

GOSPEL COMMUNITY

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Mark 16:9-20



REDEEMER
ROUND ROCK

CONNECT, REVIEW, PRAY

~5-10 minutes

- Announce any church activities/events and handle any housekeeping for the GC
- What are you thankful for / have struggled with this week?
- How did you apply or share what we learned last week?
- How can we pray for each other?

READ & RE-TELL

~5-10 minutes

- Have someone read out loud from the ESV translation.
- Have someone read out loud from a different translation.
- Do we need to define any confusing/unknown/curious words or phrases?
- Ask one person to re-tell the passage in their own words (different from the person reading).

ASK, LISTEN, LEARN

~30+ minutes

- What does this passage tell us about the character and nature of God?
- What does this passage tell us about ourselves/humanity?
- What does this passage tell us about the relationship between God and people?
- Review "FURTHER APPLICATION" questions.

APPLY, OBEY, GO

~10+ minutes

- Does anything in this passage change how you should live, or how you view God / people / yourself?
- Does this passage reveal a specific sin in your life?
- How can you live differently this coming week, with what you've learned?

FURTHER APPLICATION

1. As we come to the end of our study of the Gospel of Mark – reflect on what you have learned or how you have been shaped by the word?
 - What parts of Mark were the most impactful for you?
 - What is something the Holy Spirit spoke to you during this series?
2. In what ways have you...
 - seen Jesus more clearly for who he is or
 - better understood what it means to follow him?
3. Discuss Mark 16:9-20 and how Pastor Jordan framed this as "bonus content". What did he mean by that?
4. Which of the "three options" he presented do you think is most likely the best explanation for verses 9-20?
5. In what ways are these verses valuable to us as believers today?

5 HELPFUL GROUP DISCUSSION RULES

1. *If you talk a lot, allow space for someone else to speak up.*
2. *If you don't talk as much, work on sharing more.*
3. *Focus on what this passage is saying, don't stray too far from it. Seek not only to understand more about God through the passage, but also how it specifically applies to your own life as a Christian.*
4. *Give other people time to respond, silence is ok.*
5. *Respect your GC family and exercise grace.*

COMMENTARY EXCERPT:

*Mark 16:9-20

The gospel's abrupt ending:

One of the puzzling features of Mark's gospel is the way that it ends so suddenly, without a full account of all the times that Jesus appeared to his disciples after the resurrection. The other gospels give a much fuller picture of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. The longer ending of Mark's gospel (which is separated from the rest in the NIV) is not in the earliest manuscripts, and was almost certainly not written by Mark himself, but added by the early Christians to 'round off' the book. Some say that Mark's original ending was lost. Others suggest that perhaps Mark was martyred before he could finish his book, but this is not likely. It is more likely that Mark meant his gospel to end in this way. It was not, as some have suggested, that he wanted to leave the question of the resurrection open, but that, in his day, evidence for the resurrection would be given by word of mouth by the living witnesses. That would be much more real and exciting; it would be like an actor appearing in person at the end of a play.

The apostles were first and foremost witnesses of the resurrection (Acts 10:41). The other gospels were probably written after the deaths of the apostles and so had to contain a full account in writing of the resurrection appearances. This probably also explains why Mark does not have as full an account of the teaching of Jesus as the other gospels do. He expected it to be given by word of mouth, as it still is in many parts of the world today.

Cole, R. A. (1994). Mark. In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 948). Inter-Varsity Press.

16:9–20 The supplement. As mentioned in the Introduction, the early church was faced with the same question as we are about why Mark broke off so abruptly, especially since the other gospels give such full accounts of appearances of Jesus after the resurrection. It seems that 16:9–20 is made up of two attempts to complete the story (vs 9–18 and 19–20). These are largely made up of details taken from the other gospels or Acts, with a few additions from early church traditions as well. They cannot be said to be part of the Scriptures (like the rest of the gospel), but they are an honest attempt to 'complete' the story of Jesus.

Vs 9–18, largely taken from John's gospel, explain how Mary Magdalene was the first to see the risen Jesus. Vs 12–13 are a reference to the appearance of Jesus to the two disciples at Emmaus (Lk. 24:13–32), and v 14 has parallels in the other gospels, though the exact occasion is not clear.

Vs 15–18 are the equivalent of the 'great commission' of Mt. 28:18 which Mark had expressed in brief in 13:10. Baptism was to be the sign of commitment to Christ; unbelief was to be itself a condemnation. Most of the signs mentioned here are to be found either in the gospels or Acts (except that of drinking poison unharmed although it is mentioned in early tradition). It is important to realize that even this early church writer does not suggest that these signs happen always and for everybody. We must not presume upon them and put God to the test, like one Christian sect that handles poisonous snakes. They are signs of the kingdom of God. We should accept them gratefully if they occur, but our minds should be set on God's kingdom, not on its signs.

Vs 19–20 may be a further addition. They are a brief triumphal account of the ascension of Jesus and the apostolic mission of evangelism, and the way in which the preached word of the Lord was vindicated by the results produced.

These verses, as said above, are not part of Scripture, and so we should not use them for establishing any doctrine, but they are still a valuable summary of the beliefs of the early church, and in so far as they agree with Scripture we may accept them.

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