. What kind of responses does Jesus say people make to the Gospel message ?
3. Does it surprise you that ultimately 3 out of 4 responses are to reject the good news they hear? How does that effect your disappointment with your friend?
4. Sower and soil play a big part in this story. What part does God, a Christian and an unbeliever play in the way evangelism works?

Reflection and Action

1. Share ideas about how you individually and as a group can help your friends hear the Good News.
2. Should you be praying more regularly for people and your College generally?