

Screenshots of Jesus

A companion study to the podcasts of Amber Albee Swenson

The life of Christ through the lens of John Mark and his mentor, the apostle Peter

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Lesson One Intro to Mark:

Each gospel is written from a different point of view. Matthew was a tax collector. Tax collectors worked for the Romans, and because of that, they were hated by the Jews. They also were known for asking for more money than necessary in order to line their own pockets.

Matthew is another redemption story. Jesus took someone hated by the Jews and used him to write a gospel *to the Jews!* He showed how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament Scriptures.

Mark wrote from Peter's perspective and was all about action. He showed us what Jesus did, especially from the perspective that Jesus came to serve.

Dr. Luke interviewed eyewitnesses to write his gospel. He was a gentile and wrote to gentiles (non-Jewish people). If you want a lot of details, read Luke.

John was one of Jesus' closest friends and one of three inner circle disciples (Peter and his brother James being the other two). He wrote his gospel much later and spent a lot of time on Jesus' words and last hours. He writes poetically and circularly, going back to emphasize details he has already stated.

1. From the description of the authors and the style or perspective of the writing, which gospel might interest you most?

Peter and John Mark were both eager early on, then fell, by the grace of God recovered and eventually did incredible ministry.

Read Luke 24: 33-36 and John 21:15-19.

2. How did Jesus make sure Peter didn't think his ministry days were behind him?

3. Read Acts 15:36-41. What two things did Barnabas do to build up John Mark?

4. Who has helped you walk the Christian walk and stay close to God? If you are new to reading the Bible, who might be able to help you, encourage you, teach and guide you?

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”
Gal. 6:9

5. Read Romans 5:3-5. Look up these words:

Endurance:

Character:

Hope:

From the Apostle Paul's perspective suffering is doing something. Any suffering we are undergoing is producing something good in us.

Why are endurance, character and hope important characteristics for Christians?

6. Read James 1:2-4.

James was the half-brother of Jesus. (Mary was the mother of both. Joseph was the father of James, but Jesus' biological father was God.) From James' perspective being tested was not a bad thing. In fact it was important for becoming mature.

What trials have you gone through and how has it aided your growth?

7. Read 2 Peter 1:5-9

Peter gives us a list of traits to aspire to possess. Look up what each of these words mean:

Goodness:

Knowledge:

Self-control:

Perseverance:

Godliness:

Mutual Affection:

8. Why does Peter want us to attain these qualities? (v. 8)

9. Verse nine brings us full circle. Peter says our past sins, and the mercy we have been shown should produce these qualities in us. We've experienced the goodness of God, and so we want to exhibit goodness with others. We know better, so we want to do better. That's knowledge. Look through that list. Which ones do you struggle with?

10. Do the above qualities that you struggle with correlate to the sins you've struggled with?

Big idea: Grace is bigger than anything you've done! Matthew was a tax collector. Mark and Peter had major failures. God used all of them. He can use you.

Action item: What is one thing you can commit to doing in order to spend more time in the Bible, praying, or with other believers who can encourage you?

Prayer: God you are so good. Thank you for bringing me into your kingdom. Reveal your will and your ways to me as I study your Word. Help me to know and love you more. Move me to tell others about you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.