

# Summary of the Book of Mark

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Date: 11 January 2026

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[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you that you love us so much. Thank you that you died for us.! Even when we're going through rough times, I know a number of people are dealing with sicknesses and hardships of all kinds.

We live in a fallen world. We live in a broken world. And it's life, God. Thank you that you care for us, Lord. That you want to wrap your arms around us.

Help us to lean on you, to rest in you. And I pray that you'd wrap your arms around the people that are hurting and sick and just dealing with all kinds of hardships, Father.

Bless them, Lord. Surround them with your people. And minister to them, Father. Also want to just pray for all the unrest in the world and in the country.

So much happening, Lord. People losing lives. You know, just so much unrest. People's lives being shaken, God. We just, again, just wrap your arms around them, Father.

[ 1 : 28 ] I pray you show them truth. I pray that your truth prevails, God. That your will, that your work prevails. We thank you, God. Speak to us today in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Well, for me, I think that what jumped out at me at the most, Gospel of Mark is just the simplicity, simplicity of the gospel.

You know, Mark kind of sets the stage from the very first verse. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Very first verse. What does the word gospel even mean?

I know we all know kind of the pat answer. It's good news, right? And I like to remind us it's more than just good news. It's awesome news. It's incredible news. Amazing news.

And it's illogical news. It's illogical because it's what God did for us. You know, all other religions, all other belief systems, they're about what you need to do in order to appease the deity.

[ 2 : 44 ] Christianity is completely different. It's about what God did for us. It's the good, awesome, incredible news of what God did for us. And sending his son Jesus, God the Son, becoming one of us.

You know, suffering, dying on the cross, being raised to life. And we sing the song, the Father's wrath completely satisfied.

It is. It's not just satisfied. The Father's wrath, that word propitiation, means that the Father's wrath was completely satisfied, completely exhausted on your behalf.

It's incredible what God did for us. It's incredible. It's amazing. It's good news. I just want to commend my co-pastors for their work in taking us through the Gospel of Mark.

They did the most of the teaching. These two guys, Pastor Jack, contributed as well. Did an awesome job. So what we have is we've got that all recorded, and it's a resource for you guys on the Gospel.

[ 3 : 54 ] Did I say Gospel of John? I did, didn't I? On the Gospel of Mark. And you can find that YouTube or on the website. So those are resources for us.

Mark demonstrated the simplicity of the new covenant. It is from faith. It is by faith in the living God. Jesus demonstrated, introduced us to a personal relationship with the living God.

And remember, this is brand new stuff. You go through the Gospel of Mark, and you can just feel that. It's brand new. The Pharisees, the people of the time, the disciples, they didn't know what was going on.

Jesus, eating with sinners. Wait a minute. That's wrong. You shouldn't be doing that. Question about fasting. You know, your disciples aren't fasting.

You remember his analogy of sewing a new unshrung patch on an old garment. He was comparing the new covenant with the old covenant. This is brand new stuff. New wine into old wineskins.

[ 5 : 00 ] The new wine would burst the wineskins. Brand new. He's questioned about why don't your disciples keep the Sabbath. It was a new covenant.

Brand new. Brand new information. You see in his baptism, it's so cool how the Father, the Holy Spirit descends, and then the Father's voice.

And you've got the three persons of the Trinity together in his baptism. It's awesome. I believe this was his experience throughout his life on earth.

You see him going off to pray, and he's with the Father. He's got the Spirit. It's the Trinity once again kind of thing. And you see this personal relationship, the new covenant, demonstrated in Jesus' life throughout his life, throughout the Gospel of Mark.

A couple examples of him going off to pray. Mark 1.35, it says, Jesus did that.

[ 6 : 12 ] Off to a solitary place where he prayed. Mark 6.46, it says, After Jesus had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

Again, he left the disciples. He went up to pray. He needed to do that. Even in Mark 14, we just talked about that a few weeks ago. What does he say to his disciples at the garden?

Sit here while I pray. Then he goes off to pray. Abba, Father, all things are possible for you.

Remove this cup from me, yet not what I will, but what you will.

Jesus, going away, getting alone with the Father, and he's got the Spirit, the Trinity together again kind of thing. Why was he doing that?

Jesus is God, right? He's God. Why does he need to go pray? I like the way Pastor Hopkins put it. He didn't have the cheat codes, so to speak.

[ 7 : 12 ] He was kind of learning. Jesus, the human being, fully God, fully man, kind of learning as he went. He had to depend on the Father, on the Spirit.

Jesus had to depend on his personal relationship with the rest of the Trinity, so to speak. Okay.

Jesus, God the Son, lives his life on earth dependent on God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

And for us, as Christians, as Jesus' disciples, our discipleship, our transformation to becoming more like Jesus, depends on us depending on God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

It depends on our personal relationship with God. And Mark captures this dependence very well.

I once heard a pastor say, it's not about a personal relationship. There's nothing in the Bible. You never see personal relationship with Jesus in the Bible. Those two words, personal relationship, they're not in there.

[ 8 : 27 ] And you know what? He's right. It's true. Those words aren't in there. But obviously, the Bible is completely packed with commands and with situations where it is.

It is a personal relationship with the living God. Jesus said what? He said, follow me. Follow me. If that's not an invitation to a personal relationship, I don't know what is.

Follow me. What did he say? And I will make you to become fishers of men. Discipleship is dependent on us depending on God.

Transformation dependent on us depending on God. He also said, ask and it will be given to you.

Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened.

Calls us to prayer. And Jesus prayed. Demonstrated this. Again, prayer. It's a part of our personal relationship with God. Talking to God.

[ 9 : 33 ] Talking to him directly. Calls us to prayer. He said, walk by the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

You know, it says the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace. And that's not the fruit of just having the spirit in you. It's the fruit of what it said earlier.

Walking by the spirit. It's a personal relationship with the living God. It's a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. Dependence.

Trust. Walk by the spirit. Trust in the spirit. He said, like newborn babies, crave the pure milk of the word so that by it you will grow up in your salvation.

We need to trust the Bible. We need to trust the word of God. We need to depend on the word of God. So what does that look like? It means we're in it. It means we're in it regularly.

[ 10 : 32 ] And it means we're putting it into practice. We're walking in obedience to God, to his word. We're depending on his word. Depending on him through his word.

He said, let us not give up meeting together. He said, encourage one another daily. We need to be connected with each other.

Jesus was connected with his disciples. They were connected with him. They spent time together. They lived together. We need to be connected with each other. And this is a part of our personal relationship with God, isn't it?

You say, well, how's that? Because you have the spirit living in you. And you have the spirit. And you have the spirit. And you have the spirit. And I have the spirit living in me. When we meet, when we get together, when we're sharing about the Lord, God is using us to minister to each other. It's a part of our personal relationship with God that was demonstrated by Mark in Jesus' life. Once again, for us, as Jesus' disciples, our discipleship, our transformation to becoming more like Jesus, depends on us depending on him.

[ 11 : 59 ] Right? Depends on us depending on him. These things I just listed, they're like resources. And we've called them tools. His spirit living in us.

Depend on him. His word. Depend on his word. Put it into practice. Prayer. Depend on talking to him. His people. We need to depend on these things.

And Jesus demonstrated these things, and Mark brought them out vividly. Something I really appreciate about the Gospel of Mark. Let's pray, and then I'll invite Pastor Tim up.

Father, I do just thank you so much for your, again, for your word, God. For, it's just incredible to have this resource available to us. Your love letter to us, Lord.

Your instruction manual to us. Thank you that you live in us, Lord. That you interpret. That you apply. That you speak. That you empower. I thank you for my fellow Christians, Lord.

[ 13 : 00 ] Thank you for their work in my life. Thank you for this opportunity, this privilege to be able to pray to you, God. Help us all to depend on you. To apply it.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I got this microphone all sweaty, Tim. Sorry. Amen. Well, I love you, John.

It's all right. Well, good morning. And welcome. Thank you, Lord, for this opportunity to share a few things from Mark.

I've actually narrowed it down to just one verse that's been, I've been thinking about it for quite a few years. It's in Mark chapter 14. But one of the things I just briefly wanted to share is the life of Peter.

Really, it's, I really saw it clearly. A little more clearly, I should say. There's still more to learn. But his transformation. And we know Peter became a pillar of work, of God's work.

[ 14 : 08 ] And that touched me. But the verse I wanted to share this morning is kind of one that I glossed over. I didn't really share it. It was, I think it was my last turn to share.

And it's Mark 14, verse 26. It's a pretty simple verse. And I see you, after having studied it, I see why now I think it's important.

A very important verse for me, anyway. Maybe it'll touch you, too. Mark 14, 26. It says, and after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

That's the verse. After singing a hymn. This took place on Thursday night. The night before he was going to be crucified. Right?

Take the sin of the world on his shoulders. And we see Jesus singing a hymn. It might be, you can study this, it may be the only time we see Jesus singing.

[ 15 : 09 ] I think it's implied that he did worship and sing other places, but this is one very specific place says Jesus was singing with the disciples. And we know how incredibly important singing is in our walk with God, isn't it?

We just got done singing to the Lord here with the wonderful music led by Libby and Brian. Thank you for that. We look at Psalm. I'm going to do a couple of verses out of Psalm.

Psalm 59, verse 16. If you want to go there. Psalm 59, 16. But as for me, I shall sing of your strength, and I shall joyfully sing of your loving kindness in the morning.

For you have been my stronghold and a refuge in the day of my distress. We know David sang a lot to the Lord. He was despised by, I think, one of his wives for singing to the Lord.

You can read about that. Psalm 68, verse 4. Sing to God. Sing praises to his name. Exalt him who rides through the deserts. Whose name is the Lord.

[ 16 : 18 ] And be jubilant before him. I think we can all agree singing is a very important part of our walk with God. Drawing attention to him.

Right? Worship the Savior. Saved our soul that John was talking about the gospel. We have the Holy Spirit. We've been saved. We're children of God. We've put our faith in him.

Certainly, I think this is a regular event. And it's a very important part of our heart to God. So I was thinking about this verse. Let's put this verse in context of Mark 14, Thursday night. Let's put it into context. I think this is going to change a little bit your worship. It does me. It does for me. One simple thing he did.

Remember, Jesus is about to be betrayed. He's about to be denied by Peter three times.

[17:24] All this is going into his mind. All of them are going to flee from him. Verse 27 and 50, you see that. He's about to pray this night.

This very night. With sweats of blood. He knows the weight of the whole world is upon him.

The sin. He knows he's going to go to the cross. He's been telling the disciples this all along.

What a horrible pain he's about to take place. And death. Nails. Whipping.

Crowns of thorn. Mocking. In Matthew 26, 39, he says this.

[18:23] This is Thursday night. Going to pray. And he went a little beyond them, the disciples, and fell on his face. And prayed, saying, My father, if it is possible, let this cup pass for me, yet not as I will, but as you will.

The cup signifies the wrath of God. He was terrified. As a human. We're talking a lot about his humanity.

He also had a human brain. Kind of thought like us. Yet he sang a hymn with his best friends.

That's amazing. It makes me want to cry. Sang a hymn with his best friends. He understood the importance of singing worship in this terrible time.

So let's recap a little bit. So at this moment of the hymn, pain is on the horizon. Betrayal is coming.

[19:32] Denial is coming. Sin of the world. It's right there. Sweating blood. And he sings a hymn. Why would he do this?

I think it's a weapon that we have. It's a spiritual warfare weapon that we have to fight when we're in trouble. Singing hymn. He's taught disciples how important this is.

It draws attention to him and not ourselves. It shifts focus shifts focus from us to him. This is remarkable.

All these things we would run from. Yet he pauses to worship the Savior. We would have become depressed, anxious, distressed for sure.

Something like this. We knew something like this was coming. This would be extremely troubling.

He sings a hymn. He knew his mission. He was setting us an example.

[20:38] This was very important. This is a weapon that we have. This is a spiritual warfare weapon that we have at our disposal. Sing a hymn. Spend time with friends.

That's the last thing he did before the crucifixion. So what about us? I'm trying to think this now. Put this in my own hands here.

What does this mean to me? I think we've all gone through some tough times in life. Anxiety.

Depression. Stress.

You ever been stressed? You ever been betrayed? Drama? You ever been part of drama in your life?

Absolutely. Unforgiveness? Whether it be me or someone not wanting to forgive me? Suffering?

Tough relationships? Struggles?

[21:41] I certainly have. Paul and Silas in Acts 16 verse 25 they got thrown in jail for doing God's work.

So what do they do in jail? Acts 16 25 it says now about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God and the prisoners were listening to them and I'm not going to get into the story but there's a big earthquake and all this rumbles going on and the jailer gets saved.

God did a great work. They're singing hymns and God used it to save someone's soul. We need to learn how to sing to the Lord not just Sunday morning maybe other times at home when you're alone when you're distressed.

Sing a song to the Lord. Be thankful. I think this will help us rethink our attitude and our actions. It'll fuel fire in your heart when you're distressed.

sing a hymn to the Lord. It will take what is evil and turn it into something good. So no matter how long or what you're going through or what hard trial you're going through I would just encourage you to think about take some time and sing a hymn to the Lord.

[23:13] Spend time with friends your spouse now we know Jesus didn't have a spouse so where was he? He was with his best friends as a human his best friends he was with singing a hymn.

So if you're in that position I would just encourage you to develop an attitude of spend some time to sing a hymn all in the quietness of your heart. Maybe take a walk singing a hymn to the Lord when you're troubled.

And if you're really really troubled oh I'm having a hard time maybe come and talk to someone. Talk to one of us. Talk to a friend. So Lord I want to say thank you for this amazing scripture amazing example you gave to us singing a hymn Lord in time of distress.

I thank you for it Lord it's an amazing thing that you do for us and praise your name. They're making me go last because they're afraid I'm so contagious of whatever this bug is that they don't want to be infected and who can blame them.

Right? What a season we're in. It's pretty crazy. So I was thinking about what John and Tim were talking about. The simplicity of the gospel. Simple but not easy.

[ 24 : 37 ] We're sinners. We're in need of grace. We're the objects of God's wrath. God intervened while we were still sinners. We're God sent his son.

That's the simplicity of the gospel. And what do we have to do is simply receive it. As John was saying, to depend on what has been offered. And to walk with the Lord in the work that he's doing in our lives.

Simple but not easy. A great example of that simplicity is singing a hymn together. Allowing God's word to filter into our hearts. I've got this mob of little kids running through my house.

And one of the ways that they learn truth is through music. They get songs repetitiously over and over and over again. Many of you know Brooklyn, who's not up here.

She's downstairs, so I'm going to pick on her anyway. For weeks, she'll walk up to me and put her arm around me and sing this obnoxious song from the Christmas program that then lodges in my head.

[ 25 : 55 ] And I can't get rid of it. Which is annoying because the melody is simplistic, but the reality is the truth of that little song that the kids were singing in our house over and over and over again planted truth in my brain.

That's what music does. It planted it plants truth. It takes God's word and puts it in a different format that then we can implement and practice in our lives. And in times of the greatest stress, of the greatest trial, like Tim was saying, what did Jesus model?

They sang a hymn. Most likely they sang something from the book of Psalms. Kind of wonder which one he chose. Psalm 22, which is about his death.

Psalm 2, which is about his triumph. Psalm 8, which is about the majesty of God. We don't know.

But those, that practice, that discipline of singing is so important. So as I came to my part of thinking about what stands out to me in the Gospel of Mark, I had a number of different things that came to mind.

[ 27 : 11 ] actually, before I go any further, turn in your Bibles to two places, Ephesians chapter 4 and Hebrews chapter 1. Because my takeaway from the book of Mark isn't in the book of Mark.

Paul and the author of Hebrews illustrate those very well. But Ephesians 4 and then Hebrews chapter 1. Oh, and I put my book Mark and Timothy.

Not sure about that. There we go. Fortunately, it's a couple other pages. But as I was thinking about my takeaway, one of the things that stood out to me, I'll just give briefly, is how profoundly my understanding of the significance of Mark has changed.

The depth and nuance that's in the Gospel and the things that I learned about the person of Jesus, specifically because of what Mark chose to write about and how he wrote it.

And so that was a significant thing for me. But that wasn't the one that really stood out. What stood out to me was Jesus himself.

[ 28 : 17 ] About 10, 15 years ago or so, I was reading a book, and the author of the book challenged me and his readers to focus on the person of Jesus and to spend more time reading the Gospels, not at the expense of the rest of the Bible, but focused there.

And so at that point in my life, I had already adopted the habit, I tried to read the Bible once a year, I think that's a good discipline, so every year I want to go Genesis to Revelation, but I changed something in that I started going through the Gospels three times over the course of that same year.

So I would start in Matthew, read all the way to the end of John, keep going in Acts, but then I'd add a chapter to my daily Bible reading and I'd go back to Matthew 1 and read through. I had no idea

how profoundly my theology would be changed by greater familiarity with the personal work of Jesus Christ.

I don't have time to go over it, but suffice it to say that seeing Jesus in his element as a man, figuring things out without cheat codes, dramatically affected my ministry, affected how I relate to other people, affected how I relate to God.

God, it was profound. And the lessons I started learning 10 or 15 years ago in implementing that discipline were reinforced again and again and again as I had the opportunity to study deeply into the book of Mark.

[ 29 : 48 ] Jesus is the pattern for our lives. One of the themes of the book of Mark is who is this guy? It's the identity of Jesus.

Who is he? And through the pages, we actually see Jesus figuring out the answer to that question. Do you remember at the baptism, Jesus comes out of the water and God says what?

You are my beloved son. That comment was addressed to Jesus himself. I think the audience was allowed to hear the voice of God, God.

But God was speaking specifically to his son. Reinforcing to him at the beginning of his adult ministry, you are mine. You're my son.

With you I am well pleased. So we begin to see what's the identity of Jesus. He's the beloved son. But what does that mean? We've unpacked that over the course of several sermons.

[ 30 : 53 ] The Jews wanted him to be the triumphant king who was here to kick butt and take names. And yet there's that bothersome line of prophecy in the Old Testament about the suffering servant.

And what do we discover? As the disciples are trying to figure this out, Jesus keeps alluding to the suffering servant and claiming the triumphant king roles. Who are you?

Jesus calms the storm. Who is this guy? Jesus is walking on the water. He gets into the boat. Who is this guy?

The Pharisees ask, who do you think you are? To cleanse the temple and to call us to account.

Who do you think you are? The disciples see the mount of transfiguration.

Well, are you the suffering servant? Are you the triumphant king? Who are you? And Jesus allowed them to stew in their confusion. He allows us to stew in our confusion.

[ 31 : 55 ] salvation. But now, through the benefit of hindsight, we know that Jesus was, he is, and he is to come, both the suffering servant who died on the cross for our sins.

To redeem us, to be a propitiation, to achieve reconciliation between us and God. He was the suffering servant who paid the necessary price.

And he is the triumphant king. He's both. Next week, Jim Munson is going to introduce, he's going to do a series, or he's going to do a sermon on prophecy.

And then do that three-week class that I encourage you to be a part of. But you know what prophecy is in a nutshell? This topic that I know is a particular passion for Jim.

The whole study of prophecy, in a nutshell, is a revelation of Jesus the king that culminates in the king revealed, judging the world and welcoming his children into his presence.

[ 33 : 16 ] we finally get to fully experience what he has planned for us. The study of prophecy is the study of the revelation of the king. The following weeks, I'll be doing a series on the mission and values of the church.

The core mission of the church, not something that John and Tim and I cooked up in a back room. No, this is what the Bible itself teaches, that God's plan for the church, God's plan for each one of us, is to make us into the image of Christ, to make us like Jesus.

That's God's plan that started at the cross, culminates when he is revealed as king, and continues actually through eternity.

I think we continue to learn and grow for all of eternity. But that whole series is again looking at Jesus. So let's look at Hebrews chapter one.

Let's talk for a minute about who is this guy, and what does it mean for us? Hebrews chapter one, verse one. God.

[ 34 : 31 ] After he spoke long ago to the fathers and the prophets, in many portions and in many ways. Romans 1. So God has spoken to humanity in all kinds of different ways. We know from Psalm 19 that the heavens declare the glory of God.

Romans 1 repeats that same idea. God reveals his character actually in what he has made. We can learn a lot. If you've had a conversation with me at any time in the last eight months, nine months, you know that I'm a big fan of a man named Jordan Peterson.

Jordan Peterson proves Psalm 19 in Romans 1. Because by thinking deeply and looking at God's word and looking at nature, he has come to profound insight into the nature of God.

God reveals himself in his creation. And then God reveals himself in his relationship with various men, with Adam and Eve, with Abel, with Seth, with Noah, with Abraham, Moses, all the way to the present day.

God was revealing himself, and then he reveals himself to us through his writing, through the Bible itself. God is constantly revealing himself. Every story in the Old and New Testament throughout the Bible is another, in part, a revelation of who God is.

[ 35 : 51 ] What is his identity? What does that mean to us? But all of those things aren't enough. They're subject to interpretation. They're subject to our whim.

The Pharisees are a great example. They were so focused on Jesus, the Messiah, has to be the king, that despite the evidence right in front of them, right in front of their eyes, they could not accept who Jesus was.

So God had to come up with a better way to communicate to us who he is, his moral character, his goodness, his holiness. And how did he do that? Verse 2.

In these last days, God has spoken to us in his son. To his son. You know, when you speak to a child, you get down on one leg, you know, you get down to them, and you talk in words of one syllable, and you talk more slowly because they don't understand.

That's what God was doing when he sent his son, speaking to us in words of one syllable. In these last, excuse me, in these last days, God has spoken to us in his son, whom he appointed heir of all things, so he's certainly the king, through whom also he made the world.

[ 37 : 15 ] And listen to this description. Who is this guy? He is the radiance of his glory. the word became flesh and dwelt among us, John wrote.

Jesus is the radiance of his glory and the exact representation of his nature. If we want to know how God behaves toward us, go back to the Gospels. Look at what Jesus did.

Jesus shows us the character and the nature and the behavior of God himself. Jesus is the radiance of his glory and the exact representation of his nature and upholds all things by the word of his power.

It's repeated in Colossians chapter 1. When he had made purification of sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Having become as much better than the angels, he has inherited a more excellent name than they.

We're saying about his name this morning. The name of Jesus itself has power because his name reveals his character. It reveals who he is and what that means for us.

[ 38 : 34 ] So who is this guy? He is God in the flesh revealing himself to us in a way that we can understand. Receiving the gifts that he gives and emulating his behavior, becoming more like him.

We're literally becoming like God. Turn over though, because the means that God did to do that, look at chapter 2. Starting in verse 17.

Therefore Jesus had to be made like his brethren, that's us, in all things except for sin, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

There's one of those words again. For since he himself was tempted in that which he has suffered, he is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. In those two passages, we see the deity of God in Hebrews 1, 1 through 3.

We see the deity of Jesus there. But in just, turn over one page, you see the humanity of Jesus. Jesus endures all the things that we endure. I am enduring a miserable cold.

[ 39 : 45 ] Jesus had a cold. He dealt with the things that we deal with, on top of taking all of our sin upon him. He has credibility in telling us how to live, because he endured all that we endure.

He lived through the things that we live through. That is who Jesus is. He is our faithful high priest that we can go to because he endured what we did.

Now turn over a couple more pages to chapter 4. Starting at verse 14. Therefore, since we have a great high priest, Jesus, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses. Jesus, there have been times I've met people who are in the ministry who kind of have a holier-than-thou attitude. Ah, I've been through seminary, or I have, I am of a different standard because I'm a pastor or a priest or whatever.

[ 40 : 57 ] And they look down at their noses at everybody because I don't deal with the stuff that you riff-raff deal with. That's not Jesus. Jesus got right down into the muck with us.

He endures the things that we endure. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. And what's the consequence? Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace. That's a prayer that John was talking about a few minutes ago. Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, grace so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

That's who this guy is. Turn over to Ephesians 4. I'm going to end with this. That stood out to me. We're going to be in 14 through 16.

John and Tim and I had a meeting yesterday morning, and we were talking among a host of topics. [ 42 : 01 ] We're talking about a frustration that I have had that I've mentioned to you from the pulpit a few times, that we get so myopically focused, so intensely focused on Jesus' death on the cross freeing us from the fear of hell after death.

That we lose sight of the fact that the gospel is relevant right now in our lives. The good news of the gospel, Jesus said when he announced himself in Nazareth, was I am here to proclaim good news to the poor.

Not of, hey, your life is terrible right now, sorry to hear that, but someday you're going to die and you're going to go to heaven. A poor guy says, I really don't care. Because life is hard now. But the gospel matters now. The process that Jesus is taking us through is a process that he went through of learning dependence upon God and learning to take all that we have in him and live it out in the trenches of life today.

And his goal is that we would be like him. Because when we're like him, life makes sense. Or, we know that we can trust God even if it doesn't make sense.

[ 43 : 24 ] We can go through our own personal garden of Gethsemane. Do you remember I talked about that last week? Jesus sweat blood. He was terrified. And yet then, he prayed, not my will but yours be done.

He squared his shoulders. And when they said, when Jesus said, who do you seek? We seek Jesus of Nazareth.

He said, I am he. And they fell. He squared his shoulders. He trusted the Father. That even though he was still going to go through hell, he could trust his Father.

That's our hope. That's what it means to be conformed to the image of Christ. Verse 14 of Ephesians 4. As a result, we are no longer to be children tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness and deceitful scheming.

But here's the key. But speaking the truth in love, we play a role in each other's lives in the process of becoming like Christ. But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects, every part of our character.

[ 44 : 31 ] We are to grow up in all aspects into him who is the head, even Christ. Remember I talked about the picture of Michelangelo making the David, the sculpture?

I chip away everything that doesn't look like David. God is chipping away. The Holy Spirit is chipping away everything in your life that doesn't look like Jesus. We are to grow in all aspects into him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, that's us, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies.

You need me. I need you. We need to discover and live in our role that God has given for us because as we fit in that role, the church becomes a well-oiled machine.

And part of that is we move in the direction of becoming more like Jesus. and we change the world. We reach people with the gospel. Being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

And what is that building up of itself in love? We're becoming more like Jesus. My takeaway from the gospel of Mark is Jesus himself.

[ 46 : 08 ] He is my model. He is the answer to my questions. He is the harbinger of things to come for me. Some suffering, but ultimately glory.

He is the high priest who has endured all the things that I've endured yet without sin.

He is my partner who walks with me and says, don't do that, do this. I'm going to help you grow. I want you to be like me because I love you. And I hope that as we wrap up Mark that you would remember these summaries that John and Tim and I talked about.

The simplicity of the gospel, dependence upon God, disciplining ourselves for the purpose of godliness by trusting his word and prayer at each other, by being people of worship who use music to lift our eyes out of the mire up to the heavenlies.

and that we remember what the author of Hebrews said at the tail end of the hall of faith in Hebrews 11, Hebrews 12.

[ 47 : 27 ] It says, see, we have this great crowd of witnesses, these people who can testify the goodness of God. Let us run, let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, setting aside every encumbrance.

How? With our eyes fixed on Jesus. That's how we run. We have no hope otherwise. Let's pray together.

Father, you are so good. You are so great. Your love defies explanation. Your love defies explanation. But we can clearly see it's a demonstration as you died for us and now you live for us. God, help us to submit ourselves to you and be obedient in all things. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.