



who is Jesus? MARK THE GOSPEL OF

Discussion Questions

1. Read Mark 13:1-37.
2. In this chapter, Jesus tells His disciples to watch out/be on guard (v 5, 9, 23, 33) and then talks about staying awake/keeping watch (v 34, 35, 37). Why does Jesus want them (and us) to watch and be alert?
3. What is the context of this speech by Jesus? What did the disciples ask Him (v 1-4)?
4. The idea of the temple being destroyed was unthinkable for Jewish people living at this time. They struggled to believe that God would allow them to suffer in this way. So they asked Jesus more information about when this would happen and how they would know it was coming. Before Jesus tells them what the sign will be (v 14), Jesus tells them to watch out for and expect other kinds of suffering. This suffering doesn't mean the end is coming soon ("the end is still to come" v 7), they are simply the "beginning of birth pains" (v 8). How does Jesus tell us to deal with these sufferings? What commands does He give in verses 5-13? What promises does He give?
5. Have you experienced suffering like this or been concerned about what is happening in the world? Do you struggle to have the response to suffering that Jesus commands? Why or why not?
6. The rest of Mark is about Jesus going through very similar suffering to what He describes in these verses. How does Christ's past suffering for us help us deal with suffering in our own lives now?
7. Steve argued on Sunday that the major point of Mark 13:24-27 is that Jesus is reigning now in glory and honour, using even the big earth-shattering tragedies in our lives to fulfill His purposes of drawing His chosen people (the elect) to Himself. Do you believe that Jesus is somehow in control of even the awful things in our lives? And do you believe that He is using them for good, to draw His people to Himself? Is it hard to believe? Why or why not?
8. Can you think of any other Bible verses that support this idea?
9. The secondary point of Mark 13:24-27 is that Jesus will return in the future. When Jesus comes back, He will put an end to suffering and pain in the world (Rev 21:4). How does this truth help us deal with suffering in our lives? Do you look forward to/watch for Jesus' return? Why is it difficult to do?

10. Jesus says in verse 32-37 that we don't know when He will return. Even Jesus, in His humanity, didn't know. He hid His omniscience under his humanity and served as a perfect example for us of trusting God's wisdom and timing. How do we balance watching with not worrying or trying to figure it out?
11. Spend some time praying that God will help you watch for and expect suffering and that He will give you confidence and peace during suffering because Jesus suffered for you in the past, is reigning now, and will come back in the future.