



Pointers and questions on the Gospel of

MARK

Session 7

10:17 - 11:33

Summary

- 10:17-34** Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler; priorities in the kingdom of God.
- 10:35-52** James and John's request provokes discussion about greatness in the kingdom.
- 11:1-26** Arrival in Jerusalem. Jesus clears the temple and curses the fig-tree.
- 11:27-33** Religious leaders in Jerusalem question Jesus' authority.

Questions to get you thinking

1. Look at Jesus' encounter with the Rich Young Ruler (10:17-31). Do you think Jesus' instruction in v21 applies to all of us? When the young man did not respond, did Jesus ease back on his demands so as not to lose him?
2. In the light of 10:25-27, talk about the ways money can get in the way of spiritual progress. Which would you say is the bigger problem: too much of it, or too little?
3. Talk about the deal Jesus offers to his followers in 10:29-30, noting what comes now and what hereafter.
4. Read 10:35-40. What clues do James and John's words give as to what were their expectations regarding Jesus' kingdom? How far off the mark were they?
5. How 'great' are *you* when measured by the criterion outlined by Jesus in 10:42-45?
6. Jesus commended Bartimaeus for his faith (10:52). How, according to v47-48, was that faith expressed?
7. Why do you think the passage 11:1-11 puts so much emphasis on the acquiring and riding of the donkey? For a clue, look up Zechariah 9:9.
8. According to 11:15-17, what had been God's original plan for the use of the temple? To what use was it instead being put? Bearing in mind that, now, *Christians* corporately are the temple (Ephesians 2:19-21), what lessons can Jesus' actions teach us about church life?
9. A knowledge of the Bible lands with their climate and plant-life can be a great help in understanding some passages which otherwise don't seem to make sense. For example, how would you explain 11:12-14? When you have tried it, ask the group leader to give you the all-important background that will enable you to make sense of it.
10. In 11:12-14, 20-21, most commentators see the fig tree and what happened to it as symbolising the people of Israel at that time. Can you see what the parallels might be?
11. Talk about the dynamics of faith and prayer in 11:22-25.
12. One commentator says about this 'faith and prayer' passage: 'This theme must not be separated from the context. Overall, Mark teaches that Christians are to follow in Jesus' ministry, and this means that the faith described here is to be seen as faith demanded in the course of mission, not faith that tries to obtain things for one's own benefit or faith that seeks to do stunts for the sheer excitement of it.'¹ Any thoughts on that?
13. Why, in 11:27-33, didn't Jesus give the religious leaders a straight answer? Are there any lessons here for us?



¹ L.W. Hurtado, *Mark*, Good News Bible Commentary, Pickering, 1983