

Homegroup Notes for Week Beginning March 15th, 2026.

Introduction:

The next few housegroup notes follow our morning services as we look at the second half of Mark's gospel. The pivot of the gospel, which sees Jesus move from his ministry in Galilee to set a course for Jerusalem and the cross, comes when he asks first, '**Who do the crowds say that I am?**' and then follows this with the critical question, '**Who do you say I am?**' We left the gospel at this point last term. Now, as we move towards Easter, we plot the journey of Jesus to the cross and the resurrection. It is a bit of a mouthful, but the second half of our look at Mark's Gospel is less 'Who is this man?' and more 'How is Jesus the Messiah?'

From a discipleship point of view, we might say, *To enter this life of faith we need to know **who** Jesus was and **how** Jesus was **who** Jesus was, in order that we might know **who** we are and **how** we are to be **who** we are.* The Bible Project introduction to Mark's gospel says, *The structure of Mark's Gospel provides the key to the author's purpose. The first half of the Gospel concerns the identity of Jesus as the mighty Messiah and Son of God (Mark 1:1–8:30). The second half concerns the mission of Jesus (Mark 8:31–16:8). Shockingly, the Messiah is not here to conquer the Roman legions but to suffer and die as an atoning sacrifice for sins. Mark writes to show that Jesus' crucifixion does not negate his claim to be the Messiah but rather affirms it! His faithfulness to this mission becomes the model for all discipleship. Following Jesus means denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following him (Mark 8:34).*

Each week in the spring, we will be reading a chapter of Mark together. The speaker will be concentrating on a section of that chapter to preach. Our services will culminate in our celebration of Easter from Maundy Thursday through Good Friday to Easter Sunday.

In housegroup, you might begin by asking:

- What stood out to you in the passage?
- What did you find difficult to understand or troubling?
- What practical application do you think we need to remember?
- What does the passage offer in answering the question 'What sort of Messiah is Jesus?'

Perhaps you might like to agree on a memory verse from each chapter that you will seek to learn together? Perhaps you might like to resolve to do something as an act of discipleship or witness from each chapter and hold each other to account?

Further resources worth drawing from are:

- This Bible Project overview video: <https://bibleproject.com/videos/mark/>
- This Bible Project guide, <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-mark/>
- Mark for Everyone by Tom Wright

Do take time to pray each week for each other, for the church, and for any witnessing opportunities people might be having.

Mark 12



As we approach the conclusion of Mark's gospel, there is growing tension between Jesus and the religious leaders- and sometimes, as evidenced in **Luke 20.27-40** (parallel to **Mark 12.18-27**), between different groups of religious leaders.

It is leaders who are portrayed as most prone or most responsible for neglecting the heart of the gospel in seeking to justify themselves or protect their own doctrinal preferences. Begin this evening by reading **Mark 12.28-34**, where a more sympathetic and open religious leader is encountered.

- What is the centre of gravity to which Jesus draws people in this exchange?
- Spend some time in prayer for your group out of this conviction. You may like to begin with a short time of confession.
- You might also like to pray for leaders in the church- maybe spend some time listening to God and sharing what you think you should pray for them?



Read **Mark 12**- you might like to offer these questions before reading and then get people into pairs to share any thoughts before sharing more widely as a group
What does this passage communicate about Jesus as Saviour and as LORD?

What areas of dispute are covered?

Where can you see a sense of growing confrontation that will lead to the cross?

For most of this evening, our focus will be on verses 1-12

- Who is this parable addressed to- you may have to look back to the end of chapter 11 to find out? How might this affect how we read it today?
- The parable centres on the management of a vineyard.
 - Read Isaiah 5.1-7. What does this passage provide in helping us to understand the parable in Mark 12?
 - Read John 15.1-8. What does this passage provide in helping us to understand the parable in Mark 12?
- What does the parable suggest is the aim of the tenants? How are they going to achieve this?
- If you have time you might like to read Psalm 118, which includes the verses quoted in Mark 12. What does a reading of this Psalm add to our understanding of Jesus' words in Mark 12?
- What does Romans 8.14-17 suggest about who will inherit 'the vineyard' and how they will inherit it?
- How does this encounter anticipate the events of Easter? How does it help us understand the meaning of the cross and the resurrection?



Close by spending some time reading verses 41-44.

What are you being called to offer to Jesus at this time?

You might like to play 'I will offer up my life' as you consider this-

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1oLw8GwhFcug1wZ9H4hzUU?si=fd46cc4a68b84ae1>