



## Small Group Questions: Learning From Mark

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### Read

Luke 1: 1-4; Acts 13:13 and 15:36-39; 2 Timothy 4:11

### Reflect

The Bible is the Word of God. Yet, there are numerous translations and versions. The original papyrus upon which the Bible was first written no longer exists for us to review. Have you ever wondered whether the Gospels we read today are actually what were written 2,000 years ago? Do you have a hard time believing the truth has been maintained? Why or why not? What would it take for you to believe?

Pastor Greg gave us several reasons to assume the Gospels are reliable. Which of the below arguments resonate the most with you? Why?

1. Because of their age.
  - a. The four Gospels were written between 25-60 years after Jesus's crucifixion—within a generation. Eyewitnesses could still corroborate or dismiss what was written.
2. Because of their number.
  - a. Today, 2,000 full-copy scrolls of the Gospels exist from circa 125 A.D. This shows collective agreement for the veracity of the Gospels in a time when copying texts was labor-intensive.
3. Because of their accuracy.
  - a. In calculating the statistical errors within a contemporary book and comparing it to errors found in copies of the Bible, the variants found in the Bible result in less than a 1% error rate.
4. Because of their honesty.
  - a. The writers of the Bible included very real descriptions of people. No whitewashing. They didn't cover over failures and weaknesses—even those of the disciples. They did not alter Jesus's words to make them more palatable to the masses.

The Book of Mark presents the apostle Peter's vision of who Jesus was. Mark (perhaps at Peter's urging) doesn't shy away from including even such failures as Peter abandoning and denying Christ. Why?

Pastor Greg offered three things we can learn from the story of Mark:

1. Sometimes good people make poor choices.
  - a. Mark leaves during Paul's first missionary journey. He quits and goes home. Think of a time that you did something you regret or that you quit. In what ways have you allowed your mistakes to "mark" you?
2. God factors in even our poor choices for his glory.
  - a. Mark's quitting later causes a rift between Paul and Barnabas. Have you ever had a split with someone you greatly value? In what ways can you see God turning it around to use it for good?
3. Just because you blew it before, doesn't mean you can't have a great ending.
  - a. Mark goes with Barnabas to reach other people with the good news of Christ. He writes his Gospel. He serves Paul again later. How will you work toward letting your mistakes refine you rather than define you?

### Respond

- What do you feel like God is asking you to do in response to the weekend message? What is your next step?
- How can your Small Group support you and hold you accountable in this?