

# connect 360

BIBLE TEACHING GUIDE

# *On Your Mark*

## *The Gospel in Motion*

A STUDY OF THE  
Gospel of Mark

Pamela Culbertson • Jimmy Hester  
Deborah McCollister • Robert Prince  
Felisi Sorgwe • Gene Wilkes  
Brad Williamson • Stephen Von Wyrick



 BaptistWayPress®  
Dallas, Texas

*On Your Mark: The Gospel in Motion (A Study of the Gospel of Mark)—Connect 360 Bible Teaching Guide*

Copyright © 2016 by BAPTISTWAY PRESS®.

All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations. For information, contact BAPTISTWAY PRESS, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 7557 Rambler Road, Suite 1200, Dallas, TX 75231–2388.

BAPTISTWAY PRESS® is registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

CONNECT 360 ALL THE BIBLE FOR ALL OF LIFE® is registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in lessons 1–4 are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. NRSV refers to the New Revised Standard Version Bible.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in lessons 5–13 and the Christmas lesson are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 Biblica. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

NIV84 refers to this edition of the New International Version.

BAPTISTWAY PRESS® Leadership Team

Executive Director, Baptist General Convention of Texas: David Hardage  
Director, Great Commission Team: Delvin Atchison  
Publisher, BaptistWay Press®: Scott Stevens

Cover: Micah Kandros Design  
Interior Design and Production: Desktop Miracles, Inc.  
Printing: Data Reproductions Corporation

First edition: December 2016

ISBN–13: 978–1–938355–66–0

# How to Make the Best Use of This *Teaching Guide*

Leading a class in studying the Bible is a sacred trust. This *Teaching Guide* has been prepared to help you as you give your best to this important task.

In each lesson, you will find first “Bible Comments” for teachers, to aid you in your study and preparation. The three sections of “Bible Comments” are “Understanding the Context,” “Interpreting the Scriptures,” and “Focusing on the Meaning.” “Understanding the Context” provides a summary overview of the entire background passage that also sets the passage in the context of the Bible book being studied. “Interpreting the Scriptures” provides verse-by-verse comments on the focal passage. “Focusing on the Meaning” offers help with the meaning and application of the focal text.

The second main part of each lesson is “Teaching Plans.” You’ll find two complete teaching plans in this section. The first is called the “Discovery Plan,” which emphasizes discovery learning techniques; and the second is called the “Discussion Plan,” which provides questions and suggestions for dialogue about the Scriptures. Choose the plan that best fits your class and your style of teaching. You may also use and adapt ideas from both. Each plan is intended to be practical, helpful, and immediately useful as you prepare to teach.

The major headings in each teaching plan are intended to help you sequence how you teach so as to follow the flow of how people tend to learn. The first major heading, “Connect with Life,” provides ideas that will help you begin the class session where your class is and draw your class into the study. The second major heading, “Guide Bible Study,” offers suggestions for helping your class engage the Scriptures actively and develop a greater understanding of this portion of the Bible’s message. The third major heading, “Encourage Application,” is meant to help participants focus on how to respond with their lives to this message.

As you begin the study with your class, be sure to find a way to help your class know the date on which each lesson will be studied. You might use one or more of the following methods:

- In the first session of the study, briefly overview the study by identifying for your class the date on which each lesson will be studied. Lead your class to write the date in the table of contents in their *Study Guides* and on the first page of each lesson.
- Make and post a chart that indicates the date on which each lesson will be studied.
- If all of your class has e-mail, send them an e-mail with the dates the lessons will be studied.
- Provide a bookmark with the lesson dates. You may want to include information about your church and then use the bookmark as an outreach tool, too. A model for a bookmark can be downloaded from [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org) under the “Teacher Helps” tab.
- Develop a sticker with the lesson dates, and place it on the table of contents or on the back cover.

Here are some steps you can take to help you prepare well to teach each lesson and save time in doing so:

1. Start early in the week before your class meets.
2. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers meet for lesson overview and preparation, plan to participate. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers don’t have this planning time now, look for ways to begin. You, your fellow teachers, and your church will benefit from this mutual encouragement and preparation.
3. Overview the study in the *Study Guide*. Look at the table of contents, and see where this lesson fits in the overall study. Then read or review the study introduction to the book that is being studied.
4. Consider carefully the suggested Main Idea, Question to Explore, and Teaching Aim. These can help you discover the main thrust of this particular lesson.

5. Use your Bible to read and consider prayerfully the Scripture passages for the lesson. Using your Bible in your study and in the class session can provide a positive model to class members to use their own Bibles and give more attention to Bible study themselves. (Each writer of the Bible comments in both the *Teaching Guide* and the *Study Guide* has chosen a favorite translation. You're free to use the Bible translation you prefer and compare it with the translations chosen, of course.)
6. After reading all the Scripture passages in your Bible, then read the Bible comments in the *Study Guide*. The Bible comments are intended to be an aid to your study of the Bible. Read also the small articles—"sidebars"—in each lesson. They are intended to provide additional, enrichment information and inspiration and to encourage thought and application. Try to answer for yourself the questions included in each lesson. They're intended to encourage further thought and application, and you can also use them in the class session itself. Continue your Bible study with the aid of the Bible comments included in this *Teaching Guide*.
7. Review the "Teaching Plans" in this *Teaching Guide*. Consider how these suggestions would help you teach this Bible passage in your class to accomplish the teaching aim.
8. Consider prayerfully the needs of your class, and think about how to teach so you can help your class learn best.
9. Develop and follow a lesson plan based on the suggestions in this *Teaching Guide*, with alterations as needed for your class.
10. Enjoy leading your class in discovering the meaning of the Scripture passages and in applying these passages to their lives.

**Premium Commentary. Plan to get the additional Bible study comments available online.** Visit our website, call 1-866-249-1799, or e-mail [baptistway@texasbaptists.org](mailto:baptistway@texasbaptists.org) to order the *Premium Commentary*. It is available only in electronic format (PDF) from our website. The price of these comments is \$5 per person. A church or class that participates in our advance order program for free shipping can receive the *Premium Commentary* free. Call 1-866-249-1799 or see [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org) for information on participating in our free shipping program for the next study.

***Premium Teaching Plans.*** An additional teaching plan is also available in electronic format (PDF) by visiting our website or calling 1-866-249-1799. The price of these plans for an entire study is \$5 per person. It is available only in electronic format (PDF) from our website. A church or class that participates in our advance order program for free shipping can receive the *Premium Teaching Plans* free. Call 1-866-249-1799 or see [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org) for information on participating in our free shipping program for the next study.

***FREE!*** Downloadable teaching resource items for use in your class are available at [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org). Watch for them in the “Teaching Plans” for each lesson. Then go online to [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org) and click on “Teaching Resource Items” under the “Teacher Helps” tab for this study. These items are selected from the “Teaching Plans.” They are provided online to make lesson preparation easier for handouts and similar items. Permission is granted to download these teaching resource items, print them out, copy them as needed, and use them in your class.

# Writers of This *Teaching Guide*

**Stephen Von Wyrick, wrote “Bible Comments” for lessons one through four.** Dr. Wyrick serves as professor of Hebrew Bible and Archaeology at the University of Mary-Hardin Baylor, Belton, Texas, and as lecturer in religion at Baylor University. He has written numerous assignments for BAPTISTWAY PRESS®.

**Brad Williamson wrote the “Teaching Plans” for lessons one through four.** Dr. Williamson is the executive pastor at First Baptist Church, Lewisville, Texas. He has taught adults in Sunday School for more than twenty years and is a frequent contributing writer for BAPTISTWAY PRESS®. In addition to his church responsibilities, he has served as an adjunct professor for Southwestern Seminary, Logsdon Seminary, and the B.H. Carroll Theological Institute.

**Felisi Sorgwe wrote “Bible Comments” for lessons five through seven.** Dr. Sorgwe is an associate professor of theology at Houston Baptist University and also serves as pastor of Maranatha International Church, Houston, Texas. A dual citizen of Nigeria and the United States, he received the M.Div. and M.A.R.E. degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Ph.D. in Religion degree from Baylor University.

**Pamela Culbertson, writer of “Teaching Plans” for lessons five through seven,** is a graduate of Hardin Simmons University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. She served as a Minister of Youth for 30+ years in churches in Texas and Germany. Currently she serves as an Intercultural Sunday School Specialist. Pamela makes her home in Dallas, Texas.

**Gene Wilkes wrote “Bible Comments” for lessons eight through ten.** Dr. Wilkes is the president and professor of New Testament and Leadership at B.H. Carroll Theological Institute, Irving, Texas. He has authored eleven

books, including *Jesus On Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* and *A New Way of Living: Practicing the Beatitudes Every Day*. Dr. Wilkes received his Ph.D. in New Testament Studies and his M.Div. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He graduated from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Greek. Dr. Wilkes lives in Plano, Texas, with his wife Kim, and they have two married daughters and three grandchildren.

**Jimmy Hester, writer of “Teaching Plans” for lessons eight through ten,** retired in 2011 after twenty-seven years of publishing for churches through magazines, Bible studies, and books. Dr. Hester is Bible study director and teacher of adults at First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, where he and his wife Kim have been members since 1985. They have two grown sons and two grandchildren. Dr. Hester received the Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Robert Prince writer of “Bible Comments” for lessons eleven through thirteen and the Christmas lesson,** serves as senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Waynesville, North Carolina. A native of Georgia, Dr. Prince has also served pastorates in that state and in Texas. He has also served as an adjunct instructor at Southwestern and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminaries, and at Wayland Baptist University. He earned his B.A. degree from Baylor University, and his M.Div. and Ph.D. degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has written several other assignments for BAPTISTWAY PRESS®.

**Deborah McCollister wrote the “Teaching Plans” for lessons eleven through thirteen and the Christmas lesson.** Dr. McCollister is professor of English at Dallas Baptist University, Dallas, Texas. She and her husband Mackie, are active members of First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas. She has written many previous assignments for BAPTISTWAY PRESS® Bible study materials.

# On Your Mark: The Gospel in Motion

## A Study of the Gospel of Mark

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>How to Make the Best Use of This Teaching Guide</i> | 3 |
| <i>Writers for This Teaching Guide</i>                 | 7 |

### DATE OF STUDY

|                  |       |  |     |
|------------------|-------|--|-----|
| <b>LESSON 1</b>  | _____ | <b>Exercising Spiritual Authority</b><br>MARK 1:21–39                          | 11  |
| <b>LESSON 2</b>  | _____ | <b>Healing and Forgiveness</b><br>MARK 2:1–12                                  | 24  |
| <b>LESSON 3</b>  | _____ | <b>A Case of Mistaken Identity</b><br>MARK 3:20–35                             | 36  |
| <b>LESSON 4</b>  | _____ | <b>Invading the Darkness</b><br>MARK 5:1–20                                    | 48  |
| <b>LESSON 5</b>  | _____ | <b>Rejection and Replication</b><br>MARK 6:1–13                                | 59  |
| <b>LESSON 6</b>  | _____ | <b>Outward Piety vs. Inward Purity</b><br>MARK 7:1–23                          | 69  |
| <b>LESSON 7</b>  | _____ | <b>A Correct Confession and<br/>a Scathing Correction</b><br>MARK 8:27–38; 9:1 | 80  |
| <b>LESSON 8</b>  | _____ | <b>Overcoming Unbelief</b><br>MARK 9:14–29                                     | 92  |
| <b>LESSON 9</b>  | _____ | <b>Greatness Equals Sacrifice</b><br>MARK 10:32–45                             | 102 |
| <b>LESSON 10</b> | _____ | <b>Symbolic Acts of Judgment</b><br>MARK 11:12–33                              | 112 |
| <b>LESSON 11</b> | _____ | <b>Predictions, Promises, and Pride</b><br>MARK 14:12–31                       | 123 |

|  |                                      |     |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>LESSON 12</b>                               | <b>Betrayed, Arrested, and Tried</b> |     |
|  | MARK 14:43–52; 15:1–15               | 134 |
| <b>LESSON 13</b>                               | <b>Death is Defeated!</b>            |     |
|  | MARK 15:33–41; 16:1–8                | 146 |
| <b>CHRISTMAS</b>                               | <b>God is with Us!</b>               |     |
| <b>LESSON</b>                                  | MATTHEW 1:1, 17–25                   | 157 |
| <i>How to Order More Bible Study Materials</i> |                                      | 167 |

# lesson 1

## Exercising Spiritual Authority

### MAIN IDEA

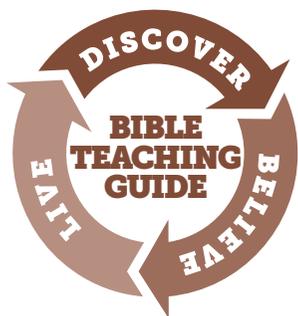
Jesus displayed his spiritual authority by teaching those who listened, healing the afflicted, and defeating demons.

### QUESTION TO EXPLORE

How can we recognize and respond to Jesus' spiritual authority in our lives?

### TEACHING AIM

To lead adults to recognize and respond to Jesus' spiritual authority in their lives



## Bible Comments

---

### Understanding the Context

---

Many scholars view the Gospel of Mark (likely penned between 66–70 A.D., before the Roman destruction of Jerusalem’s temple in 70 A.D.) as the first written of the three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). The Gospel of John contains style and vocabulary significantly different from the synoptic gospels. Additionally, John shows no clear evidence of using the Gospel of Mark as a reference. The Gospel of Matthew contains ninety percent of the contents found in the Gospel of Mark while the Gospel of Luke contains fifty percent of the material.

Early Church Fathers, such as Papias (ca. 70–155 A.D.) and Irenaeus (ca. 130–200 A.D.), agree that Mark wrote his Gospel shortly before Peter’s martyrdom. Although Mark was not an eyewitness of Jesus’ ministry, Peter mentored him. However, some scholars question the assignment of authorship to any particular person and argue for anonymity of authorship.

The Gospel of Mark, according to German theologian Wilhelm Wrede, presents Jesus as the “hidden Messiah.”<sup>1</sup> This flawed theory does not stand against the weight of biblical evidence. The truth is that Jesus faced rejection by his people and the Romans condemned him to die on a cross. Jesus was an apocalyptic preacher whose suffering and death revealed him as the one, true Messiah.

Mark is the most action-packed of all the Gospels. The writer used action verbs extensively, moving the reader quickly from scene to scene as Jesus put the gospel message into motion.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke begin with the genealogy of Jesus. John’s Gospel starts with the announcement of Jesus as the eternal *Logos*. The Gospel of Mark begins with the “good news of Jesus Christ” and leads into the ministry of Jesus. There is no announcement of his birth or infancy. John the Baptist appears immediately announcing the good news. John fulfills Isaiah’s role as the messenger who prepares the way of the Lord, referring implicitly to Jesus. He is the new Elijah, as announced at the end of the Book of Malachi. The writer moved quickly to the baptism of Jesus followed by a

brief mention of Jesus in the wilderness. Mark 1:14 delineates the details of the ministry of Jesus, including his selection of the first disciples.<sup>2</sup>

---

## Interpreting the Scriptures

---

### Jesus Exercised Spiritual Authority in the Synagogue (1:21–22)

**1:21a.** The city name *Capernaum* was derived from the Hebrew “Kafar Nahum,” the village of Nahum. The name Nahum referred to a prominent figure in the community and not to the biblical prophet of the same name. Capernaum was a fishing village located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee and is one of the most frequently mentioned sites in the Gospels. The original village was on the highway from the Mediterranean coast to Damascus. It boasted a small port for fishermen on the Sea of Galilee.

**1:21b–22.** The earliest synagogues were built for the assembly of prayer, particularly outside of Judea. After the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 A.D., synagogues became more prominent in Judaism. However, before the temple’s destruction, synagogues existed in only a few Jewish communities throughout the Greco-Roman world.

The synagogue as an architectural structure evolved over several centuries and was the precursor of church buildings (as places of worship). A Jewish community with more than ten families was supposed to have a synagogue, a place where the men would gather every Sabbath for prayer, reading the Torah, and instruction. This format was the Jewish practice for more than 300 years. The role of women was severely limited in these settings.

A synagogue had several officers but no permanent preacher. Instead, after the reading of a section of the Torah, a competent male would stand before the congregation and explain the passage. The presiding officer might invite a visiting teacher to give an exposition of the daily passage.

The Jewish Sabbath began at sunset on Friday. However, Jews typically observed the Sabbath service on Saturday.

Mark's Gospel implies that Jesus immediately went to the synagogue for the Sabbath service. There is no indication that this was an unusual activity of Jesus.

Mark's writing reveals the people were astounded, literally "utterly amazed" at the teaching of Jesus. From the response of the congregation, the people in the Capernaum synagogue were accustomed to lukewarm sermons.

Mark described the manner of Jesus' teaching as "one who had authority." The Greek word *exousia* which Mark used refers to freedom of choice, which is the ability to command. Other Bible passages that use this Greek word convey the meaning of absolute power or authority.

Scribes were experts in the Torah. They typically relied upon what other rabbis taught, adding little new insight into a sacred text. Jesus taught from his own authority, and this impressed the audience. He provided fresh insight into the sacred text without reading into the text false meaning (eisegesis).

## Jesus Confronted an Unclean Spirit (1:23–24)

**1:23.** Jesus came face-to-face in a verbal confrontation with a man described as possessed by an unclean spirit. Jesus demonstrated compassion for the man.

In the Old Testament and Judaism, the opposite of "holy" is "unclean." God alone is holy. Temple protocol prohibited individuals who were considered unclean from entering the temple. A synagogue was not the temple, and we occasionally find that individuals whose uncleanness prevented them from entering the temple might find a space in a synagogue. However, local leaders governed each synagogue. Although the man possessed by an evil spirit was in the Capernaum synagogue, he would not have been permitted to enter the temple.

Bible students disagree as to the meaning of the description "unclean spirit." Was the man emotionally disturbed or insane? Was he demon-possessed? Either interpretation would have prevented the individual from entering the temple and experiencing the presence of God, which is the real issue. No one unclean can come into the presence of God because God is holy.

**1:24.** Mark's text specifies that the uttered words belonged to the "unclean spirit," who asked on behalf of all evil spirits, "What have you to do with us?" The Greek translates this question as "What do we and you (have in common)?" Some interpret the inquiry as "Why do you meddle with us?"

The unclean spirit recognized Jesus had the authority and power to destroy (completely ruin) all uncleanness and release the control of uncleanness over the lives of individuals. Evil spirits always recognize the holiness of Jesus ("Holy One of God").

### Jesus Gave Two Commands (1:25–28)

**1:25–26.** The imperative "Be silent" means to "be muzzled." For the writer of Mark, if Jesus revealed his real identity too soon, he would be confined to the traditional beliefs of the day concerning the Messiah. Besides, an unclean spirit was not the proper instrument through which to reveal Jesus as the Messiah; that revelation would come from Jesus' words and deeds.

The imperative "Come out" conveys the meaning of "go away." At the second command of Jesus, the unclean spirit departed like a storm—convulsing, releasing a thunderous shriek, and quickly exiting the area. That which is unclean, demonic or otherwise, was no match for the divine authority that resided in Jesus.

**1:27.** Every person who witnessed this act of Jesus was amazed. The text does not indicate that they engaged Jesus in their discussions; however, the text is clear that they discussed or disputed among themselves what they had witnessed. Were the actions of Jesus some new authoritative teaching? They recognized Jesus' authority over unclean spirits, something they did not have or understand.

**1:28.** Because of this encounter with an unclean spirit, Jesus' fame spread throughout the entire region of Galilee.

## Jesus Healed Simon Peter's Mother-in-Law (1:29–31)

**1:29–31.** The author of the Gospel of Mark included a story about a private healing immediately following the account of the public healing of the man with an unclean spirit.

Tradition locates the house where Simon Peter's mother-in-law lay ill only a few yards from the assumed location of the synagogue Jesus visited in the village of Capernaum. Today, a Catholic church is constructed above the ruins of a first-century house viewed by many as the home of Simon Peter.

Two sets of brothers, Simon (Peter) and Andrew, along with James and John, accompanied Jesus to the house. Apparently, the village of Capernaum and Peter's house served as the headquarters of Jesus' Galilean ministry.

Clearly, the story indicates that Simon Peter was married because Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a fever. The Old Testament and rabbinic traditions often present a person suffering from a fever as encountering God's punishment (Leviticus 26:16; Deuteronomy 28:22). Popular belief ascribed fevers to gods or demons. Fever was abnormal, and Jews often viewed someone suffering from a fever as "unclean."

Those present probably wondered if Jesus could help Peter's relative as he had helped the man with the unclean spirit. With a sense of urgency, they informed Jesus of her desperate situation. Jesus acted immediately. The wording "at once" or "immediately" is used repeatedly in Mark 1. Jesus healed the man with an unclean spirit by speaking. Jesus healed the mother-in-law by touching her ("took her by the hand and lifted her up.") As with the man with the unclean spirit, Simon's mother-in-law was healed immediately and was able to perform her traditional duties within the first-century household.

## Jesus Cared for the Community (1:32–34)

**1:32–34.** First-century Judaism forbade work on the Sabbath. Both the cleansing of the man with the unclean spirit and the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law occurred on the Sabbath. Each act was considered work; however, the text does not indicate that these two acts stirred up any religious opposition. Other actions by Jesus did create problems (e.g. John 7:23). It is interesting that the Capernaum community waited until sunset (the end of

the Sabbath) to bring the sick (badly ill) and the unclean to Jesus for healing and cleansing. They took no action until the Sabbath ended. The Jewish population of the city did not want the religious leaders to accuse them of violating the Sabbath laws as interpreted by the rabbis.

Note that, unlike the man with an unclean spirit mentioned in verses 23–28, in this passage, the writer used the Greek term for “evil spirit,” or “demon.” The word refers to malignant forces that are harmful to humans. Such influences made individuals unclean in the eyes of the Jewish community and prevented those possessed by these demons from entering the temple, (and by extension—the presence of God). By casting out these evil or unclean spirits, called demons, Jesus removed the obstacle preventing the individual from entering into a relationship with God. These healing activities of the physical diseases and malignant forces restored the individuals’ opportunity to pursue their relationship with God in the community of believers and the places of worship.

Jesus again ordered the evil spirits not to speak. The demons recognized the true identity of Jesus, which in one sense is sad because the people who needed to know his identity the most did not recognize him as the Messiah. Again, Jesus would not allow the unclean world to reveal his identity. Knowledge of him as the Messiah would come to humanity through Jesus’ words and deeds. Everything that was evil in creation recognized the deity of Jesus. However, this knowledge did not stop their distorted view of Jesus.

The Greek text indicates that a continuous stream of suffering humanity flooded the door to Simon Peter’s house. The expression “the whole city” is hyperbole and is used to emphasize the significance of what happened. Jesus responded to the masses in the same manner in which he cared for the man with an unclean spirit, and Simon Peter’s mother-in-law. He demonstrated compassion in public and in private.

The wording “he cured many” does not imply that there were individuals that he did not or could not heal. The Greek term meaning *many* is also a figure of speech that emphasizes a vast number of people. Jesus healed all those brought to him (Matthew 8:16).

## Jesus Set the Pace (1:35–39)

**1:35.** Jesus needed time alone and sought it by rising before dawn. He found a deserted, quiet place to pray and did not rush.

**1:36–39.** In contrast, Simon, his companions, and the townspeople frantically searched for Jesus. Jesus could have taken the easy route and stayed in Capernaum to teach and convince others of his mission. Instead, he called on his followers to go with him to the neighboring towns to reach people there. The activity in Capernaum became the model; Jesus taught in the synagogues and removed uncleanness from the lives of individuals.

---

### Focusing on the Meaning

---

Unlike many religious leaders, who used their positional power to preach and teach but did little for their hurting communities, Jesus relied on spiritual authority to preach, teach, and remove uncleanness in the lives of the hurting. Even when confronted by unclean spirits or demons that recognized his positional authority as the Son of God, Jesus chose to use his spiritual authority to make a difference.

The time will come when all, including the demonic world, will bow to Jesus' positional authority (Philippians 2:9–11). Until that time, Jesus set the example that spiritual power dominates positional power. Unfortunately, many leaders within the modern church either do not believe in the spiritual authority exemplified by Jesus, or they are power hungry as evidenced in their abuse of positional authority.

The narrative of Mark 1 is proof that Jesus can remove all uncleanness from an individual and restore such a person to proper fellowship with God. No physical, mental, or social impairment can keep a person separated from God's love.

Mark 1:35–39 exemplifies how all believers can exercise the spiritual power within them. Jesus began every day in prayer. We should too. Jesus did not allow others to define or distract him from his mission. Neither should we.

# Teaching Plans

## DISCOVERY PLAN

### Connect with Life

1. Say, *Lights, camera, ACTION!* These are familiar words from the movie industry. With modern technology, it is much easier for people to create home movies. If we were going to produce a movie, what are the things we would need? (List these items on the markerboard: Plot, conflict, script, camera, producer, characters, actors, editors, camera crew, etc.)
2. Say, *If Mark, the Gospel writer, had access to today's technology, he might have produced a film instead of a book about Jesus' life. It would have been an action-adventure movie, filled with the ministry and miracles of Jesus.*

Say, *Let's turn Mark's Gospel into a movie.*

- What events should we include in the script? (Jesus' actions and miracles, death, resurrection)
- What is the plot of the movie? (To show through the life of Jesus that he was the Messiah who defeated Satan on the cross and who offers eternal life through his death, burial, and resurrection)
- Who are the main characters? (Jesus, the disciples, the Pharisees and other religious leaders, other friends of Jesus)
- Who (or what) provides the conflict to overcome? (Satan, the religious leaders, sin)
- Who are the producers? (John Mark; the Holy Spirit);
- Who are the editors? (the disciples; the Holy Spirit)

### Guide Bible Study

3. Say, *Today we begin a study of the Gospel of Mark. As mentioned, it is an action-filled account of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It was most likely the first Gospel recorded, and it was written to convince people that Jesus is the Messiah.* (Use the material found in "Introducing On Your Mark: The Gospel in Motion" from the Study Guide to acquaint the class with the Gospel of Mark.)

4. Before class, write the following outline on the markerboard. (A copy of this outline is available in “Teaching Resource Items” for this study at [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org)).

### Storyline Development

- Read the passage.
  - Describe the setting.
  - What is the plot for this scene? (What is the point of this passage?)
  - What conflict is present?
  - What questions would you ask Jesus before sending your scene to production? In other words, what needs clarification in your passage?
  - How would you portray the people’s response to Jesus?
  - What creative elements would you include in your scene?
5. Group class members into three teams. Say, *Mark 1 is action-packed. Work with your team to prepare a storyline for the following scenes and get ready to share your storyline with the class.*
    - Team 1: Mark 1:21–28
    - Team 2: Mark 1:29–34
    - Team 3: Mark 1:35–39
  6. Allow seven to twelve minutes for the teams to work. Call for reports.

### Encourage Application

7. As time allows, ask and discuss the following questions:
  - What does it mean that Jesus had, or spoke, with authority?
  - In what ways does Jesus demonstrate his authority over evil today?
  - In what ways does Jesus reveal his authority over his followers today?
  - In what ways does Jesus want to have more authority in people’s lives? What helps or hinders that from taking place?
  - How does gathering for weekly Bible study help connect people to Jesus’ authority? How have you grown in Christ as a result of participating in small group Bible study?

## DISCUSSION PLAN

### Connect with Life

1. Say, *Today, we begin a study of the Gospel of Mark. Mark's Gospel was written to draw people to Jesus and prove he is the Messiah. It is an action-packed book filled with Jesus' miracles and ministry. As we begin, what are some things you already know about Mark and his Gospel? Include these items from the Study Guide:*

- The Gospel's author, John Mark, was not one of the twelve apostles.
- Mark went on a missionary journey with Paul and left mid-journey (Acts 13:13).
- Mark later became a close friend of Paul (2 Timothy 4:11).
- Mark probably wrote his Gospel while in Rome.
- This Gospel was written to reveal Jesus as the Messiah.
- The Gospel of Mark was the first Gospel written; likely between 55–65 A.D.
- Ninety percent of the contents of the Gospel of Mark corresponds with the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.
- Mark's Gospel records more miracles than the other Gospels.

### Guide Bible Study

2. Say, *This study focuses on the authorities in our lives. Higher authorities have power or control because of their position, while lower authorities exert control behind the scenes, often in subtle ways. What are some of the authorities (both kinds) we encounter daily? List the answers on a markerboard. Afterward, classify them "H" for higher authorities and "L" for lower authorities.*

### Examples

- Police officers (H)
- Teachers (either)
- Government officials (H)
- Advertisers (L)
- Lobbyists (L)
- Parents (both)
- Bible/God/Jesus (both, complete authority)

3. Recruit a volunteer to read aloud Mark 1:21–28. Instruct class members to listen for the word *authority*.
4. Say, *In Mark 1:22, the people were amazed because Jesus “taught them with authority, and not as the teachers of the law.”* Ask and discuss: *What do you think Mark meant here? How would you describe Jesus’ authority in this situation? Would you say Jesus’ authority came because of his position or was he trying to exert influence behind the scenes?* For clarification, use information from the “Jesus Exercised Spiritual Authority in the Synagogue” section of this *Teaching Guide* and the “Authority Speaks” section of the *Study Guide*.
5. Ask and discuss, *How would you describe Jesus’ authority over evil spirits as revealed in Mark 1:25–27?* Using information from the sidebar entitled “The Power of Evil Spirits” in the *Study Guide*, share what the Scripture says about evil spirits.
6. Read aloud Mark 1:29–34. Say, *Mark did not use the word authority in this passage, but Jesus demonstrated it.* Ask and discuss, *What do these verses add to our understanding of Jesus’ authority?* (Jesus has power over nature; Jesus’ authority trumps lesser authorities that try to take control of our lives.)
7. Ask a volunteer to read aloud Mark 1:35–39. Ask, *What words in these verses indicate Jesus’ authority was recognized?* (Verse 35, Jesus talked with God; verse 37, people intensely searched for Jesus; verse 39, the disciples followed Jesus.)

### Encourage Application

8. Ask and discuss, *In what ways would you say Mark 1 depicts or proves Jesus is the Messiah?*
9. Read aloud Matthew 28:19–20. Say, *Jesus holds all authority in heaven and earth.* Ask and discuss, *As believers, how would you say Jesus demonstrates his authority in our lives? How can we allow Jesus to have more authority in our lives?* Close in prayer, encouraging class members to surrender to Jesus’ authority in their lives.

**Notes**

---

1. <http://www.gotquestions.org/Messianic-secret.html>
2. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in lessons 1–4 are from the New Revised Standard Version.