

Some Final Questions for reflection on the Gospel of Mark

- 1) With whom does Jesus spend most of his time in Mark's gospel? Who is he in partnership with? Who is he in conflict with? What does this teach you about Jesus?
- 2) In Mark, who knows the true identity of Jesus? Who doesn't? Why does Jesus work so hard to keep his identity a secret? What things remain mysterious for you in Mark's gospel?
- 3) What is intercalation (Markan Sandwich)? Give, and explain, an example of intercalation from Mark's gospel. Be sure to explain how the two stories are connected and how they help explain each other.
- 4) In Mark's gospel, Jesus spends a great deal of time on the "other side" of the Sea of Galilee. Who lives there? Why does Jesus spend so much time with them? How are these people important to our story? What is Mark trying to teach us through this?
- 5) Compare the stories of the Baptism of Jesus (1:9-11) with the story of the Transfiguration (9:2-8). How are these two stories different? How are they similar? What do we learn about Jesus, and the major themes in Mark's gospel, from these pericopes?
- 6) What is irony? How is Mark's gospel ironic? Give an example of a case of irony in Mark's gospel and explain why it is ironic.
- 7) How does Mark's gospel end? Why does it end like this? What problems are there with this ending? What theme does it illustrate? What is Mark trying to teach his audience (us!) through this ending?
- 8) What are the two movements in Mark's gospel? Give an example from each that illustrates the main theme of each movement. What is the "high point" of each? How are the two scenes similar? Why are these two the "high points"? Which movement teaches you most deeply about Jesus and his work, and the work of G-d in the world?
- 9) What did you learn about the Kingdom of G-d from reading Mark's gospel? Give one example and explain.
- 10) What are flat characters? What are round characters? Give an example of each type from your reading of Mark's gospel. Which are the disciples? Explain. Why do you think Mark characterizes them the way that he does?
- 11) Why was Jesus killed? What was his "crime"? Who killed him? How? Why in this way?
- 12) How does Mark use the themes of blindness and sight throughout the gospel to teach us? How do the healings of the two blind men help us to understand the major themes and symbolism in Mark's gospel?
- 13) Mark tells us that this story is "good news" (1:1), yet the story seems to end in tragedy. For whom do you think this story is good news? What in it did you find to be good news for your own life? Is there a message of joy to be found in Mark? Where? What is it?**
- 14) What in Mark's gospel was surprising or upsetting to you? What was comforting? Are there any particular stories or pericopes from Mark's gospel that left a lasting impact on you? Are there any particular insights that are important to you from having read Mark?**