



We are in week five of a series called “Misunderstood: Jesus According to Mark.” This series is an opportunity for us to prepare our hearts and lives for Easter as we study the book of Mark together. This discussion guide is designed to help your small group or class dive deeper into what is being taught each weekend, and to be intentional about applying it to your life as you prepare to celebrate Easter. If you weren’t able to hear the sermon this weekend, please check it out at:  
<http://www.firstdecatour.org/sermons/>

## WEEK 5: TRUST

Mark wrote his gospel with the purpose in mind of bringing clarity to his readers about who Jesus truly is. Last weekend’s sermon discussed the accounts in Mark Chapter 10 of Jesus’ interactions with children as well as with a wealthy man. These two interactions seem unrelated, but Mark wanted his readers to understand that they are in fact both making the same point. That point is that in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, we must fully and actively place our trust in Jesus.

### START

Trust is essential to any healthy relationship. In fact, when trust is broken, it often has a significant impact on the strength and sustainability of a relationship. It should not come as a surprise then that our individual relationship with Jesus also requires trust to be healthy. He desires for us to trust him with our lives, our relationships, our finances and the many circumstances we face each day. We will dive into that more in a moment, but before we do, take a minute in your group or class to discuss the questions below.

- ▶ Have you ever done a trust-fall? If not, take a minute to look it up on Google. If you’ve been the person falling, how did you feel? Were you able to keep your body straight? If no, why not? What does this exercise teach us about trust? If you are feeling extra ambitious, go ahead and try it in your group or class.
- ▶ Who is someone you trust deeply? What is it about that person that makes you trust them? What have they done over time to earn your trust?

### READ MARK 10:13-16

As Pastor Brian shared this weekend, one of the first phases of development a child goes through is called: “Trust vs. Mistrust”. Infants look to their caregiver for security and stability. When a child receives constant, predictable and reliable care they learn to trust people, and they are able to feel secure even when they are threatened. However, when a child receives harsh, unpredictable or unreliable care, they develop a sense of mistrust with the world around them. Jesus understood that just as infants need trust in their caregiver to be secure and stable, we need to trust him to become secure and stable in our faith.

At first glance, the disciples’ reaction to the children in this passage seems quite harsh. However, we know that children were not valued members of the culture Jesus lived in. They were looked down upon and were expected to not disrupt adults. So, while it may seem harsh, the disciples most likely thought they were doing the right thing. However, on the other hand, Jesus’ response would have been shocking to the people around him. Not only did he not rebuke the children, he spent time with them and cared for them.

- ▶ In verse 15, Jesus said that in order to enter his Kingdom, we have to have faith like a child. In other words, in order to fully embrace the new kind of life he is offering, we have to become childlike and fully trust him for our every need. If Jesus is worthy of our trust and knows what is best for us, why do you think we have such a difficult time trusting him?
- ▶ What is one area of your life you have struggled to trust Jesus with? What has kept you from trusting him? If you have surrendered something to Jesus, that you were previously struggling to trust him with, how did it feel to trust him? What did you experience?
- ▶ Jesus made a habit of reaching out to people who were not valued in society. Can you think of examples other than the children in this passage? What do these examples teach us about the heart of God? How have you followed Jesus’ example of caring for those who our society rejects? Is there someone in your life right now you need to reach out to?



## READ MARK 10:17-25



## VIDEO

Take a minute to watch “Week 5 Misunderstood: Jesus According to Mark” and think about what Mark wanted us to understand about Jesus. You can stream or download the video at <https://vimeo.com/album/4987313> or on the Grow Together Blog at: <https://fccgrowtogether.org>

As Pastor Brian mentioned in the video, this passage isn’t about money. Like the passage we just talked about, it is about Trust vs. Mistrust in God. However, while the primary teaching point is about **trust**, the primary application point is about **money**. So, while it would be easy to focus on one and ignore the other, it is important that we understand both.

One of the most fascinating components of this passage is the discussion between Jesus and this man about the Ten Commandments. Both of them would have known these commandments well, and yet as Pastor Brian mentioned in the video, Jesus initially only listed five of the ten. Then he revealed to the young man how he had not measured up to the other 5 commandments.

Jesus wanted this man, and those around him, to know that obeying God's commandments is important, but our actual, functional, rubber-to-the-road trust in him also matters. However, that isn't the end. Because our trust matters, Jesus also wanted us to know that money is very dangerous and has serious implications on our ability to trust him.

- ▶ This teaching caught Jesus' disciples off guard. They believed that wealth was a sign of God's favor and blessing. Jesus turned that understanding upside down. What do you think, can wealth be a blessing from God? If so how?
- ▶ Is wealth always a blessing? How can wealth negatively affect our trust in God?
- ▶ Jesus wasn't creating a precedent that we should each give away everything we own. He was addressing this man's heart and the way his priorities were keeping him from trusting God. Having said that, money often is a barrier to our complete trust in God. Share with your group or class how money at one point or another has interfered with your trust in God. Also share, how your handling of money has allowed you to place greater trust in God.



## SABBATH AND GENEROSITY

As Pastor Brian mentioned in the video, Sabbath and generosity are closely tied together. Sabbath is our God given opportunity to rest, but not just to kick back and take a nap necessarily. Sabbath is about remembering that God is in control. It is our reminder to trust him, to worship him, and to remember that we are not in control of our own lives. Generosity is similar because it reminds us that we are not the ones providing for ourselves. God is the one who provides for us and we can rest in his providence.

- ▶ Why is being financially sound such an important pursuit in our culture? What lies does our culture believe about being financially sound?
- ▶ If idolatry is finding your trust, rest, faith, or security in something other than God, what are you idolizing right now? What is God calling you to do about that?



## BRING IT HOME

As you close your time, take time to pray for one another. Pray that over the course of these six weeks you will each see Jesus for who he really is and why he came. Pray that God will reveal to each of you, areas within you, or misunderstandings you may have that need to change. Pray that you will embrace the Gospel more deeply and live more powerfully in his kingdom.

On your own this week, take time to reflect on what God is revealing to you through the book of Mark. Please also take time this week to listen to the audio devotional and prepare for next weekend.