

Portraits of Jesus

A Study of the Gospel of Mark

by Gary Fisher

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If you have not already done so, save this lesson to your computer using the "save" feature of your browser or PDF reader. Then print out the lesson (or at least open it in your browser or PDF reader **offline** – not on the Internet). Read the lesson and **study in your Bible the passages indicated >>> Scripture <<<**. Following each passage, study each question that has a number enclosed in asterisks (*1*, *2*, etc.), and **write down your answers on paper**. Some questions include more than one number because they have more than one blank to fill in. ("Think" questions should be carefully considered for your own benefit, but your answers will not be submitted to us.) Please take your time, study each passage carefully, answer the questions honestly, and consider the applications to your own life (John 12:48; 2 Tim. 2:15).

When you have studied the whole lesson and written down answers to all the indicated questions, return to the menu for this course on our web site at www.BibleStudyLessons.com and click on the link for the **answer quiz** for this lesson (or simply click on the link at the end of this lesson). Follow the directions to submit your answers and receive your grade. You will then be given an opportunity to see the correct answers to the questions. Please save this lesson and the correct answers for future reference.

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The Message Spreads

Lesson 5

Jesus Sends out the Twelve

>>> Read Mark 6:7–13. <<<

Please make sure to pick up your Bible and read each paragraph as you proceed with this lesson. In this section, Jesus sent His twelve apostles out in pairs on a preaching tour. This marked the fourth stage in their career. Earlier, they had heard Jesus, been called by Him, and been chosen as apostles. Here they were sent out as His representatives to proclaim the message of repentance. The mission was urgent, so Jesus forbade them to take extra provisions. This restriction was not intended to be permanent (see Luke 22:35–36), but was appropriate for this brief mission (see Mark 6:30). Sending out six pairs of preachers both facilitated the spread of Jesus' message and gave the

apostles valuable practical experience.

1 What message did Jesus' apostles preach (v12)? Answer: They said people should _____.

2&3 What were they to do when people would not receive their message (v11)? Answer: They should shake off the _____ from their _____.

Herod Fears Jesus

>>> Read Mark 6:14–29. <<<

Perhaps because of the additional groups of preachers being sent out, Herod, the governor, heard about Jesus. His guilty conscience made him worry that Jesus was John the Baptist whom he had beheaded some time earlier. This paragraph tells why Herod had killed John. John had been preaching against his marriage telling him that it wasn't right for him to have Herodias, who had been his brother's wife. As a result, he imprisoned John, but did not wish to kill him. Herodias did. One day, he had a party with many important guests. His stepdaughter provided "live entertainment." Because of her provocative dance, Herod rashly vowed to give her anything she asked, up to half of his kingdom. Upon receiving instructions from her mother, the girl requested that John's head be served to her on a platter. Herod hated to do it, but he didn't want to lose face in front of his dinner guests, so he obliged the girl's request and John was murdered.

Note — Sins that beheaded John the Baptist: John was a righteous preacher who was murdered because of several sins: 1) an unlawful marriage; 2) resentment and bitterness on the part of Herodias; 3) a lustful dance; 4) a rash promise; and 5) Herod's lack of courage in not breaking the sinful vow. Actions that produced such bitter fruit should be carefully avoided by Christians today. 1) Despite the frequency of divorce and remarriage in our society, Christians must not act against the Lord's instructions (see Mark 10:2–10; Matthew 19:9). 2) All disciples must rid their lives of resentment and bitterness, because they build up and lead to hatred, harsh words and revengeful actions. 3) Lustful behavior provokes every form of sexual sin in our society. Followers of Christ should avoid nightclubs, dances and other activities that encourage sensual feelings. 4) No one should make any promise without careful thought. 5) All should have the courage to do what is right regardless of the presence of others.

4 Who did Herod think Jesus was? Answer: He thought He was _____.

5 Why had Herod arrested John the Baptist? Answer: John had preached that it was not lawful for Herod to have his brother Philip's _____.

6 How did Herodias' daughter please Herod? Answer: She _____ before him on his birthday.

7,8,&9 What promise did Herod make to Herodias' daughter, and what did she ask for then? Answer: He promised to give her anything up to half of his _____, so she asked for the _____ of _____.

(Note: For more information about unscriptural marriages, see lesson 7 on Mark 10.)

Unsuccessful Attempt to Rest

>>> Read Mark 6:30–44. <<<

When the disciples returned from their preaching trip, Jesus sought to leave the multitude in order to spend time with them privately. They had been so busy they hadn't even had time for meals. Therefore, Jesus and the twelve crossed the Sea of Galilee by boat. The multitude followed Jesus on foot and were already there waiting when the Lord and His apostles landed. Instead of being perturbed, Jesus felt compassion for them because He knew that they were like sheep without a shepherd. He taught them. Then He discussed the options for feeding the huge crowd. The disciples had only five loaves of bread and a few fish. To buy enough food at the market would have been prohibitively expensive. So Jesus simply had the crowd sit down by hundreds and fifties on the grass and He multiplied the food. All ate, were filled and more leftovers were gathered than the amount they had started with. Once again we see Jesus as the One who had the authority to handle every situation.

10 How did Jesus feel toward the multitude who pursued him while he was trying to get away for a time of rest? a) He was angry, b) He was compassionate, c) He didn't care about them, d) all of the preceding. Answer: _____.

11,12,13,&14 Fill in the numbers. Jesus' disciples had _____ loaves and _____ fishes. They fed _____ men and had _____ baskets of leftovers.

The Trip Back across the Sea

>>> Read Mark 6:45–56. <<<

Jesus sent the disciples in a boat across the sea. Meanwhile, He went to a mountain to pray. In the wee hours of the morning, He saw the disciples still struggling in their boat. A storm had arisen and they were strenuously rowing trying to get across. He simply walked across the sea to them. At first they thought He was a ghost, but He identified himself, got into the boat, and the storm suddenly stopped. Though the disciples had seen Jesus do many amazing things, every new incident seemed to surprise them. When they landed on the shore, many recognized Jesus and began to bring sick folks for Him to heal. As usual, the Lord healed all that were brought to Him.

15 While the disciples got on a boat to cross the sea, what did Jesus do? Answer: He went to a mountain to _____.

16&17 How did Jesus go to the disciples? Answer: He _____ on the _____.

Jesus vs. Traditions

>>> Read Mark 7:1–13. <<<

The Pharisees and scribes challenged the disciples because they ate with unwashed hands. The issue here was not hygiene, but religious ritual. The Pharisees had developed elaborate cleansing procedures that they believed were a part of God's will. The truth is, God had never commanded these washings; they originated with the doctrines and traditions of men. Jesus answered His critics by pointing out the difference between God-given commandments and human traditions. He showed that their insistence on following rules established by men caused them to actually break God's law. He cited the case of "Corban." This was a Jewish tradition that prohibited a person from using his resources to provide for his aging parents if he had previously declared those resources "dedicated" to God. Their obedience to men's doctrines led them to disregard God's will.

Note — Men's doctrines vs. God's commands: Men continue to follow their own traditions and doctrines rather than God's word. Just like the scribes and Pharisees, people today believe that their

doctrines actually are God's will. They haven't learned how to distinguish between unnecessary rules and binding commands. Jesus showed how easy it is to tell the difference: Look at their source. Any religious practice or teaching that comes from man is wrong; those which come from God are right. We should examine everything we do to see whether it comes from God or man. Everything from God is in the Bible. So if what I believe isn't taught by Scripture, I can know it must be from man.

18&19 What criticism did the Pharisees and scribes raise against Jesus' disciples? Answer: The disciples did not _____ their hands before they _____ food.

20 What was the authority behind this religious practice? Answer: It was a _____ of the elders.

21 What did Jesus say about service to God that is based on the doctrines of men (v7)? Answer: He said their worship was _____.

Emphasis on the Heart

>>> Read Mark 7:14–23. <<<

The Pharisees focused primarily on external things. But Jesus showed that what actually defiles a person are the things inside his heart. In the Bible, the heart refers to the mind or spirit of man. Every sin germinates and grows within man's spirit and is then expressed in external action. In this way, the Lord showed how foolish it was for the Pharisees to be frantically seeking external purity by a ritual hand washing procedure. This principle also proved that God no longer had rules prohibiting the eating of certain foods.

Note — *We need a heart check-up: Jesus' words should motivate us to carefully examine our own heart. Heart disease is a warning symptom, and if not detected and cured, will result in all manner of sin. Jesus warned about greed, envy, pride, and lust. These attitudes are wrong, and must be checked at their onset. We must care for our heart by feeding on the pure Word of God and constantly seeking the Lord.*

22 What causes a person to be defiled? Answer: A person is defiled by things that come from out of his _____.

Jesus Heals a Gentile Woman's Daughter

>>> Read Mark 7:24–30. <<<

Jesus had traveled to a predominantly Gentile area. Before this, almost all of His work had been done with Jews. He had healed Jews; His apostles were Jews; and He preached to Jews. Jesus wanted to have some time alone with the apostles, so He withdrew to a Gentile region north of Galilee. He had hoped to stay there undetected, but a Syrian woman found out He was there and came requesting that He heal her demon–possessed daughter. At first, Jesus refused. He said that it was not good to take bread from the children and feed it to the dogs. What he meant was that according to God's plan it wasn't time yet to heal and teach the Gentiles; the Jews (the children) were the ones God intended to be the recipients of the bread (healings and blessings in general) first. God planned that later on through the Jewish people the gospel would be introduced to the Gentiles. This woman showed great faith, humility and quickness because she responded: Yes, but even the dogs under the table get to eat the crumbs. She implied that just a mere crumb of Jesus' miraculous power would be sufficient to heal her daughter. She also recognized that this did not signal the beginning of a major Gentile "campaign." As a result, Jesus healed her daughter. The conversation had made it clear that she would not misinterpret the healing as a sign that the time for the Gentiles had come.

23 Of what race or nationality was the woman who came to Jesus? (a) Jewish, (b) Hindu, (c) Greek/Gentile (Syrophenician), (d) American. Answer: _____.

24 What problem did she want Jesus to solve? Answer: She wanted Him to cure her daughter who had a _____.

25,26,&27 What did Jesus tell her, and how did she respond? Answer: He said that the children's bread should not be thrown to _____. She said that even the dogs get to eat the _____ that fall from (or are under) the _____.

Jesus Heals a Deaf Man

>>> Read Mark 7:31-37. <<<

Please read this paragraph in your Bible before continuing. You undoubtedly noticed that Jesus used an unusual procedure to heal this deaf man. After taking him away from the crowd, Jesus put His fingers into the man's ears, and touched the man's tongue with His own saliva. Apparently, Jesus was using "sign language" to communicate with him, and to let him know who was about to heal him. Had Jesus not done this, the man would have suddenly begun to hear, but would not have understood why. The multitude's affirmation was absolutely correct: "He has done all things well!"

28 Where did Jesus put His fingers? Answer: He put them into the deaf man's _____.

29 What effect did the miracle have on the crowds? Answer: They were amazed and said that Jesus did everything _____.

When you have carefully studied this lesson and written down answers to all the questions, click on this link to submit your answers.

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