

# 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 8

# KINGDOM CONFESSIO

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Mark 8:27-9:1

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*And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ."*

(Mark 8:29, ESV)  
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## Introduction

Do you like great stories? Are you somebody that likes to get totally lost in a great book, movie, play or story? Part of what makes a great story is when there's some kind of real tension or conflict that gets resolved in a dramatic or unexpected way. That key moment in the story is called the "climax" because it's the high point.

This section contains the climax of Mark's gospel—the moment when Peter declares that Jesus is the Christ (8:29). Up to this point, we've been observing Jesus, hearing his teaching, seeing his works, and watching his ministry. But here, in this passage, we see who Jesus really is and what he's really come to do.

From this point on, the narrative will shift from Jesus' ministry in Galilee to his journey to Jerusalem and, ultimately, his death. None of this will surprise Jesus—he actually predicts his death for the first time in Mark 8:31: "And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again."

This section makes it clear why Jesus came and also teaches us some valuable lessons about what it means to follow him. The cost is high. The demands are significant. Things will often be different than we expect (notice Peter). But Jesus has come as a Redeemer and he will not be deterred from his mission.

Someone has said that the four Gospels are just "stories of Jesus' death with long introductions." Well, the introduction is over. The turning point has arrived. Jesus is going to die and we are going to watch our Savior as he resolutely sets his gaze on the cross of Calvary.

## Investigation

Read Mark 8:27-9:1.

1. Peter accurately states that Jesus is the Christ (the Greek word *Christos* means "fulfiller of Israelite expectation of a deliverer, the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ."<sup>18</sup> If Peter knew that Jesus was the Christ, why did he have such a hard time accepting the Jesus' prediction of death?
2. Why did Jesus call Peter "Satan"? Was this a fair thing to say or was it too strong?
3. In your own words, what does it mean to deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Jesus?
4. What do you think Jesus meant by the phrase "For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it" (8:35)?

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<sup>18</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 1091.



ceive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses...” (Acts 1:7). If we remember that Luke also records this saying about them “seeing the kingdom” (Luke 9:27), a case can be made that Pentecost is in view. But it is not clear that Mark thought that this was the meaning of Jesus’ saying. So we have to be modest in our interpretation of this text. If we are careful not to become too absorbed in the puzzle, we can step back and see the pastoral meaning of Jesus statement. He has just told them that to belong to him could easily mean physical death. So 9:1 is Jesus’ way to comfort them. He says, “don’t worry — what ever you lose will be more than made up for! You will see great things! I will be with you!” So though we are not sure about Jesus’ specific meaning, his general meaning is clear — and it is wonderful!<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 102-103.