

TERM 2 2020



EVANGELISTIC
PRAYER
TEAM
BOOKLET



**CITY BIBLE
FORUM+**
Ask the bigger questions



EVANGELISTIC PRAYER TEAM

Vision: to reach the world through the work place with the good news about Jesus

Aim: 1000 people across Australia meeting Jesus in the pages of the Bible

EPTs seek to gather Christian workers across our cities to **encourage** one another in our **CONVICTION**, **CHARACTER**, **COMPETENCE**, and **COURAGE** so we all can share Jesus with our colleagues and to **pray** for each other that God may work in their lives to see Jesus known.

Remember as you pray:

Coffee



Dinner



Gospel





MEETING JESUS IN THE PAGES OF MARK





MEETING JESUS IN THE PAGES OF MARK



WHAT'S INSIDE

These studies look at a way to read the Bible one-to-one by doing studies with an unbeliever. You can use these studies as a practice for reading the Bible one-to-one.

There are some significant differences between a Bible study, an EPT, and reading the Bible one-to-one with an unbeliever. A Bible study is a meeting of people with similar levels of understanding and knowledge of God. But reading with an unbeliever is a different dynamic and there are some things that need to happen differently. Tips for how to do this are given throughout the studies.

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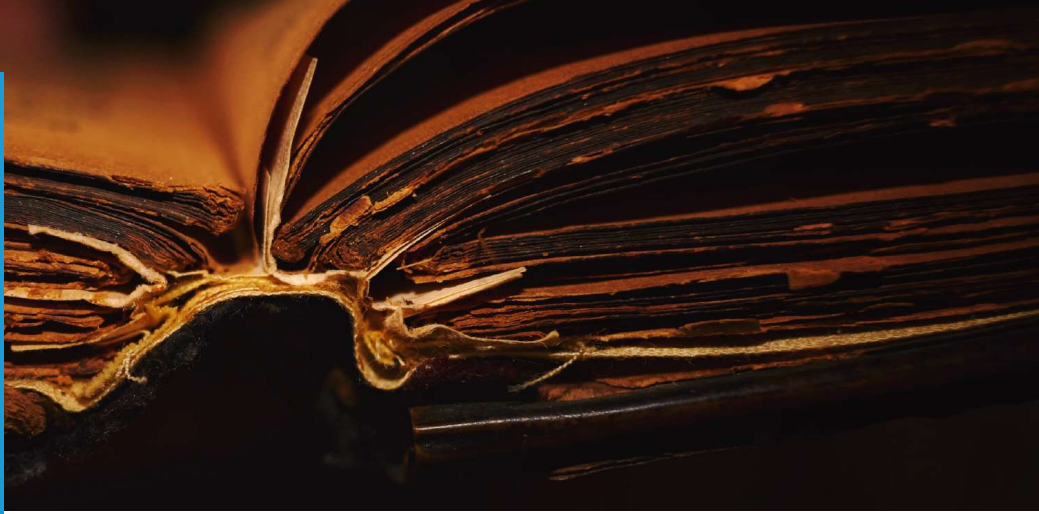
HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES



These studies are short modules to help workers think more deeply about different areas of your workplace witness. They are designed to be used in Evangelistic Prayer Teams (EPTs), but can also be used in any small group setting.



MEETING JESUS IN THE PAGES OF MARK



READING THE BIBLE ONE-TO-ONE

Here are a few ideas for reading the Bible one-to-one:

- The Bible is a strange book to many unbelievers, so why not provide them with a print out of the passage rather than bring along a Bible?
- Don't ask your friend to read the Bible out loud, in fact it might be better to let them read the passage in their own time. Christians love to read the Bible aloud, but it is a bit strange culturally
- Find somewhere unobtrusive, where your friend will feel comfortable, and won't have to fear being overheard. A cafe a short distance from your office might work. (try to avoid cafes in your foyer, it might cause undue discomfort)
- Don't assume your friend is reading the Bible because they're interested or keen, they might be here because they trust you.
- It's less important what you say, and more important that they deal with who Jesus is.
- If your friend enjoyed themselves, offer to meet again (don't assume they will want to). Maybe offer to meet up again in a few weeks time
- Hopefully this is a long term prospect, so you don't have to cover the whole counsel of God in this sitting. If you can convey one point from the passage about Jesus, or better yet pose a really good question for them to ponder – even if they go off on a wild goose chase – that's a victory! Trust God is working by his word.
- Pray before, during, and after – God is at work!

JESUS THINKS HE CAN FORGIVE SINS

1

These studies are about learning how to read the Bible one to one with an unbeliever. Perhaps, this week, the leader could demonstrate what this can look like this week.

HANDY TIP

When meeting up with a friend, it's a good idea to have printed off a copy of the passage for them.

From the Bible

Remember, don't read aloud

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ²They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³Some men came, bringing to him a paralysed man, carried by four of them. ⁴Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. ⁵When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralysed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

⁶Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷"Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

⁸Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? ⁹Which is easier: to say to this paralysed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? ¹⁰But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, ¹¹"I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." ¹²He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Mark 2:1-12

COURAGE

COMPETENCE

CHARACTER

CONVICTION

Key Truths

1. When Jesus sees the faith (or better *trust*) of the friends of the paralysed man, he responds by announcing the forgiveness of sins of the man.
2. The religious leaders reject that Jesus has the power to forgive sins because they think he is not God.
3. It's easier to say 'your sins are forgiven' than 'get up and walk' to a paralysed man – you don't have to prove anything! So, Jesus proves he can forgive sins by healing the man.

Questions you could ask

Jesus seems to think he can forgive sins (see sentence 5). What do you think about that?

If it is true that only God can forgive sins (because all wrong is ultimately done against God), who does Jesus think he is?

Those who trust in Jesus have their sins forgiven. What do you think about that?

What does it mean to forgive (or be forgiven)?

Prayer

Pray for your colleagues that they would agree to read the Bible with you.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

Perhaps you could break into pairs and lead each other through the study.

HANDY TIP

When meeting up with a friend, be prepared for moments of silence – people need space to think, this may be the first time they’ve read the Bible.

From the Bible

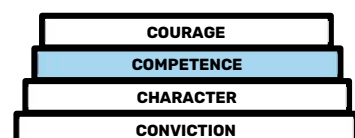
Remember, don't read aloud.

3 Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shrivelled hand was there. **2** Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. **3** Jesus said to the man with the shrivelled hand, “Stand up in front of everyone.”

4 Then Jesus asked them, “Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they remained silent.

5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. **6** Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Mark 3:1-6



Key Truths

1. The Jewish religion forbids working on the Sabbath – it is a day devoted to God. But Jesus' point is that the Sabbath is about restoration and healing – to stop Jesus from healing on the Sabbath completely misses the whole point of the Sabbath.
2. Religion gets a bad name, and here's an example of why. These religious leaders have taken rules that were for the good of the people – to give them a rest and opportunity to praise God and be thankful – and applied them so strictly that they crushed those they were meant to help.
3. The result of Jesus' kindness to this poor man? The religious and political leaders (Pharisees & Herodians respectively) want to kill Jesus.

Questions you could ask

What's your impression of Jesus? (is he for or against people)

How do you think Jesus feels about religious people? What do you think about Jesus' attitude?

What do you think of the plot to kill Jesus?

What do you think Jesus would say to religious people today?

Prayer

Pray for courage to invite a colleague to read the Bible with you.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

Swap over your pairs from last week – let the other person lead

HANDY TIP

When meeting up with an unbelieving friend or colleague, remember this isn't an information download. This is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus. Pray before, during, and after! (just don't expect them to pray – yet)

From the Bible

Allow people time to read the passage

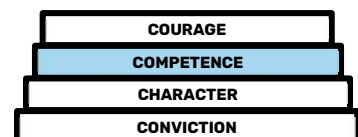
That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." ³⁶Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

³⁹He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

⁴⁰He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

⁴¹They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Mark 4:35-41



Key Truths

1. The Old Testament portrays God as commanding the wind and the waves, Jesus is acting like God.
2. Jesus is stunned that the disciples doubt his love for them. They believe he can help (that's why they wake him up), but does he care?
3. The disciples' question (41) is meant to be our question; who is this man? The disciples have to come to terms with this man who does what only God can do.

Questions you could ask

In the rest of the Bible, only God can control the wind and the waves. What do you think this says about Jesus?

(By the way, after a storm the sea usually has waves for days. Here the wind and waves immediately die down – what does that tell us?)

Why do you think the disciples are now terrified of Jesus?

Prayer

Pray for and opportunity this week to invite a colleague to read through a Gospel with you.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel



A GENEROUS MEASURE



A GENEROUS MEASURE

WHAT'S INSIDE

These studies help Christians think about why and how to share Jesus in their workplace

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HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES



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A GENEROUS MEASURE

When it comes time to give to someone in need or to a cause you believe in, what is your attitude? Is it a time of joy or do you feel the pain of the loss of money?

BIG IDEA

Christians are to give cheerfully and generously towards the work of God in the world.

From the Bible

While you read – what is God’s problem with Israel’s attitude towards him?

Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty.

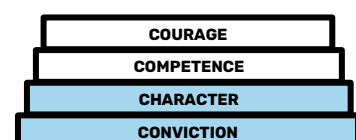
“But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’

⁸“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.

“But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’

“In tithes and offerings. ⁹You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. ¹⁰Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. ¹¹I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the LORD Almighty. ¹²“Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.

Malachi 3:7-12



Key Truths

1. So, up the giving and wait for the blessings to flow in, right?

Well, let's reflect on what's going on here – God's speaks to his people Israel after they have returned from exile and calls them to return to him spiritually.

2. God's promises in his law were: live his way so it may go well for them in the land. God also promises to curse his people and exile them if they disobey (which he did). But now they have returned to the land, they haven't returned spiritually to him – represented by their reluctance to bring him the full tithe. God yearns to bless his people in the land, but their hearts are hardened to his generosity.
3. Israel was given a law to give a tenth of their harvest to God for the Levites to live upon. The law wasn't written on their hearts, so they dragged their feet to give; they didn't give the full amount (or their best). Despite God's desire to bless his people, they refused to trust him enough to give generously.
4. Now, we have experienced the ultimate generosity of God in his giving Jesus for us. So, when it comes to giving, a tenth is no longer our law, but generosity is now our measure. (Romans 12:8)

Thoughts? Questions?

Application

Giving generously is our calling today as Christians. We are the ones who have been given much, and so we should also give generously. What does giving generously look like?

City Bible Forum is supported in the main by the kindness and generosity of God through his people giving generously in partnership together for the great mission of reaching the world through the workplace with the good news of Jesus.

Are you a supporter of City Bible Forum? Have you reviewed your giving? Have you considered increasing your regular financial support?

Prayer

Pray for generous hearts and a cheerful attitude towards giving to God's work.

Pray for the finances of City Bible Forum.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel



MEETING JESUS IN THE PAGES OF MARK

JESUS RESCUES FROM DEATH

4

Maybe give someone else a go at leading the group this week

HANDY TIP

When meeting up with an unbelieving friend or colleague, eating together is a powerful way of developing a relationship. Meeting over coffee is great, meeting over lunch or breakfast is better!

From the Bible

Remember don't read aloud

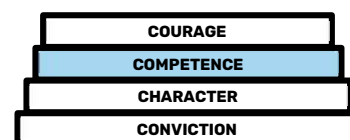
They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes.² When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

⁶When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. ⁷He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" ⁸For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!"

⁹Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." ¹⁰And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

¹¹A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. ¹²The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." ¹³He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into



the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

¹⁴Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. ¹⁵When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ¹⁶Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. ¹⁷Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

¹⁸As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Mark 5:1-20

Key Truths

1. Death has this poor man in its clutches, he is effectively the living dead. He lives in tombs, dominated by evil spiritual forces. But Jesus' power over demons is absolute; he tells them to come out – they fear him.
2. Upon being sent out, the demons destroy the 2000 pigs they are sent into. Imagine the deadly destruction they were doing to the man!
3. Jesus commands the demons; dismissing them and bringing life back to the man. This man is saved; he has a new purpose, speaking to people about Jesus and what he had done for him.
4. The Bible speaks of a spiritual realm of power and evil. However, Jesus has no fear of this evil spiritual reality, and so also his followers have no fear of this reality because they follow a greater power. (It is interesting to note that where Christianity has flourished, "superstition" has died out)

Questions you could ask

What do you think about this idea of a spiritual realm?

Why do you think there is evil in our world? (or in humanity?)

What do you think of Jesus' power over spiritual evil?

Prayer

Pray for God to work in the hearts of your colleagues that they might agree to read the Bible with you.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

HANDY HINT

It's a good idea to find somewhere unobtrusive and quiet to meet so your friend will feel comfortable. A café a short distance from their office could work, but try to avoid meeting in their foyer – it might make them feel uncomfortable.

From the Bible

Remember let them read in silence

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

²⁸ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

²⁹ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take



up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ³⁸If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

9:1 And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power."

Mark 8:27-9:1

Key Truths

1. We've come to the great turning point in Mark's Gospel. The disciples finally understand who Jesus is, and Peter declares him to be the king of Israel – the Messiah.
2. But Jesus immediately shifts attention from *who he is* to *what he came to do* – that he must suffer, be rejected by Israel's rulers, die, and rise again.
3. This is the first of three times that Jesus announces his death and resurrection. The Old Testament and Jesus have promised the coming death and rising of Jesus; it's no surprise, but the carefully orchestrated action of God to save people.

Questions you could ask

Jesus as Messiah could claim the rule of Israel, but instead he outlines a path of rejection and suffering. Why do you think Jesus makes this choice?

(Mark 10:45 might be helpful here – *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*)

Prayer

Pray for a sacrificial desire to serving the lost, even when it costs you.



NAN'S KNEE, WORLD PEACE AND...



NAN'S KNEE, WORLD PEACE AND...

WHAT'S INSIDE

These studies help Christians think about why and how to share Jesus in their workplace

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NAN'S KNEE, WORLD PEACE AND...

When we gather as Christians we pray about many things, but what is the most important thing we should be praying for?

BIG IDEA

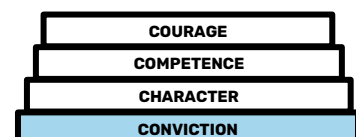
The most important thing we should be praying for is understanding the good news about Jesus with incredible depth.

From the Bible

While you read – What is Paul's focus for his prayer?

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²²And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 1:15-23



Key Truths

1. Paul constantly thanks God for the Ephesian Christians, praying that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation so they can understand the Christian hope in God.
2. The certain hope of the Christian is the glorious inheritance of God and God's power working in us
3. God's power working in us is his resurrection power that rose Jesus from death – that's powerful stuff!

Thoughts? Questions?

Application

As we pray for one another, we should pray for our understanding of the gospel and the hope this provides.

If knowing God, his gospel, and the certainty of our hope in Jesus is the most important thing for Christians to understand and pray for. What can we conclude about the most important thing for our unbelieving colleagues?

Prayer

Pray for each other to truly understand the gospel of God, the certain future we hope in, and the working of God's power in our lives towards that hope.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel



MEETING JESUS IN THE PAGES OF MARK

JESUS CLAIMS TO BE THE MESSIAH – THE ONE WHO RULES FOR GOD

6

HANDY HINT

When you meet with your friend, remember – while for you this meeting is eternally significant – it may not be so for your friend. Graciously expect cancellations (and to be forgotten about) and don't expect they will automatically want to meet up again next week; they might need some time.

From the Bible

Read quietly to yourself

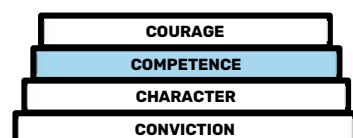
⁵³They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together. ⁵⁴Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire.

⁵⁵The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. ⁵⁶Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.

⁵⁷Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: ⁵⁸“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.’” ⁵⁹Yet even then their testimony did not agree.

⁶⁰Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” ⁶¹But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”



⁶²“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

⁶³The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. ⁶⁴“You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?”

They all condemned him as worthy of death. ⁶⁵Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophesy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

Mark 14:53-65

Key Truths

1. Jesus makes two claims here – he is the Christ, and the Son of Man.
2. The *Christ* is the promised king of Israel who will rule the world on God’s behalf. “Son of the Blessed One” refers to Psalm 2 where the king is the Son of God.
3. The *Son of Man* is a figure from Daniel 7 who judges the world with God’s power and authority. This figure is human-like, but divine in power and authority.
4. So the Christ is the representation of God’s *rule*, and the Son of Man is the expression of God’s *justice*.

Questions you could ask

Jesus seems to have an unambiguous view of who he is. Who is he claiming to be?

Many people like to think of Jesus as a good moral teacher, or a powerful religious guru, who was wrongly put to death. What do you think of that idea now?

Prayer

Pray for patience as you seek to meet with your unbelieving colleague.

This is a long study**HANDY
HINT**

As you meet with your friend, remember you're not there to prove them wrong, rather to help them meet Jesus. So, listen to their comments and questions, and don't be afraid to say those scary words – "I don't know, but I can find out."

From the Bible

Read in silence

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

²"Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate.

"You have said so," Jesus replied.

³The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."

⁵But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

⁶Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. ⁷A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. ⁸The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹"Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, ¹⁰knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

¹²“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

¹³“Crucify him!” they shouted.

¹⁴“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

¹⁵Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” ¹⁹Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. ²²They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). ²³Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

²⁵It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

²⁷They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰come down from the cross and save yourself!” ³¹In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! ³²Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

³³At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud

voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

³⁵When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

³⁶Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said.

³⁷With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

Mark 15:1-39

Key Truths

1. There's a lot going on here, but the most important idea is the innocent king who dies in the place of guilty rebels in order to save them. We see this in:
 - a. Barabbas is guilty – an insurrectionist and murderer. Jesus is innocent. Yet the murderer goes free and the innocent dies.
 - b. Jesus' claim to be king is mocked repeatedly
 - c. Jesus is mocked because he is unable to save himself – this is deliberately ironic, the only way Jesus *can* save is by dying.
 - d. Jesus dies with the guilty thieves on the cross, underscoring his innocence.
2. Jesus could come down from the cross and save himself, but he chose to die so he could save others (remember Mark 10:45!).
3. 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' might seem confusing, but it's actually the first line from Psalm 22 – a psalm that starts in despair, but ends in praise of God for generations. It also features pierced hands and feet, clothing being divided up and gambled for, and ends with "it is done" – sound familiar? (you might like to look at it too in your preparation)

Questions you could ask

What do you think of the great exchange where Jesus dies instead of Barabbas?

Why do you think Jesus died?

Prayer

Pray for revelation for your colleague; that God would indeed reveal himself to them.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

Another long study**HANDY
HINT**

Reading the Bible with an unbeliever is a long-term prospect. There are going to be weeks where it feels like nothing is going in, there might be weeks where you seem to lose ground. But trust God is working; ask him to be merciful.

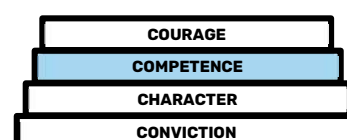
From the Bible

Read quietly

Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome. ⁴¹In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

⁴²It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, ⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ²Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they



were on their way to the tomb ³and they asked each other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?”

⁴But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶“Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.’”

⁸Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

Mark 15:40-16:8

Key Truths

1. Jesus’ death was public and well-witnessed. The women who were with Jesus during his ministry, now stay and watch while many of his followers flee. They witness his death, burial, and empty tomb.
2. The Roman centurion confirms that Jesus is dead. Joseph of Arimathea handled Jesus’ body. Jesus was dead!
3. The women, Joseph, and possibly the centurion were people that could have attested to these events at the time Mark was written.
4. Mark finishes strangely; the women run away scared, we don’t see Jesus (but are told he’s raised), did the women tell Peter and the disciples? History tells us they did, but it’s a strange way to end.

Questions you could ask

An empty tomb is an intriguing way to end this account of Jesus’ life. What do you make of Jesus’ tomb being empty?

If Jesus is risen from the dead, what does this mean for your thoughts concerning life and death?

Prayer

Pray for new life for your colleagues. Pray that God would intervene in their lives powerfully.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel