
Devotional for Lent 4

Reading through Mark



During the season of Lent (14th February to 21st March 2018) you are invited to read the Gospel of Mark.

The various Gospel sections each week will be used as a springboard for the worship themes on Sundays.

It is hoped that you will also use the devotional to prepare for worship.

There will be opportunities through each week for discussion of the Gospel. Speak with Ian to register your interest in participating and look for details of when and where discussions are taking place.

Lent 2018 : Week 4

Read through the Gospel of Mark, chapters 11 &12
“A triumphal entry and the Greatest Commandment”

Jerusalem stood at the heart of faith. Here the Living God had chosen to place his name and his presence. People were coming from all over to celebrate the great faith stories of the past...

The disciples shared this excitement. They had the added anticipation of entering the city with Jesus. It was Passover time... freedom time- and from their point of view it was also Kingdom Time- with Jesus as their King!

Apply what happens to life today: are we ready to put our property (the donkey) at the disposal of Jesus?

Are we ready to obey his orders even if they puzzle us?

What do you think would be modern day equivalents of cloaks and palm branches in welcoming Jesus the King?

Which stories stand out for you in these chapters? Please take note of why:

What is has gone wrong in the Temple that Jesus should be so critical of the life he found there ?

The Temple was the heart of God's presence in this city for for the whole world. However, those with the power and authority had turned in on themselves instead of generosity to the world.

Where today do you think Jesus would "upturn tables and drive out traders"?

In chapter 12 we come to another parable and this one is big! Unlike the earlier chapters and the parable of the seeds, for example, this story needs no explanation in Mark's narrative.

It's an echo of a poem from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah, chapter 5, about God planting Israel like a vineyard.

What comes to mind as you read the parable of the Tenants?

If the house is on fire, what will you grab as you make your escape?

Make your list:

You've made some important choices! You have identified where your priorities lie. The question put to Jesus by the lawyer at the close of chapter 11 is like that.

Faced with the whole of Jewish law, what really matters?

No half measures in the answer Jesus gives. Heart soul and mind to the worship and love of God. That's also what the law intends for people!

How does Jesus take the lawyer's question further and what do we learn from it?

Is there a challenge here for churches today?

Are we living the life Jesus expects of his followers?
