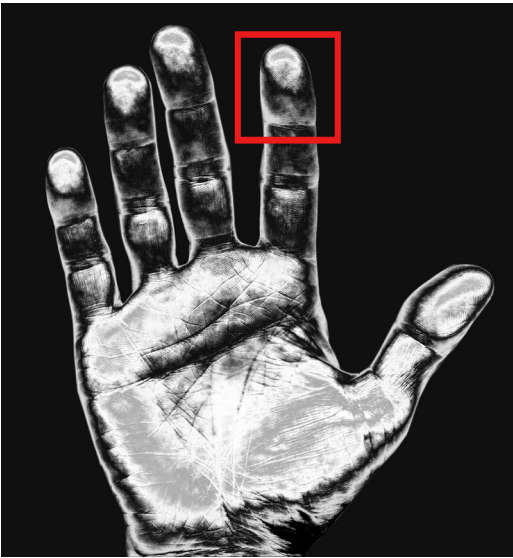


# JESUS

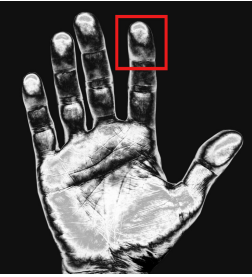


**Who Are You?**

Mark

Chapters 1-9 (Book 2)

Latechurch 2008



## Study 7: Jesus—The Prophet Man

### Mark 6:1-30

### Personal Preparation 1

It's been a few weeks since we've looked at Mark's gospel, so it would be worth refreshing yourself on what we've seen so far. In particular, in preparation for Mark 6:1-30 it's important to think more about John the Baptist, the 12 apostles, faith and how all this fits with Jesus.

1. According to Mark 1:1-5, what was John's mission?
  
2. According to 1:14-15, what was Jesus' mission?
  
3. If the message is that Israel needs to repent, what does this say about the nation?
  
4. According to passages like, 1:16-20; 3:13-19, and 4:10-11, what can you say about the identity of the apostles, their relationship with Jesus and their mission?
  
5. Can you list any times when Jesus commends people for their faith in him?  
Hint: the most recent occasion was when Jesus was disrupted on his way to Jairus' house.

## Personal Preparation 2

Since 'going public' with his message of the Kingdom of God, Jesus has focused his energy on his home town region of Galilee which is in the north of Israel. Jesus now enters his actual hometown of Nazareth (1:9) which brings a very surprising result.

### Read Mark 6:1-6

1. What do we learn about Jesus' background and family in this passage?
  
2. What are the different reactions to Jesus in Nazareth?

3. Why do you think certain people take offense at Jesus?
4. In v5, the link is made between Jesus not doing many miracles, and their lack of faith. How do you think the link works?
5. What sustains your faith in Jesus?

## Personal Preparation 3

The sceptics in Nazareth are in stark contrast to the twelve – those who were called and selected by Jesus and have been closely following him. Jesus has already said to Peter and Andrew, “I will make you fishers of men.” (1:17) and now we see them going out to cast their net.

### Read Mark 6: 6-13

1. What does Jesus call the twelve to do?
2. How similar is their work to what Jesus has been doing? See 1:38-39.
3. In Mark’s gospel we see that Jesus speaks a message (the Kingdom of God) but his *message* is generally linked with his *action* of driving out demons. How does authority over demons support the message?
4. Jesus gives his disciples their marching orders, but rather than being full of detail on what they should do when they confront evil spirits, Jesus’ instructions are all about what not to bring, their accommodation arrangements, and what to do when they are not welcomed. From Jesus’ words, v8-11 – does this give you an indication of the sort of mission the disciples are on?
5. Do you think the urgent message for people to repent is still as important today?
6. What would it mean for the people of Nazareth to repent?

thoughts. questions. insights

## Jesus: The Prophet Man, Group Discussion Questions

Things are looking so good for the apostles. As we've seen in Personal Preparation, they are going out – preaching the kingdom, calling on people to repent, and driving out demons. It looks very successful and easy. But then we have this episode which is a flashback to the execution of John. Mark is telling about John's demise for a reason.

### Read Mark 6:12-30

1. The apostles have obviously been very busy! News of Jesus has travelled all the way to Herod Antipas' palace. Herod was one of the sons of 'Herod the Great' who was the King at the time of Jesus' birth. Within the royal court – what are they speculating about Jesus?

2. From what we've seen so far in the gospel, how close (or far away) are they from the mark?

3. One of the theories about Jesus is that he is John the Baptist, raised from the dead. Mark then provides us with a flashback to tell us about John's death. If a tabloid journalist was there at Herod's party, what do you think would be a good headline to match the juicy photos that he could have taken?

4. Throughout this episode, pick 3 words to describe:

John

Herod

Herodias

Daughter of Herodias

It's always worth pausing to remember that the events of the New Testament are exactly that – events, moments in history recorded for us. Not fairytales. Josephus, the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish historian, makes reference to these events:

Herodias, taking it into her head to flout the way of our fathers, married Herod the Tetrarch, her husband's brother by the same father, who was tetrarch of Galilee; to do this she parted from a living husband. **Antiquities 18.5.3 136**

Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and was a very just punishment for what he did against John called the baptist [the dipper]. For Herod had him killed, although he was a good man and had urged the Jews to exert themselves to virtue, both as to justice toward one another and reverence towards God, and having done so join together in washing.....And so John, out of Herod's suspiciousness, was sent in chains to Machaerus, the fort previously mentioned, and there put to death..... **Antiquities 18.5.2 116**

Herod and Herodias are the classic case of hard-hearted Israelite royalty who murder the prophets sent by God. The most well know example is King Abab and Queen Jezebel (see 1 King 16:29-33; 18:4; 19:1-2) who wanted to kill Elijah.

The death of John the Baptist reminds us about the sordid history of Israel – but it also makes us look ahead to the time when another will be killed at the hand of wicked rulers – the one John was preparing the way for (1:2).

5. What is similar about John’s death and Jesus’ death?

In between the apostles going out (v12) and returning (v30) we have the story of John’s death. It seems that we’re being reminded – that in the midst of telling others about the Kingdom of God, opposition, hatred and danger are never far away. John was opposed and killed, Jesus was opposed and killed, and so too were many of the apostles as well.

6. When we seek to be faithful to God and tell others about Jesus, we can feel threatened. What is good news about the Kingdom of God that makes us want to keep following our King despite the discomfort, dangers and threats?

## Pray

- Pray that we would have a desire to tell others about Jesus despite the pressure and threats we face.
- In your group, pick a country or people group in the world where people are in danger for their lives because they follow Jesus. Please pray for them.

## Remember

- For those that work in the CBD we have the ‘City Workers Network Lunch’ this coming Friday—18 April, 123-130pm. For more info contact Garnet, [garnet@mpc.org.au](mailto:garnet@mpc.org.au).