

# Unexpected Hope

November 1, 2020



## The Unexpected King: The Gospel of Mark

Group Discussion Guide

### Begin with prayer

As you begin your gathering, designate someone to pray. Sit upright in silence together as a community for a brief time.

Instruct your group to notice their breathing, what they feel in their body. Encourage them to breathe in the presence of God. Then, exhort them to exhale the thoughts, worries, and frustrations of the day.

Maintain a few more seconds of silence. Then, when the time feels right and everyone seems settled, pray **Psalm 121**:

*Father,*

*We lift our eyes to the hills. From where does our help come?*

*Our help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.*

*You will not let our feet be moved; he who keeps us will not slumber.*

*Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The LORD is our keeper; the LORD is our shade on our right hands.*

*The sun shall not strike us by day, nor the moon by night.*

*The LORD will keep us from all evil; he will keep our lives.*

*The LORD will keep our going out and our coming in from this time forth and forevermore.*

*Amen.*

### Read this overview

During this 13-week series, we opened the Book of Mark together to study the life of Jesus—The Unexpected King. During this series, we hoped to gain a better understanding of who Jesus is and what it really means to be his disciple.

This past weekend Tom and Eric preached on **Mark 16:1-8** and the Unexpected Hope Jesus brings us.

### Scripture + Discussion

*This week's goal is to consider the unexpected ending of Mark and how our faith should be lived out, based on hope, even though we may still have some unanswered questions.*

Read through **Mark 16:1-8**. Then, use the questions below to guide your discussion to hit on the above objectives.

Here are a few questions to help guide this time:

1. What from this weekend's sermon deepened your faith? What resonated with you?
2. Why do you think that Jesus' resurrection account in Mark is different than how it is portrayed in Matthew (**Matthew 28:1-15**) or Luke (**Luke 24:1-53**) or John (**John 20:1-21:25**)?
3. Define hope in a few words or sentences. How does a hope differ from a want, wish, or desire?
4. When was a time in your life things felt hopeless? How did hopelessness lead to doubt and unanswered questions? How did hopelessness affect your relationship with God and others?
5. Mark's gospel ends a little differently than the other gospels because it ends without anyone actually having *seen* the risen Jesus, just the proclamation that he has risen. This is very applicable to our situation today. We have not physically seen, felt, or heard the risen Jesus, but we have the proclamation and testimony of the Scriptures and believers for the last 2000 years. The women had many questions and we might too. How do you live out your faith/spirituality whenever you have unanswered questions?
6. What are some questions about your faith that often arise? What is your typical response whenever you have questions about your faith? How do you cope with these questions (i.e. push them to the side, research)?
7. Every day we have to contend with the reality of Jesus' empty tomb. In what ways have you or do you still contend with that truth? How does that wrestling affect your faith?
8. How has or how does the hope of the resurrection work its way down into your everyday life?
9. How can you grow in or practice hope this week?

## **Accountability**

Take some time this week to split your group into smaller or gendered groups and share your answers to the accountability questions below and go over the challenge for this week. Be sure to follow up on anything that was shared last week.

- Have you memorized **Philippians 2:5-11**?
- What has your time in God's Word and prayer been like this week?
- What have you learned from Jesus this week?
- Have you consistently reflected the love of Christ to those in your life this week (such as your spouse, children, or co-workers)?
- Where have you wrestled with temptation this week?
- What sins do you need to confess right now?
- Have you been 100% honest?

### **Finish with prayer**

Like each week finish your group session with prayer. You might designate someone in your group to write down everyone's prayer requests and then send them to the whole group for everyone to be praying about through the week.

- What is on your heart that you need prayer for?
- Who in your life needs prayer?

Have someone close your time together by interceding for the requests that were shared.