



SMALL GROUP GUIDE

SESSION 10 | MARCH 13, 2022

NOTE TO LEADERS:

Because this section of Mark is central to the story, we have changed the presentation for the reading of the Scriptures by creating a drama in 3 acts. The Scripture passage for this session is included in the readings. This dramatic reading of Scripture will hopefully allow the story to come alive and be more than just a story—but instead a reality that changes your life.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Act 1 takes about 3 minutes to read. Act 2 takes about 3 minutes. And Act 3 takes about 7 minutes.
- There are questions after each act. Before moving on, please allow the group to reflect and discuss what they have just read.
- Assign parts to group members. Depending on the number in attendance, you may be able to assign all the parts before beginning, keeping the same cast throughout, or you may need to recast after each act to be sure everyone gets a part. Optional, if you are in person: provide simple props, such as random hats or scarves from your closet, to help readers get into character! Let the readers select their own “costumes.”

WATCH SESSION 10 | MARK 14:1–15:47 (14 minutes)

[RightNow Media Video: Session 10](#)

ACT 1 (MARK 14:1–31)

9 Readers Needed: Narrator, Teacher #1, Teacher #2, Jesus, Judas, Priest, Disciples #1, Disciple #2, Peter

Scene 1 Anointing with Perfume

Narrator: Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him.

Teachers 1 & 2 together: But not during the festival, or the people may riot.

Narrator: While Jesus was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

Teacher #1: Why this waste of perfume?

SESSION GOALS

Main Idea: Despite being abandoned, Jesus accomplished his mission on the cross, laying a victorious foundation for our eternal hope.

Head Change: To know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus loves us.

Heart Change: To feel genuine affection for Jesus.

Life Change: To set out to proclaim the wonderful thing that Jesus accomplished for us on the cross.

Teacher #2: What are you doing? That perfume could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor.

Jesus: Leave her alone. Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.

Scene 2: Judas and the Chief Priests

Judas: I am one of the twelve disciples and can take you to Jesus.

Priest: That is great! We will pay you for this service.

Judas: I will tell you a time.

Scene 3: Passover & Lord's Supper

Disciple #1: Where do you want us to go to prepare for you to eat the Passover?

Jesus: Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, "The Teacher asks, 'Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.

Disciple #2: We'll go into the city and find things just as Jesus said. Come on. Let's go prepare the Passover.

Narrator: *When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. While they were reclining at the table eating, Jesus began to speak.*

Jesus: Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me.

Disciples: *(one at a time)* Surely you don't mean me?

Jesus: It is one of the Twelve—one who dips bread into the bowl with me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.

Narrator: *While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples.*

Jesus: Take it; this is my body. And this cup, that I give thanks for, drink from it. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

Narrator: *They sing a hymn and then go out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus calls them together.*

Jesus: You will all fall away, for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered."

Peter: Even if all fall away, I will not.

Jesus: Truly I tell you, today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice, you yourself will disown me three times.

Peter: Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.

Disciples: *(one at a time)* And neither will I.

DISCUSS

Jesus knows full well what he's going to face the next day. And he knows that the friends that have stuck by him on this journey to Jerusalem are going to abandon him. And yet he still shows them love—promising that his death is for their sake.

- Think about the people in your life that you love more than anything. **How would you respond to them if you knew, in just a few hours, that they would betray and abandon you? What would you be feeling?**
- Hold that response and those feelings in your mind for a moment. **What does it say about Jesus' love for us that he wants to spend time with us despite what he knows about us?**

ACT 2 (MARK 14:32–50)

3 Readers Needed: Jesus, Narrator, and Judas

Scene 1 Prayer in Gethsemane

Narrator: *The road to the crucifixion winds ever closer for Jesus. After supper he takes his friends to the Mount of Olives, where he tells them what is about to happen. They then make the short walk to Gethsemane, where Jesus goes off alone to pray.*

Jesus: Sit here while I pray. I'm going to take Peter, James, and John with me. *(Read the next lines as if deeply distressed and troubled.)* My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.

Narrator: *Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that, if possible, the hour might pass from him.*

Jesus: *Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.*

Narrator: *Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping.*

Jesus: Simon Peter, are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Narrator: *Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him. Returning the third time, he said to them...*

Jesus: Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer.

Scene 2 Jesus Arrested

Narrator: *Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.*

Judas: The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard. Rabbi! *(Kiss sound)*

Narrator: *The men seized Jesus and arrested him. Then one of the disciples drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.*

Jesus: Am I leading a rebellion that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Narrator: *Then everyone deserted him and fled.*

DISCUSS

The RNM video talked about the deep anguish that Jesus finally voices in the garden. Jesus is wrestling with the events ahead of him. And his friends can't stay awake with him for even an hour. In a sense, they've already begun to abandon him.

Nothing on our road of discipleship is beyond Jesus' experience. He knows our pain. That's why he can completely represent us to God. That's why he can stand in our place at the cross.

- That's why he can weep with us in our own pain. **Share a time in your own experience where you felt so much pain (physical or mental or spiritual) that you cried to God to save you from the experience?**
- Empathy is much more powerful than mere sympathy. **How has someone comforted you out of an experience of their own that was similar to yours?**
- Jesus' time in the garden helps us see his humanity. **How does his anguish, anticipating his approaching suffering, help you identify with him more closely?**
- (Hebrews 5:7.) During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the One who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. What does submission mean in this context? How can we follow Christ's example of submission to the Father—What does this look like practically?

ACT 3 (MARK 14:53–15:47)

12 Readers Needed: Narrator, High Priest, Jesus, Servant Girl, Peter, Man in the Crowd, Pilot, Crowd, Roman Soldier, Simon of Cyrene, Centurion, Follower

Scene 1 Jesus Before the Sanhedrin

Narrator: *They took Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests, the elders, and the teachers of the law came together. Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.*

High priest: Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?

Narrator: Jesus stood silent.

High priest: Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?

Jesus: I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.

High priest: Why do we need any more witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?

Narrator: *They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.*

Scene 2 Peter Disowns Jesus

Narrator: *Peter was below in the courtyard. One of the servant girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him.*

Servant Girl: You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus.

Peter: I don't know what you're talking about.

Servant Girl: Hey, you men, this fellow is one of them.

Peter: You don't know that's true.

Man in the Crowd: Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.

Peter: By the gods in heaven, I don't know this man you're talking about.

Narrator: *Immediately, the rooster crowed the second time.*

Peter: Oh, dear God, these are the words Jesus said to me: “Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.” Oh, my God and King. What have I done?

Scene 3 Jesus Before Pilate

Narrator: *Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law, and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.*

Pilate: Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus: You have said so.

Pilate: You have been accused by the priests of many things. Aren't you going to answer? Aren't you going to defend yourself?

Narrator: *Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did at the festival.*

Pilate: *(Thinking out loud)* I know it was out of self-interest that the chief priests handed Jesus over and they want me to release Barabbas instead. *(Speaking to the crowd)* What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?

Crowd: Crucify him!

Pilate: Why? What crime has he committed?

Crowd: *(Louder)* Crucify him!

Narrator: *Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified.*

Scene 4 The Soldiers Mock Jesus. Jesus spoke not a word.

Roman Soldier: We led Jesus away into the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called together the whole company of soldiers. We put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. And we began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” Again and again, we struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on our knees, we paid homage to him. And when we had mocked him, we took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. And led him out to crucify him.

Scene 5 Jesus' Crucifixion, Last Words, and Death

Simon of Cyrene: I was passing by on my way in from the country, and they forced me to carry the cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

Narrator: *It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The written notice of the charge against him read: **the king of the Jews.***

Roman Soldier: We crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!” In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can't save himself! Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

Narrator: *At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.*

All read together: And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*” which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”. Listen, he's calling Elijah.

Narrator: *Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. Then he said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down.”*

Centurion: With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. I stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, and knew, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

Narrator: *Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.*

Scene 6 The Burial of Jesus

Follower: It was Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath. So as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body.

Pilate: When the Arimathean came asking for Jesus’ body, I was surprised. I summoned the Centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. When the Centurion confirmed that it was so, I gave permission for Joseph to take the body.

Follower: So Joseph bought some linen cloth. We took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then we rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joseph, saw where he was laid.

DISCUSS

It is ironic that two Jews heard the Son of God affirm his identity, yet the high priest, who should have recognized the Messiah, rejected him as a blasphemer, and Peter, who knew beyond a doubt who Jesus was, denied knowing him for fear of human authorities. It may be tempting to mock them, but let’s turn the question to ourselves.

- **Would you recognize God’s Holy One? Or do you have a certain image in mind of what he will look like? Have you ever turned your back on him in fear of others’ opinions?**
- Who really got who Jesus was? It wasn’t the disciples—they ran from Jesus’ captors. It wasn’t the Jewish people—they traded the Son of God for a murderer. It was a pagan Roman Centurion—a man who represented everything the Jews wanted the Messiah to destroy. He got it. **Who is Jesus to you? What does that mean, then, for your life?**

TAKE WITH YOU AS YOU GO

(Consider using this to guide your prayer as you close your time together)

Remember Francis Chan’s words, “**No matter what happens in your life, you should always be able to look to the garden, look to the cross, and know that God loves you.**” Chan reminds us that nothing can compare to the love the Father showed us by allowing his Son to die for us.

