

The Unexpected Gift

October 4, 2020



The Unexpected King: The Gospel of Mark

Group Discussion Guide

Begin with prayer

As you begin your gathering, designate someone to pray the Holy Spirit would lead and guide your time together. Before they do so, spend a few moments together in prayerful silence. Then, after a few seconds of quiet centering, have the specified person pray for the group.

Read this overview

During this 13-week series, we are going to be opening up the book of Mark together to study the life of Jesus—The Unexpected King. During this series, we will gain a better understanding of who Jesus is and what it really means to be his disciple.

This past weekend Dan preached on **Mark 14** and the Unexpected Gift given to Jesus.

Scripture + Discussion

The goal of your discussion this week is to discuss our personal devotion to King Jesus.

Take turns reading through all the way through **Mark 14:1-11**. Then, use the questions below to guide your discussion to hit on the above objectives.

Here are a few questions to open and guide this time:

- What from this passage/sermon challenged or deepened your discipleship to Jesus?
- Picture yourself in the text of **Mark 14:1-11**. In this text, Mary with passion, love, and vulnerability, “wasted” the entirety of her greatest asset on Jesus. What do you think was stirring in Mary’s heart that prompted her to do such a thing? When was a time you had similar feelings for something? Do you have that feeling for Jesus? Explain.
- What do you think prevents you from feeling and acting this way towards Jesus? What falsehoods or strongholds blocking your way?
- Now, imagine being one of the disciples. What feelings do you think were stirring in their hearts that prompted them to chastise Mary? What were their reasons for chastising Mary? Has there ever been a time when you had similar feelings against someone who acted like Mary?

- Jesus said that Mary’s action towards him was “beautiful.” What do you think made that so? What is the difference between a beautiful action and an action done out of utility or practicality?
- In your spiritual life, do you find yourself “going through the motions” and opting for utility and practicality or do you act with purpose and love and intention like Mary? What would it look like for you to foster a spiritual life that operates more out of beauty than practicality?
- **Read Mark 12:41-44.** How does this story compare to the story you just read in **Mark 14**?
- In both stories, we are being challenged to be extravagant in our devotion to Jesus. When was a time when you did this? When was a time you were invited to do this by the Holy Spirit, but didn’t? Explain.
- What would it look like for you to be extravagant in your love for Jesus today?

For further study:

- Read **1 Samuel 16:1-13** and **2 Samuel 2:1-7**. Have your group compare and contrast those scenes with **Mark 14:1-11**. Perhaps ask, “What do these scenes have to teach us about what’s happening here between Mary and Jesus in **Mark 14**?”
- In both of these texts, David is anointed so he can become king. In **Mark 14**, the same thing is happening with Jesus. Mary anoints Jesus to prepare him to become King. That’s why Jesus tells her, “Wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.” That isn’t just because she will now become written in the gospels, but because if the gospel is “Jesus is King,” then her anointing him is part and parcel of making that happen.
- It should also be noted that Mark’s gospel points to Jesus being King. You might ask, “At this point in Mark’s gospel, how does it help you see that Jesus is the true King of both Israel and the world?” Then point them to specific passages such as **Mark 1:1**, **Mark 1:14-15**; **Mark 6: 7-29**; **Mark 8:27-30**; **Mark 11:1-10**; and finally **Mark 14:1-11**.

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

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.