

Simply MARK

Fast-Paced Evidence



Bible Study Guide

simplifying life
re-prioritizing life
cultivating a deeper walk with God

All Bible verses are taken from the New Living Translation unless otherwise indicated.

The following people contributed to this study guide.

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You may copy this resource or any part of it to build up God's Kingdom.
Please include the following reference information:

More studies available at
www.SimpleChurchAtHome.com

the WORD among us
simply MARK

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the WORD among us

The WORD among us series is different. These leader's guides capture real group life, where secular and unchurched people's lives are being changed.

People need the Everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ.

People also need safe and authentic friendship with Christians. Most unchurched people will not seek you or your group's friendship. You will have to intentionally seek their friendship.

May God bless you as you simplify and re-prioritize your life, creating time to “spend” with unchurched people.

how to use this leaders' guide

This leaders' guide assumes you have:

1. read through the www.SimpleChurchAtHome.com web page.
2. completed the online Simple Church training.

Simple Church Start-up Guidelines: Download and print this guide to help you start a successful Simple Church. It can be downloaded from the **Drop Box** found on the Simple Church training web page.

title

[outline](#)

Bible story reference

Message of Hope: Have this idea crystal clear in your mind. This is what you want people to remember for the rest of the week.

Leader's Tip: These tips show up here and there.

Needed for Today: Additional items that you will need.

Planning Ahead: This includes items coming in future weeks that you may need to plan for ahead of time.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Welcome: We focus on three things: connecting with God, connecting with each other, and serving our world. In other words, this group does not exist for us. Someone invited you, and now it is your turn to invite others.

Before we introduce ourselves, let's remember:

- This is a safe place to grow spiritually.
- We are a wide diversity of people—new Christians, long-time Christians, and people who are thinking about becoming Christians. We are glad all of you are here.
- You will notice we do not use a bunch of fancy religious language.
- We do not try to impress people with how much Bible quoting we can do. We are common people.
- Please be sensitive so everyone has an opportunity to share and contribute.
- Cell phones should be put on “vibrate,” or turned off.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name, and what was your week like?
2. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Rotation Questions: Rotate through the following three questions: (Check-In is not used in Growth Groups)

Week 1: How are you simplifying your life?

Week 2: How are you re-prioritizing your life?

Week 3: What would it take to cultivate a deeper relationship with God.

Week 4: How are you simplifying your life?

Week 5: etc.

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments: *(This part is hard for church people. They will have to learn how to be comfortable with "quiet space." People will need time to think, and will need encouragement to share. Learn to let Jesus be the leader of your group and see how and where He leads. This time is often a mixture of sharing, singing, praying; a time when people share their prayer requests, reflections, praise, joy, and thankfulness to God. This is body-life.)*

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?
- Sing, share meaningful Bible verses, rejoice in God's goodness
- Prayer comes naturally and spontaneously during this time.

page 2 of a typical leaders guide for a given week

Kick-off Question: (short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)

Bridge: Have this idea crystal clear in your mind. This is what you want people to remember for the rest of the week.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Bible story reference

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible during our discussion.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

Here are some helpful pointers:

1. Remember, there are no "right answers" to relational Bible study questions.
2. You DO NOT have to "accomplish" all the the questions listed. Use them as a resource from which to select during your discussion.
3. Spend a maximum of 50% of your Bible study time on Listening & Learning Questions.
4. Affirm each answer, no matter what is said, by saying something like, "Excellent, someone

else"; "Thanks for sharing, someone else"; "Good, someone else"; "How about the rest of you, what do you think?"

5. Did you catch the common denominator, "someone else"? You are always affirming and always inviting others to give input.
6. If someone gets off-focus, I will say (after they have stopped talking), "Thanks. How about some else?" then restate the question to refocus the discussion.

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

Some helpful pointers:

1. Spend a minimum of 50% of your time on Heart Questions.
2. These questions are designed to invite people to share portions of their life story as it engages with the Bible study.
3. This is not a doctrinal study. This is not a life application study. It is a relational Bible study. There is a big difference.
4. At appropriate times, affirm confidentiality and offer reassurance that this is a safe place to share and grow spiritually.

Wrap Up:

1. We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
2. Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
3. Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

1. Keep is simple.
2. Taco Salad (Mexican Haystack).
3. Hostess (one of the CORE4) provides the beans.
4. During lunch have Taco Salad sign-up sheet available.

Bible Baptism

[outline](#)

Mark 1:1-13

Message of Hope: God has sent someone in your life to help you experience Jesus.

***Leader's Tip:** This study will give people the opportunity to request baptism or request re-baptism. Look for God's leading and prompting in their lives.*

***Needed for Today:** Have the Connections Card Envelops printed and setting out. There is a check-box for people to request baptism or re-baptism. The Connection Card Envelops are found in the **Drop Box**.*

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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- We do not try to impress people with how much Bible quoting we can do. We are common people.
- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What do you think is one of the more important decisions you make in life?

Bridge: Today's story is about a very important decision, but it may not be what most people first think of. Mark gets right to the point about this. What is this decision? Let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 1:1-13
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Why do you think that Jesus, of all people, needs a messenger to prepare the way for Him?
2. Read verses 1-3 again. Mark begins this story with the good news about Jesus, is that the way the prophet Isaiah said it would start? Why would good news about Jesus begin with Isaiah?
3. Verse 6 gives a description of John's clothes and diet. Why do you think Mark highlights this?
4. In today's world, it seems there are all kinds of versions of baptisms. What are some of the different versions you have heard of?
5. When the Bible talks about being baptized, what specifically is the Bible talking about? What could Bible baptism symbolize?
6. Verse 8, 9, and 12 talks about the Holy Spirit. Let's read them again. What does it mean to be baptized with the Holy Spirit? How does a Holy Spirit baptism effect a person's actions?
7. Why do you think Jesus' temptation is the first thing Mark tells us about after his baptism?
8. Sometimes people who have already been baptized ask to be re-baptized. Why do you think a person would want to be re-baptized?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Verse 5 says that *all the people* went out to see and hear John. What do you think it would take in today's culture for our country to take John and Jesus as seriously as they did back then?
2. If you had been alive back then, why would you have gone to see and hear John?
3. In today's culture, what are the different things that draw people to Jesus?
4. Who were the significant people in your life that you think helped prepare the way for you to learn about Jesus? How did they go about it?
5. If you were going to prepare the way for your friends to experience Jesus, what would you do?

Invitation: *Bible baptism is one of the most important steps in a person's life. If you would like to be baptized or re-baptized you can talk with any of us, or check the box on the Connection Card Envelope that talks about baptism.*

6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **God has sent someone into your life to help you experience Jesus.**

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Showdown

[outline](#)

Mark 1:14-28

Message of Hope: God is more powerful than Satan.

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1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was one of the first times you saw evil in this world.

Bridge: Many movies have a war plot between a good guy and a bad guy. Today's story has a good guy and a bad guy, but today's story is not some make-believe movie plot. This story will introduce us to the real war that is going on in our world.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 1:14-28
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Back to verse 14, this story does not tell us, but why do you think John was arrested?
2. Let's read verses 16-19 again. What might have motivated these people to walk away from their business to follow Jesus?
3. In verse 22, what do you think was different about Jesus' teaching that gave Him authority?
4. Would someone read verses 23-24 again? How would an evil spirit know so much about Jesus?
5. Verse 25 says that Jesus cut the evil spirit short. What is Jesus trying to "cut short"?
6. What questions do you think this man would have asked Jesus after the evil spirit had been cast out of him?
7. Let's read verse 27 & 28 again. If evil spirits obey Jesus' commands, what does this tell us about Jesus' authority.
8. To put it bluntly, this story is a showdown of power and authority between God and Satan. What do you think Mark wants us to learn about this war?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. If someone asked you, What is an evil spirit? How would you answer their question?
2. If you had been an eye witness, what part of this story would you have told your friends about?
3. Let's list the people in this story. Who do you most identify with, why?
4. Where do you see the showdown between God and Satan going on in your own life?
5. Today's story began with Jesus inviting people to become radical followers. If you were going to take a first step, a next step, or even a radical step towards Jesus, what would it be?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **God is more powerful than Satan.**

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

World War X

[outline](#)

Mark 1:29-34

Message of Hope: God is more powerful than demons.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* Who do you know that has served in a war?

Bridge: Believe it or not, each of us are part of a war that is going on right now. Today's story is a very short story that has a big punch. It will give us a small glimpse into this global war that is going on around us – but much of this war is invisible unless you know what you are looking for. Today's study is called World War X, so let's read it.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 1:29-34
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If this story had happened in our town people would most likely be talking about it. But what part of this story do you think people would focus on?
2. Based on a story from two weeks ago (1:16-20), what do we already know about James, John, Simon and Andrew?
3. Let's read verses 30-31 again. There is no verbal command to “be healed”. Jesus just takes her by the hand and the fever leaves. What might this tell us about Jesus?
4. Verse 32 says, “after sunset” many sick and demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. Why do you think this happened after sunset?
5. A verse similar to verse 34 was in a story a couple weeks ago. How do you think the demons knew who Jesus was?
6. How is demon possession the same today, or different than it was in Jesus' day?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. When have you seen demonic powers at work?
2. Who is someone you know or who you heard of that was miraculously healed?
3. When did a miracle, any kind of miracle, happen in your life?
4. Simon took Jesus to his mother-in-law. If someone was going to bring Jesus to you, what would you wish Jesus would do for you.
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **God is more powerful than demons.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Healing

[outline](#)

Mark 1:35-45

Message of Hope: Jesus wants to bring healing to your life.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
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Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was the last time you got up before daybreak – really early in the morning? Why did you get up so early?

Bridge: Today's story begins with one person who is up before day break and ends with a big problem. But the best part of this story is what happens in the middle. And in the middle of our story is where we will find the heart of God.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 1:35-45
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Verse 37 said, “Everyone is looking for you.” Why do you think everyone was looking for Jesus?
2. Let's read verse 38 again. Jesus' reply could seem like a very cold or non-caring answer. What do you think Jesus is really saying here?
3. Verse 39 says that Jesus did two things. Why do you think Jesus did both of these together?
4. Someone please read verse 40 again. If people were to beg Jesus to do something for them today, what kinds of things do you think most people would ask Him to do?
5. Why would this begging leper add the words, “If you are willing?”
6. In today's world, not everyone is healed. How do you make sense of that?
7. Let's read verse 44 again. Why would Jesus tell this man “Don't tell anyone about this”?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. When was a time you asked or even begged for a miracle that *did or did not* happen?
2. If you were to ask God if He was willing to do something for you, what would you ask him?
3. Our story started with Jesus getting up before daybreak and going to pray. When you need to get away for some quiet time with God, where do you go?
4. What are some of the obstacles you have experienced in your personal time with God?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Jesus wants to bring healing to your life.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Identity Crisis

[outline](#)

Mark 2:1-12

Message of Hope: Jesus, the Son of God, has the authority to forgive your sins.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When facing a crisis and needing help from a friend, who would you most likely call?

Bridge: Today's story brings every human face to face with a crisis. But this is a very different crisis than what most people would naturally think of. As we read this story, see if we can discover what crisis every human faces sometime in their life.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 2:1-12
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Cutting a hole in the roof is no small task. How do you imagine Jesus and the crowd responded while this hole in the roof was being cut?
2. What do you think was attracting all these people to Jesus?
3. Let's read verse 5 again. What does Jesus mean when he said, "Seeing their faith"?
4. Read verses 8-10 again. What would motivate Jesus to shift gears and talk about sins being forgiven?
5. How do you think this story proves Jesus' ability to forgive sins?
6. How do you think this story proves Jesus' identity as the Son of God?
7. In previous stories over the past few weeks, Jesus has commanded the demons to keep quiet about His identity. Why would Jesus choose this story to reveal His identity?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. When was a time that a friend helped you do something you could not do yourself?
2. What qualities do you most look for or value in a friend?
3. If you had been the paralytic in this story, what would you had done after you had been healed and had your sins forgiven?
4. When did you begin to comprehend that Jesus is either the Son of God or the best liar that ever existed?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Jesus, the Son of God, has the authority to forgive your sins.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Sinners Invited

[outline](#)

Mark 2:13-17

Message of Hope: Jesus came to invite people like you and me to follow him.

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- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* If your income doubled overnight, what would you do with the extra money?

Bridge: Today's story is about someone who probably had a very large salary and walked away from it to do something very different. That is not what normal people usually do, so let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 2:13-17
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Why do you think Levi got up so quickly and followed Jesus?
2. What do you think Jesus has in mind when he says in verse 14 "Follow me and be my disciple"?
3. Why are the Pharisees at Levi's house? Were they invited?
4. Read verse 16 again. Why would it bother the Pharisees, that Jesus would be eating with sinners?
5. Let's read verse 17 again. What might have motivated Jesus to make this statement?
6. How would you summarize the heart beat of Jesus' message in this story?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If the other disciples (who used to be fishermen) had paid Levi inflated taxes, how would you have felt when Jesus invited Levi to be one of the disciples?
2. Who has been a Levi in your life, someone who first invited you to begin learning about Jesus?
3. Who is someone that you have helped learn about Jesus?
4. There are several people and groups of people in this story. Who do you most relate to?
5. How can you reach out to those in our community whom others consider "unacceptable"?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **Jesus came to invite sinners, like you and me, to follow him.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Patches

[outline](#)

Mark 2:18-22

Message of Hope: Jesus does not want to patch your life, but give you a new life.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is the longest period of time you have gone without food?

Bridge: Today's story is about people who were skipping meals, but not to loose weight. Let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 2:18-22
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. We don't think of church denominations in the New Testament but they existed. What were the 3 denominations in this story and what do you think made them different from each other?
2. Let's read verses 19-20 again. Why do you think Jesus uses a wedding example to answer their question?
3. What do you think Jesus is saying about himself in this wedding example?
4. Let's read verses 21-22 again. What additional insights do these example give us?
5. What do the old and new clothing and wineskins represent in this story?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you had been in Jesus' shoes, how would you have answered the original question about fasting?
2. On a scale of one to ten, with one being fasting and ten being feasting, where you would score your personal friendship with Jesus? Are you fasting or feasting.
3. Where in your life do you feel like you are trying to temporarily patch or hold it together?
4. What would it take to raise your fasting/feasting score one point?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Jesus does not want to patch your life, but give you a new life.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Creation's Invitation

[outline](#)

Mark 2:23-28

Message of Hope: There IS rest for the weary.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was the last restful day you had, and what made it restful?

Bridge: Today's story is about rest, something we all need. But this story goes much deeper than sleeping or taking a nap. We live in a world that never shuts down, it goes 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. But in the midst of this out of control world, God gave us a very special invitation that most of the world has forgotten?

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 2:23-28
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Why do you think the Pharisees even care about what Jesus and his disciples were doing?
2. What is the law the Pharisees are talking about?

Leader's Tips: Hold you finger in Mark and let's take a quick history tour.

- Read Exodus 20:8-11 (part of the 10 commandments)
 - “Remember”
 - The day God asks us to set aside our work and spend it with Him.
 - Read Genesis 2:1-3 (part of creation, before sin entered this world)
 - Sabbath was part of Creation.
 - Sabbath was set apart and the day was made Holy.
 - The day God sets aside his work and wants to spend it with us.
 - Sabbath is all about loving relationships. God made a special day to spend with you and me.
 - Video resources: [Created for Something Better](#), [Fooled by a Myth](#)
3. From what we have just read, what are the benefits and blessings that people receive when they keep Creation's Sabbath?
 4. Let's read verse 27 again. What is Jesus' message in this verse.
 5. Read verse 28 again. What does it mean to be “Lord” over the Sabbath.

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. When was one of the first times you began to learn about Creation's Sabbath?
2. What is or would be one of the blessings of keeping Creation's Sabbath in your life?
3. What are some of the more stressful things you are facing this coming week?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Creation's Sabbath is God's personal invitation to spend a special day with Him, resting.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Tipping Point

[outline](#)

Mark 3:1-3:6

Message of Hope: God loves you so much He set aside his work and wants to spend a special day, Sabbath, with you.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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Check-In:

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2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* There are all kinds of questions in life. But when a question pops into your mind, in general, how do you tend to go about finding answers to your question?

Bridge: Today's story is about something that more and more people are asking questions about. So if you have not given it much thought before today, not a problem. Today's story is full of healing and special blessings that God established when He created this world. What are these special blessings? Let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 3:1-3:6
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Why do you think the Pharisees were against Jesus and wanted to kill Him?
2. Why would healing be considered “working” on the Sabbath.
3. Where does the idea of not working on the Sabbath come from?

Leader's Tips (review from last week): Bookmark our story. Let's take a quick history tour.

- Read Exodus 20:8-11 (part of the 10 commandments)
 - “Remember”
 - The day God asks us to set aside our work and spend it with Him.
 - Read Genesis 2:1-3 (part of creation, before sin entered this world)
 - Sabbath was part of Creation.
 - Sabbath was set apart and the day was made Holy.
 - The day God sets aside His work and wants to spend it with us.
 - Sabbath is all about loving relationships. God made a special day to spend with you.
4. Back to Mark, and let's read verse 4. What is Jesus' message?
 5. Someone read verse 5 again. If Jesus were to look around in our culture, what kinds of hardness of heart would anger and sadden Him?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you had been Jesus, what do you think you would have done?
2. How do you make sense of the idea that today, Creation's Sabbath, is a day for resting from our work and a day for doing good for others.
3. What are some of the blessings and benefits you receive on Sabbath?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **God loves you so much He chose the Sabbath to set aside His work and spend it with you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Evil Obeys

[outline](#)

Mark 3:7-12

Message of Hope: Even evil must obey God's commands.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

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Check-In:

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Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is the longest distance you have walked at one time?

Bridge: Today's story begins with people who are walking from all over the country side to one location. There are no cars, bikes, possibly some rode on horses or donkeys, but probably the majority of the people just walked. Why are they willing to walk such long distances? Let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 3:7-12
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Let's go back and read verses 7-8 again. Does anyone have maps in their Bible that show how big of an area people came from to see Jesus?
2. It seem's unlike Jesus. Why do you think Jesus wanted to keep His distance from the crowd?
3. Let's read verses 9-10 again. If Jesus is in a boat just off the shore, all these people can not get close to Him. What do you think Jesus was originally hoping to do this time?
4. Would someone read verses 11-12. These verses almost seem like they do not fit with this story. What does Mark want us to understand from these two verses?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Imagine that you had been hearing about Jesus. He is the talk of the city. How far would you have been willing to walk to see Jesus with your own eyes?
2. If you had been Jesus, after a long day of having people press around you and you wanted to get away with your disciples, what would you have done?
3. If it is true, that even evil spirits have to obey Jesus' commands, how does that change or confirm your view of Jesus' authority in your life?
4. When you want to get away and spend time with God, where do you go?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Even evil must obey God.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Divided or United

[outline](#)

Mark 3:13-35

Message of Hope: Jesus is able to forgive our sins

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When you hear this phrase, “divided or united”, what comes to your mind?

Bridge: Today's story talks about being divided or united. It also talks about betrayal, family, blasphemy, Jesus, Satan, power, authority, and the Holy Spirit. Now that is a lot to cover, but it will be quite easy because today's stories will look at them in bite size pieces. Let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 3:13-35
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Leader's Tip: Pray that this question will raise questions about Sabbath. But do not take the time in simple church to answer this question. Schedule a time next week after lunch (after simple church) to share a summary. When people have additional questions, start mid week Bible studies.

- John 11:24 (the entire story) teaches what the NT and Jesus believed about death.
- Video (25 minutes): [What happens when you die?](#)
- Video (25 minutes): [Hell – When the smoke clears.](#)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Let's go back to verse 19. Why do you think Jesus would choose an apostle who would later betray him?
2. Someone read verse 21 again. What evidence do you think Jesus' family based their claim on?
3. Let's read verses 24-27 again. What is the message Jesus is teaching the people?
4. What do these verses tell us about power and authority between Jesus and Satan?
5. Read verse 28-29 again. Why do you think this verse begins with “I tell you the truth”?
6. What is blasphemy? What does it mean to blaspheme the Holy Spirit?
7. In verses 33-35, what is Jesus really saying about His family?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Who are some people in your life who are like family? Why did they become like family?
2. Our story began with betrayal. When was a time you were betrayed or had to forgive someone who betrayed you?
3. As you think about your life, what kinds of things typically drive wedges between you and those you love?
4. How have you gone about bringing unity, when a relationship has been divided?
5. When, if any, was a time when you thought you had blasphemed the Holy Spirit?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **Satan will try to divide you. But Jesus has the ability to forgive all your sins and unite you with Him.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Planting Seed

[outline](#)

Mark 4:1-20

Message of Hope: God wants to plant seeds of truth in your heart.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) If you were to plant a garden, what are some of the seeds you would like to plant?

Bridge: Today's story is about planting seeds in all kinds of soil. But this story goes far beyond gardening and has a much deeper meaning. It talks about the seed that God is planting in our life and how that seed will either die or flourish.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 1-20
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. If Jesus is wanting everyone to learn about Him and follow Him, why would He use parables to make it somewhat difficult to understand what He is saying?
2. Let's read verse 15 again. What reasons does Jesus give, as to why seeds don't take root in some people's lives?
3. Read verses 16-17 again. What kinds of persecution do people face today because of believing and following God's Word?
4. Let's read verse 18-19 again. What are the “worries of life”, the “lure of wealth”, and the “other things” that choke out God's word in our culture?
5. Read verse 20 again. How does God's word “produce a harvest” in peoples lives and what is the harvest produced?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Who has been instrumental in planting new seeds of God's word in your life?
2. What are some of the new seeds that have been recently planted in your life?
3. What could hinder these new seeds from growing and thriving in your life?
4. As these new seeds produce fruit in your life – how will your life change and be different?
5. How could you put down deep roots so that you can face opposition that might come because of the new seed God has planted in your life?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **God is planting seeds of truth in your life.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Use It or Lose It

[outline](#)

Mark 4:21-25

Message of Hope: Jesus wants to take you deeper.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was a time when all the lights went out and you had to use candles?

Bridge: Today's story begins with candles or a small lamp, but it is not because the lights have gone out. This small lamp represents something much deeper and more important in our lives. This story also makes a startling claim about everyone's life. So let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 34:21-25
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Why do you think Jesus introduces this story by using the lamp/candle illustration?
2. Read verse 22 again. This is a pretty serious claim. Why do you think Jesus is making this claim?
3. How would people live their lives differently if they really believed that someday everything they did will be out in the open?
4. How do you think Jesus might bring this claim about?
5. Would someone read verse 23 again? What do you think Jesus is wanting us to hear and understand about this story?
6. Let's read verse 25 again. In learning a new language, it is often said that one must use it or you will lose it. What is Jesus' message in this verse?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Who is someone that has been a spiritual lamp in your life and how have they given you spiritual direction or guidance?
2. How would you, or better yet, how will you live your life differently so you do not have to worry about full disclosure?
3. What new spiritual teaching or understanding has God been giving you lately?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **God wants to take you deeper, but you must use the spiritual understanding He is giving you so you don't lose it.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Kingdom of God

[outline](#)

Mark 4:26-34

Message of Hope: Either the Kingdom of God is real or Jesus is a good liar.

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- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* How much farming or gardening, if any, have you done in your life?

Bridge: Today's story is about farming. Some of us may have farmed or gardened, and other of us may have never planted a seed. But the good news is that you don't have to be a farmer to understand today story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 4:26-34
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. At the beginning of both stories Jesus uses the phrase “Kingdom of God”. What do you think the this is referring to?
2. This first story, verses 26-29 has several symbols. What are they and what do you think they represent?
3. In verse 27 and the first part of verse 28 Jesus emphasizes that the farmer does not “make” the seed grow. What is Jesus' trying to teach us in this story?
4. The second story, verses 30-32 is another picture of what the “Kingdom of God” is like. What glimpses or perspective is Jesus trying to emphasize in this story?
5. Lets read verse 33 again. What do you think limited the people's ability to understand?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. What helps you to grow spiritually and what hinders your spiritual growth?
2. Do you feel like you are more like a single mustard seed or part of a field of seed? Why?
3. How would you describe your spiritual growth over the last few months?
4. What questions about the “Kingdom of God” would you like to better understand?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Either the Kingdom of God is real or Jesus is a good liar**. How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Life's Storms

[outline](#)

Mark 4:35-41

Message of Hope: God can calm the storms in your life.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

Welcome: We focus on three things: connecting with God, connecting with each other, and serving our world. In other words, this group does not exist for us. Someone invited you, and now it is your turn to invite others.

Setting the Context:

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is one of the worst extreme weather storms you have been in?

Bridge: Have you noticed that storms seem to be getting bigger and more destructive around the world? Today's story talks about a storm, but it also talks about the personal storms we face in life.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 4:35-41
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you had been one of these disciples, what would you be thinking by now?
2. If other boats could follow, why do you think Jesus wants to cross over to the other side of the lake?
3. Do you think this was a natural storm or a supernatural one?
4. Let's read verse 38 again. How is it that Jesus can actually sleep during a storm like this one?
5. What does this story tell us about Jesus' disciples?
6. Someone please read verse 39-41 again. What do these verses tell us about Jesus?
7. Why do you think Jesus asks his disciples, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. What was a storm that God calmed in your life?
2. Who is someone in your life that seems to have a strong faith in God, even when faced with difficulties?
3. Who are some of the spiritually wise people you like to talk with about the storms you are facing?
4. What current storm in your life would you like God to calm?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **God can calm the storms in your life.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Mercy Came Running

[outline](#)

Mark 5:1-20

Message of Hope: Mercy will come running, past all your failures, to the point of your need.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was a time you were helpless and someone came to help you?

Bridge: Today's story is about a person who is so completely helpless that there is nothing he can do. But the story does not stop there. Another person comes and not only helps him, but sets him free. So let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 5:1-20
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. If someone were to ask you, what is an “evil spirit”, how would you answer their question?
2. Read verses 6-7 again. What does this tell us about evil spirits?
3. Read verses 8-10. From these verses, what does Jesus believe about evil spirits?
4. What different parts of this story show us that Jesus has power and authority over evil spirits?
5. Read verses 18-20 again. It could be seen as unkind of Jesus to not let this man come with Him. Why does Mark say that Jesus does not allow this man to come with Him?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What is a small or large miracle that you have seen Jesus do for someone you know?
2. Verse 19 talks about two things this man was to share, the miracle and how Jesus had been merciful to him. Where have you seen miracles or mercies in your own life?
3. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
4. Song - Mercy Came Running - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbq3nRFuhfU>
5. Remember, **Mercy will come running, past all your failures, to the point of your need.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Reversing Fear

[outline](#)

Mark 5:21-43

Message of Hope: Your faith builds someone else's faith.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What would you say is the opposite of fear?

Bridge: Today's story is about fear, but more importantly it is about the opposite of fear. And in the opposite of fear is where we find comfort, courage, hope, and peace of mind. Today's story is called, *Reversing Fear*.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 5:21-43
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Verse 22 said that Jairus was a leader of the local synagogue. Most religious leaders were against Jesus, what do you think was different about Jairus?
2. Read verse 28 again. What do you think made this lady think that touching Jesus' robe would heal her?
3. In verse 32 why does Jesus persist in publicly identifying this lady who probably did not want to be noticed?
4. Let's read verse 34 again. What do you think everyone listening would have felt when they hear Jesus say this?
5. In verses 35-36 Jairus' daughter dies just after he has heard Jesus say to the lady, "your faith has made you well". How did this experience help Jairus with his own faith in Jesus?
6. Why do you think Jesus doesn't let everyone go with Him to where Jairus' daughter was?
7. Someone please read verse 39 again. What is Jesus really saying when He says "she's only asleep".

Leader's Tip: Pray that this question will raise questions about what happens when people die. But do not take the time in Simple Church to answer this question. Schedule a time next week after lunch (after Simple Church) to share a summary. When people have additional questions, start mid week Bible studies.

- John 11:24 (the entire story) teaches what the NT and Jesus believed about death.
- Video (25 minutes): [What happens when you die?](#)
- Video (25 minutes): [Hell – When the smoke clears.](#)

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. There are several people in this story. Let's list them all. Who do you most identify with? Why?
2. When was a time that someone else's spiritual experience helped you grow in your own spiritual journey?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low and 10 being high, where would say your faith is?
4. If Jesus were to say to you, "Don't be afraid, just have faith" what would Jesus be referring to in your life?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Your faith builds someone else's faith.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up

Lunch

Homecomings

[outline](#)

Mark 6:1-6

Message of Hope: My level of belief, no matter how small or large, helps others to believe in Jesus.

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Breakfast

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When and where did you attend a family, school or other kind of homecoming event?

Bridge: Most homecomings are a wonderful time but today's story takes an unexpected turn for the worse. But even in this sad set of circumstances there are valuable lessons for us to learn. Many of the lessons we learn today will protect us from making the same mistakes in our own lives. Today's story is called, Homecomings.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 6:1-6
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Some Bibles have maps in the back. Where is Nazareth?
2. Let's read verse 2 again, especially the last part that asks a question. How do you think Jesus' disciples would have answered this question?
3. Someone read verse 3 again. Some translations say that “they scoffed” and “were deeply offended and refused to believe.” Why do you think those who had watched Jesus grow up are now treating him like this?
4. What mixture of feelings do you think Jesus experiences?
5. Let's read verse 4 again. Jesus does not say very much in this story. Of all the things Jesus could have said, why do you think He says this?
6. Let's read the last verse of this story, verse 6. Different cultures approach “belief” differently. Some see it as an individual choice and other cultures see belief as a community choice. Which way does Jesus' culture lean in this story? Which way does our own culture lean?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you had been part of this story, where do you see yourself fitting into this story?
2. When you think about your own life, what are some of the best gifts you have received from family and friends?
3. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
4. Remember, **My level of belief, no matter how small or large, helps others to believe in Jesus.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Sent to Serve

[outline](#)

Mark 6:7-13

Message of Hope: Jesus is also sending us.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) Have you ever been sent on a mission – maybe something as simple as being sent to the grocery store or something around the world?

Bridge: Today's story is about being sent on a mission. It is actually a mission that millions of people have been sent on but we will see that this mission is quite interesting and will give much food for thought. So let's read the story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 6:7-13
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Let's jump back to the beginning of this story and read verse 7. Why do you think Jesus sent people in teams of two?
2. Why do you think Jesus needs to give “authority” to cast out demons?
3. How would someone know if someone was casting out demons and healing people under a “false” authority?
4. Let's read verses 8-9 again. Why would Jesus include these instructions?
5. Verse 11 talked about shaking the dust off of their feet and abandoning them to their own fate. What is the purpose of this or what good does this accomplish?
6. Let's read the last two verses, 12-13. How do you think people responded to the disciples message?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What part of this message would be hard or easy for our community to accept?
2. What part of this message is hard or easy for you to accept?
3. If Jesus were to send you out as one of His disciples, what do you think you would do first?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Jesus is also sending us.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Who is Jesus?

[outline](#)

Mark 6:14-28

Message of Hope: People are still trying to figure out who Jesus is.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) Who is a person or what is an event that lots of people seem to be talking about?

Bridge: Today's story might seem a bit morbid and we may wonder why would this story be in the Bible. We may not find all the reasons why it is included, but this story does ask a very import question that every human will have to answer at some point in their life. What is that question? Well let's read our story for today.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 6:14-28
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. A quick history question - Our story started with people trying to figure out who Jesus was. Who was John the Baptist and who was Elijah? (For John, see Mark 1:9-11. For Elijah see 1 Kings 18 and 19)
2. Let's read verses 17-20 again. It is one thing to not like someone or what they say, but why do you think Herodias is looking for an opportunity to kill John?
3. Why do you think Herod respected John, feared him, protected him, likes to listen to him and did not want him killed?
4. Why do you think Herod so quickly abandoned his values of protecting John and played politics?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In what different ways do people play politics in our culture?
2. Who is someone you admire for the way they stand up for what is right?
3. If you had been Herod and realized what Herodias was trying to do to John, what do you think you would have done?
4. When it comes to standing up for what's right, what do you usually do?
5. Our story started with people wondering who Jesus was. If you had been part of this story and someone asked you, Who is Jesus? How do you think you would have answered their question?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **People are still trying to figure out who Jesus is.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
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Lunch

Compassion

[outline](#)

Mark 6:30-44

Message of Hope: Jesus has compassion on you.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When was the last time you skipped a meal or two?

Bridge: Today's story begins with an amazing miracle of feeding some 10,000 people. But more important than the miracle, is the compassion that prompted the miracle. As we read this story, notice the extent that Jesus is willing to give up His own wants and wishes to care for the needs of people. Our story is found in Mark 6:30 and is called Compassion.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 6:30-44
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Let's do some quick math. How many loaves of bread and fish do you think it took to feed these people?
2. So much for getting away to a quiet place to rest. Why would Jesus think that He could actually get away without people seeing and following Him?
3. Let's read verses 33-34. What do you think Jesus means when He describes these people as sheep without a shepherd?
4. The Bible does not tell us what Jesus taught the people. But what do you think He would have or might have focused on when He was teaching them?
5. Let's read verse 35-40 again. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach his disciples in this experience?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. When you want to get away from everyone to rest and unwind, where do you usually go or what do you do?
2. Who is someone that has had compassion on you and how did they show it?
3. Where in your life do you sense the need for God's compassion?
4. What is a situation you are facing or that you are working on with people who need your compassion?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **The same Jesus who had compassion on this crowd has compassion on you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

I Am Here

[outline](#)

Mark 6:45-56

Message of Hope: In the storms of life Jesus is right beside you.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is one of your favorite water activities?

Bridge: Today's story involves lots of water and some amazing supernatural activity. But the most important part of the story is not about the water. It is about peace. Peace of mind, peace of heart, and a peace with God even when you find yourself in the middle of raging storms. So let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 6:45-56
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In last week story Jesus and his disciples were trying to get away and rest but ended up feeding 20,000 people. In today's story Jesus is still trying to get some peace and quiet. What might have caused this growing need for some peace and quiet?
2. Let's read verses 47-49. If the disciples were in serious trouble, why would Jesus walk past them instead of walk over to them?
3. Someone please read verses 50-52 again. What do you think Mark is hoping that we will discover in this story about Jesus?
4. Why were the disciple's hearts hard after all they had seen and experienced with Jesus?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In today's world, what are the different things that harden people's hearts towards Jesus?
2. What would soften people's hearts in today world?
3. As you reflect on your own life, what has softened you heart towards Jesus?
4. How does God let you know that He is near and close to you, even in the storms of life?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?

Song: *Sometimes He Calms the Storm and Sometimes He Calms His Child.*
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Ti1SULYteI>

6. Remember, **In the storms of life, Jesus is right beside you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Clean Hearts

[outline](#)

Mark 7:1-23

Message of Hope: God is more concerned about cleaning our hearts.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

Welcome: We focus on three things: connecting with God, connecting with each other, and serving our world. In other words, this group does not exist for us. Someone invited you, and now it is your turn to invite others.

Setting the Context:

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- We do not try to impress people with how much Bible quoting we can do. We are common people.
- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When you hear the word hypocrite, what comes to your mind?

Bridge: Today's story has some fighting words. Hypocritical church leaders are publicly exposed and people learn the difference between God's laws and man's traditions. Sounds quite interesting, so let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 7:1-23
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. The last few verses, 20-23 are the punch lines, which are the most important part of this story? How would you explain the punch lines of this story to children?
2. Let's go back and read verse one again. What do you think was the real reason the Pharisees and teachers of religious law came from Jerusalem to see Jesus?
3. Let's re-read verses 6-8 again. Why do you think Jesus used such a strong word, calling these church leaders hypocrites?
4. Let's find the verses that talked about God's laws and man's traditions. Verse 10 quotes from God's moral law in Exodus 20. Let's quickly read it?
5. Some people use verses 18-19 to say that we can eat anything and it will not hurt us. How do you think Mark or Jesus would respond to this?

Leaders Tips: In these verses, Jesus is not declaring that a person can eat anything. *Some foods and liquids are life-destroying, and some are plainly unhealthy.* See Lev. 11:2–23 for lists of animals, birds, fish, and insects that were not only deemed ritually unclean but physiologically unhealthy. What Jesus is attacking is the belief that if pious Jews simply observed the ritual purity laws, they would thereby be morally clean. *On the contrary, no food in and of itself can defile a person's character.* What ethically defiles are the evil thoughts (which are realized in outward actions), which originate inside of a person. See note on Matt. 15:11. For the issue of clean and unclean in the NT, see Acts 10:9–16; 15:19–20.

6. Back to Jesus' main point in this story. Let's find the verses that use the word “defile”. How do these things defile a persons heart?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. This story started with fault finders coming to see Jesus. When fault finders come to see you, what do you tend to do or how do you cope?
2. Hypocrites exist today. How do you guard your heart so that you do not use them to justify what you want to do?
3. How do you strive to guard your heart and keep it pure?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **God is more concerned about cleaning our hearts, then everything else will fall into place.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Persistence

[outline](#)

Mark 7:24-37

Message of Hope: Persistence pays off in Kingdom work.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is something in your life that you have “begged” for?

Bridge: Today's story is actually two in one. They are similar stories that are short, simple, and to the point. As we read these stories let's see if we can figure out the reason why they are in the Bible. One clue: today's study is called, *Persistence*.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 7:24-37
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Let's read verse 24 & verse 33 again. In both of these stories, why do you think Jesus tries to avoid the larger crowds?
2. One story takes place in “the region of Tyre” and the other story takes place in Sidon. What clues do we find as to the nationality of these two places?
3. Both stories use the word “begged.” Let's find both verses and read them again. What similarities do you think Mark is wanting us to notice between these two stories? (non Jews are important to Jesus. Jesus honors persistence. Interceded for others.)
4. Let's read verses 27-29 again. This seems a bit odd. What do you think Jesus is trying to say?
5. Let's read verses 33-35. Why would Jesus lead this man away from the crowd to heal him?
6. What motivates people to persistently intercede on behalf of other people?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Who are the people in your life that have persistently prayed for you over the years?
2. Let's list all the different people in these two stories. Who do you resonate with? Why?
3. If someone was to be persistent about you, what would you like them to be persistent about?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Persistence pays off in Kingdom work**. How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

little things

[outline](#)

Mark 8:1-10

Message of Hope: Jesus is concerned about the basic needs of our lives.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) Have you ever run out of food, or what was the closest you have ever come to running out of food?

Bridge: Today's story is about 4000 people who almost ran out of food. As we read this story, notice how much compassion and concern Jesus had about the little things in these people's lives.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 8:1-10
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Let's briefly look back to a similar story we read a few weeks ago. Where was the story and what differences and similarities do you notice between these two stories?
2. Notice chapter 8, verse 4 again, someone please read it. Why do you think Jesus' disciples act like this is something new and they have no idea what to do?
3. Why do you think Jesus looks for a little bit of food to bless and multiply, instead of starting with nothing?
4. If Jesus lived in our area, what are some of the basic needs you think He would help people with today?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What are some of the basic needs, little or big, that Jesus has helped you with in your life?
2. In a real and practical way, what are some of the basic needs of life you are depending upon Jesus to supply?
3. During life we go through time of plenty and time of little. What is a "little piece of bread" that you would like to bring to Jesus and ask Him to multiply?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Jesus knows what you need and cares about the details of your life.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

blind spots

[outline](#)

Mark 8:11-21

Message of Hope: Jesus is patient with those who are trying to learn more about him.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is something you have argued about?

Bridge: Today's story is about two groups of people who argue. But it is interesting how Jesus walks away from one group of arguers, but He stays with the next group of arguers. There must be something going on that is much deeper than the surface arguing. Let's read today's story which is called, *Blind Spots*.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 8:11-21
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Let's go back to the beginning of this story and read verses 12-13 again. Very rarely do we see Jesus walking away from people. Why do you think He quickly gets back into the boat and leaves the Pharisees?
2. What kind of people in verse 12 do you think the words, "this generation" is referring to?
3. Someone read verses 14-15 again. What are the characteristics of good yeast and contaminated yeast?
4. What is Jesus referring to when he said "the yeast of the Pharisees"?
5. Let's read verse 18 again. What might be the blind spots Jesus is longing for his disciples to "see and hear"?
6. In verse 11, Jesus left the Pharisees when they began to argue. What might have kept Jesus from leaving His disciples when they started arguing?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In today's world, what are some of the common blind spots or misunderstandings people have about Jesus?
2. What is a blind spot you used to have, but as you have grown, it is no longer a blind spot in your life?
3. If you were to make a guess, what is a blind spot that you think you might have?
4. As you reflect over the past few months, what "leftover baskets of food" may God be hoping you see in your life?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Jesus is patient with those who are truly searching for Him**. How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

spiritual journey

[outline](#)

Mark 8:22-26

Message of Hope: A spiritual journey has many steps.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* If you lost your eye sight, what do you think would be most difficult for you?

Bridge: Today's story is an odd short story. It seems that Jesus, when asked to heal a blind person, has to try two times before He completely heals the blind person. But there may be much deeper things going on, so let's take a look at this story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 8:22-26
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Someone read verse 23 again. Why do you think Jesus took this person out of the village before healing him?
2. What do you think Jesus is getting at when He says, "Can you see anything now?"
3. What are the different reasons we can think of why Jesus used a two-step process to completely heal this blind man?
4. Let's read verse 26 again. Why would Jesus tell this man not to go back to the village on his way home?
5. What hints can we find as to where this man lived, since Jesus tells him not to go into the village on his way home?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. What level of spiritual sight would you say most of our community has?
2. Who are some of the people in your life who have helped you receive your spiritual sight and how have they helped you?
3. This blind man went from blind, to blurred sight, to 20/20 vision. Where would you say your spiritual sight was six months ago? And where is it today?
4. If you were to ask Jesus for better spiritual sight, what do you think you would ask for?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **A spiritual journey towards Jesus has many steps along the way.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Turning Point

[outline](#)

Mark 8:27-33

Message of Hope: Jesus is the Messiah.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What was a turning point in your life?

Bridge: Today's story is a turning point in Mark's story. The disciples have been with Jesus, seen Him heal dozens of people, and feed thousands of people with a sack lunch. They have researched, evaluated, and pondered who Jesus really was. In today's story Jesus asks them a turning point sized question. So let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 8:27-33
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Based on what we know about Peter, what are some different ways we would describe his personality?
2. If Jesus has the ability to know what people are thinking, why do you think Jesus asks His disciples, "Who do people say I am?"
3. In verse 29 Jesus asks His disciples who they think He is. Peter is the only one who answers the question, but how do you think the rest of the disciples would have answered Jesus' question?
4. What are the possible reasons why, in verse 30, Jesus tells his disciples not to tell anybody who He is?
5. Let's read verse 31 again. How do you think the disciples made sense of what Jesus was telling them?
6. Let's read verse 32-33 again. Why is Jesus using such strong language with Peter?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. If you had been Peter, how do you think you would have responded to Jesus' strong language?
2. What do you think are the deeper reasons people hesitate to accept Jesus as the Messiah?
3. What is the most convincing evidence for you that Jesus is the Messiah?
4. If you had been walking with Jesus on that day, how would you have answered His questions, "But who do you say I am?"
5. What do you stand to lose and what do you stand to gain by following Christ?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **Jesus is the Messiah**. How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Your Invitation

[outline](#)

Mark 8:34 – 9:1

Message of Hope: Jesus wants you to turn from your sinful ways and follow Him.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was a recent time you received an invitation and accepted the invitation?

Bridge: Today's story is a personal invitation that Jesus gives to each one of us. He never forces, manipulates, or puts pressure on us to accept this invitation. He simply says, "if you want to," which seems a bit low key. But maybe it has to be that way, so let's read our story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 8:34 – 9:1
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. This story started with a crowd of people. Where do you think this crowd came from?
2. Jesus begins verse 34 with, "If any of you wants to be a follower" Why do you think that Jesus does not assume people want to be His disciple?
3. Jesus says, "you must turn from your selfish ways." How would a person go about learning what their selfish ways are?
4. What does a person look like who has taken up their cross and followed Christ?
5. Let's read verse 35 again. How would you try to explain to a five year old what it means to "give up your life" to Christ in order to "save it"?
6. Verse 38 also begins with the word "if". Let's read this verse again. Why do you think freedom of choice is so important to Jesus and the way His Kingdom works?
7. How would you describe the opposite of ashamed?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Who is someone you admire who has made this kind of life change; what differences have you noticed?
2. What are some of the things that keep people from making this kind of life change?
3. Let's read verse 36 again. How would you answer this question?
4. How does Satan try to discourage you as you follow Christ?
5. What do you think your next step is, as you continue to turn from selfish ways and follow Christ?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **Jesus wants you to turn from your sinful ways and follow Him.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

A Glimpse of Heaven

[outline](#)

Mark 9:1-13

Message of Hope: Our humble Savior is also our glorious King.

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2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is the highest place you have climbed to?

Bridge: Today's story begins with four people climbing up a mountain. But as we will soon discover, this story is unlike any story we have read in the book of Mark. It involves two other humans who had lived hundreds of years before Jesus' time. There is lots to dig into and talk about in this story, so let's read it.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 9:1-13
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Why do you think Jesus only takes three of His disciples?
2. Who are Elijah and Moses, where did they come from, and who might they represent?
3. Let's read verse 4. We are not told in this story, but what do you think Elijah, Moses, and Jesus were talking about?
4. What are possible reasons why God would send Elijah and Moses instead of angels?
5. Let's read verse 7-8 again. Who do you think spoke these words and what is their significance?
6. In verses 9-10, What contributed to their confusion?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. When you are really afraid, what do you usually do?
2. If you were to go on a spiritual retreat, where would you like to go and what would you like to do?
3. This story ended with the disciples being a little confused. What is something in your life, that is confusing and you wish was more clear?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Our humble Savior is also our glorious King.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Help My Unbelief

[outline](#)

Mark 9:14-29

Message of Hope: All things are possible when we believe God!

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

Welcome: We focus on three things: connecting with God, connecting with each other, and serving our world. In other words, this group does not exist for us. Someone invited you, and now it is your turn to invite others.

Setting the Context:

- This is a safe place to grow spiritually.
- We are a wide diversity of people—new Christians, long-time Christians, and people who are thinking about becoming Christians. We are glad all of you are here.
- You will notice we do not use a bunch of fancy religious language.
- We do not try to impress people with how much Bible quoting we can do. We are common people.
- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) Who have you known that could not hear or speak?

Bridge: Today's story is about a boy that could not speak or hear when controlled by an evil spirit. And people were beginning to wonder if the evil spirits were more powerful than Jesus since His disciples had just tried and failed to cast them out of the boy. As we read this story, notice how confused the crowd is. Notice how desperate the boy's father is. And notice how he asks Jesus to help his unbelief.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 9:14-29
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What does this story teach us about evil spirits?
2. This story begins with the teachers of religious law arguing with Jesus' disciples. Why do you think this situation sparked such an argument?
3. Let's read verse 19 again. Jesus seems to express frustration and impatience which is not typical. What do you think Jesus is trying to say?
4. Verses 22-24 are interesting. Let's read them again. What might have prompted this father to end his request with, "if you can"?
5. How is it possible for someone to both believe and have unbelief at the same time?
6. Let's read the last two verses again, 28-29. It almost seems that Jesus is suggesting that his disciples did not pray. What is Jesus trying to teach his disciples?
7. What might Jesus be referring to when He says in verse 29, "This kind"?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. There are several people in this story. Let's re-identify them. Who do you tend to resonate with? Why?
2. Who is someone you know that has a strong belief that what they ask of God, actually happens? And what gives them such a strong belief?
3. When was a time that you asked something of God and it did not happen; and when was a time when you asked and it did happen?
4. How do you fight against unbelief and encourage belief in your life?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **All things are possible when we believe God!** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Upside Down Greatness

[outline](#)

Mark 9:30-37

Message of Hope: In God's Kingdom, service is greatness!

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When you hear the word betrayal, what comes to your mind?

Bridge: Today's story is actually two stories. They may not seem to be related, but together they show what upside down greatness really means. The first story begins with the pain of being betrayed by someone and the second story ends with the importance of being a servant to the same people who betrayed you. This is not a natural response. We want to get revenge. Yet Jesus gives us an example of how to respond when we are betrayed.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 9:30-37
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Let's go back to verse 31-32 and read it again. Why do you think the disciples were afraid to ask?
2. In verse 31 when Jesus' disciples heard Him saying that He would be betrayed, what different possibilities may have raced through their minds as they tried to make sense of this?
3. Let's read verses 33-34 again. How could a misunderstanding of what Jesus said about His death and resurrection lead to a discussion about who would be the greatest?
4. Verse 35 is the punchline of this story so let's read this verse again. How is it that being last, makes one first in God's Kingdom?
5. It seems that out of the blue, Jesus uses the example of a child in verse 37. How does this verse connect to what Jesus is talking about?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Who is someone you know that lives out this servanthood principle in their life? How do they do it?
2. What would be the hardest thing for you about being a full-time servant?
3. Our story started with betrayal. What are some of the more common ways betrayal happens in our culture?
4. When being betrayed, how do you or how could you live as a servant?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **In God's Kingdom, service is greatness!** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Mini-Stories

[outline](#)

Mark 9:38-49

Message of Hope: (Group Leader: See the affirmation exercise the group does together which is listed at the bottom of the next page. You will need a piece of paper and pen for each person.)

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is one character quality you admire in someone else?

Bridge: Today's story is a collection of really short mini-stories. The first one begins with casting out demons and the last one ends with character qualities of salt. But each story has a punch line that Jesus is teaching us. Some of these mini-stories make sense and some of them may be hard to understand. So let's jump in and take a look at these mini-stories.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 9:38-49
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Let's go back to the first mini-story and read verses 38-41 again. This makes it sound like people have a default that is for God, unless they intentionally choose against Him. Is this what this is saying or how do you make sense of this mini-story?
2. This is one of those “truth sayings” of Jesus. How would one decide if this “reward” is talking about Heaven or a reward on this earth?
3. Let's read the next mini-story again in verse 42. What are the different ways we can cause children (or anyone) to sin?
4. Verse 43-48 is the longest mini-story, so let's read it again. What do you think Jesus is saying?

Leader's Tip: Why do some translations leave out verses 44 & 46? Since the KJV was translated into English, older Greek manuscripts have been discovered. So the deeper question becomes, over time, did copy scribes (who manually wrote out photo-copies of the Greek manuscripts), add additional information or did they delete information? Both options are possibilities.

KJV supporters would suggest that modern translations leave out Bible verses. This option believes that over time, copy scribes deleted information from the Greek manuscripts.

Modern translation supporters would suggest that the older Greek manuscripts are more accurate. And over time, copy scribes added information from side-margin notes into the Greek manuscripts that was not in the original. This would explain why additional verses show up in the newer Greek manuscripts from which the KJV was translated.

5. What does it mean in verse 49 to be seasoned or tested by fire?
6. The last mini-story is in verse 50, so let's read it. What are all the different qualities of salt?

Affirmation Directions: *Give each person a piece of paper and a pen.*

- **5-10 minutes** – Write each person's name down on the paper and list at least one quality that you have seen in their life. Also write how you have seen that quality lived out in their life. For some here today, it may be a quality that you have seen today or it may be a quality you have seen over time.
- **10-20 minutes** – Start with one of the CORE leaders. Go around the circle so that everyone can take a few minutes to share both the quality they wrote down and how they have seen it in their life. Then move to the next person and repeat the affirmation process.

Closing Question:

1. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?

Strong Marriages

[outline](#)

Mark 10:1-16

Message of Hope: God wants to bring healing, hope, and real happiness to your life.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) In our culture, what do you think the word “adultery” means?

Bridge: Today's story is about a very sensitive topic, adultery and divorce. We all live in a broken world where many have felt the hurt and pain from broken relationships. But there is hope. As we read this sensitive story, we pray that you will experience healing and encouragement.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 10:1-12
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Why do you think the question in verse 2, “Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife?” was used as a trap question?
2. Verse 4 is quoting the law Moses gave about divorce. Let's look in the side-margins and foot notes to find the original reference. Where is this quote found in the Old Testament and what additional information does this law include?
3. What do you think Jesus intended in verse 9 when he says, “let no one split apart what God has joined together”?
4. In verses 11-12, what do you think prompted Jesus' disciples to bring up this topic again.
5. What was God's ideal plan for marriage and where in this story do we find this summary?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What are some of the biggest threats to marriage in our culture?
2. Who is someone you know who fought to preserve their marriage? What made the difference?
3. No matter what a persons past experience has been and as all of us look to the future, what is one thing you can do to strengthen your own marriage or someone else's marriage?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **God wants to bring healing, hope, and real happiness to you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Simple Complexity

[outline](#)

Mark 10:13-22

Message of Hope: Even in a complex world, you can find peace and freedom.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is a care-free happy memory you have about your childhood?

Bridge: Today's stories contrasts the difference between a simple, trusting, and worry free relationship with Jesus with a complex, calculated, and worry or guilt driven relationship with Jesus.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 10:13-22
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. What are obvious and not so obvious differences you notice between these two stories and why do you think Mark put them back to back?
2. In verse 13, what could have caused the disciples to scold the parents for bringing their children to see Jesus?
3. Let's read verse 14 again. Why would Jesus have such a strong reaction to his disciples?
4. What makes Jesus' anger, anger without sin?
5. Let's read verses 15-16 again. In verse 15 what is the deeper message Jesus is saying?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. What are some ways you see God blessing your life?
2. How do you try to keep a child like relationship with Jesus?
3. How does life tend to complicate your relationship with Jesus?
4. How could you capture a simple, trusting, and worry free relationship with Jesus?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Even in a complex world, you can find peace and freedom.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Salvation Issues

[outline](#)

Mark 10:17-22

Message of Hope: Jesus always invites, but He never forces people.

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Breakfast

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is one of your favorite or most valued material possessions?

Bridge: Last week we read and contrasted two stories, but we did not talk much about the second story very much. Today's story is about a man with great material possessions. But these possessions became too important to him, even more important than eternal life. This story provides a lot to think about and talk about, so let's read it.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 10:17-22
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Why do you think this man knelt down to ask his questions?
2. Let's read verse 19 again. Jesus is quoting from the 10 Commandments. To refresh our memory, let's turn to Exodus 20:1-17 and read them.
3. Why do you think Jesus did not list all of the 10 Commandments?
4. Let's read verse 21 again. It may appear that Jesus asks this man to do something that is not part of the 10 Commandments. But which of the 10 Commandments did he lack and why was it crucial to his salvation?
5. If we are saved by grace, why does Jesus say that obedience to the 10 Commandments is important?
6. What does "treasure in heaven" refer to?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. After reading this story, how would you answer the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"
2. Jesus invited this man to take the next step of surrender. What is a next step that you sense Jesus is inviting you to take?
3. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
4. Remember, **Jesus always invites, but He never forces people.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Salvation Issues #2

[outline](#)

Mark 10:17-31

Message of Hope: Everything is possible with God.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When you hear the term “blind spot” what comes to your mind?

Bridge: Today's story is part two. Last week we looked at part one, so in order for today's story to make sense, let's read part one and part two and then focus our discussion on the second half. This story is about a blind spot that Jesus makes plain. It is mind boggling, and yet it is a hope-filled and encouraging breath of fresh air.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 10:17-31
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Let's go back to the beginning of today's story and read verses 23-24, why do you think the disciples were so amazed or astonished at Jesus' question?
2. Why would Jesus use the camel going through the eye of a needle as an example?
3. Let's read verse 26 again. This is the turning point. The disciples' understanding of salvation had just been shattered. What have the disciples just finally understood that caused them to ask this question?
4. Verse 27 is the punch line so let's read it again. How would you summarize this verse so a 4 year old child would understand?
5. Verse 31 is an interesting conclusion to this story. Let's read it again. If we could read between-the-lines, what is Jesus saying to His followers?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What do you think are some of the things in our culture that people trust in for eternal life?
2. What are some of the common things people are unwilling to give up in order to follow Christ?
3. What is something you have given up in the last couple years, to follow Christ?
4. The disciples had blind spots in their understanding that Jesus helped clarify. What possible blind spot could Jesus be trying to clarify in your life?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Everything is possible with God.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Upside Down Greatness, part 2

[outline](#)

Mark 10:32-45

Message of Hope: There is a Kingdom blessing when you live as a servant slave.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is a special favor you have asked for?

Bridge: Today's story begins with two disciples asking a special favor. But it ends with Jesus turning the common values of this world upside down. This world says, "look out for me, care for my things first, put others second, stand up for myself." Jesus says, "be a servant. Be a slave."

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 10:32-45
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Leaders Tip: Notice the same pattern in part one (Mark 9:30-37) and part two (today's story). First Jesus predicts his death. Second Jesus explains how a life of service and slavery is the greatest in God's Kingdom.

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Our story started in verse 32 with the disciples being amazed and the other people being afraid. What do you think they were amazed about and afraid about?
2. Let's go back and read verses 35-40. What do you think motivates or prompts James and John to ask such a favor?
3. Let's re-read verses 41-45 again. If you had been one of the other disciples, how do you think you would have responded to James and John's special request?
4. Jesus uses two strong words, servant and slave. Why does Jesus use these words and what are the implications for people to live their lives as servants and slaves?
5. In verse 43, Jesus said "But among you it will be different" and then goes on to talk about servants and slaves. That was 2000 years ago. How has it been different among Christ's followers?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Who is someone you know that lives their life as a servant and a slave and how do they go about living that way?
2. What are some of the blessings you have received while living as a servant slave?
3. How do you cope when people rejected your help and throw it back in your face?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **There is a Kingdom blessing when you live as a servant slave.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Desperate

[outline](#)

Mark 10:46-52

Message of Hope: When you cry out to God He does not ignore your call.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

Welcome: We focus on three things: connecting with God, connecting with each other, and serving our world. In other words, this group does not exist for us. Someone invited you, and now it is your turn to invite others.

Setting the Context:

- This is a safe place to grow spiritually.
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- We do not try to impress people with how much Bible quoting we can do. We are common people.
- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When we get desperate, sometimes we do things without thinking or caring what others think. When was a time when you were in a desperate situation?

Bridge: Today's story is short, only 5 verses. We will meet a blind guy, named Bartimaeus who is desperate to get Jesus' attention even though those around him are trying to discourage him. The good news is that Bartimaeus' persistent attempts to find Jesus pay off. So let's read the story to see what happens.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 10:46-52
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. This story begins by saying that they reached Jericho. What clues do we find in earlier stories as to where Jesus and His disciples had come from and how far they have traveled? (Encourage people to look at the maps in their Bible.)
2. Why do you think Bartimaeus addressed Jesus as “Jesus, Son of David”?
3. Let's read verses 49-52 again. If Bartimaeus was blind, why do you think Jesus asked him to come to Him, instead of going to where he was?
4. Jesus must have had a deeper reason for asking, “What do you want Me to do for you?” Why do you think Jesus asked this obvious question?
5. Let's read Bartimaeus' answer to Jesus' question in verse 51 again. Why do you think his answer was so specific, “I want to see!” instead of something like, “Do whatever you think will help me be ready for Heaven!”?
6. Let's read verse 52 again. How would you describe this faith to a 4 year old boy?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you had been blind Bartimaeus, how do you think you would have gone about getting Jesus' attention?
2. When was a time when you felt like you got Jesus' attention and He noticed you?
3. People told Bartimaeus to be quiet. Sometimes other people discourage us in our search for Jesus. When have you been discouraged in your search for Jesus?
4. If Jesus were to ask you, “What do you want Me to do for you?” what would you say today?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **when you cry out to God, He does not ignore you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Beginning of the End

[outline](#)

Mark 11:1-11

Message of Hope: Today is the beginning of the rest of your life.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* Who is a well known person that you have seen in person?

Bridge: Today's story is about a well known Person who comes to town. There is procession, a crowd who follow Him, and fanfare that makes it extra special. But this story is not going to follow typical celebrity style processions. Today's story is called, The Beginning of the End.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 11:1-11
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. This story is often referred to as the Triumphal Entry? What was triumphal about this and why do you think it ended so quick in verse 11?
2. This event had been predicted 500 years before in Zechariah 9:9, so many recognized this as another evidence of Jesus being the Messiah. Why do you think Jesus uses this event to mark the beginning of the end of His life and mission here on earth?
3. Let's read verse 2-3 again. What is significant about Jesus' use of a colt that has never been ridden?
4. Verses 8 and 9 talk about the crowd of people, Jesus being in the center of the procession, and how people had cut branches in the fields to make a path for him. Do you think this was a planned event, a last minute event, or something that developed?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you knew the end of your life was near, how would you live the last days of your life?
2. When we think about it, today is the beginning of the end for each one of us. What are some of the more important things that you would like to make a higher priority in your life?
3. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
4. Remember, **Today is the beginning of the rest of your life.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Bookends

[outline](#)

Mark 11:12-26

Message of Hope: Faith development is an adventure.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is one of your most favorite fruits?

Bridge: Today's story begins with a fruit tree and ends with the same fruit tree. But sandwiched in between these two trees is another story which almost seems to be out of place. So let's take a look at these stories and see if we can make sense of them.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 11:12-26
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Why do you think the temple scene is sandwiched in between the two fig tree stories?
2. Let's read verses 13-14 again. If it was not the season for figs, why would Jesus expect to find them on the tree and “curse” the tree since it was out of season?
3. Verses 15-18 may or may not be the first time Jesus has seen people buying and selling in the temple. Why would Jesus take such a drastic action in the temple this time?
4. What was it about this temple event in verse 18 that becomes the tipping point for planning to kill Jesus?
5. Let's read verses 22-26 again. When Peter points out the dead fig tree, why does Jesus respond by talking about faith and moving mountains?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. This “ask and believe” concept seems so straight forward, yet why do so many seem to not have this kind of experience?
2. What are some of the other things that God factors into his “ask and believe” promise?
3. When was a time you asked and believed and God answered you request?
4. When was a time God said no or wait?
5. When you need some undisturbed time with God, where do you go?
6. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
7. Remember, **Faith development is an adventure with God, not a formula.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Authorities

[outline](#)

Mark 11:27-33

Message of Hope: God, the ultimate authority, can be trusted.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When you hear the word “authority” what thoughts and feelings come to your mind?

Bridge: Today's story is a hot topic, authority. And it is a topic that everyone of us have to face in life and people deal with and respond to authority differently. So as we explore this story, let's be sensitive to people's sensitivities.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 11:27-33
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Verse 28 lists two key questions the leaders asked Jesus. Of all the questions these leaders could have asked Jesus, why do you think they focused on these two questions?
2. Let's read Jesus' response again in verse 29-30. Why does Jesus not directly answer their questions?
3. What would Jesus say are the real issues going on in this story?
4. If we could ask Mark, how would he answer these questions? What is the difference between human authority and God's authority?
5. How do most people respond to authority in our culture? Why?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Who is someone that has been a good authority role model for you?
2. Authority ultimately comes down to an obedience issues. How do you decide if a human authority goes against God's authority?
3. Why do you trust God as the ultimate authority in your life?
4. When was a time when you had to choose between human authority and God's authority?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **God, the ultimate authority, can be trusted.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Unexpected Turn

[outline](#)

Mark 12:1-12

Message of Hope: Jesus came to save us, but we get to decide if we will accept Him.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) If you were going to plant a vineyard, an orchard, or a garden, what are some of the things that would be at the top of your planting list?

Bridge: Today's story is a parable, which means it is a pretend story with a special message. It is about a vineyard and an owner who moves away. So he hires help to take care of his vineyard. But this story takes an unexpected turn of events when the religious leaders understand the deeper meaning of this parable.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 12:1-11
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. At what point in this story do you think the Pharisees realized the story was about them?
2. In verse 5, who do you think Jesus had in mind when He talked about the “other” servants who had been killed by the farmers?
3. Your Bible's footnotes or side notes might be of help. Where is Jesus quoting from?
4. Let's read verse 9 again. Who does Jesus have in mind when He says that He will give His vineyard to “others”?
5. What was the message Jesus was teaching His listeners by telling this story and this quote?
6. Let's read two verses from last weeks story, chapter 11 verse 28 and 33. This story is tied to last weeks story which dealt with the sensitive subject of authority. How does today's story answer their questions about Jesus' authority?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. If you had to leave town for an extended period of time, who would you ask to care for your house, vineyard, pets, or business and why would you choose them?
2. Who is someone, a servant, that God may be sending across your path and provide help, encouragement, or direction in your life and how do you receive them?
3. Where do you sense God is inviting you to work in His vineyard?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Jesus came to save us, but we get to decide if we will accept Him.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Trapped

[outline](#)

Mark 12:12-27

Message of Hope: There is life after death – when God will raise His people and take them to Heaven.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was a time when you were stuck or trapped?

Bridge: Today's story is actually two different stories that have a common theme of people trying to trap or trick Jesus. After last week's story, the church leaders are angry, so they turn up the heat and try to manufacture a way to arrest Jesus. Let's start with the last verse from last week's story and continue with the new stories.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 12:12-27
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Verse 14 drips with flattery. Why would the leaders think that flattery would help them trap Jesus?
2. Let's read verse 17 again. This question is about paying taxes. Although it failed, how do you think this question was suppose to be a trick question?
3. The Bible also says that everything belongs to God. So when Jesus says, "and give to God what belongs to God," what do you think Jesus is referring to?
4. The second story we read has a lot of people dying. In our culture, what are the different beliefs about death?
5. Let's read verse 24 again. Jesus says, "For when the dead will rise". What does this tell us about what Jesus believed about death?
6. Let's read verses 26-27 again. How do you makes sense of these verses. What is Jesus trying to say?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In verse 14 the leaders tried to flatter Jesus. How do you respond when people try to flatter you to get you to do something?
2. How do you go about giving to "Caesar" what belongs to him and giving to God what belongs to Him?
3. How would you have felt if you were a religious teacher and Jesus told you, "Your mistake is that you don't know the Scriptures and you don't know the power of God"?
4. What are some of the things you most look forward to about Heaven, why?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **There is life after death – when God will raise His people and take them to Heaven.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
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Lunch

Most Important

[outline](#)

Mark 12:28-34

Message of Hope: When feeling lost at sea and looking for direction, this story provides clear direction.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What is something you do most every day because you believe it has meaning and importance?

Bridge: Today's story boils the meaning of life down to what really matters at the end of the day. It is kind of like one of those stories we can come back to when we feel like we are lost at sea. In some ways this story might be familiar, but let's dig a little deeper. Today's story is called, *Most Important*.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 12:28-34
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. Most of the questions people have been asking Jesus are an attempt to trip Him up and trap Him. What clues in today's story do we find that this teacher of religious law is truly seeking and asking an honest and sincere question?
2. The last sentence in this story says that nobody else dared to ask Jesus any more questions. What do you think it is in this story that caused people to be afraid of asking more questions?
3. Let's read verses 28-31 again. Where do these commands come from in the Old Testament? Why do you think people often say that this is a summary of God's moral law, the 10 Commandments, which are found in Deuteronomy 5?
4. Let's read verses 29 and 32 again. This teacher (verse 32) understands Jesus' radical statement (verse 29) to claim that God is the one and only true God. If Jesus would have said this in our day, how do you think people would have responded?
5. The last part of verse 33 is profound. Let's read it again. Here this sincere religious teacher admits that the two-part command is more important than all the other laws of Moses. What do you think puts this command on a higher level of importance?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. If you had a chance to ask Jesus, face-to-face, one of your questions, what would you like to ask Him?
2. If you had been the person to ask Jesus this question, how would you have felt if Jesus would have responded to you by saying in verse 34, "you are not far from the Kingdom of God"?
3. Of this two-part commandment, which one was emphasized more while you were growing up? And even though they are equally important, which one do you find yourself emphasizing now?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **when feeling lost at sea and looking for clear direction, this story provides clear direction.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Giving

[outline](#)

Mark 12:35-44

Message of Hope: God knows our real motives.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When did you give a gift to someone that cost you more in terms of time, sacrifice, and money than others may have realized?

Bridge: True to the book of Mark, his stories are short and to the point. Today we will read short stories. They may not appear to have anything in common. But we may discover they have more of a connection than we originally thought.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 12:35-44
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging/Sharing Questions:

1. Why do you think Mark includes this story about David calling the Messiah his son?
2. There must have been some benefit for the religious teachers. Why would the teachers of religious law even want to teach that Jesus (the Messiah) was David's son?
3. Let's read the second story again, verses 38-40. Religious hypocrites have been around for a long time. They existed in Jesus' day and they exist in our day. So Jesus warns us about them. But why do you think people are tempted to use hypocrites as a reason not to follow Jesus?
4. If you were going to try to reach out and befriend, and hopefully inspire a hypocrite to change, what do you think might soften their heart?
5. Let's read the third story again, verses 41-44. Why do you think the previous story, in verse 40, and this third story would both highlight widows?
6. What is the message Jesus is trying to teach in this story?
7. Let's try to understand this story from the poor widow's perspective. If she knew about the hypocritical activity of the religious leaders, what would motivate her to give everything she had to live on?
8. Money is often a sensitive topic, but Jesus is not afraid to talk about it and highlights the faith of the poor widow. What blessings are given to the giver when they meaningfully give of their financial resources to God's work?
9. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
10. Remember, **God knows our real motives.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Deception

[outline](#)

Mark 13:1-23

Message of Hope: I don't have to be spiritually deceived.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

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Setting the Context:

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- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is something you have had to endure?

Bridge: Today's story is about the signs of the end of the world. But this story is also a bit confusing because Jesus seems to mix signs that relate to the destruction of Jerusalem together with signs about the end of the world. Let's see if we can figure out the difference.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 13:1-23
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Now that we have the big pictures, let's read this story again, one verse at a time, and see if we can determine if each sign is referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the world, or to both.
2. Let's read verse 13 again. Sometimes people think that “endures to the end” has nothing to do with being saved, but here Jesus links them together. Why do you think people say that enduring to the end has nothing to do with being saved?
3. Let's read verses 21-23 again. People often say, “I saw it with my own eyes” as if that makes it “true”. Since false prophets can perform signs and wonders, how can I know if what I see with my own eyes is true or deceptive?
4. If these deceptions will be so convincing that even if possible, even the most spiritual people would be deceived, what can we do to make sure we don't get sucked into the deception?
5. This story may seem like a lot of doom and gloom. But woven throughout this story what are we told to do?

LeadersTip: verse 5 - watch; verse 6 - not be alarmed; verse 10 - not worry; verse 13 - stand firm/endure; verse 18 - pray.

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. When have you been deceived, even if it was by a slight of hand or what some call a magic trick?
2. Have you ever been persecuted in a small or large way? What happened?
3. Having read this story of warning, what could you do to make sure you are not deceived by people telling you things that are not true spiritually?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **You don't have to be deceived spiritually.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
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Lunch

Keep Watching

[outline](#)

Mark 13:21-37

Message of Hope: Jesus is coming soon – keep watching.

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Check-In:

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2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* Growing up, what is something you heard so many times that it almost lost its significance or punch?

Bridge: Today's story begins with the last few verses from last week where Jesus warns of such smooth deceptions that if possible, even the most spiritual person would be deceived. As we explored last week, there are things that can protect us from these amazingly convincing deceptions. Today's story continues with tips so that we do not get tricked and then this story ends with hope and one of the best promises.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 13:21-37
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. *Optional recap from last week:* People often say, “I saw it with my own eyes” as if that makes it dependable and “true”. Verses 21-23 tells us that false prophets can perform signs and wonders, so how would one know if what they see with their own eyes is actually true or a smooth deception?
2. Verses 24-25 lists four interesting signs that are to happen before Jesus comes back. What are they? Does anyone know enough history to know if and when they happened?
3. Let's read verse 26-27 again. There are a lot of beliefs floating around about how Jesus will come back. Jesus himself says how He will come back. What are the key items in these verses that will keep one from being deceived?
4. Let's read verses 28-31 again. How do you make sense of verse 30?
5. If we can read the signs and know that Jesus' coming is near, why do you think Jesus says two times that nobody knows the day nor the hour?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Someone please read the last part of this story again, verses 34-37. In today's culture, how are people sleeping?
2. When you see buds on the trees you know Spring is near. What are the signs that you see around the world that suggest Jesus' coming is near?
3. What is something you feel that Jesus has put you in charge of doing or taking care of, until He comes back?
4. What is something that helps you stay at the edge of continually watching while you wait for Jesus' coming?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Jesus is coming soon – keep watching.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Loved by the Unloved

[outline](#)

Mark 14:1-9

Message of Hope: Jesus loves to spend time with those who are unloved.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* If you had saved an entire year's wages, how would you like to spend it?

Bridge: Today's story is about someone who spends an entire year's wage on one thing. It is also a touching story of Jesus's love for the unloved and their love for him.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 14:1-9
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Look in the side notes in your Bible and let's find out what the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread mean?
2. Let's read verse 3 again. People usually don't recover from leprosy but Simon seems to have been healed. Any ideas or clues to Simon's background and how he was healed?
3. Who do you think this lady was and why do you think this lady used such an expensive perfume when there were cheaper options?
4. Let's read verses 6-9 again. Why do you think Jesus aggressively defends this lady?
5. What does Jesus mean when He says, "She has done what she could and has anointed my body for burial ahead of time"?
6. What is it about this story that it would be remembered and discussed wherever the Good News is preached around the world?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. How would you go about life if you knew someone was really trying to kill you?
2. If you knew you did not have long to live, who would you like to spend time with?
3. What is one of the most beautiful and wonderful things someone has done for you?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. How has Jesus defended you?
6. Remember, **Jesus loves to spend time with those who are unloved.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Betrayed

[outline](#)

Mark 14:10-26

Message of Hope: Jesus promised to wait until we are with him in Heaven to eat this special meal again.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) How would you describe betrayal? Or maybe you have been betrayed, what did it feel like?

Bridge: Today's story is a story of betrayal. But it ends with a promise of Jesus. A promise that reminds us that either Jesus is the greatest liar that ever lived or He is coming back to take His faithful follower to Heaven.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 14:10-26
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What do you think would motivate one of Jesus' closest friends to betray Him?
2. Let's read verses 13-16 again. What do you think these two disciples were thinking as they experienced Jesus' predictions coming true?
3. Someone please read verses 17-21. Why would Jesus so quickly expose the betrayal that was going to happen, during the meal?
4. Do you think it is easier to be born into a non-Christian family and then learn about Jesus on your own, or into a Christian family where you are taught about Jesus and may betray Him?
5. Let's read the last few verses, 22-26. How might the broken bread represent Jesus' body and how might the spilled (poured out) wine represent his blood?
6. What is the covenant Jesus is talking about and how does Jesus' blood confirm the covenant between God and his people?
7. Why does Jesus end with this promise in verse 25?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In today's world, what are some of the common ways people betray Jesus and may not even know it or even thought about it?
2. What was a time when you heard something or read something that prompted you to ask God, 'Is it I or does this apply to me?'
3. This special meal is commonly called communion. When was the last time you participated in communion? Or maybe this story has raised some questions; what question might you have?
4. When would be a good time, in the next couple weeks, for us to share communion together?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Jesus promised to wait until we are with Him in Heaven to eat this special meal together.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Reconnecting

[outline](#)

Mark 14:27-42

Message of Hope: Even when we may desert and deny Christ, He wants to reconnect with us.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

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Check-In:

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2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When is a time you felt alone in life?

Bridge: Today's story is not normal human behavior. Most of us, when abandoned by someone would have very little interest in reconnecting with the person who deeply hurt us. Today's story is about betrayal, abandonment, and denial – with a 180 degree turn.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 14:27-42
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In the first couple of verses of this story, Jesus gives a prophecy and a promise to His disciples. What is the prophecy and what is the promise? And how did the disciples respond to both?
2. In verse 30, why do you think Jesus gets so blunt with Peter and tells him what he is going to do?
3. Let's read verses 32-34 again. The last sentence of verse 34 says, “Stay here and keep watch with Me.” This could have a lot of meanings. What do you think they were to “keep watch” for?
4. In these verses, Jesus uses words like, “deeply troubled, distressed, crushed with grief”. His death is just around the corner and yet what do you think are some of the other things that are weighing so heavily on Him?
5. Someone please read verses 35-38 again. Even today people will say “not my will, but your will be done.” What do they mean when they say this?
6. In verse 38, it sounds like Jesus wanted the disciples to pray, not necessarily for Him, but for themselves and the temptation they were going to face. Why do you think prayer is the key to overcoming temptation?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. If a three year old boy asked you what prayer was, how would you answer so that it made sense to him?
2. How does prayer actually help a person overcome temptation?
3. Jesus predicted all of His disciples would desert Him. All of His disciples vowed they would not. How does a person go about reconnecting with Christ after denying and deserting Him?
4. When was a time you reconnected with Christ?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Even though we may desert and deny Christ, He wants to reconnect with you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Evidence

[outline](#)

Mark 14:42-52

Message of Hope: Evidence builds a strong faith in Christ.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When was the last time you saw or knew of someone who had been arrested?

Bridge: Today's story could be confused with a crime scene but the police are not your typical police. In fact the whole thing is a setup to frame an innocent person. But even in this unjust set up, some of the most convincing evidence is given that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 14:42-52
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Verse 43 suggests that Jesus knew Judas had arrived even before everyone else knew. How do you think Jesus knew His betrayer had arrived?
2. Jesus did not have a history of being violent. So why would the crowd come with weapons to arrest Jesus?
3. Let's read verses 48-49 again. Verse 49 says that these things have been penned to fulfill what the Scripture said about Jesus. Sometimes Bibles have footnotes or endnotes that cross reference to other Scriptures. What are these verses? And let's read some of them.
4. Why do you think Mark includes that last two verses in the story?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. In this story people responded to a crisis in different ways. How do you think you would have responded in this situation?
2. Judas denied Christ with a kiss. How are you or have you been tempted to deny Christ?
3. This story is about evidence. What is some of the most convincing evidence for you, that Jesus is God's Son, the Messiah?
4. If Jesus was to "arrest" your attention, what would be your next step in following Christ?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Evidence builds a strong faith in Christ.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Renewed Promise

[outline](#)

Mark 14:53-65

Message of Hope: Jesus promised again, that He is coming back to take us home.

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Check-In:

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2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When you hear the word “oxymoron”, what comes to your mind?

Bridge: Today's story seems like an oxymoron. The very people who were looking for the Messiah to come are the same people who reject Jesus and falsely accuse Him. But even in the midst of being falsely accused, Jesus renews His promise to us.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 14:53-65
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. In verse 53, why do you think everyone was gathered at the high priests home instead of at the office?
2. Someone read verses 51 and 52 from last week's story and 54 from today's story. What clues might suggest that these three verses refer to the same person or possibly different people.
3. Let's read verses 58-62 again. Of all the false testimonies against Jesus, why do you think Mark only records the false testimony in verse 58?
4. Why had Jesus remained silent during the false charges, but then responds when the high priest asks him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed one?”
5. Someone please read verses 63-65 again. What is blasphemy and what made Jesus' response blasphemy?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. When was a time when you were falsely accused? What did it feel like?
2. In today's world, what are different ways that people follow Jesus at a distance?
3. What are some of the more convincing evidences that Jesus' claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God, is true?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Jesus again promised that He will come back to take His people home.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Close Denial

[outline](#)

Mark 14:66-72

Message of Hope: Close denial is better than complete abandonment of Christ.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) What words would you use to describe how you felt, if or when, you were rejected?

Bridge: Today's story is often used to highlight how Peter denied Christ three times. But Peter is the only disciple that is still following close to Christ. Even close enough to deny him. All the rest had long abandoned Christ. Today's story explores the blessing of being close enough to Christ to deny Him.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 14:66-72
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. When Peter heard the first rooster crow in verse 68, is there anything in this story that suggests he realized what he had just done or do you think he was clueless of what was happening?
2. Let's read verse 69 again. What do you think motivated this girl to zero in on Peter and continued to talk about him being with Jesus?
3. What is different and what is similar between Peter's three denials?
4. Verse 71 is the crux of the story. Let's read it in all the different versions we have here. What are the differences between swearing and cursing?
5. This story ends with Peter weeping because of what he did. If you had been Peter at this point, what new resolution might you have made as you moved forward?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. What is one of the spiritual lows you have experienced in your life?
2. When did you take some risks to follow Jesus?
3. Peter often gets criticized for denying Christ, but he was the only disciple that was still following close to Christ. All the others had run away. What helps you stay close to Christ, even when others have distanced themselves from Christ.
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **Close denial is better than complete abandonment of Christ.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
- Put an Empty Chair in the middle of your prayer circle. When you talk with someone who needs hope and courage, tell them about this group and invite them to come next week.
- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Accused

[outline](#)

Mark 15:1-15

Message of Hope: Jesus went through this to save you.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

Breakfast

Welcome: We focus on three things: connecting with God, connecting with each other, and serving our world. In other words, this group does not exist for us. Someone invited you, and now it is your turn to invite others.

Setting the Context:

- This is a safe place to grow spiritually.
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- We do not try to impress people with how much Bible quoting we can do. We are common people.
- Encourage those who like to talk to give a opportunity for everyone to participate.

Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* As a child, were you ever bullied or pushed around by others? What happened?

Bridge: Today's story is about adult bullies who falsely accused Jesus and arranged for His death sentence. At times it still happens today. But in today's story, everyone knew these accusations were not true.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 15:1-15
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. This might seem obvious to some, but why do you think they took Jesus to Pilate?
2. Let's read verse 2 in the different translations we have here. Most all translations include the word "you". Why does Jesus answer this way, instead of simply saying, "Yes I am"?
3. Verse 6 introduces the governor's custom of releasing one prisoner that the people requests. Do you have any footnotes in your Bible that help us understand where this custom of releasing a prisoner during the Passover came from?
4. What do you think Pilot really believed about Jesus?
5. If Jesus is going to be crucified, why would Pilate have him flogged first?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you had been a mouse in the corner watching this story unfold, at what point in this story would you have realized that Jesus was innocent and the leaders were making all this up?
2. When in your life did you begin to realize that Jesus went through this, not to be popular, but so you could be saved?
3. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
4. Remember, **Jesus went through this to save you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

The Death Sentence

[outline](#)

Mark 15:21-32

Message of Hope: Jesus accepted the death sentence so that you and I could accept an eternal life sentence.

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2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* When is the last time you attended a funeral or memorial service?

Bridge: Today's story is about a funeral where most of the attendees came to mock and scoff at the person. As inappropriate as this sounds, it really happened and in some ways this still happens today. Let's read the story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 15:21-32
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Our story began with an innocent passerby, Simon, who is forced to carry Jesus' cross. What do you think was going through his mind as he tried to make sense of what was happening?
2. Let's read verse 23 again. Two questions – 1) What is Myrrh? 2) If everyone was so against Jesus, why would they even think to offer him wine drugged with myrrh?
3. Would someone read verse 24-28 again. Does your Bible's footnotes say anything about where in the Bible it was predicted that they would throw dice or cast lots to see who got Jesus' clothing?
4. Any ideas as to why two other men were crucified with Jesus?
5. Let's read the last part of this story again, verses 29-31. Why do the mockers focus on these two accusation: (1) rebuilding the temple in 3 days, and (2) Jesus could save others, but could not save himself?
6. Verse 32 says, “so we can see it and believe Him.” Why did they think they would believe if Jesus did these miracles now?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. In today's world, if someone is going to mock and scoff Jesus, what are some of the more common ways they go about doing it?
2. If you had been Simon the passerby, forced to carry Jesus' cross, what might have been going through your mind as you carried the cross?
3. What symbolic crosses tend to weigh you down in life?
4. Even though Jesus did not accept the wine drugged with myrrh, people in our culture often drown pain of all kinds. How do people typically drug down physical pain, emotional pain, or any kind of pain?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **Jesus accepted the death sentence so that you and I could accept an eternal life sentence.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists “for those who are not yet here.”
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Abandoned

[outline](#)

Mark 15:33-41

Message of Hope: At times we may feel abandoned, but God is still with us.

The Basic 8: Oatmeal Can, Connection Card envelopes, Post card invitation cards, Taco Salad sign up sheet, extra New Living Translation Bibles, Child Safety Poster (to post), Blessing List, and Link to online Simple Church Weekly Report Form (This is the Details Coordinator's responsibility).

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: (*short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first*) When was one of the last times the electricity and lights went out and everything was dark?

Bridge: In today's story the lights go out at noon and everything becomes dark. Some people may have wondered what had happened and others knew something supernatural was happening.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 15:33-41
(*Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.*)

Digging Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. At noon, when everything turned dark, what kind of rumors do you think spread around the town and countryside?
2. Let's read verse 34 again. Do you think God had abandoned Jesus, and why do you think that Jesus felt abandoned?
3. What is the difference between what Jesus said, "My God, my God" and taking God's name in vain?
4. Someone read verses 37-38 again. Does your Bible footnote or cross-references, reference any additional information about Jesus' loud cry?
5. What do you think is the meaning or significance of the Temple curtain being torn from top to bottom?
6. Let's read verse 39 again. What might have been the tipping point that convinced this soldier that Jesus was the Son of God?

Sharing Questions: (*50% of your study time*)

1. There are lots of people in today's story. If you could have been one of them, which one would you choose? Why?
2. What part of Jesus' death do you find most convincing that He is the Son of God?
3. When was a time when you felt abandoned or completely on your own and alone in life?
4. In today's world, how do people feel abandoned?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **At times we may feel abandoned, but God is still with us.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
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Lunch

Risky Business

[outline](#)

Mark 15:42-47

Message of Hope: The Cross gives hope to rich and poor, male and female.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is a risk, small or large, you have taken in life?

Bridge: Today's story is about risk taking. We often think about risk-taking in the context of business, but today's story is going to focus our attention on another kind of risk-taking that is much more difficult, where a lot more is at stake, and the personal reward and loss is much greater.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 15:42-47
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. We are not told a lot about Joseph. Does your Bible have any additional footnotes or cross-references telling more about him?
2. Let's read verse 42-43. What were the risks that Joseph took when he asked Pilate for Jesus' body?
3. Why do you think Mark begins this story by emphasizing that "this all happened on Friday, the day of preparation, the day before the Sabbath"?
4. What do you think is significant about the Roman officer's confirmation that Jesus was indeed dead?
5. Someone please read verses 46-47 again. What thoughts and feelings might have been going through Joseph's mind as he was taking Jesus' body down from the cross?
6. Mary Magdalene shows up in today's story, in last week's story, and in next week's story. Why do you think Mark continues to highlight her presence, when others are not mentioned?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Pilot had sentenced an innocent man to politically please the crowd. Now he has confirmed that Jesus is dead. If you had been Pilot, what thoughts and feeling would have been going through your mind?
2. What are some of the current risks people face today when they follow Jesus?
3. If you were to take a risky step like Joseph did, what could you lose and what could you gain?
4. If you had had been one of the two Mary's that saw where Jesus was buried, what do you think you would have done next?
5. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
6. Remember, **The Cross gives hope to rich and poor, male and female.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

- We are blessed by being part of this group, but it exists "for those who are not yet here."
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- Close by saying the Blessing List blessing together.

Lunch

Empty

[outline](#)

Mark 16:1-8

Message of Hope: The empty tomb invites all of us to follow and obey Christ.

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Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What was a highlight of your week?
3. And...*[insert rotation question]*?

Children's Check-In: What did you enjoy this week? (or, they can answer the adult questions)

Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
- How did you recognize and accept God's invitation to join Him in His work this past week?
- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)* What is something you like to find empty?

Bridge: There are many things we do not like to find empty. But some things are better found empty than full. Today's story is one awesome example of something that is better found empty.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 16:1-8
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. In verse 1, Mark includes Salome. What additional information does your Bible's footnotes and cross-references say about this person?
2. Mark starts this story by saying it was Saturday evening, when the Sabbath ended. Why do you think it is pertinent to highlight this detail that Sabbath had ended?
3. Most people think the day changes at midnight. But in this story, it states that it was after the Sabbath, Saturday evening, when they went to buy burial supplies. How do you make sense of this difference?
4. Let's read verse 7-8 again. Why do you think Jesus mentions Peter by name?
5. Verse 7 says that Jesus had told them He would meet them in Galilee after He had risen. Where does Mark record Jesus actually saying this? And what would be significant about this prophecy?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If you had been one of the people who had watched Jesus die, taken down from the cross, buried in the tomb, and then discovered an empty tomb on Sunday morning, what do you think you would have done?
2. What kind of things soften your heart and draw you close to Jesus?
3. Who are a few people God has used in your life to help and inspire you to follow Jesus?
4. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
5. Remember, **The empty tomb invites all of us to follow and obey Christ.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Wrap Up:

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Lunch

Believed & Baptized

[outline](#)

Mark 16:9-20

Message of Hope: Even though the disciples were slow to believe, God did not give up on them.

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Children go to Adventurers

God Moments:

- Where did you see God at work this past week?
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- How did God use you to show up in someone's life this past week?

Needed for today: *Today's story will invite people to prepare to be baptized or re-baptized in the coming weeks. Be sure to have a small stack of Connection Card Envelopes to share with everyone. And be sure to have the box on the table so people know where to put the Connection Card at their own leisure.*

Needed for today: *Which book of the Bible should we start next week?*

Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first) What is something you believe strongly in, even if others do not agree with you?*

Bridge: Today's story is the last story in the book of Mark. He has told the stories, presented the evidence for Jesus Christ, and invited people to follow Jesus. Jesus has died, rested in the grave on Sabbath, and was raised from the grave. After all this, it is hard to believe that Jesus' own disciples had a hard time believing – that gives all of us hope so let's read the story.

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark 16:9-20
(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. Notice the people Jesus appear to and the order in which He appears to them; first to an individual (Mary Magdalene) who goes and tells the disciples. Second, He appears to two others, and then third, He appears to the eleven disciples. Why do you think Jesus did not begin with the 11 disciples?
2. Where was the 12th disciple?
3. Let's read verses 15-18 again. How many times is the word “will” or “shall” used in these verses?
4. How and where do we see these kind of things happening around us in today's world?
5. Why does Mark emphasize and link believing with being baptized?

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1. If Jesus had lived in our lifetime, who do you think He would send you to tell? Why?
2. Being slow to believe, is not wrong, since the disciples were slow to believe. But eventually each person has to decide. What has helped convince you, or what has helped make you a stronger believer in Jesus Christ?

Mark connects believing with baptism. There may be someone here that would like to prepare for baptism. Or, maybe there is someone who has already been baptized, has then gone their own way for a while, and would like to be re-baptized. Take one of these Connection Card Envelopes and check the box that talks about baptism. Put it in the box on the table and we will plan a special time for your baptism or re-baptism.

3. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
4. Remember, **Even though the disciples were slow to believe, God did not give up on them.** How can this group pray for you this week?

Which book of the Bible should we begin next week?

template

[outline](#)

Mark ?

Message of Hope:

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Kick-off Question: *(short answers, go around the circle, a co-leader goes first)*

Bridge: Today's story

Read the Bible Story from a modern translation: Mark ?

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

Digging Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1.

Sharing Questions: *(50% of your study time)*

1.

2. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?
3. Remember, **Message of hope**. How can this group pray for you this week?

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