



MARK: When Riches Rob You of Jesus

Pastor Derek Sanford

October 6, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Who has been an example of not letting their possessions come before following Jesus? How has their example encouraged your faith?

Scripture: Read [Mark 10:17-31](#).

Observations:

- How does Jesus respond to the man who approaches him? Which of the Ten Commandments does he list? Which ones does he leave out? (see [Deuteronomy 5:6-21](#))
- Describe the responses of the man and the disciples.
- What does Jesus teach the disciples after the man leaves?

Interpretations:

- How are the man's priorities misaligned with Jesus' way to eternal life? (see the *NIV Application Commentary*, pp. 400-405)
- Read [Matthew 6:19-24](#) and [Mark 4:18-19](#). How do these verses help us understand Jesus' view of money/possessions?

Application:

- What would someone see about your priorities if they followed your money trail?
- What do you struggle to give up the most to follow Jesus?
- What's one small step you can take to be more generous with these things?

Prayer: Take a moment to privately confess what prevents you from fully following Jesus. Have each person write down their small step in the form of an "I will..." statement (for example, "I will set up recurring giving to Grace Church this week.") Break into pairs, share your statements with each other and pray for the Holy Spirit to help you take this step of faith.

Next Steps:

- What do I need to leave behind to follow Christ?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



MARK: The Humility of the Ransomed

Pastor Derek Sanford

October 13, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: When you think about great leaders, who have you been inspired by and/or learned the most from? Why?

Scripture: Read [Mark 10:32-45](#), [Philippians 2:5-11](#)

Observations:

- Imagine yourself as one of the disciples listening as James and John ask a favor of Jesus. What are you thinking and feeling? Are your thoughts in alignment with the heart of Jesus or something different?
- Read *The NIV Application Commentary*, page 414-415 (Bridging Contexts).

Interpretations:

- What did Jesus mean when He said, “Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?”
- What do the words of Jesus in verse 42 imply concerning the disciples’ view of leadership?
- How has Jesus become the servant and slave?

Application:

- The selfless example of Jesus is inspiring and humbling; why is it so hard to put into practice?
- Think about where you worship, live, work, and play; where is it most challenging to be the servant of others? Why?
- What’s your next step in becoming a servant of others?

Prayer: Reread verse 45. Jesus’ ultimate act of servanthood was to give his life a ransom. He paid the price of your freedom from sin by His shed blood. Take time to give thanks and then pray for those who have not yet received this freedom by faith in Jesus. Pray for specific people.

Next Steps:

- Pray every day this week for those who don’t know Jesus yet.
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



MARK: I Once Was...

Pastor Sarah Burt

October 20, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Jesus had compassion for Bartimaeus and stopped to meet his needs. Share about a time when someone stopped and compassionately met your needs.

Scripture: Read [Mark 10:46-52](#).

Observations:

- What do you see in Bartimaeus that shows he believes Jesus is the Messiah and his only hope?
- What actions showed Bartimaeus was ready to follow Jesus all the way?

Interpretations:

- Why do you think Jesus asked Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?"
- **Read [Mark 10:35-40](#)** Jesus asked the same question of James and John. How did their answer differ? What did their answer reveal about the condition of their hearts? (see pg. 422 in *The NIV Application Commentary*.)

Application:

- What do you see in Bartimaeus that makes him an ordinary hero? (example of bold faith; heart that could see Jesus)
- Oswald Chambers wrote, "Once we see Jesus, the impossible things He does in our lives become as natural as breathing." What impossible thing do you want Jesus to do for you? He's just waiting for you to ask!

Prayer: Jesus, I want to see You and know You. Help me see You, and then help me see the things or people You want me to see in the way You see them. Help me be willing to throw off the things that keep me from following You this week so I can be more like You.

Next Steps:

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



MARK: When He's Not the King You Thought He Was

Pastor Derek Sanford

October 27, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Share a time when God's answer to your prayers led you in a direction you did not expect (and maybe didn't like at first). How was God's love and faithfulness ultimately revealed?

Scripture: Read [Mark 11:1-11](#)

Observations:

- What do you find most interesting about Jesus' instructions to His disciples as they drew near to Jerusalem? What does their obedience indicate about their relationship with Him?
- How does the way Jesus entered Jerusalem this time differ from His typical travel practices? (see *The NIV Application Commentary*, pg. 426-428)

Interpretations:

- Middle Eastern leaders rode horses as they declared war but donkeys when they came in peace. What do you think Jesus' choice of donkey suggested about the kind of kingdom He was declaring? The sort of King He was meant to be?
- Read [Zechariah 9:9](#). How does this passage shed light on the details of Jesus' entry?
- Consider the context of this moment in scripture and different people's responses to Jesus up to this point in the gospel story (those healed, the disciples, the religious leaders). What kind of King were the people hoping for?
 - o Context: Passover is a celebration of the Israelites' liberation from slavery in Egypt. ([Exodus 12:24-27](#)). Even as they marked that miraculous delivery in their history, they were under the rule and oppression of the Roman Empire.
 - o Responses: [John 6:14-15](#); [Mark 8:31-33](#); [Mark 3:4-6](#)...
- Read [Psalm 118:25-26](#). This is known as one of the Hallel (Praise) psalms, commonly sung at Passover as a hymn of thanksgiving for deliverance from enemies. How do you think the crowd's expectations aligned or differed from this song's application to that moment?
- The crowds correctly identified Jesus as their coming King but did not understand what that meant. What do you think their expectations tell us about their priorities, focus, and faith?



- Knowing that Jesus would be crucified only three days later, how does Jesus ultimately disappoint the crowd that welcomes him in this passage?

Application:

- Describe a time when you didn't recognize or understand the kind of lasting kingdom Jesus offers us. How did your expectations differ from the truth?
- How would you currently describe the kind of King that Jesus is? What hopes and expectations might you still hold that impact your full acceptance of His Lordship?
 - o Consider passages: [Matthew 5:17-19](#); [Matthew 28:18-20](#); [John 10:11](#); [Revelation 22:13](#)

Prayer: Read [Psalm 24](#) and encourage group members to invite the King of Glory into their hearts and lives. Allow time to confess any areas where misplaced expectations have blinded them to the true nature of Jesus and His kingdom.

Next Steps:

- Identify one area of your life where you need to choose Jesus because of who He is and not what He can do for you.
- How will you respond when Jesus is not the King you thought he was?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.