

THE BIBLE RECAP

KNOWING JESUS SERIES

KNOWING JESUS



AS SERVANT

**A 10-SESSION STUDY ON THE
GOSPEL OF MARK**

TARA-LEIGH COBBLE

General Editor, Creator of D-Group International

Past Praise for the KNOWING JESUS SERIES

“In true Tara-Leigh fashion, this study is easy to follow while also challenging you to dig deeper into what the Word is saying. It’s more than simply reading the Bible and answering some questions. It’s a test to gauge your spiritual walk, to ask the hard questions, and to be challenged with each turn of the page about what the Holy Spirit is revealing. Whether you are a new believer or well-versed in theological teachings, this study has something to offer everyone.”

Clare Thompson Sims, D-Group member

“This study delivers what D-Group has been doing for years. Instead of feeding the readers answers, it empowers them to do the work of arriving at answers through the careful study and close reading of God’s Word, allowing them to take ownership of their continued growth and faith in King Jesus. What a thrilling start of a memorable new series!”

Zuzana Johansen, D-Group member

“This study helps the reader connect the Old Testament with the New by giving the perspective of the Jewish culture and customs during Jesus’s day. This lens provides clarity as to why Jesus ministered and spoke as He did while interacting with both Jews and Gentiles. It also clearly communicates the relevance and life-changing power of Jesus’s teachings for Christians today. It’s a road map, pulling from the pages of the Old Testament and connecting it to the Gospels, pointing to our victory in Christ on the cross.”

Jeremy Hall, D-Group member

“*Knowing Jesus as King* combines a deep dive into the book of Matthew with the structure of D-Group. Having been in D-Group from the very start—fifteen years ago—I can confidently say the structure creates the consistency it demands and bears much fruit for any believer. Buckle up and have faith that God will reveal Himself to you as the promised and present King over the next ten weeks.”

Meghann Glenn, D-Group charter member

**KNOWING
JESUS
AS SERVANT**

Also by Tara-Leigh Cobble

*The Bible Recap:
A One-Year Guide to Reading and Understanding the Entire Bible*

*The Bible Recap Study Guide:
Daily Questions to Deepen Your Understanding of the Entire Bible*

*The Bible Recap Journal:
Your Daily Companion to the Entire Bible*

*The Bible Recap Discussion Guide:
Weekly Questions for Group Conversation on the Entire Bible*

*The Bible Recap Kids' Devotional:
365 Reflections and Activities for Children and Families*

*The God Shot:
100 Snapshots of God's Character in Scripture*

*Israel:
Beauty, Light, and Luxury*

THE BIBLE RECAP KNOWING JESUS SERIES*

*Knowing Jesus as King:
A 10-Session Study on the Gospel of Matthew*

*Knowing Jesus as Servant:
A 10-Session Study on the Gospel of Mark*

*General editor

THE BIBLE RECAP KNOWING JESUS SERIES

KNOWING JESUS AS SERVANT

**A 10-SESSION STUDY ON THE
GOSPEL OF MARK**

**TARA-LEIGH COBBLE,
GENERAL EDITOR**

WRITTEN BY THE D-GROUP THEOLOGY & CURRICULUM TEAM



BETHANYHOUSE
a division of Baker Publishing Group
Minneapolis, Minnesota

© 2024 by Tara-Leigh Cobble

Published by Bethany House Publishers
Minneapolis, Minnesota
BethanyHouse.com

Bethany House Publishers is a division of
Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, recording—without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Cobble, Tara-Leigh, editor.

Title: Knowing Jesus as servant : a 10-session study on the Gospel of Mark / Tara-Leigh Cobble, general editor.

Description: Minneapolis, Minnesota : Bethany House Publishers, a division of Baker Publishing Group, [2024] |

Series: The bible recap knowing jesus series | Includes bibliographical references.

Identifiers: LCCN 2023058287 | ISBN 9780764243578 (paperback) | ISBN 9781493446889 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Christian leadership—Biblical teaching. | Servant leadership—Biblical teaching. | Jesus Christ—Leadership. | Bible Mark—Criticism, interpretation, etc.

Classification: LCC BS2555.6.L42 K66 2024 | DDC 262/.1—dc23/eng/20240223

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2023058287>

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ESV Text Edition: 2016

Scripture quotations identified NASB are taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. www.lockman.org

Scripture quotations identified NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com. The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.®

Interior design by Nadine Rewa

Cover design by Dan Pitts

Author image from © Meshali Mitchell

The general editor is represented by Alive Literary Agency, www.AliveLiterary.com.

The D-Group Theology & Curriculum Team is Laura Buchelt, Emily Pickell, Meg Mitchell, Evaline Asmah, Brittney Rice, and Tara-Leigh Cobble.

Baker Publishing Group publications use paper produced from sustainable forestry practices and postconsumer waste whenever possible.

24 25 26 27 28 29 30 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

Introduction 9

How to Use This Study 11

WEEK 1 **Mark 1:** The Servant Established 13

WEEK 2 **Mark 2–3:** The News of the Servant 35

WEEK 3 **Mark 4–5:** The Greatness of the Servant 65

WEEK 4 **Mark 6:** The Servant's Rejection and Response 93

WEEK 5 **Mark 7–8:** The Law of the Servant 121

WEEK 6 **Mark 9:** The Deity of the Servant 145

WEEK 7 **Mark 10–11:** The Purpose of the Servant 171

WEEK 8 **Mark 12–13:** The Servant's Economy 195

WEEK 9 **Mark 14:** The Heart of the Servant 219

WEEK 10 **Mark 15–16:** The Servant's Sacrifice 241

For Group Leaders 265

INTRODUCTION

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) offer us fourfold telling of Jesus's story. Some may wonder why this is necessary, but the fascinating truth is that each gospel speaks to a specific audience and emphasizes a unique aspect of who Jesus is. Additionally, the areas where they overlap verify the authenticity of the full narrative.

Matthew writes about King Jesus—His authority, His royalty, and His throne that will last forever. Mark writes about Jesus as the Suffering Servant, the One whose suffering would eternally serve all who call on His name. Luke, drawing on Jesus's humanity, emphasizes Jesus as Savior of mankind, which seems fitting since Luke was a doctor. And John, the self-proclaimed favorite of our Lord, repeatedly highlights that Jesus is God. These four narratives help us see Jesus from various angles, capturing different facets of His glory—King, Servant, Savior/Man, God. These characteristics may seem opposed to each other, but they actually present us with a fuller understanding of who He is. All four accounts are not only necessary but beautiful!

The book of Mark is most commonly attributed to Mark, also known as John Mark, who traveled with Peter as his interpreter. Since this gospel is full of information someone would know only if they were present, scholars tend to agree that Mark was recording Peter's personal experiences with the Suffering Servant. The apostle Paul told the church in Colossae that Mark was Barnabas's cousin (Colossians 4:10), Mark makes several appearances in Acts (12:12, 25; 13:13; 15:37–40), and though he seemed to have disagreements with Paul, Mark was eventually praised by Paul in his letter to Timothy (2 Timothy 4:11).

This gospel was likely written in Rome, specifically to Gentile Roman followers of Jesus. The reason scholars think this is threefold. First, Mark translated Aramaic words for his readers (3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 10:46; 14:36; 15:22, 34). Second, he used Latin expressions instead of Greek words in some places (5:9; 6:27; 12:15, 42; 15:16, 39) and referenced time according to the Roman system of the day (6:48; 13:35). Third, Mark explained Jewish customs in detail (7:3, 4; 14:12; 15:42), omitted genealogies tracing Jesus's lineage, and included fewer references to the Old Testament. These things seem to indicate he was catering to a Gentile audience.

Mark's tone is distinct as well. His stories have an urgency to them—he used the word *immediately* over forty times! Mark wrote the shortest of all the gospels—only 678 verses—but that didn't stop him from painting vivid pictures of the life of Christ. Mark's lens was Jesus as Servant, and that point is hammered home most clearly in Mark 10:45. This gospel was recorded prior to the fall of the temple in AD 70 and was likely written in the mid-to-late AD 50s, while eyewitnesses to Christ's life were still alive. It appears to have been the first gospel recorded, since we find significant overlap in the other gospels, particularly Matthew and Luke.

As you read through what may be a familiar story, challenge yourself to push past the surface to understand Mark's perspective of the life of the most important Man to walk the earth. Jesus, who is God, reigns as King and Savior, yet He came to earth as a suffering servant. Have you stopped to let that transform you? Let's begin that journey together!

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

While Bible study is vital to the Christian walk, a well-rounded spiritual life comes from engaging with other spiritual disciplines as well. This study is designed not only to equip you with greater knowledge and theological depth, but to help you engage in other formative practices that will create a fuller, more fulfilling relationship with Jesus. We want to see you thrive in every area of your life with God!

Content and Questions

In each of the ten weeks of this study, the teaching and questions are divided into six days, but feel free to do it all at once if that's more manageable for your schedule. If you choose to complete each week's study in one sitting (especially if that time occurs later in the study-week), keep in mind that there are aspects you will want to be mindful of each day: the daily Bible reading, Scripture memorization, and the weekly challenge. Those are best attended to throughout the week.

Daily Bible Reading

The daily Bible reading corresponds to our study. It will take an average of three minutes per day to simply read (not study) the text. If you're an auditory learner, you may prefer to listen to an audio version of these Bible chapters.

Even if you decide to do the week's content and questions in one sitting, we still encourage you to make the daily Bible reading a part of your regular daily rhythm. Establishing a habit of reading the Word every day will help fortify your faith and create greater connections with God.

If you decide to break the study up into the six allotted days each week, your daily Bible reading will align with your study. Days 1–5 will follow

our study of Mark, Day 6 features a psalm that corresponds to our reading, and Day 7 serves as a catch-up day in case you fall behind.

Scripture Memorization

Memorizing Scripture isn't busywork! It's an important part of hiding God's Word in our hearts (Psalm 119:11). Our passage—Mark 10:42–52—includes Jesus's mission statement on service. We encourage you to practice it cumulatively—that is, *add* to what you're practicing each week instead of *replacing* it. We quote the English Standard Version (and some of our resources are in that translation as well), but feel free to memorize it in whatever translation you prefer. We suggest working on each week's verse(s) throughout the week, not just at the last minute. We've provided some free tools to help you with this, including a weekly verse song: MyDGroup.org/Resources/Mark.

Weekly Challenge

This is our practical response to what we've learned each week. We want to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). You'll find a variety of challenges, and we encourage you to lean into them all—especially the ones you find *most* challenging! This will help strengthen your spiritual muscles and encourage you in your faith. As with the memory verse, you'll want to begin this practice earlier in the week, especially because some weekly challenges include things to do each day of the week (e.g., prayers, journaling, etc.).

Resources

This is a Scripture-heavy study, and you'll find yourself looking up passages often. If you're new to studying Scripture, this will be a great way to dig in and sharpen your skills! You will feel more equipped and less intimidated as you move through each chapter. Some questions may ask you to refer to a Bible dictionary, commentary, or Greek or Hebrew lexicon, but you don't need to purchase those tools. There are lots of free options available online. We've linked to some of our favorite tools—plus additional resources such as podcasts, articles, and apps—at MyDGroup.org/Resources/Mark.

WEEK 1

Mark 1: The Servant Established

Note: If you haven't yet read "How to Use This Study" on pages 11–12, please do that before continuing. It will provide you with a proper framework and helpful tools.

DAILY BIBLE READING

Day 1: Mark 1:1–8

Day 2: Mark 1:9–15

Day 3: Mark 1:16–20

Day 4: Mark 1:21–34

Day 5: Mark 1:35–45

Day 6: Psalm 85

Day 7: Catch-Up Day

Corresponds to Day 277 of *The Bible Recap*.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

See page 33 for more information.

Scripture to Memorize

And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them."

Mark 10:42

DAY 1

Mark 1:1–8



READ MARK 1:1–8

1. **Review Mark 1:1.** How does the book begin?

Unlike the other three gospels, the book of Mark doesn't start with a genealogy, a theological thesis, or the birth of Jesus. *Gospel* means “the good news of the fulfillment of God’s promises.” And Mark begins with the gospel Himself: Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2. **Review Mark 1:1–8. Then read Isaiah 40:3–5.** How do these passages connect?

In Roman tradition, a forerunner—also known as a herald—announced the arrival of important Roman officials. Roman Christians hearing Mark’s letter would’ve been deeply familiar with this role. John the Baptist (we’ll call him JTB) was the forerunner of Jesus, the messenger preparing the people for His arrival.

In addition to announcing the arrival of Jesus, JTB baptized people. People from Judea and Jerusalem came to the Jordan River to receive his baptism, but he called them to more than baptism itself. He called them to *repentance*.

3. **Look up *repentance* in a Bible dictionary.** Write down the definition.

4. How is repentance different from confession?

5. How is repentance different from regret?

While he baptized people and called them to repentance, he also preached, pointing them to Jesus.

6. In 1:7, what three things did JTB say about Jesus?

At the time this book was written, untying someone's sandals would have been a low-level servant's job. But knowing who Jesus was, JTB said he wasn't worthy to serve Him, even in a task as lowly as that.

7. **Skip ahead and read Mark 10:45.** How does Jesus describe Himself?

Jesus, the Son of God—whose arrival had been long awaited and prophesied, whose ministry was announced by a forerunner, whose authority is God's, and whose sacrifice makes our reconciliation with God possible—came to serve.

A lack of repentance and an inflated view of ourselves may lead us to believe that we are worthy to do much more for Jesus than untie His sandals, or even that we deserve Jesus's service to us. But when we repent and really believe that His service to us is a gift we don't deserve and could never earn, we can humbly and gratefully accept the gift of eternal life made possible through Jesus the Servant.

Although we aren't worthy to serve Him, and He doesn't need our service, He delights when we serve Him with gladness (see Psalm 100:2) and demonstrate our affection for Him!

8. What are some ways you delight to demonstrate your affection for God through service?

DAY 2

Mark 1:9–15



READ MARK 1:9–15

Yesterday, we learned that JTB called the people he was baptizing to more than baptism itself: He called them to repentance.

1. **Review 1:9–11.** Why do you think Jesus—who never sinned and did not need to repent—was baptized?

There is humility in baptism, and through Jesus’s humility, He set an example for us to follow. Some faith traditions say He was also purifying the waters of baptism for all who follow in His footsteps. But Jesus’s baptism also demonstrated His authority as God and displayed His relationship with the other two persons of the Trinity. At His baptism, all three are present: God the Son humbles Himself in the physical act of baptism, God the Spirit descends, and God the Father speaks. The scene is reminiscent of the roles each person of the Trinity plays in creation (see Genesis 1:1–3; John 1:1–3).

2. **Read Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1. Then review Mark 1:11.** How was this Old Testament language echoed at Jesus's baptism?

In this scene, Jesus's humility as Servant and His authority as Son are clear. And while a humble servant with divine authority seems to be a contradiction, in God's economy, it makes perfect sense. Jesus stepped fully into the juxtaposed roles, just as He was also both fully God and fully man (see John 1:14–18).

The book of Mark moves with urgency from one event to the next, and Mark tells us that immediately after Jesus's baptism, the Spirit drove Him to the wilderness where He was tempted.

3. **Review 1:12–13.**

Though the Spirit drove Jesus to the wilderness, the Spirit didn't tempt Him to sin: Satan did. And the Spirit didn't leave Him alone to struggle: The angels ministered to Him.

While Mark doesn't explain why Jesus went to the wilderness after His baptism, we do know that after high points in Jesus's ministry, He tended to retreat to places where He could be alone with His Father. Being publicly announced as the Son of God while in the waters of baptism would certainly count as a high point!

We also know that after milestones in our own walks of faith, we can be faced with strong temptations to sin. For Jesus, His time in the wilderness was both the aftermath of a high point *and* the preparation for public ministry. In these final days of preparation before Jesus's ministry began, there would've been nothing Satan would have loved more than to stop that ministry. But instead, Jesus's temptation likely served as preparation for what was to come—perhaps for Him, but also for us. God took what the enemy intended for evil and turned it around for our good. Because of what Jesus endured, He understands our joy, our grief, and our struggles

firsthand. He faced temptations as we do, but as our perfect Savior, He overcame them.

4. Mark 1:14–15 is written below. **Circle the message Jesus proclaimed.** Then underline the words He said.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Jesus’s ministry began when JTB, His forerunner, was taken away from the people. This short passage is easily overlooked, but it is absolutely vital in God’s redemptive story. The gospel of God that Jesus proclaimed is *from* God and *about* God.

God’s people had been waiting and longing and praying for God’s kingdom to come, and Jesus told them that it (He) had finally arrived!

5. In Jesus’s time, the people of Galilee were mostly working class and poor. They were also under the oppression of Roman rule. What would Jesus’s message have meant to them?

6. What does it mean to you?

God’s people wanted a king who would save them from their enemies and give them a peaceful life. But God had a plan that was infinitely more beautiful: He gave all of us a King who saves us from our sins and gives

us eternal life. In Mark 1:15, the King Himself tells us our role: “Repent and believe in the gospel.”

For Christians, when we repent of our sins and believe in the gospel, the one-time work of justification—being declared righteous because of Jesus’s work—is complete. And the process of sanctification—becoming more like Jesus—is demonstrated through ongoing repentance and belief.

7. What things do you need to repent of?

8. What truths do you struggle to believe?

