

## **Mark: Seeing and Obeying Christ**

Study the real Jesus and choose to follow him wholeheartedly.

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The Gospel of Mark is written simply through short, punchy parables. It catches our eye and draws us into the action. As we read about Jesus' miracles, we're faced with a choice: you've seen what Jesus can do; will you follow and obey? In this four-session study, learn to see Jesus for who he is and what he requires of his followers.

### **Session One:** Seeing Jesus for Who He Is

The importance of examining our spiritual eyesight

Mark 8:1-33

It's amazing the places where people think they see Jesus. Just search the Internet and you can find all kinds of pictures of Jesus sightings: a banana peel, a water stain, a ketchup lid, the bottom of a frying pan. It's silly when people see Jesus where he isn't. But it's tragic when we don't see Jesus when he's right before our eyes because Jesus must be seen to be believed.

### **Session Two:** Following Jesus on His Terms

Why we must deny self to gain all God has for us

Mark 8:34-9:1

We have an uneasy relationship with the cross. We honor the cross of Christ, to be sure, but the fact is the cross gets in the way. As we saw in our last session, in the middle of Mark's Gospel, after all the disciples had heard and seen from Jesus, there was a miraculous moment when Peter's blindness was healed. "Who do you say I am— Jesus asked, and it was as if cataracts were removed from Peter's eyes. "You are the Christ!" Right here with us all along! How blind could we be? You're God's Son, the one God promised to send to deliver us and bring us peace. You are the Christ!

And then, as we saw, the cross got in the way (Mk. 8:31-33). Peter reacted so strongly because if God's Messiah is rejected, if he suffers, if he dies, what good is he? How could he help? Where's the hope in that? The cross was in the way. And for many of us, it still is.

### **Session Three:** Bearing the Weight of Our Faith

Keep your eyes fixed on God's glory.

Malachi 4:4-6; Mark 9:2-13

There are weights that only Christians carry. A Christian man has a daughter who is angry with him, a feeling many parents know. But this man is not only concerned about reconciling with his daughter, but also scouring his heart before God to see if he has sinned. Who but Christians feel that weight? A woman watched a popular awards show and was sickened by the vulgarity. Though many people probably were, this woman groaned over the lostness of people who know nothing about Jesus, her heart heavy over their blindness. Who but Christians feel that weight? There is a man who serves the homeless often. When others are exasperated with them, he feels the ache of their need, he makes his

time theirs, he defends them, he cries over them, and he does it all for Jesus. Who but Christians feel that weight?

As we experience the fallenness and pain around us, we will carry a heavy weight, a weight we can only bear if we keep our eyes fixed on God's glory.

**Session Four:** Overcoming Our Unbelief  
Understand how our faith is polluted.

Mark 9:14-29

Today in our study of Mark, we come down from the mountaintop where Jesus was transfigured to a tragic defeat. This is a vivid, heartbreaking story of Satan's demonic powers. These stories, which are common in the Gospels, are mysterious to us because we don't see these kinds of evil manifestations very often. The Bible teaches that Satan is living and active, reigning over this earth as the prince of the power of the air. And under his control is a vast army of personal and powerful demons—fallen angels. Most of the time, Satan works in this world through subtle lies and disguised destruction, but whether he works subtly or visibly, Jesus' followers must confront and defeat this dark, powerful, and ruthless enemy in Jesus' name.