

# READ THIS FIRST

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## The Gospel of Mark: The King and His Kingdom

### Note from Pastor Luke Simmons

The mission of Second Mile Church is to “embody Jesus’ mission and message in every place that God sends us.” The Bible refers to the followers of Jesus as his “ambassadors” (2 Cor 5:20) and expects us to faithfully represent him to the world. In order to faithfully live out this mission we must grow intimately familiar with who Jesus is and what he has done. Thus, it makes sense to have our first weekly study focus on the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, as described in the Gospel of Mark.

Though this series, “The King and His Kingdom,” will not be an exhaustive study of the person of Jesus, we will become thoroughly acquainted with his message, mission, attitude and actions. Not only will we see Jesus in action, but we’ll also get a glimpse of what life looks like in Jesus’ Kingdom. Mark is a fast-paced, hard-hitting, action-packed book and we will spend fourteen weeks examining the highlights of his account.

This study guide, designed for individual study or for use in Community Groups, is intended to help us dive deeper into the Scripture and apply the things we learn. The Bible calls us to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). These study guides are designed to help us not just hear the word on Sunday, but put it into practice Monday through Saturday.

My prayer for this series is that God will use it to deepen your love for Jesus. Whether you are just beginning to explore what it would be like to follow Christ or you’ve trusted him for a long time, my hope is that your heart would be delighted by his majesty, power, humility, trustworthiness, sacrifice and victory. Only as we grow satisfied in Jesus will we be able to bring his love and grace to our hurting world.

Because the Tomb is Empty,

Luke Simmons  
Lead Pastor

### The Format

Each study begins with a **key verse** that summarizes the truth found in the entire section. These key verses, if memorized, would allow you to learn the big ideas found in Mark’s Gospel. Then there is an **introduction** to the passage that you can use for review or, if you miss a Sunday, you can track with us wherever we are. Next are some questions for **investigation** (getting into the text) and **implication** (applying these truths to daily life). Each study concludes with a section on **other issues**, which expand on any other issues or questions raised by the passage that we may not take time to cover during the sermon.

### Suggestions for Individuals

- Before you begin, pray that God would open your eyes to see what he is saying in the Bible and give you the spiritual strength to do something about it.
- Work through the study and write out answers to the questions.
- Resist any temptation to skip over the **implication** section. It is important to ponder how the truths apply to your life. Though these questions are sometimes penetrating and difficult, they are designed to help you think seriously about your life.
- Take what opportunities you can to share with others about what you’ve learned and how you’d like your life to change as a result.

### Suggestions for Community Groups

- It is recommended that you study the passage *after* it has been preached. This way you can discuss the issues raised by the sermon as well as the study itself.
- In your time together as a community, focus on the **implications** for your lives individually and as a group. Share with one another how you sense God calling you to change, pray for one another about these things, and invite one another to encourage you and hold you accountable to apply the truth.
- In your time together as a community, use this guide as a launching point for discussion and care for one another. Resist the urge to try to discuss every question or “get through the material.”

### Questions or Comments?

If you have feedback or questions about the series or studies, please feel free to email them to [info@secondmilechurch.com](mailto:info@secondmilechurch.com).

Week 9

# KINGDOM COSTS

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Mark 10:17-31

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*"How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God!"*

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(Mark 10:23-24, ESV)  
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## Introduction

Many Christians dream about the day that somebody will walk up to them and say, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Perhaps you've even thought about how you would respond to a person who asked that question. Maybe you'd have some excellent points to make about God's holiness, man's sinfulness, the provision of grace through Jesus' death on the cross as a substitute, and the need to place personal trust in Jesus. This would be a good way to respond and you'd expect somebody who was this concerned about eternal life to walk away having just turned his or her life over to Jesus. Wouldn't you?

That's what makes this passage so surprising. Jesus has somebody come to him and ask the question—but this man "went away sorrowful" (10:22). What happened? Did Jesus skip his Rabbi class the day that they taught evangelism? How could he not close the deal with this spiritual seeker?

Your study of the text will reveal the answers to those questions, but it's interesting to note that Jesus was more interested in *true* conversion—people who were actually changed at the heart level and lived differently as a result—than just getting a bunch of people to follow him. He wasn't interested in numbers for the sake of numbers. He didn't do ministry in order to grow large crowds of half-hearted people. Had this been his approach, he could have easily loosened the message in order to accommodate the young spiritual seeker. But Jesus wasn't interested in accommodating people's idolatry—he wanted to challenge it, even if it meant fewer people followed him.

God is not an idolater. He does not value anything above his own glory or fame, nor will he share his glory with other things. Following Jesus in the way of the kingdom is costly. But, as we also learn in this passage, the cost is worth it.

## Investigation

Read Mark 10:17-31

1. What does the young man's response in verse 20 tell us about his attitude and heart condition?
2. The text says that the young man "went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions" (10:22). Why did the call to sell all these possessions discourage the young man so greatly?
3. Why do you think Jesus says it's so difficult for people with material wealth to enter the kingdom of God?
4. What is Jesus promising in verses 29-31?



have a lot of money? **(2) Anxiety.** Do you worry a lot about money? **(3) Bias.** Do you have a clear bias toward people with money? Do you prefer them as friends? **(4) Spender or miser.** Are you either too prone to shop and buy things in order to feel good? Or, on the other hand, are you almost miserly? All these are signs that money and wealth has too much spiritual influence in your heart.<sup>21</sup>

**Does Jesus promise prosperity for those who are truly faithful to him?**

No. If Jesus didn't live a life of prosperity, but instead lived in poverty and suffering, what would make us think that we deserve any better than him? The "Prosperity Gospel" is a demonic lie that tempts people to *use* God to get what they really long for and worship—money.

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 127.