

Cross Examination

Take a closer look

A Grab Gather Grow Bible Study

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Video teachings:

hillsdaleumc.com/crossexamination

John Mark was a contemporary of Peter and likely wrote the gospel to Christians living in Rome. The fact that Mark wrote with the Romans in mind helps us understand his style and approach. The emphasis in this gospel is on activity, rather than lengthy dialogue. Mark describes Jesus as He busily moves from place to place and meets the physical and spiritual needs of all kinds of people. One of Mark's favorite words is "immediately." He uses it forty-one times! It is the shortest of the four gospels, but probably the first to be written (between 65-70 A.D.).

For further reading, consider:

Mark for everyone. NT Wright.

BE Diligent. Warren Wiersbe.

Reading Plan

Consider reading through the gospel of Mark over the next four weeks with your group!

Day	Passage
1	Mark 1:1-20
2	Mark 1:21-45
3	Mark 2
4	Mark 3
5	Mark 4:1-25
6	Mark 4:26-41
7	Rest
8	Mark 5:1-20
9	Mark 5:21-43
10	Mark 6:1-29
11	Mark 6:30-56
12	Mark 7
13	Mark 8
14	Rest
15	Mark 9:1-32
16	Mark 9:33-50
17	Mark 10:1-31
18	Mark 10:32-52
19	Mark 11
20	Mark 12:1-27
21	Rest
22	Mark 12:28-44
23	Mark 13
24	Mark 14:1-42
25	Mark 14:43-72
26	Mark 15
27	Mark 16
28	Rest

Session One

Don't you care?

Watch the Session One video.
Discuss the following questions with your group.

Read Mark 4:35-41

1. Several disciples were professional fishermen. Why do you think the disciples were scared of this storm?

2. In this text, the disciples panic when the storm comes, even though Jesus is in their midst.

When life brings storms, how do you respond?

How would the disciples have responded if they had faith?

3. Some people have an easier time following God when everything is calm. Some draw closer to God in the storms because they are reminded of their need for God. In your life, when are you more likely to rely on God - in times of calm or in times of storm?

4. Do you think the disciples woke Jesus in verse 38 so that He could help them bail water, or because they hoped He could perform a miracle?

5. The disciples ask an indicting question in verse 38, “Don’t you care?” There are times in our lives when we, like the disciples, ask, “God, don’t you care?” How can we be assured that He does, indeed, care for us?

6. Even those who are closest to Jesus will face storms in life. Talk about a time when you wanted to ask Jesus, along with the disciples in the boat, “Don’t you care?” What was that like?

7. The disciples were terrified by Jesus’ power when He calmed the storm. They were more afraid in the calm than in the storm. Why are they terrified after Jesus calms the storm? Shouldn’t they be at ease?

8. *Who is this?* The unanswered question in verse 41 teaches us that this story is not about Jesus’ *performance*: it’s about His *identity*. How would you answer the question the disciples ask: Who is Jesus?

Session Two

If you can...

Watch the Session Two video.
Discuss the following questions with your group.

Read Mark 9:14-32

1. What do you think the disciples and the Pharisees were arguing about?

2. In verse 19 “*O unbelieving generation,*” why was Jesus so frustrated?

3. In Mark 1, a man with leprosy comes to Jesus and asks for healing. *40 A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.” 41 Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” 42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.*

What is the difference between the request in Mark 1:40 and the request in Mark 9:22?

4. The father drops an indicting statement in verse 22: *If you can do anything....*

The boy’s father does not question Jesus’ willingness, but His ability. Why do you think that the man doubted Jesus?

5. “*Everything is possible for him who believes.*” Pastor Alfred Rawlinson teaches that this affirmation does not mean that faith can accomplish anything. It means that those who have faith “will set no limits to the power of God.” What are your thoughts on this explanation?

6. The boy’s father said, “*I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!*” Share an example of something in our life that cause "unbelief"?

How does this affect our relationship to Jesus?

7. *Why couldn't WE drive it out?* The disciples’ emphasis on *WE* indicates they were wondering what they could have done differently; they were looking for the right actions, technique, or right words to say. Talk about something in your life that you need to start praying about, instead of just relying on your actions.

8. The exchange with the father highlights the importance of faith; the conversation with the disciples emphasizes the necessity of prayer. Which of these would you like the group to pray for you this week: increase my faith or help me pray?

Session Three

What must I do?

Watch the Session Three video.
Discuss the following questions with your group.

Read Mark 10:17-31

1. In Verse 17 “*what must I do...*” implies that the rich young rulers’ goodness could pay off in eternal life. Why do we have the desire to earn good things from God?
2. In naming the commandments, Jesus names the last six, which deal with our relationship to other people. Why did He not name the first four, which deal with our relationship to God?
3. Because Jesus loves him, He directly challenges him that knowing the commandments and faithfully keeping them do not secure eternal life. What was the one thing this man lacked? Was it salvation or treasure in heaven? Was it that he was not following Jesus? Was it something else?
4. Having money fools us into thinking anything can be bought and had for a price. Do you think that the actions of the young ruler are common today? Is there a reluctance to give up everything for God?

5. The young man was blind to the one thing that stood in the way of his relationship with Jesus. This continues to happen today. How can we help one another as a church community to address or avoid this?

6. The camel was the largest animal, and a needle the smallest point. Jesus uses this illustration to answer the young rulers' question in verse 17: there is nothing you can do to inherit eternal life. Do you think Jesus is teaching that salvation is virtually impossible for the rich?

7. In verse 26, the disciples ask the question the young ruler should have asked: "*Who can be saved?*"

What is the difference between the disciples' question in verse 26 and the young rulers question in verse 17?

8. "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

What do you think Jesus is teaching here?

9. Which of these answers line up best with the teaching of this passage?

A) God is powerful and can do anything.

B) Believers can do anything with God on their side.

C) Anyone can be saved by God's grace.

Session Four

What is the greatest commandment?

Watch the Session Four video.
Discuss the following questions with your group.

Read Mark 12:28-34

1. Many of the questions from religious leaders were meant to trap Jesus, to trick him into saying something chargeable. Do you sense that this teacher of the law was sincere in his question of Jesus?

2. Scholars have counted as many as 613 commandments in the Old Testament - 243 were positive commands, 365 prohibitions. Why do you think Jesus chose these two commands as the most important?

3. When Jesus recites the Great Commandment (found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5), Jesus is saying, "Love me with your life." What does it look like to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength in today's world?

4. Jesus' answer shows that one cannot love God in isolation from one's other relationships. Why is loving your neighbor so important?

5. In the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10, Jesus is challenged with this indictment: “*who is my neighbor?*” Is there such thing as a non-neighbor?

6. “*Love your neighbor as yourself.*” There is no mention of “how” you should love yourself. What does this look like?

7. The Kingdom of God is a spiritual rule over the hearts and lives of those who willingly follow Jesus. To be in the kingdom, one must do more than simply approve Jesus’ teaching. How do you live in the Kingdom of God today?

8. “The Law was given so that God’s grace might be desired. God’s grace was given so that the Law might be truly obeyed.” How does this line of thinking impact your understanding of law? Of love? Of God? Of Neighbor?

