



THE JESUS WAY: Purpose in the Pain

Pastor Derek Sanford

May 5, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Share an example of how you saw suffering in your life lead to spiritual growth.

Scripture: Read [Mark 6:14-29](#).

Observations:

- See pp. 242-245 in the *NIV Application Commentary* for context about Herod.
- What are the rumors about who Jesus is?
- What happened to John the Baptist in this story?
- Before John died, he asked Jesus to clarify who he is in [Matthew 11:2-6](#). What is Jesus' response?

Interpretations:

- John's death foreshadows what Jesus will experience with Pilate. Compare Mark 6:19-20 with [Matthew 27:11-14](#). How are Herod's and Pilate's reactions similar?
- Compare Herod being forced to kill John to [Luke 23:18-25](#). How are these similar?
- What type of soil (from the parable in [Matthew 13:18-23](#)) are Herod and Pilate?

Application:

- Since John and Jesus suffered, we can also know that Christians will suffer. According to [Job 1:20-21](#) and Derek's sermon, what is God's role in our suffering?
- Read [James 1:2-4](#) and [Romans 5:3-5](#). How does our suffering change us?
- Read [Revelation 21:4](#) and [Romans 8:18](#). What is our hope in suffering?
- How has your perspective or response to suffering changed from this sermon?

Prayer: Use [Psalm 69:14-18](#) to guide a prayer time for those who are suffering. Pray for the Lord to be near to them and for them to grow spiritually through it.

Next Steps:

- What is my next small step of obedience today?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



THE JESUS WAY: Missing Jesus

Pastor Mike Crisman

May 12, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Share something you learned from your mother (or a mother-figure in your life).

Scripture: Read [Mark 6:30-56](#)

Observations:

- Assign roles to group members: Jesus, disciples, men in the crowd, women in the crowd, kids in the crowd.
- Ask: what do you imagine they were seeing, smelling, feeling, thinking, experiencing?

Interpretations:

- See *The NIV Application Commentary* pp 253-256 for the biblical themes found in the feeding of the 5,000.
- Read [Isaiah 55:1-2](#) and [Revelation 7:13-17; 21:6-7](#)- From Isaiah's prophecy to prophecy of the new heavens and the new earth, what is Jesus fulfilling and foreshadowing in this miracle?
- For some of the theories as to why Jesus wanted to "pass by them" (6:48) on the lake, see *The NIV Application Commentary* pp262

Application:

- We're often dismayed at the disciples' confusion and blindness, but how often have you seen the work of God in your life yet failed to understand? Failed to credit or honor Him? Failed to remember when the next hard day comes around?
- In what area of your life do you need Jesus to provide for your need? What do you want that provision to look like? How might His provision come in a different way? What does trust look like?

Prayer: Pastor Mike's Big Idea is "Jesus is easy to miss if we aren't looking for Him." Use that sentence to lead your group into prayers of confession, praise, thanksgiving, and asking for provision.

Next Steps:

-How does this picture of Jesus compel me to live differently?

-Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



MARK: THE JESUS WAY: The Antidote for Hypocrisy

Pastor Derek Sanford

May 19, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Share one way Jesus has changed your heart since you started to follow Him.

Scripture: Read [Mark 7:1-23](#)

Observations:

- What traditions did Jesus say the Pharisees had mistakenly elevated to the status of God's law? *(see pp. 272-273 of NIV Application Commentary)*
- What did Jesus say makes a person 'unclean'?

Interpretations:

- Read [Romans 14:10-17](#). How do Paul's teachings here affirm what Jesus told the Pharisees in Mark 7? *(see pp. 284-286 of NIV Application Commentary)*
- Read [Mark 7:14-23](#). Compare Jesus' interpretation of sin with that of the Pharisees.

Application:

- What are some modern examples of rejecting God while establishing our own ideas and traditions of purity?
- How do we uphold the standards of God's word without being legalistic?
- Derek's big idea: "Monitor the condition of your own heart more than you monitor the behavior of others." How can you live this out, both individually and as a group?

Prayer: Take a few minutes in silence to think about any hypocrisy in your life, then pray together this prayer of David in [Psalm 139:23-24 ASV](#) "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; And see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

Next Steps:

-Realizing only God can change your heart, pray the prayer of [Psalm 139:23-24](#) each day this week and watch for ways God will begin to change you.

-Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



THE JESUS WAY: Hope for the Disqualified

Pastor Derek Sanford

May 26, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Have you ever felt like you didn't belong or out of place? How did you feel in this situation? What does it look like to draw someone in, from outsider to insider?

Scripture: Read [Mark 7:24-37](#) [Mat 15:24-28](#) [Isaiah 35:5-6](#)

The big idea of Derek's message this week is, "Jesus is available to even those who think they are disqualified." What does that statement mean to you personally?

Mark 7:24-30, The Syrophenician woman

- How does Jesus react to the Gentile woman's request?
- How does Jesus draw out her faith?
- Where do you see yourself in this story? What does it teach you?

Mark 7:31-35, the deaf man

- Why did Jesus take the man to a private spot?
- How has Jesus healed you personally?
- How do you think the man felt when Jesus told them not to tell anybody?

Mark 7:36-37

- How do the crowds respond to Jesus?

Psalm 107 NLT

- Look for the pattern in the four stories
- Notice how the poet opens and closes the psalm
- What do you learn about your own story?
- Why is it important to become a Compassionate Storyteller?

Prayer: Use **Psalm 107** to lead your group into prayer. Allow the group to pray out loud or silently, expressing a need for healing or praise for Jesus' work. Close the prayer by asking the Spirit to give all of you courage and boldness to become compassionate storytellers.

Next Steps:

Discipleship Question: Ordinary Heroes – what is my next small step of obedience today?

Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.