



4 more studies from the Book of Mark (Part 6)

Please Note the following:

1. It is not necessary to answer the Bible Study Questions before meeting together for the Bible Study. Some people like to prepare beforehand whereas others like to think through the Bible Passages in a group setting. It is also not compulsory to answer ALL the questions.
2. It is not necessary to look up all the Bible cross references listed in a particular question; your Growth Group Leader will summarize these Bible cross references for you.
3. Just a reminder that sometimes in our Growth Groups, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information **MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP**

Study 1 – Recognizing the True King and Rejecting False Religion Mark 12:35-40

(Sermon on 1st Feb 2026)

To begin with: What does **Messiah** mean?

Messiah (Hebrew *Mashiach* and Greek *Christos*) means “**Anointed One**.”

In the Old Testament it refers to someone set apart by God—especially kings. By Jesus’ time it had come to mean **God’s promised King from David’s line who would bring salvation and rule God’s people**.

Read Mark 12:35-37

1. Where is Jesus’ teaching and why is this context important?

Jesus is teaching in the temple courts in Jerusalem, during the final week before His crucifixion.

This is important because:

- *The temple is the centre of Jewish religious authority*
- *Jesus is publicly confronting official teaching*
- *These are His final teachings before the cross*

2. What common understanding about the Messiah does Jesus refer to in verse 35?

That the Messiah is the son (descendant) of David—a human military king in David’s royal line.

Since Jesus is the Christ, He spoke of Himself here. With the questions of the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees to Jesus, they tried to trap Him. Jesus did not do the same in His questions to them; instead He got to the heart of the matter: “Do you really know who I am?”

These religious leaders thought they knew just about everything there was to know about the Messiah. Jesus challenged this thought, and He asked them to consider that they may have something to learn.

3. Which Old Testament passage does Jesus’ quote in verses 36 and 37?

Jesus quotes from Psalm 110:1.

4. Who is speaking in the Psalm Jesus quotes, and who is being addressed?

Speaker: David

Addressed: "My Lord" — the Messiah

The other speaker: "The LORD" (Yahweh) speaking to David's Lord, the Messiah!

5. Why is it surprising that David calls the Messiah "my Lord"?

Because:

- *In ancient culture, ancestors outranked descendants*
- *A father would never call his son "Lord"*
- *David was Israel's greatest king—yet he submits to the Messiah*

6. What problem does Jesus raise with the idea that the Messiah is only David's son in verse 37?

If the Messiah is merely David's descendant, why does David call him "Lord"?

Jesus exposes the inadequacy of a purely human view of the Messiah.

7. What does this reveal about the Messiah's status and authority?

The Messiah:

- *Is greater than David*
- *Has divine authority*
- *Shares in God's rule and reign*

Jesus is not only the Son of David but also the Lord of David. As Revelation 22:16 says, He is both the root and offspring of David. With this question Jesus challenged the religious leaders, asking them "do you understand this truth about the Messiah?"

8. **Ponder:** Is there a hint here that Jesus is more than a political or earthly King?

Yes, there is more than a hint...

Sitting at God's right-hand points to:

- *Heavenly authority*
- *Divine rule*
- *An eternal kingship, not a political revolution*

9. How does **Psalm 110** help explain Jesus' identity after the resurrection and ascension?

Psalm 110 explains:

- *Jesus' exaltation after resurrection*

- *His enthronement at God's right hand*

- *His ongoing reign until all enemies are defeated*

This Psalm becomes one of the most quoted in the New Testament.

10. **Ponder:** Is there a reason why this teaching about the Messiah comes just before Jesus is crucified?

Yes, there is a reason why this teaching comes just before Jesus is crucified.

Jesus clarifies who He truly is before He dies:

- *He is not a failed Messiah*

- *He is not merely David's heir*

- *He is also David's Lord who will reign through His suffering and resurrection*

11. What does it mean for Jesus to be both David's son and David's Lord?

It points to Jesus' two natures:

- *Human: born in David's line*

- *Divine: exalted Lord over David*

This is a profound claim about Jesus' unique identity.

12. Why do you think the crowd "listened to Him with delight"?

Because:

- *Jesus teaches with clarity and authority*

- *Jesus exposes shallow religious thinking*

- *Jesus opens up Scripture in a new fresh and compelling way*

13. How do the following Old Testament passages relate to **Mark 12:35-37?**

2 Samuel 7:12-16

In 2 Samuel 7:12-16 - God promises a descendant of David will be a forever King of an everlasting kingdom—which is fulfilled fully in Jesus.

Psalm 2

Psalm 2 describes God's anointed King who rules all the nations of the world—pointing to Jesus, God's anointed one!

Psalm 89:3-4, 19-29

These verses reaffirm the promise God made to King David of a forever King of a forever Kingdom

Psalm 132:11-18

God's oath to David finds its ultimate fulfilment in the Messiah/The Christ, not merely in Israel's monarchy.

Read Mark 12:38-40

14. Who is Jesus warning the crowd about?

The teachers of the law (the Scribes)—they are religious leaders/teachers with authority.

*The scribes were the “Bible Scholars” of Jesus’ day. They were entrusted with preserving, learning, and teaching the Word of God to the world. These were the men that the people of God should have been able to trust, but Jesus said instead they should **beware of the scribes**. The scribes represented a complete contrast to the picture of how a true disciple should be —a true disciple acts as a servant, as a child, and as one carrying a cross. Jesus said that we should notice what they do as well as what they say.*

15. What outward behaviours does Jesus point out here?

- *Wearing long robes*
- *Seeking public recognition by being greeted with respect*
- *Wanting most important seats in the synagogue and seats of honour at banquets*
- *Enjoying visible religious status*

16. What motivates these teachers of the law, according to Jesus?

Love of honour, status, and admiration, not love for God or love for people.

17. What serious injustice does Jesus accuse them of in verse 40?

They devour widows' houses—exploiting the vulnerable for personal gain.

They sinned against the weak and vulnerable but excused it because they thought they were so spiritual. In that day, a Jewish teacher could not be paid for teaching — but he could receive gifts. Apparently, many scribes used flattery and manipulation to wrangle big gifts from those who could least afford to give them — such as widows. The Jews of Jesus' day taught that teachers were to be respected almost as much as God; they said that they deserved more honor and respect than any other people in life. They taught that the greatest act someone could do was to give money to a teacher. Of course, it was the teachers themselves who taught this.

18. Why is their prayer especially condemned?

Because it is: Long, Public, full of Pretence. Their prayers are used to mask their greed and oppression. Their prayers are a performance!

Their relationship with God was far more show than substance. The scribes thought they were more spiritual because of their long prayers. But G. Campbell Morgan wrote that when a man is away from his wife and the journey is short, the letters are short. The farther he is from his wife, the longer the letters become. Morgan said that some people must be a long way from God because their prayers are so long.

19. **Ponder:** Why does Jesus say they will be “**most severely punished**”?

Because:

- *They knew the Scriptures but didn't follow it and should have known better*
- *They were leading people astray*
- *They held spiritual authority but abused their authority*
- *They abused trust and harmed the vulnerable by taking advantage of them and they were dishonest*
- *Their greater responsibility came with greater accountability*
- *They were glorifying themselves; rather than glorifying God*

20. **Ponder:** Does this passage have anything to say about hypocrisy?

Yes—religious hypocrisy is especially offensive to God when it: looks holy, sounds spiritual, but exploits others

21. In what ways can religious activity become performance rather than devotion?

- *When outward appearance matters more than obedience to God*
- *When prayer is for approval, not communion with God*
- *When leadership seeks status and accolades rather than service*
- *When people look for glory for themselves rather than giving God ALL the glory!*

22. How do the following Old Testament passages relate to **Mark 12:38-40**?

Isaiah 29:13

Isaiah describes people who honour God with their lips while their hearts are far from Him. This is just like the teachers of the Law in Mark 12:38-40. God does not want lip service!

Isaiah 1:11-17

In Isaiah 1, God does not want worship that consists of many animal sacrifices, burnt offerings and fancy prayers, from people who neglect to “learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow”. And this is what the Teachers of the Law are like in Mark 12 - they focus on themselves and their fancy seats and fancy prayers, and devouring the widows’ houses!

Ezekiel 34:1-4

Ezekiel condemns the leaders who exploit the flock instead of caring for them; which is precisely what the Teachers of the Law are doing in Mark 12.

Jeremiah 7:9-11

Jeremiah condemns the people in his day who are stealing, murdering, committing adultery, perjuring themselves and worship false gods like Baal – and then think they can come to the Lord’s House that bears His name – and think they are safe – and that will cover up their injustice. In addition, they have made God’s House that bears His name ‘a den of robbers’. But they can’t get away with it, because God is

*watching (v11b). Something Jesus condemned when He visited the Temple!
Likewise the Teachers of the Law are robbing the widows!*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Mark 12:35-40

Jesus is not merely David's son but David's Lord—and true submission to Him is revealed not in outward religion but in humble, righteous devotion.

OR

The true Messiah reigns with divine authority, and false religion is exposed by self-serving hypocrisy

OR

Recognizing the Messiah and following His example!



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the **verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V36-David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared: “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.””

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you that Jesus is Lord, exalted at your right hand. Forgive us when we seek honour for ourselves or neglect those in need. Give us humble hearts that serve you faithfully, love the vulnerable, and honour your Word in all we do. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Study 2 – Giving from the Heart

Mark 12:41-44

(Sermon on 8th Feb 2026)

Read Mark 12:41-44

1. Where is Jesus sitting, and what does He notice?

Jesus is sitting opposite the temple treasury, where people place their offerings. He deliberately watches how people give, noticing not just the amount, but the heart behind the gift.

*The line at the offering box and the pride shown by the rich men in their giving shows us that it isn't necessarily more spiritual to have an offering box instead of passing offering bags. It isn't a matter of right and wrong, but a matter of which is an easier way for people to give in a way that doesn't attract attention to their gifts (Guzik) Jesus looks at us when we give and He notices how we give. As Jesus looks, He is more interested in **how** we give than in **how much** we give. In seeing **how** the people gave, Jesus wasn't studying technique. He looks more at **motive and heart**. Jesus noticed a long line of rich people who put in a lot of money, perhaps making some kind of showy display to call attention to their gifts. A poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. (Guzik)*



2. What does Jesus say about the widow's gift?

i. Mark tells us that two mites make one quadrans. Matthew Poole says that we can calculate the value of a mite based on the value of a denarius, which was the going

rate of one day's labor for a working man. According to Poole's calculations, a denarius equals six meahs; one meah equals two pondions; one pondion equals two issarines; one issarine equals eight mites. When you figure it all out, two mites are 1% of a denarius. A mite was pretty small — perhaps our equivalent of putting \$1 in the collection plate.

ii. A quadrans was a Roman coin. Mark helped his Roman readers to understand how much a mite was worth. It wasn't worth much.

V42 footnote: Greek two lepta, which make a kodrantes; kodrantes (Latin quadrans) was a Roman copper coin worth about 1/64 of a denarius (which was a day's wage for a laborer)

iii. The ancient Greek word lepton literally means "a tiny thing," and so in the Old English was translated **mite**, which comes from the word for a "crumb" or "very small morsel."

Jesus did not say that she put in more than any one of them; He said that she put in more than **all** of them — **all of them put together**.

3. Why does Jesus value the widow's offering more than the large sums of others?

She gave all she had to live on, showing total trust in God.

They all put in out of their wealth (abundance), but she out of her poverty put in all that she had: This explains how Jesus could say that the widow put in more than all. It was because all the others gave out of their abundance but she gave sacrificially. She gave all she had to live on, showing total trust in God.

The wonderful thing about this widow's giving was that she had two mites and gave them both. She might have kept one coin for herself, and no one would blame her if she did. Instead, she gave with staggering generosity.

4. **Ponder:** What does this teach us about God's perspective on giving?

God measures giving by sacrifice and trust, not by size or visibility.

What matters most to God is the heart, not the amount.

i. Jesus' principle here shows us that before God, the spirit of giving determines the value of the gift more than the amount. God doesn't want grudgingly given money or guilt money. God loves the cheerful giver.

ii. The widow's gift and Jesus' comment on it also shows us that **the value of a gift is determined by what it costs the giver**. This is what made the widow's gift so valuable. David refused to give God that which cost me nothing (2 Samuel 24:24). iii. Jesus' principle here shows us that God does not need our money. If God needed our money, then how much we give would be more important than our heart in giving. Instead, it is our privilege to give to Him, and **we need to give because it is good for us, not because it is good for God**.

This is the sort of giving Jesus gives at the Cross at Calvary!

We will see another example of this giving in Mark 14:3 when a woman smashed an alabaster jar of expensive perfume for Jesus' sake.

The rich people gave a contribution [and probably a large amount] – but the widow gave her all. God doesn't want our contributions – He wants our lives!

5. How does the widow demonstrate faith?

She entrusts her entire livelihood to God, believing He will provide.

Her giving is an act of dependence, not security.

The woman was poor because she was a widow and had no husband to help support her. It also may be significant that Jesus had just criticized the scribes/teachers of the law for devouring widow's houses. Then a lone widow made a spectacular contribution. Perhaps a scribe devoured her house.

6. How could we give sacrificially today, even if we have little?

- *Giving consistently, even when finances are tight*
- *Giving time, prayer, hospitality, or care*
- *Choosing generosity that costs us time, comfort, convenience, or control*
- *Sacrifice is about cost, not quantity.*

The widow challenged the mindset that says, "I'll give when I have more." The widow had virtually nothing yet was a giver. This means that we can all please God with our giving just as much as the richest man can please God with his giving. Whatever we give sacrificially to God, He sees it and is pleased (Guzik)

7. What does this story teach about humility in giving?

True generosity is often quiet and unseen.

The widow seeks no recognition, yet receives Jesus' highest praise.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing (Matthew 6:3)

8. **Ponder:** How might we be tempted to give “for show” instead of faith, and how can we guard against it?

Temptations to give “for show”:

- *Wanting approval or recognition or accolades*
- *Comparing our giving to other people's giving*
- *Giving publicly but not sacrificially*

Ways to Guards being “for show”:

- *Giving anonymously*
- *Praying before giving*
- *Asking: “Does this giving actually cost me anything?”*

9 **Ponder:** What is one way you can give with a “*widow's heart*” this week — fully trusting God and not seeking recognition?

Examples:

- *A quiet act of generosity no one else knows about*
- *Giving time to someone who can be difficult*
- *Giving time which means you miss something you enjoy*
- *Trusting God by giving when it feels risky*
- *Serving without thanks or acknowledgment*

10. How do the following Old Testament passages relate to **Mark 12:35-37**?

Proverbs 3:9-10

*Honouring God with our wealth and **firstfruits** — giving God priority, not leftovers.*

God should be the first priority when it comes to the use of our time, talents and wealth.

Deuteronomy 16:17

Each person gives according to what they have, reinforcing proportional, not equal, giving.

1 Samuel 2:1-10

In Hannah's prayer she tell us that God lifts the humble and needy and humbles the proud — the widow fits God's pattern.

Exodus 22:22-24

Exodus 22:22-24 establishes that:

- *Widows are especially vulnerable*
- *God takes their treatment personally*
- *God hears their cry and acts in judgment against those who exploit them*

So when Mark tells us a widow is present, this should sound an alarm that this is important to God as Exodus 22 tells us!

Psalm 41:1-3

Blessing is promised to those who care for the poor [including the widow], aligning with God's heart for the widow.

Leviticus 27:30-32

Everything belongs to the Lord — so our giving acknowledges God's ownership, not ours.

Malachi 3:8-10

In these verses from Malachi, God accuses the people of holding back on God, even robbing Him! So God calls His people to faithful giving, trusting in God's provision. That's precisely what the widow did in Mark 12, when she gave all she had

2 Kings 12:9-10

This passage in 2 Kings 12 shows the origin and historical context of the giving place that Jesus is observing in Mark 12.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

11. How might this passage relate to **Mark 12:41-44?**

Both passages teach that:

- *God values **willing, joyful, and trusting giving***
- *Generosity flows from **faith**, not abundance*
- *God is the one who **supplies and multiplies**, not the giver*

The widow demonstrates this principle perfectly.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Mark 12:41-44

God wants us to give from the heart – He's interested in the INSIDE, not the OUTSIDE!



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

⁴³ Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

Finish in prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for teaching us through the example of the widow. Help us to give with faith, trusting You completely, and to serve You with hearts fully devoted, not for show, but from love and dependence on You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Study 3 – Watchful and Faithful: Following Jesus in Troubled Times **Mark 13:1-23**
(Sermon on 15th Feb 2026)

Read Mark 13:1-23

1. What prompts Jesus' teaching in this chapter (verses 1&2)?
2. What question do the disciples ask in verse 4?
3. What is the first warning Jesus gives (verse 5)?
4. Why does Jesus say wars, earthquakes, and famines are not the end (verses 7&8)?
5. What does Jesus say will happen to His followers (verses 9 to 13)?
6. What promise is given to those who endure (verse 13)?
7. What does "*the abomination that causes desolation*" refer to (verse 14)?
8. **Ponder:** Why does Jesus urge immediate action rather than delay (verses 15 to 18)?

9 What does Jesus say about the severity of this time (verses 19&20)

10. Why do you think Jesus repeats the warning about false Messiahs and false prophets (verses 21 to 23)

11. **Ponder:** What does this passage teach about God's control over history?

12. How do the following passages relate to **Mark 13:24-37?**

Daniel 7:13-14

Isaiah 13:9-13

Acts 1:9-11

1 Thessalonians 4:16–17

1 Corinthians 15:23–26

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Mark 13:24-37



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Finish in prayer: Faithful Father, we thank you for the sure promise that Christ will come in glory. Help us to live watchfully and faithfully, trusting your word, serving you with hope and perseverance, until that day. Come Lord Jesus, come! In Jesus Name, we pray. Amen.

Study 4 – Watchful until the Son of Man comes**Mark 13:24-37****(Sermon on 22nd Feb 2026)****Before we begin:** Summarise what happened in **Mark 13:1-23?****Read Mark 13:24-37**

1. What major shift occurs in verse 24?

2. What signs accompany the coming of the Son of Man (verses 24&25)?

3. How is the Son of Man described in verse 26?

4. What does Jesus say He will do when He returns (verse 27)?

5. What lesson does Jesus teach from the fig tree (verses 28&29)?

6. What does Jesus mean by “***this generation***” (verse 30)?

7. What contrast does Jesus make in verse 31?

8. What does Jesus say about knowing the day or hour (verse 32)?

9. What does “**watch**” mean in this passage (verses 33 to 37)?

10. How does the parable of the doorkeeper explain watchfulness?

11. **Ponder:** How should Jesus’ return shape everyday Christian living?

12. Why is watchfulness a communal command, not just individual (verse 37)?

13. **Reflection:** What does “**watching**” look like in your life right now — in prayer, obedience, or service?

14. What helps Christians avoid deception today?

15. What does this passage say to Christians facing opposition or hardship now?

16. How do the following Old Testament passages relate to **Mark 13:1-23**?

Daniel 9:26-27

Daniel 11:31

Daniel 12:1

Jeremiah 7:1-15

Micah 3:12

Lamentations 4:12

Daniel 7:21, 25

Isaiah 50:6-7

Isaiah 49:6

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Mark 13:1-23**



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Finish in prayer: Faithful Father, when the world is unsettled, help us to trust your purposes. Keep us from fear and deception, give us strength to endure, and courage to bear witness to Christ. Teach us to be watchful, faithful, and steadfast, until the end. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke
Toukley Presbyterian Church
January 2026**

Resources:

The MacArthur Study Bible
New Bible Commentary (Carson, France, Moyter & Wenham)
The Gospel of Mark (William Barclay)
The Gospel of St. Mark Commentary by C.E.B. Cranfield
Preaching Mark by Phil Crowter
The Gospel of Mark by Ben Witherington III
Matthew Henry's Commentary