



Series Big Idea: The goal of this series is to study the book of Mark and ask the questions “Who is Jesus?” and “Who are we because of Him?”

Today’s Big Idea: What is the good news?

Leader Reminders:

- Pray for your students by name, asking that the Holy Spirit would show them who Jesus is and who they are because of Him. Pray that their identities would be firmly rooted in Jesus.
- The main application of this series is to push your students to spend time with Jesus daily and read through the entire book of Mark over the course of the next 12 weeks. Make this a priority for yourself personally. We have to lead in this, or the things we communicate don’t matter. Challenge your students to bring Bibles and a journal each week.
[Youth Pastor Note: Have extra Bibles available for students who forget or don’t have one.]
- Our goal is to equip students to discover the delight of spending time in Jesus’ presence, and how to read the Bible, wrestle with it, and apply it to their lives. These small group meetings should not be sermons or lectures. Help students dig in and fall in love with the God of the Bible. Listen and ask questions—don’t be afraid of silence. Help students explore for themselves instead of giving or accepting easy answers.
- Make it a goal to meet up individually with each student in your group outside of small group time during this series. Seriously, text your students right now with some available times! Get it on your calendar. Even if it’s taking them to the grocery store, inviting them to have dinner with your family, meeting before a church service, or grabbing ice cream for 30 minutes—use that focused time to build the relationship and create a space to dig a little deeper into who they are and how their identity is being shaped. As always, make sure you are communicating with their parents and meeting in a public place.

Icebreakers for Your First Meeting:

- Give any **announcements**.

- **Soccer Ball/Hot Seat:** Buy a small soccer ball. Write fun “get to know you” questions on each of the hexagons. Each week, have 1 or 2 students be in the “hot seat” and catch the ball. Then, have them answer the question one of their thumbs lands on. Then, have the rest of the group answer that one question, as well. Over the course of the 12 weeks, all the students will have answered all the questions and gotten to know one another better.
- **Happy, Crappy, God Moment:** Have each student share a happy thing, a crappy thing, and a God moment from this past week. Do this every week in your small group.
- **Prayer Requests and Praises:** It can be valuable to have students share these before the lesson or else you may end up running out of time. Consider using a “prayer jar” and a “praise jar” during the next 12 weeks. When a prayer is answered, move it to the praise jar. Keep adding to each as a tangible reminder of the power of prayer for your group.
- **The Other Six Devotional:** Hand out “The Other Six” devotionals to help students continue to pursue a relationship with Jesus on the other six days of the week that you don’t meet. Encourage them to ask each day as they read, “Who is Jesus, and who am I because of Him?”
- **Student Survey:** Start out your study time by giving each student a survey that will help you to get an idea of where they are at spiritually at the start of this series. Play some music on your phone while they are filling them out. Collect the handouts when they are finished.
- Now, **play a game** with your students. Have each of them pull out their phones and look up the best piece of good news they can find. Make it a competition to find the best news story. If a student doesn’t have their phone, have them partner up with someone who does. As the leader, pick a winner! But as a twist, give everyone a piece of candy instead of just the winner. Explain that today, you are going to be talking about how we all have been given the best news ever. **[Youth Pastor Note: Give all of your leaders enough candy to give to each student in their group.]**

Starter Questions: *Start by having a student say a quick prayer!*

- What’s the best news you have ever received?
- What does good news have to do with Jesus?

Say This: Today, we are starting a new series about the life of Jesus as told in the book of Mark. There are two questions we are going to be asking

every week: **1. Who is Jesus?** and **2. Who are we because of Him?** Let’s keep those two questions in mind as we start reading through the book of Mark together.

Digging Into the Word:

*Have a student read **Mark 1:1-3.***

- From this passage, who would you say Jesus is?
- What does Messiah mean?
- Who is Isaiah? *Turn to the book of Isaiah so they can see where it is.*

*Have a student read **Mark 1:4.***

- What do you know about John? Why is He significant to Jesus’ life and ministry?

*Have a student read **Mark 1:14–15.***

- What does repent mean? Why do we need to repent?
- Based on what this passage says, what is the Good News? Why does it matter for your life?
- What would you say the difference is between Jesus/Christianity and other religions? *(Most other religions give you advice on how you must live to earn the way to their god. With Jesus, you can’t earn your way to God. Jesus had to pay our debt of sin that we owed to God.)*
- What are some good things you have done?

*Have a student read **Ephesians 2:1–10 (emphasizing vs. 8–10).***

- What does this passage say about the good things we have done and how they compare to the good things Jesus has done? *(Concept of “Do vs. Done.” It’s not about what we DO to be good people. It’s about what Jesus has DONE on our behalf so we could be saved.)*

Illustration: Give each of your students a piece of paper. Have them draw a stick figure version of the Grand Canyon. Have them write the word “death” on the bottom. On one side of the chasm, have them write the word “us” with the words “sin, selfish, broken” near it. Then, have them write the

word “God” on the other side of the chasm with the words “perfect, good, love” near it. Use this drawing to explain the gospel. Then, have them draw a cross from one side of the chasm to the other.

Say This: As we study Jesus in the book of Mark, we will see that Jesus claimed to be God’s Son, which makes Him equal with God. This is why Jesus was the only one who could make a bridge for us to get close to God, be forgiven, and be saved for eternity.

Application Questions:

- In what ways do you need good news in your life?
- What do you need to be forgiven for?

Quickly give an appropriate example from your life to show students you can be vulnerable.

Prayer Partners: Pair students up with a new prayer partner every week to decompress and pray with.

Challenge: Come back together and challenge students to unplug for 5 minutes a day this week, go outside if weather allows, and use the “Other Six” devotional to pursue a relationship with Jesus.

Wrapping It Up:

Say This: In this lesson, we have seen how Jesus has given us the best news ever—that we can be forgiven of our sins and that we don’t have to be “good enough” people to get into Heaven. Based on that essential truth:

- What is one thing you learned about ***who Jesus is*** today?
- What is one thing you want to take away today about ***who you are because of Jesus?***

Abide Activity: Give students 5 minutes of individual time to pray, journal, meditate, or reread the passages you read today in Mark to close your time.

Stay Connected: Later in the week, text each student individually something like this, “Don’t forget to spend time with Jesus this week with

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your Other Six Devotional. Love ya! Let’s make sure we find a time to hang out in the next month. When are you free?” Also, post the follow-up social media graphic and devo for the week so your students see it!

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