

Resource: Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

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Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

MRK

Mark 1:1–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 1:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:1–13 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The book of Mark begins by setting the stage for the good news or gospel of Jesus, "The Son of God" and the start of his time of ministry, or teaching.

Mark tells us that John will prepare the way for Jesus. Then Mark immediately tells us that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus as the Son of God is a theme of this book. God shows us this is true by telling us that Jesus is his son and that he loves and approves of Jesus. Another theme in Mark, which we begin to see here, is God and Satan at war with each other. Immediately after Jesus' baptism, Jesus is in conflict with Satan.

This story happens in the wilderness along the Jordan River. It is important that the story happens in the wilderness because it shows that God has made everything that the prophets in the Old Testament said would happen, come true. The Jordan River is about 320 kilometers long. Normally, it is about 30 meters wide and 3 meters deep. People can easily cross it.

Stop here and look at a picture and map of the Jordan River as a group. Pause this audio here.

Mark reminds us of what the Jewish prophet Isaiah has said long ago. A prophet is someone who receives a message from God and takes God's message to people. What Isaiah said was recorded in a book that all Jewish people knew well. Isaiah said to listen to the shouting voice that tells us that someone will make a pathway in the wilderness for God to come to us. Another prophet, Malachi, tells us that a messenger will prepare the way, and God will come back to his temple, or place of worship. Mark is reminding us of these prophecies and showing us that John is the messenger who is preparing the way for Jesus. Jesus is the way back to God. Mark

is also showing us that Jesus is God. In the rest of the book of Mark, the characters keep trying to figure out who Jesus is, but we hear right away that Jesus is the Messiah, or Promised Savior, God's Son.

John lives in the wilderness and comes preaching to people, much like the old prophets did, about turning from their evil ways to God. John looks a lot like the messenger the prophets talked about—he's in the wilderness, he dresses like him, and he's telling people to get ready for God to come. John wears clothes made out of camels' hair, an animal he can find in the wilderness. He eats locusts and wild honey, which are things that he can find in the wilderness. He baptizes people by putting them in water—a Jewish ceremony that showed that people were turning away from their old way of life and starting a new way of life. In the new way of life they stop disobeying God or sinning, they follow God, and God forgives them for their sins. When God forgives someone, he chooses not to punish or seek revenge on the person who has sinned against him. He cancels their wrongdoing and does not hold it against them. John also tells people that someone more powerful and more important is coming. John says that person will be much more important than he is. John will not even be worthy to bend down and untie that man's sandals. Often a servant would help his master untie his shoes or get dressed. But John will not even be worthy to be that man's servant.

Stop here and show the translation team a photo of sandals. Pause this audio here.

That person who will come will baptize people with the Holy Spirit. John baptizes people with water, but to be baptized with the Holy Spirit means that God will put the Spirit of God into your heart and mind. Several prophets (like Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Joel) in the Old Testament talked about God pouring out his Spirit on people, so people are waiting for this moment to come. John is telling them—it's here!

Mark tells us that Jesus came from Nazareth to Galilee and was baptized by John. Nazareth was a town in the region of Galilee, where Jesus grew up. John baptizes Jesus, but Jesus does not need forgiveness, because Jesus has never done anything wrong. However, Jesus is starting a new life in a way—he is starting his formal ministry, or teaching. This baptism is an important step to show us that God is commissioning him or appointing him for this task. Mark likes to use short sentences and fast action to tell his stories, and we see this here. Immediately after Jesus comes up out of the water, the heavens, which is another way to say the sky, open up and the Holy Spirit came down on Jesus like a dove. Either the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove, or the Holy Spirit came down in the same way a dove comes down. Maybe the heavens open up to show us that God is coming near to us again, after hundreds of years of silence after the previous prophet. A voice from heaven, the place where God lives, speaks. Only Jesus hears the voice from heaven here. Mark does not tell us whose voice it is, but we know it is God's voice. No one else yet knows who he is, but Jesus hears God speaking to him. The voice says that God loves him and approves of him. Mark shows us that Jesus is God's son and people should listen to him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of ceremonies or rituals does your culture have to show that someone is starting a new way of life or an important work? How are these ceremonies the same or different than baptism? Pause this audio here.

The Holy Spirit very immediately and very intentionally sends Jesus out into the wilderness. This would have been a place like a desert where no one but wild animals lived, and very little grew. There is a clear call and purpose in the verb used to "send" Jesus out. This is a special task God has for him. Jesus spends 40 days in the wilderness—just like Moses did on the mountain, just like Elijah did traveling to the mountain, and just like Israel's 40 years in the wilderness. Jesus was tested by Satan over these 40 days. Satan is the leader of all evil spirits. He is the enemy of God. Angels were with Jesus to take care of him and give him what he needed. Angels are supernatural spiritual beings who serve God. Mark does not tell us here if Jesus was successful in the wilderness fighting Satan or not, but this is an important step in Jesus' ministry.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Mark begins by telling us that this is the start of Jesus' ministry. John is in the wilderness at the Jordan river fulfilling scripture from the Old Testament, where Isaiah told us that someone would come to "prepare the way for the Lord's coming," shouting and making a pathway for God to come to us.

In the second scene: John is baptizing people in the Jordan River. John is telling people that someone is coming who is more powerful than he is and who will baptize people not just in water but with the Holy Spirit.

In the third scene: Jesus comes from Nazareth to Galilee where John baptizes Jesus. Immediately after Jesus comes out of the water, the heavens are torn open, and the Holy Spirit comes upon Jesus.

Pause the audio here and show your group a map that shows the region of Galilee that includes Nazareth and the Jordan River area.

In the fourth scene: Immediately after Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit sends Jesus out into the wilderness for 40 days. Satan tests Jesus. Angels are with Jesus helping him.

The characters in this passage are:

- John the Baptist
- Crowds of people
- Jesus
- The Holy Spirit
- God
- Satan
- Angels

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The story takes place in the wilderness near the Jordan River and later in another area of wilderness where Jesus is tested by Satan. The setting of the wilderness is important as it shows us that Isaiah's prophecy that there would be a voice shouting in the wilderness has come true.

Pause the audio here and show your group a picture of the Jordan River and a picture of the wilderness.

In the second scene the people have come from all over Judea and Jerusalem. John is baptizing them. They are confessing their sins, turning away from their old ways of living and starting a new way—obeying God. John is telling the people that soon someone will come who will be more powerful than he is. John talks about untying the sandals of someone more important than he is. Servants would do that for their master. John says he is not even important enough to untie the sandals of the man who is coming! This important man will baptize the people with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God will be put into people's hearts and minds.

Pause the audio here and show your group a map of Judea and Jerusalem.

In the third scene we see John baptizing Jesus. It's important to remember that although Jesus is being baptized, he does not need forgiveness as he has never done anything wrong. His baptism is the start of his new life of public ministry or teaching and shows us that God is appointing him for this task. Mark likes to use short sentences and fast action to tell his stories, and we see this here. First Jesus comes out of the water. The original language is unclear if Jesus comes out from under the surface of the water, or if he comes completely out of the river. Most likely, Jesus comes out from under the surface of the water, but you should leave this unclear in your translation if possible. Immediately after Jesus comes out of the water, the heavens are torn open. This does not mean the heavens or sky were destroyed, but instead means they were opening up. From the opening came the Holy Spirit like a dove. This could mean that the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove, or the Holy Spirit came down like a dove comes down. It is best to keep this translation unclear also. Jesus heard a voice that said, "You are my son. I love you. I am pleased with you." Although we know this is God's voice, the text

does not say whose voice it is. You may say something like, "Jesus heard a sound like a voice." Jesus seems to be the only person to hear the voice.

Immediately after Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit sends Jesus to the wilderness for 40 days. Although the Holy Spirit sends Jesus, this does not mean he forces Jesus to go. Jesus would have known that this was a special task God has for Jesus and an important step in his ministry.

The wilderness is a place like a desert where wild animals live and no people. Very little grows in the wilderness. In Jesus' time in the wilderness Satan tests or tempts Jesus. Temptation is a test or trial designed to give people the opportunity to do evil and sin against God. Mark doesn't tell us specifically how Jesus is tested. We are told that angels are with Jesus, helping him. Again, Mark does not tell us in what ways the angels are helping.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:1-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- John the Baptist
- Crowds of people
- Jesus
- The Holy Spirit
- God
- Satan
- Angels

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The beginning scene of this story sets the background. This story happens in the wilderness. It is the fulfillment of scripture. Act out John telling the crowd to be baptized, to turn away from their old ways of living, and to follow God and be forgiven for their sins.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the crowds, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like "Can we trust this man?" or "I'm excited to be baptized and be forgiven," or "Is this man a prophet?" or "Expectant: Is the Messiah going to come soon?" Continue the drama.

Act out John baptizing people in the river and the people confessing their sins.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing John, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Happy to see so many people hearing God's message," or "surprised at the crowd." Continue the drama.

Act out John telling the crowd that someone is coming who is more powerful than him. He will not baptize with water but with the Holy Spirit.

Pause the drama. Ask the people in the crowd what they are feeling or thinking. They might answer with things like "When will they come?" or "What does it mean to be baptized with the Holy Spirit?" or "Can we believe what John is telling us?" or "Who is the person who is coming?" Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus being baptized by John. Think about how you can act out the sky being torn open and the Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus. Could you use random objects to help you visualize this? You could tear a piece of cloth in two to show the sky opening up.

Act out God's voice speaking to Jesus, telling him that Jesus is his loved son and he is pleased with him.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing John, "How are you feeling in this moment?" The person might answer, "Unworthy" or "Excited that he is here" or "Amazed" or "Confused—why does Jesus need to be baptized?" Ask the person playing God, "How are you feeling in this moment?" The person might answer things like, "I'm feeling so much love for my son" or "Proud." Ask the person playing Jesus, "How are you feeling in this moment?" The person might answer things like, "So happy to hear God's voice," or "Overwhelmed by the task ahead," or "Loved." Continue the drama.

Finally, act out Jesus going to the wilderness for 40 days where he is tested by Satan. Angels are with him, helping him. Think about in what ways the angels may be helping Jesus. Mark doesn't tell us. Mark also doesn't tell us in what ways Satan tests Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Satan, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I can make Jesus listen to me," or "I want Jesus to fail," or "I am more powerful than this man."

At the end, ask the group, "What do you think about the Holy Spirit sending Jesus to the wilderness to be tested or tempted by Satan? How do you feel about the ending to the story?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Originally, Mark used the word **gospel** to mean the Christian message—the good news that Jesus was on this earth, died for our sins and was raised from the dead. Mark liked this word "gospel" and used it often throughout his book. He was excited about Jesus' message.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for gospel. Look up gospel in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Mark said that this was the gospel, or good news about Jesus the **Messiah**, the **Son of God**. The name Jesus means "God saves." "Christ" is the Greek word for the Hebrew word "Messiah," and it means someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed for special tasks. Jesus is all of those things, but Mark tends to see Jesus as a king appointed by God for a special task.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for Messiah, or Christ. Look up Messiah or Christ in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

In the New Testament the singular term **Son of God** shows a unique relationship of Jesus to the true God—Jesus is God's special beloved one. Jesus and God have a special relationship, as between a father and his son.

This is a title that refers to Jesus both being God and being in close relationship to God the Father. This term also implies that Jesus—called the Son of God—is the Messiah, or God's appointed savior prophesied about in the Old Testament.

Stop here and discuss as a group what phrase you will use for **Son of God**. For more information about Son of God, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Mark tells us what Isaiah the **prophet** talked about many years before. Choose a term for prophet that adequately describes the prophet's function. A prophet:

1. receives a call and message from God
2. takes God's message to people
3. knows that his most important job is to bring the Word or message of God to people

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for prophet. For more information about prophet, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Isaiah says someone will come like a voice in the **wilderness**. "Wilderness" is used often in Mark and refers to the area of land near the Jordan River where no one lived and very little grew. In the Bible, God often meets with his people in these kinds of areas. We see that in this story—God says he will send his messenger to the wilderness, John preaches in the wilderness, and Jesus is sent to the wilderness to be tempted.

Stop here and look at a picture of a desert/wilderness as a group. Discuss what word you will use for wilderness. For more information about wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The voice will tell people to prepare the way for the **Lord**. Lord is a respectful title for a master, and in this case it also refers to God himself.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for Lord. For more information about Lord, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

John preached a **baptism** of repentance. Baptism was a washing of water to symbolize cleaning of sins. Jewish people did this to themselves in order to show that they were repenting of their sins. In this case, John did it to others to show this. Later in the New Testament, baptism was a symbol of Jesus' burial and resurrection, and our death to our old life and the new life we have with Jesus. **Repentance** means to turn away from your sins and turn towards God, and to begin living a new life in following God's ways. John was clear that repentance leads to a new way of life.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for baptism and repentance. Look up baptism and repentance in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

John says that his baptism shows God's **forgiveness of sins**. Forgiveness involves two people, one of whom has done something wrong to the other. In forgiveness, the one who was wronged sets aside his rights and does not punish the other as he deserves. He does not seek revenge. If the other repents of his behavior and accepts the forgiveness, the relationship between the two is restored and the guilt is removed. With God, forgiveness is available to all who stop doing evil and turn towards God. Then God restores his relationship with them. Here are some ways the New Testament describes "forgiveness." Your language may have a similar way of describing forgiveness. If so, you may use that to create a word picture for your audience.

- to wipe away the sins of someone
- to lift up the sins of someone
- to loose, release
- to throw away
- to cover over
- to pass by
- to take away
- to turn one's back on

Teaching Tool: In one West African language, when God forgives someone, he "cuts" their sins away completely so that they are no longer present. Try having the translation team mime or act out a scene where someone forgives someone else. Watch what actions they do to show the forgiveness. Ask the translators to explain the emotions of each of the characters in the scene.

Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God. Be sure that the word you use here does not mean that someone has failed to perform a religious act like ritual prayer or following certain religious rules.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sin. Look up sin in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

John says that the person who is coming will baptize people with God's **Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for spirit can have the physical meanings "wind" or "breath." It also can mean "power" or "authority" that God gives to someone to do extraordinary things. God gives people gifts when God's Spirit (or the Spirit of God) comes into (or onto) someone. God gave kings his Spirit when he anointed them to be king and gave them special wisdom and power from God. God's Spirit equips people to do something. For example, the person may be asked to carry a message from God to someone.

In the New Testament the concept of **holy** refers to people or things that belong to God, are dedicated to him, or are like him.

If the term **Spirit** is difficult to translate, or if the idea of **God's Spirit** makes people think that there is more than one God, you may need to translate the term by referring to what it does or what it provides. One example of a way to translate the term "God's Spirit" is "God's power."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for Holy Spirit. Look up Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

When "heaven is torn open," the same word is used for **tore** as would be used for tearing a piece of cloth. This shows that the place where God lives is very clearly opened up to the earth in an almost violent way. God is accessible again after hundreds of years of silence. If you need to say that the sky opened instead of that heaven opened, you can.

The voice from **heaven** is really God—Jewish people didn't say God's name often, so they often substituted "heaven" for his name. The voice definitely comes from the place where God lives.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for heaven. Look up heaven in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Satan tempted Jesus. **Tempted** really means to "test." Satan refers to the spiritual being, whom God created, who is the leader of the evil spiritual beings who decided to rebel against God. You may need to describe the name Satan with "leader of the evil spirits" if Satan is unknown to your audience.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "Satan." Look up Satan in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Angels came and took care of Jesus. An angel is a supernatural, spiritual being who is a messenger from God. Angels appear to humans in human form, they are less than Jesus, and they often come with a specific message or to do a specific task. If there is no word in the language for angel that a non-believer would understand, you could translate this as messenger of/from God, or ambassador of God. Be aware, though, that prophet also conveys those meanings. You may need to include spirit messenger from God to this description.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for angels. Look up angels in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 1:1–13

Audio Content

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Mark 1:1–13

Video Content

No video content available.

Mark 1:14–20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 1:14–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:14–20 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:14–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage Mark introduced us to the start of Jesus' ministry. God was fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy that Isaiah told. Jesus traveled to Galilee and John baptized Jesus. Immediately after John baptized Jesus, the Holy Spirit sent Jesus into the wilderness where Satan tested him for 40 days. Mark now makes a clear break between John and Jesus. Some time has gone by and the authorities arrested John and put him in prison. Although Mark does not tell us here who arrested John or why they arrested him, we find out later in Mark that Herod Antipas arrested John. Herod Antipas was the son of king Herod who had tried to kill Jesus as a baby. After John's arrest, Jesus goes into Galilee. Jesus is now the focus of the ongoing story.

Mark tells us that Jesus is now in Galilee preaching the good news that God's kingdom is near. In Jesus' time people believed that one day God would rule over the whole world through his people Israel. But in Mark, Jesus has come, and Jesus is preaching a different kind of kingdom. God's Kingdom does not mean a place or land that

he rules over, but instead means one where God rules in our hearts. We experience God's Kingdom now when we listen to him and obey him by following Jesus.

Jesus' message is immediate. He says that "the time has come," meaning that all the prophecies from the Old Testament about God's Kingdom and about his promised savior are beginning to happen now, because Jesus, the promised savior, has come to start his ministry. "The time" means that God has specially appointed this time for his kingdom—it is a good time for people to respond to him because they can hear directly from Jesus.

Jesus' message is simple. People should repent and turn away from disobedience, turn to God and believe the gospel, or good news that God's Kingdom has truly come. Mark talks a lot about having faith in Jesus. Having faith means to trust in someone—in this case, trusting in Jesus and showing that you believe by obeying and following him.

As Jesus begins his ministry, he focuses on the very important topic of choosing the first men who will closely follow him. Mark tells us that Jesus invites his first disciples to follow him. A disciple is a person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher about God, faith, and life. Jesus' disciples, or closest followers, were with him for much of his public ministry, traveling with him everywhere, learning from him, and sometimes being sent out by him to preach the good news of the Kingdom and heal the sick.

Jesus is walking along the shore of the sea of Galilee when he invites Simon and his brother Andrew to be his disciples. The Sea of Galilee is a lake with fresh water. It is 21 Kilometers long and 10 kilometers wide.

Stop here and look at a map of the Galilee area and a picture of the Sea of Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

Simon and Andrew were fishermen. Their job was to go out onto the lake and use a net to catch fish to sell. Their fishing net would have been made from string or thread which people knot together to form a circle about 7 meters across. Some nets would have small weights attached to its edges to make it sink quickly. People probably used these types of nets while standing in the shallow water along the shore and throwing them out further into the lake.

Stop here and look at a picture of a fishing net as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells Simon and Andrew to follow him and says he will send them out to fish for people. In the Old Testament, the prophet Jeremiah talked about people "fishing" for men, or bringing them to God for God to judge them. However, Jesus talks about "fishing for men," or bringing men to Jesus, in order to rescue them and bring them to an understanding of how to be in God's Kingdom.

Mark tells us that Jesus walks farther along the shore of the Sea of Galilee where he sees James and John, the sons of Zebedee, in a boat cleaning and mending their nets. These may be longer nets than the ones that Simon and Andrew were using, because people used these nets from a boat. A boat is a vehicle used for traveling across a lake or sea or for fishing. People used oars or paddles to cause the boat to move. These boats also sometimes used sails, or big pieces of cloth, that relied on the wind to move them.

Stop here and look at a picture of a boat with oars as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus invites John and Andrew to be his disciples and they immediately respond to Jesus. John and Andrew left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men. Fishermen would sometimes hire men for the day or a certain time to help them. These men were not slaves—the owners of the boat paid them for their work.

When Jesus calls people, he expects them to respond immediately and fully commit to him, even when it's hard. James and John left everything—their family and their jobs—to follow Jesus. When people follow Jesus, they are responding to his call, accepting his authority, and imitating him. Jesus commands this, and people follow this.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do when they decide to follow a respected teacher or leader? How do their lives change?

*Defining the Scenes**Defining the Scenes*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:14–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: The authorities arrest John and put him in prison. Jesus goes into Galilee where he begins his ministry and preaches about God's Kingdom coming.

In the second scene: Jesus is walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee and calling his first disciples, who leave their fishing nets and follow him.

The characters in this passage are:

- John (who is arrested)
- Someone who arrests John
- Jesus
- People who Jesus is preaching to
- Simon and his brother Andrew
- James and his brother John
- Zebedee, the father of James and John
- The hired men in the boat with Zebedee

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

We are not told how much time has passed between John being arrested and Jesus returning to Galilee. This story starts with a phrase that just shows us that it was sometime after John's arrest when Jesus went back to Galilee.

Jesus is preaching about God's Kingdom coming. To preach is to publicly tell people something important. Jesus would have been traveling from place to place in Galilee preaching this good news. It's important to remember that God's Kingdom does not mean he is ruling over a place or a piece of land, but that God is ruling in our hearts and minds. Jesus is the promised king, and his presence is among the people. He is the king they have been waiting for.

Jesus commands people to repent and believe in the gospel. It is time to act. People now have a choice to accept what Jesus is telling them and believe in him or to reject his message.

Simon, Andrew, James, and John are all fishermen. Simon and Andrew may have been in their boat or standing in the water along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, casting their nets, which means to throw their net into the water to catch fish. Jesus calls Simon and Andrew first, so we can assume they would have been with Jesus when he walks farther along the shore and calls James and John. James and John are with their father Zebedee and their hired men in their boat. Mark doesn't tell us how many hired men there were, but the boat could probably fit between four and fifteen people. Mark also does not tell us if there were any other people there at this time but there were many towns and fishing villages in this area so there may have been other people working and fishing.

Stop here if it would be helpful to look again at the pictures of the Sea of Galilee, the boat with oars and the net as a group. Pause this audio here.

Simon, Andrew, John, and James all acted immediately when they were invited by Jesus to follow him. They left everything behind and obeyed him. Again, we see here that Jesus wants people to act. The time has come to be decisive, turn from our old ways, and instead follow God with obedience.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:14–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- John (who is arrested)
- Someone who arrests John
- Jesus
- People who Jesus is preaching to
- Simon and his brother Andrew
- James and his brother John
- Zebedee, the father of James and John
- The hired men in the boat with Zebedee

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the story, Jesus goes into Galilee and starts to preach after John is arrested.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "He was sad, John was his cousin" or "Jesus knew this was a starting point of his ministry as he was to begin preaching about the kingdom of God." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus calling to Simon and Andrew and saying, "Come, follow me, and I'll show you how to fish for people."

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing Simon and Andrew, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "They just knew that they needed to follow him," or "They had a sense of urgency that they needed to leave their nets and follow him at once," or "Excited, the one we've been waiting for is finally here." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus, Simon and Andrew walking along the shore towards James and John. Jesus calls out to James and John to follow him, they immediately leave their father, their boat and nets and their hired men.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing Zebedee and the hired men, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "I'm confused, who is this man and what is happening?" or "Why are James and John leaving so suddenly?" or "Why haven't we been called?" or "Excited for them," or "Overjoyed to see them following Jesus."

At the end, ask the group, "If you were a fisherman, and you were doing your job, and Jesus came up to you and asked you to follow him, how would you respond? How would you feel?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:14–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus **went into** or **came into** Galilee. Use the action word for coming towards someplace or going towards someplace—whichever is the most natural in your language.

Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee in this story. The lake is about 21 kilometers long and 10 kilometers wide. Its deepest point is 67 meters. Many people used it to fish and make a living. Galilee is the area around the Sea, or Lake, of Galilee.

Stop here and look at the picture of the lake and a map of Galilee if you have not already as a group. Discuss what word you would use for this body of water. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that the **kingdom of God** is near. A kingdom is a place where a king rules a group of people. In the Old Testament, God's kingdom was his people, Israel. But the people of Israel disobeyed God all the time. Now, God's Kingdom refers not to a place, but to all who follow him. We know that everyone still disobeys God, and his Kingdom is not yet perfect. But Jesus also came to bring part of God's Kingdom now. God's Kingdom now is people following Jesus as king, helping each other, and spreading Jesus' love to others. Later God will bring the perfect kingdom. God will come, judge the evil people, and the world will be perfect. God will rule perfectly over his people, when there will be no more suffering or evil, and all people will obey him. When Jesus talked about God's Kingdom, people did not understand that, so it felt like a mystery to them. They needed to really listen to Jesus to understand what he was saying.

We experience God's Kingdom now when we listen to God and obey him by following Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the kingdom of God. Look up kingdom of God in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus commands us to **repent** of our sins and **believe** in the good news. To repent means to turn away from sins and turn to God, and to begin living a new life in following God's ways. Use the same word or phrase for repent as you used in previous passages, and remember that repent is in the Master Glossary.

To **believe** is like faith in that it involves emotions—to be strong in something, to make the heart straight about it, to have no doubts.

Some languages have only one word for believe and for obey. Belief describes people's response to God's promise. This is about putting your faith or confidence in God.

Teaching tool: Ask a volunteer ahead of time to help you with this. Place a chair in the centre of the room and ask the volunteer, "Do you believe that this chair exists? Do you believe that this is a chair? Do you believe this chair is strong enough to hold you?" The volunteer should say "yes" to all these questions. Then ask, "I know you are tired, so here's this chair for you to sit in." The volunteer should refuse to sit in the chair. Go over this several times, asking why the volunteer won't sit in the chair even though he/she knows it is there and says that they believe it is strong enough to hold them. Explain to the group that this is an example of what faith is about. If the person will not sit in the chair, they really do not have faith in the chair.

Stop here and do this activity. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for believe. Look up belief in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus told the people the gospel, or the good news. Before Jesus died and was raised to life, the disciples and Jesus taught the good news of the kingdom. This means that they are teaching about the time when God comes to rule. God will come to rule in his people through Jesus—this is good news! Later, the good news will include the full story of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Use the same word or phrase for good news or gospel as you used in previous passages.

Jesus calls **Simon** and Andrew to be his disciples. Simon here is the same person as Simon Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, later. Andrew is described as the brother of Simon. Simon is probably older, so put the two brothers' names in whatever order you need to for your culture when you talk about two brothers.

Simon and Andrew were fishermen. **Fishermen** were men who caught fish in order to make money. Simon and Andrew were casting their **fishing nets** when Jesus called to them. People made fishing nets from string or thread which they knot together to form a circle and wound around their arm. People threw out the nets in a circular movement of the arm. Some nets would have small weights attached to their edges to make them sink quickly.

Stop here and look at a picture of a fishing net as a group. Discuss what word you will use for fishing net. Pause this audio here.

Fishermen would use a boat as a way to travel across the water. The fishing boats were about 8 meters long and 2 1/2 meters wide. It was about 1 1/4 meters deep. A boat of that size would have comfortably fit thirteen people.

Stop here and show your translators the photo of the boat and choose a way to show the boat size, perhaps by drawing the dimensions on the ground with a stick and asking people to step inside the drawn lines. Discuss what word you will use for **boat**. Pause this audio here.

The disciples in this passage are called to be **Fishers of men**. This means they were to be fishers who catch men instead of fish. Be careful that the word you use for "catching" or "fishing" isn't bad. You could say that you will catch men as if you were catching fish. To be fishers of men means to bring men to Jesus, in order to rescue them and bring them to an understanding of how to be in God's Kingdom.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 1:14–20**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (14324980 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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Mark 1:14–20**Video Content**

No video content available.

Mark 1:21–28

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 1:21–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:21–28 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:21–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus has called his first 4 disciples to follow him—the fishermen, Simon, Andrew, James, and John. Jesus and his 4 disciples have gone in to the village of Capernaum, which is next to the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was an important town on the main road between Egypt and Damascus. It became the headquarters for Jesus during his ministry in the Galilee area. Capernaum is probably where the 4 disciples lived.

Stop here and show your translation team a map of the Sea of Galilee that shows Capernaum, Egypt, and Damascus.

On the next Sabbath day, Jesus goes to the synagogue and Jesus begins teaching God's message to the people there. The sabbath is a Jewish day of rest and worship—a day to be kept holy or special by not doing any work. The Sabbath for the Jews began at sundown on Friday and went on until sundown on Saturday. It was normal for people to gather in the synagogue to hear teaching on the Sabbath. The synagogue was the town's place of worship. It was a meeting place where people gathered to pray and where they heard and discussed God's Word with respected teachers. People also gathered in synagogues to discuss important issues of law and politics.

Stop here and look at a photo of a synagogue. Discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what is your weekly schedule of rest and work like? How do you rest? Where do people gather to discuss important issues? Pause this audio here.

Someone invited Jesus to teach in the synagogue. This tells us that people would have known Jesus and respected him. Mark does not tell us what Jesus taught on this day, but we know that Jesus' teaching was unusual. People were "amazed" at the way Jesus was teaching. Usually, teachers of the law talked about what the religious law said and what the prophets said about a subject. In this case Jesus seemed to be speaking in his own authority—Jesus spoke as if he had power and the right to tell people what to do, and people were not expecting this. Jesus was probably speaking about God's Kingdom being here now and telling people what they should do to become a part of God's Kingdom.

We are told that "immediately" a man possessed by an evil spirit shouts out. Evil spirits, often referred to as demons or unclean spirits, are spiritual beings who serve Satan as his agents, being under his authority. These spiritual beings have power to oppress a human being and even take control of their thoughts and actions and speak through them. We do not know if the possessed man had been in the synagogue the whole time Jesus was teaching or if he entered after Jesus finished teaching. It's surprising that he would have come to the synagogue at all, as a person with an evil spirit was not allowed to worship in a synagogue. The demon speaks through the man. His language is like Jewish people expected demons to speak—they usually said things like "You have no business with us!" The demon is probably speaking on behalf of other evil spirits when he says "us." The demon is very violent in the way he speaks to Jesus—this shows that he is afraid because he knows who Jesus is and that Jesus has authority to tell him what to do and to destroy him. Destroy here means to ruin, not to kill.

The demon calls Jesus by his name—Jesus of Nazareth. This means that Jesus is from the town of Nazareth. It was common in those days for people to be known by their name and their hometown as a way of identifying them. In Jewish culture, people often believed that when you called someone's name you had control over them. The demon is trying unsuccessfully to find some way to have control over Jesus because he knows that Jesus has the real power. Then the demon calls Jesus the "Holy One of God." The demon probably means that he knows Jesus has God's Holy Spirit. This name shows that the demon knows Jesus is divine—he is God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you use names in your culture? What do names mean? When do you call people by their names? Pause this audio here.

Jesus commands the evil spirit "Be quiet and come out of the man!" Jesus is demanding that the evil spirit leave the man and stop controlling him. Usually, a teacher of the law performed a ritual or ceremony to cast out demons. But Jesus only has to say the words, and the demon comes out of the man. This again demonstrates Jesus' authority. As the demon comes out of the man, it causes the man to shake like he was having a seizure.

and the demon cries out loudly. Mark likes to show this theme in his stories, and he's often showing us the competition between Jesus as good and Satan as evil.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture deal with people who are possessed by evil spirits? What kinds of things do possessed people do? How do they get healed from this trouble? Pause this audio here.

Once again, the people in the synagogue are amazed at Jesus. They can see that Jesus has great power. The people begin to discuss what has happened. The people do not fully understand who Jesus is yet, but they can see that Jesus is someone who not only teaches with authority and power in his words only, but demonstrates it with his actions, in this case setting someone free.

Mark always shows us the results of miracles. In this case, the news about Jesus and his miracles spread throughout the area.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:21–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his four disciples, fishermen who he just called to follow him, are now in the town of Capernaum. It is Sabbath, so Jesus goes into the synagogue, the Jewish house of prayer, and teaches. People are amazed at his teaching.

In the second scene: A man who is possessed by an evil spirit suddenly appears. Jesus reprimands the evil spirit and commands that it leave the man. At this, the evil spirit screams, throws the man into convulsions, and comes out.

In the third scene: The audience is amazed. They begin to discuss what happened and Jesus' authority. News about Jesus spreads quickly throughout the entire region of the Galilee.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' four companions/disciples—Simon, Andrew, James, and John
- People in the synagogue, including local people and religious leaders
- The man possessed by an evil spirit
- People outside of the synagogue (those within the synagogue spread the news to people throughout the whole region)
- The evil spirit

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Have the group think through the context of these scenes. We are now in a different context—the town of Capernaum, inside a synagogue, on a Sabbath day. Capernaum was a small town on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Less than 2000 people lived in Capernaum. This is probably where Simon, Andrew, James, and John lived. Every Jewish community had a synagogue. Synagogues were meeting places where people gathered to hear religious teachings and worship. Synagogues were also a place to gather to discuss important issues of law and politics.

This story takes place on the Jewish Sabbath, which is the day when Jewish people stopped working and rested and gathered in synagogues to learn and worship. Jesus would have been invited to teach in the synagogue.

This shows that Jesus is already known and respected. Jesus would have been sitting down, teaching. We do not know what Jesus was teaching but we know that the people were amazed at the way that Jesus was teaching. Jesus taught with authority. This is different to how other teachers taught. Teachers of the law would often quote from other scholars and talk about what the religious law said and what the prophets said about a subject. Jesus is speaking from his own authority. This means he is not speaking as someone bringing a message from another. Jesus is teaching something new as someone who has the right to declare the truth.

Stop here and look at a picture of a synagogue as a group, both the outside and the inside of the synagogue. Pause this audio here.

In the next scene there is a sudden appearance of the man possessed by an evil spirit. Evil spirits are sometimes known as unclean spirits or demons. Evil spirits are spiritual beings that serve Satan and can control a person's actions and thoughts. We are not told how long the demon possessed man had been in the synagogue. It may be that he was there while Jesus was teaching, or it may be that he arrived when Jesus had finished teaching. It would have been surprising for him to be in a synagogue at all. The evil spirit recognizes Jesus straight away—he calls Jesus by name and later refers to him as "The Holy one of God." It is the evil spirit who is talking when he recognizes who Jesus is. Be sure that your translation shows that it is the evil spirit talking. It is clear that the man was possessed by an evil spirit and not just unwell. Evil spirits have supernatural knowledge—knowledge that is not of this world. He knows who Jesus really is even though the people in the crowd do not yet fully understand who Jesus is. Jesus is divine. He is God and has the power to destroy the evil spirit.

Jesus demonstrates his authority and power when he commands the evil spirit to be quiet and leave the man. Jewish leaders normally had to follow many rituals to cast out demons. Instead, Jesus commands the demon to leave with his words only. We are not told where the evil spirit goes when it leaves the man. As the demon leaves the man, it causes the man to convulse and scream or shriek. Convulse means to shake violently. Since demons are spirits, they do not have a physical body, so we cannot see the demon leaving the man. However, it would be clear to the crowd that the man was free from the demon because the man would behave differently. Again, the people in the synagogue are amazed at the different way Jesus is doing things—with authority and power!

This is the first time we see Jesus commanding a spirit to leave a person in Mark, although Jesus has already encountered Satan in the wilderness when Satan tested him. We see this important theme throughout Mark, where Jesus and Satan are in conflict.

In the last scene you have the audience—all the people who were in the synagogue at the time. They begin to discuss what happened with people outside of the synagogue, and this news spreads throughout the entire region of the Galilee (which is the region around the city of Capernaum).

Stop here and look at a map of Galilee and the surrounding areas as a group. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:21–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' four companions/disciples—Simon, Andrew, James, and John
- People in the synagogue, including local people and religious leaders
- The man possessed by an evil spirit
- People outside of the synagogue (those within the synagogue spread the news to people throughout the whole region)
- The evil spirit

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus in the synagogue with his disciples and a crowd. Jesus is teaching. The crowd are very impressed with the authority with which Jesus teaches.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing Jesus' four disciples, Simon, Andrew, James and John, "what are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "Confusion," "Their faith is growing," or "They're learning and understanding more of who Jesus is." Continue the drama.

A man possessed by an evil spirit arrives. Make sure to act out the story in such a way that his arrival is sudden and surprising. The possessed man is shouting at Jesus, asking him why he is here, and calling him "The Holy one of God." Jesus commands the evil spirit to leave the man. The evil spirit leaves, causing the man to convulse and scream.

Pause the drama. Ask the person who is playing Jesus what he feels at this moment. You may hear things like, "I am feeling opposition from Satan to my ministry," or "I am feeling confidence and authority that I can cast out this demon." Now ask the person playing the man who had been possessed by an evil spirit how he feels. You may hear things like, "Freedom," "Relief," "Joy," or "Peace, finally." Continue the drama.

Act out the crowd being amazed at Jesus' power and authority. They are discussing what has happened. The crowd then go and tell people in the regions around Galilee about Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask those playing the crowds of people, "What are you thinking at this point? You have never heard such authority in teaching and now you have seen Jesus' authority in casting out demons. How are you feeling? Are you making sense out of this?" You may hear things like, "Eager to tell others what I've seen," or "Unsure what this means, who is this man and how does he have such authority?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:21–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his companions are now in Capernaum. **Capernaum** was a main city on the route from Egypt to Damascus, another major town. It was a centre of fishing and trading. It was also important to the foreign conquering Roman government as a tax collecting station. Jesus based much of his ministry in this town. Several of his disciples were fishermen from this town.

Stop here and show your translation team a map of the Sea of Galilee with Capernaum, Egypt, and Damascus.

The Jewish people observed the **Sabbath** day as a day of rest and worship from the time that God gave them this command long ago. This was considered the seventh day of the week. By the time of Jesus, strict, specific rules were in place regarding what kind of work could and could not be done on this day. This was also the day that people went to the synagogue to worship.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sabbath. Look up sabbath in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. **Synagogues** were Jewish places of worship where people in villages could meet instead of in the main temple in Jerusalem. People did not do sacrifices in synagogues. These were local congregations of Jews who gathered on the Sabbath and special feast days to pray, read Scripture, hear teaching, and sometimes judge community disputes.

Stop here and do this activity: Collect several stones of different sizes, but with one stone much larger than the rest. Place the large stone in a slightly higher place than the smaller stones, and use this word picture as you discuss what people did at the temple versus what they did at a synagogue. Look up synagogue in the Master Glossary for more information. Discuss as a group what word you will use for synagogue, or use the same word you have used in other Bible passages. Pause this audio here.

Mark tells us that the people in the synagogue were **amazed at his teaching**. In other words, they were amazed at the way Jesus was teaching because he taught like someone with authority.

Authority means to have power, or the right to tell people to do something. Look up authority in the Master Glossary for more information.

The way Jesus taught was different to the other teachers of the law. **Teachers of the law** is sometimes translated as scribes or people who wrote down the law: They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These interpretations were not written down but memorized and taught orally by the teachers.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for "teachers of the law." Look up teachers of the law in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Suddenly a man possessed by an **evil/unclean spirit** is there. In this text in the original Greek language it is actually "unclean" spirit. Unclean refers to something that is unfit for service for God. All evil spirits are "unclean" because they are unfit for service to God. "Evil spirit" refers to spiritual beings who serve Satan as his agents, being under his authority. These spiritual beings have power to oppress a human being and even take control of him. This is what we see happening to this man in this story. We know from the Bible that evil spirits were created by God and chose to disobey him. Some languages do not have a term that can express that adequately. Their "evil spirit" may refer to a dead person's spirit that "haunts" people. Try to choose a word that refers to an independent spirit being that is evil and opposed to God. If there is one, you can also use a neutral word for an independent spirit being and add an adjective like spirit from Satan, or bad/evil spirit.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for unclean or evil spirit. Look up evil spirit/unclean spirit in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

The evil spirit uses the name **Jesus of Nazareth** when he speaks to Jesus. Nazareth is the town where Jesus grew up, in a different part of the area of Galilee. The evil spirit used a name for Jesus that showed that he knew who he was and where he came from. The evil spirit hoped to gain some control or power over Jesus by using his name.

Stop here and show your translation team a map of Galilee that shows Nazareth.

The evil spirit also calls Jesus the **Holy One of God**. This title usually refers to God himself and implies that Jesus has a special relationship with God and has God's Spirit.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for Holy One of God. If needed, look up holy in the Master Glossary. Pause the audio here.

Capernaum was on the side of the Sea of Galilee and in the region of Galilee. The lake, or sea, is about 21 kilometers long and 10 kilometers wide. Its deepest point is 67 meters. Many people used it to fish and make a living.

Stop here and show your translation team the map and photos of the lake if you have not already. Discuss what word you would use for this body of water.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 1:21–28

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13747456 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 1:29–34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 1:29–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:29–34 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his four disciples have just been at the synagogue in Capernaum. Jesus has been teaching with authority. Jesus commands a demon who has possessed a man to leave the man and stop controlling him. The crowd are amazed by Jesus' teaching and actions, they spread the news about Jesus and his miracles throughout the area. This next passage takes place in Simon and Andrew's house, two of Jesus' disciples. Jesus heals many people and commands many more demons to leave.

Mark tells us that immediately after Jesus and his four disciples left the synagogue they went to Simon and Andrew's house. This was the very next event to take place after Jesus had healed the demon possessed man at the synagogue. Jesus and his four disciples left the synagogue straight away, before the news about Jesus had spread throughout the area. Simon's house was in Capernaum—it was probably close by to the synagogue. Simon and Andrew lived in the house with Simon's wife and Simon's mother-in-law, his wife's mother, who was sick with a fever. James and John were with them. We see that when Jesus asks us to follow him, he asks us to fully commit to him. James and John left their business, their father, and their servants and followed Jesus. Now Mark is telling us that Simon lives with his wife and his wife's mother. Simon has a family but is obedient to Jesus' call to follow him, even when he doesn't know where that may be or what it will involve.

Straight away when Jesus and his four disciples arrive at Simon and Andrew's house, the people in the house tell Jesus that Simon's mother-in-law is sick with a fever. We don't know what kind of fever Simon's mother-in-law had or how long she had it, just that she was sick in bed. Jesus goes to her and holds her hand. We do not

know which hand Jesus held, but we know Jesus held her hand, helped her to sit or stand up from her lying position, and she became well again. Jesus' healing was complete—she got up immediately, with no tiredness, and served them. She probably cooked them an evening meal.

On the same day, after sunset, many people who lived in Capernaum came to bring the sick people to Jesus. During the Sabbath day of rest people were not allowed to work, and this would include carrying sick people on mats. However, the Sabbath ended at sunset, so people would have been able to help the sick get to Jesus after this time. They had heard about Jesus' teaching and healing in the synagogue earlier that day and wanted him to heal them too.

Mark tells us that the "whole town" gathered at the door. The "whole town" may be an exaggeration—or in other words, it *seemed* like everyone in town came. Jesus healed many people of sickness and commanded many demons to leave and stop controlling people. Different people had different diseases, but the sick people are described differently to those who were demon-possessed. The passage says the "sick *and* demon possessed." Someone who is possessed may show many signs that they are possessed by a demon and not just sick physically or mentally.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how are people who are physically sick different than people who are possessed by evil spirits? How do they act differently, and how do people treat them differently? In these texts, there is a clear difference between those who are physically sick and those who are possessed by evil spirits. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus cast out the demons, he told the demons to not say who he was. Jesus was not ready for people to know that he was God's son, but the demon he cast out earlier in the day had named Jesus as the "Holy One of God." Jesus needed to keep these demons silent so people would not begin to realize who he was and try to make him do things he had not yet come to do. People were only thinking of the miracles he could do for them and not who he was. Performing miracles is not the main reason he has come.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus goes with his four disciples to Simon and Andrew's house and heals Simon's mother-in-law.

In the second scene: Crowds of people start bringing the sick and demon possessed to Jesus. Jesus heals the sick. Jesus commands the demons to be silent and casts them out of people.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon, Andrew, James, and John
- Simon's mother-in-law
- Many sick and demon possessed people (who come to Jesus after sunset)
- Large crowds (who gather to watch Jesus)
- Demons (who Jesus does not allow to speak)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus is never named in the original language in this story, but we know he has gone with the four disciples to Simon and Andrew's house right away after they leave the synagogue. Another way of saying "right after" or "immediately" is "straightaway." Simon and Andrew's house was probably close to the synagogue, as Capernaum was a small town with less than 2000 people living in it. We know that Simon lives in the house with his brother Andrew, Simon's wife, and Simon's wife's mother. It was common for different generations of family to live together in the same house. James and John were with them but did not live in the same house as Simon and Andrew.

Pause the audio here and discuss as a group: What does a typical household look like in your culture or area? Which family members live together? In many places in the Bible, we see people inviting each other into their homes. How do you show hospitality in your culture?

We do not know why Jesus and his 4 disciples go to Simon and Andrew's house. It may be that Simon wanted to ask Jesus to make his mother-in-law well again, having been with Jesus when he healed the demon possessed man earlier that day. We know that Jesus is told straight away about Simon's mother-in-law being sick with a fever. In the story Mark says that when they arrived at Simon and Andrew's house, they told Jesus "about her." This means they told him she was sick. "About her" is unclear, but they must have told him that she was sick, because as a result Jesus went in to heal her. Jesus takes hold of Simon's mother-in-law's hand and helps her to rise (to either sit or stand) from lying down. She is healed immediately. Simon's mother-in-law is completely well and begins serving—probably preparing a meal for Jesus and his four disciples. The phrase "she served them," or "she waited on them" does not give details about what she did; however, she probably made an evening meal for them since it would have been her normal task for that time of day. Jesus' healings are miraculous. He does not use medicine; he heals with the power of God's spirit.

The next scene takes place after sunset—that evening after the sabbath, or day of rest, had ended. The people of Capernaum had heard the news of what had happened at the synagogue earlier that day and they wanted Jesus to heal them. During the sabbath day people were not allowed to work, and this would include carrying sick people on mats. The people had to wait until the end of the sabbath to bring the sick people and demon possessed people to Jesus. Crowds of people arrive and gather probably at the front of Simon and Andrew's house. We know that people have been told about what Jesus had done at the synagogue, but they didn't yet know who Jesus really was—the Son of God. Maybe they were there to see if what they heard was true, maybe some were just curious about who this man was, maybe others had real faith that they would be healed. Jesus was a respected and known teacher. There were many people; it seemed as though the whole town had come to Simon's house. This may have been a bit overwhelming for those inside the house and perhaps a bit frightening.

Jesus heals people. They come to him with many kinds of sickness. Some people who come to Jesus are sick with disease and some are possessed by evil spirits. The evil spirits have no power in Jesus' presence. He commands them to be silent and to leave the people they possess, just as Jesus had at the synagogue. Jesus knows that the evil spirits know who he is, "the Holy one of God." Jesus does not want the crowd to know this yet because it is not the right time in his ministry, so Jesus does not allow the demons to speak.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon, Andrew, James, and John
- Simon's mother-in-law
- Many sick and demon possessed people (who come to Jesus after sunset)
- The whole town (who gather to watch Jesus)
- Demons (who Jesus does not allow to speak)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus goes with Simon and Andrew to their house. Simon's mother-in-law is lying in bed sick with a fever. Jesus takes Simon's mother-in-law by the hand, sits her up, and her fever leaves her. Then Simon's mother-in-law prepares a meal for them.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Simon's mother-in-law how she feels at this moment. You may hear things like, "Gratitude," "Thankfulness," or "Healthy and ready to serve." Now ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "We had faith Jesus could heal her," "Surprised at how quickly she is well and serving us." Continue the drama.

In the second scene, many people who are sick and demon possessed arrive. Jesus heals many of them and casts out many demons. The demons know who Jesus is, but he does not allow them to speak.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the demons, "Who do you know Jesus to be?" You may hear things like, "The Son of God," "The Messiah," "The one with all authority," or "God." Now ask the person playing Jesus, "Why don't you want them to speak?" You may hear things like, "It wasn't time for me to be known," "I didn't want demons to proclaim who I am," or "I was going to be in control of when I made myself known."

Now ask the people playing the crowd "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "I can't believe what I'm seeing," "How is he doing this?" "Relief at seeing my friends and family healed."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his disciples have come straight from the synagogue to Simon and Andrew's house. **Synagogues** were Jewish places of worship where people in villages could meet instead of in the main temple in Jerusalem. People did not do sacrifices in synagogues. These were local congregations of Jews who gathered on the Sabbath, or religious day of rest, and special feast days to pray, read Scripture, hear teaching, and sometimes judge community troubles and disputes. Use the same word or phrase for synagogue as you used in previous passages.

The woman Jesus healed was Simon's **wife's mother** (mother-in-law). Use the most natural phrase in your language for this relationship.

In those days when people were **sick with fever**, people may not have known what the sickness was. Having a fever could mean any sort of illness. This story is not clear about what kind of fever it was or how long she had had it.

Some of the people who came to Jesus for healing were **possessed** by demons or evil/unclean spirits. Demons choose to possess people because they want to destroy people and their relationships in communities. When demons possess people, they control people's actions. **Demons** is a term used interchangeably with **evil/unclean spirits**. Use the same word or phrase for demon/evil spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on evil spirit refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: In your culture what do people who are demon-possessed do?

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 1:29-34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9985030 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 1:35–39

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 1:35–39 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:35–39 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:35–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story happens right after Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law and many others that same night in Capernaum. The next morning, very early, before the sun has risen, Jesus gets up and goes to a place where he can be alone to pray. Some versions of Mark use the phrase "desert place" or "solitary place" to describe where Jesus went, but there was no wilderness or desert in Capernaum. It wasn't like the place Jesus went to when he was tested by Satan. The area around Capernaum was highly populated. The place Jesus went was probably outside of the town and was a place that was isolated, a place where Jesus could be completely alone. Jesus goes somewhere away from any crowds where he can rest and speak to God in prayer. In two other places in the book of Mark, Jesus does miraculous things and preaches, and then goes at night to a place away from people to pray and be alone.

Stop here and look at a map of the Galilee area that includes Capernaum.

Jesus going somewhere alone to pray reminds us of when Jesus was called out into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Maybe Jesus needs to be alone to pray to be reminded by his father God that he did not come to be made a famous king but to fulfil God's plan for him, to preach the good news about God's Kingdom. God strengthened and supported Jesus in his time in the wilderness and he strengthens Jesus again now, in this time alone in prayer.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people pray in your culture? When do people pray? What do people usually pray about? Pause the audio here.

Later, Simon and the others (probably Andrew, James, and John) go to look for Jesus. They woke up and found Jesus gone and they went to look for him. "Look for" suggests that they searched anxiously, that they are not happy with Jesus' actions and are surprised to find that Jesus is not there. When Simon and the others find Jesus, they tell him, "Everyone is looking for you." "Everyone is looking for you" does not mean every person in the town is looking for Jesus, but it suggests that many of the townspeople are trying to find Jesus, probably for more healing. Simon and the other disciples want Jesus to come back to the crowds and perform more miracles. They have misunderstood why Jesus came—they don't understand that Jesus does not want to become a famous healer and leader. The healings and miracles that Jesus performs show people some of the nature of the kingdom of God, but that is not Jesus' main purpose.

Jesus responds to Simon and the others by telling them it is time to go to other nearby villages to preach. Jesus says that's why he has come earth. Although it's not clear in this story, the Luke account of this story tells us that Jesus came to give people the information they need to make a decision to become part of God's Kingdom.

Jesus and his disciples traveled throughout the region of Galilee, an area on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, densely populated with medium-sized towns where people fished and did agriculture in the fertile soil of the area. When they travel, Jesus used the people's synagogues as a place to meet people of the village. He preached and commanded demons to leave people. Although he probably healed people physically as well, casting out demons better shows how he restored people in every way to full life and freedom that God wants for us in God. We again see the theme of Jesus' conflict with Satan here and how Jesus has power over Satan and his followers.

In this story, Jesus establishes that he is the one in control of his own actions—not the crowds around him or his disciples.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:35–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus has woken very early, while it is still dark and gone to a place to pray alone.

In the second scene: Simon and the others (probably Andrew, James, and John) go to look for Jesus. When they find Jesus, they tell him many people are looking for him. Jesus tells the disciples it's time to go to other villages to preach. That is why he is here.

In the third scene: Jesus and his disciples travel throughout the region of the Galilee. Jesus preaches in synagogues and casts out demons.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon and the others/companions (probably Andrew, James, and John)
- People at the house looking for Jesus
- People in the synagogues

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus has woken very early to go and pray somewhere alone. It is still dark outside. Remember, large crowds had gathered around Simon and Andrew's house the night before and Jesus healed the sick and possessed. We

are not told how long the crowds were with Jesus that night, but we know it was likely to be a very busy time for Jesus. Jesus was probably physically tired. Even though Jesus may have been tired, spending time alone talking to God was Jesus' priority. Time alone to pray is important to Jesus. We see two other places in Mark when Jesus goes to be alone to pray after preaching and healing. This is time to rest and speak to God; God strengthens and supports Jesus. Jesus shows us here that prayer is a priority for him and should be a priority in our lives, even when it feels hard to find the time. God wants us to spend time with him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you're very busy, how do you make time for the things that are important? What are your priorities? Pause the audio here.

In the second scene Simon and the others go to look for Jesus. Although we are not told who the "others" are, it is likely that Mark means Andrew, James, and John here. They have woken to find Jesus is no longer in the house. People in the town are at the house looking for Jesus, probably so he can heal them after the news of Jesus' miracles continues to spread. Simon and the others appear to be anxious. They may not know what to tell all the people gathering. They don't want to disappoint them. They may be concerned about Jesus; they don't know where he has gone. Or they may be surprised that Jesus has left the house when there is so much excitement in the town about what he has done. It may seem to them like Jesus is missing an opportunity to show even more people his power to heal.

When the disciples eventually find Jesus, they tell Jesus that everyone is looking for him. They are probably frustrated with Jesus. However, Jesus again shows us his priorities here. Jesus' priorities are to pray and to preach. Jesus has not come to be famous and just perform miracles. He does not go back into Capernaum, to the crowds that are looking for him. Jesus tells the disciples that they must move on to other villages, so Jesus can preach to them too, as this is why he came.

Jesus and his disciples go throughout the whole region of Galilee. Jesus preaches in the synagogues. Jesus was not trained as an official religious teacher, like other teachers of the law. However, people had heard him teach. He was respected, and religious leaders allowed him to preach in the synagogues and cast out demons.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:35–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon and the others/companions (probably Andrew, James, and John)
- People at the house looking for Jesus
- People in the synagogues

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus walking out to a quiet place alone. He spends time talking with God in prayer.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Tired. I needed time away from the crowds," or "Strengthened," or "So happy to have this time alone with God," or "Refreshed and focused on continuing my ministry." Continue the drama.

Act out the disciples looking for Jesus. They have woken and Jesus has gone. Crowds of people are already looking for Jesus. The disciples find Jesus and tell him that everyone is looking for him.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You might hear answers like "Confused, why has Jesus left the house?" or "Expectant, Jesus will come back and heal more people." Continue the drama.

Jesus responds to the disciples by saying, "We must go to other towns and preach to them too. That is why I came."

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples what they think Jesus meant when he said this. Ask them why they think Jesus came at this point. Continue the drama.

Finally, act out Jesus and his disciples traveling throughout Galilee. Jesus is preaching in synagogues and commanding demons to leave people who are possessed.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:35–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This story begins with Jesus going to a solitary place to pray. **Solitary place** is the same word used for where John lived, and where Jesus went out to be tested. There is no real wilderness near Capernaum—this is a way to say he went to find a place where he could be alone in order to talk with God. The word **pray** suggests prayer over a long period of time. In its broadest sense, prayer is talking with God. Try not to use a term which means only to recite a formula of words.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for "pray." For more information on pray/prayer refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Simon and **the others** or Simon and his **companions** went to look for Jesus. "Others" or "companions" here were probably Andrew, James, and John.

Jesus and the disciples go to other towns/villages in the region of Galilee to preach. **Towns/villages** refer to towns that were like large agricultural villages the size of a small city (at least 15,000 people) but felt like a village. Galilee is an area around the western side of the Sea of Galilee, densely populated with medium-sized towns where people fished and planted crops in the fertile soil of the area.

Stop here and look at a map of Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus preached in the **synagogues**. Remember that synagogues were Jewish places of worship where people in villages could meet instead of in the main temple in Jerusalem. Use the same word for synagogue as you have in previous passages, and remember that synagogue is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus casts out **demons**. He causes demons to leave people and stop controlling them. The word "demons" is used interchangeably with the word for unclean or evil spirit. Use the same word or phrase for demon or evil spirits as you've used in other passages. For more information on evil spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 1:35–39

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9169934 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 1:40-45

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 1:40-45 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:40-45 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:40-45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples have been traveling throughout the region of Galilee. Jesus has been preaching in synagogues and commanding demons to leave people. News of Jesus' miracles continue to spread. Mark now introduces us to a man who was sick with a serious skin disease, leprosy, who has either seen or heard about Jesus' power to heal and has come to ask Jesus to heal him.

Leprosy probably refers to a lot of different kinds of skin diseases. People were afraid of the people with the disease of leprosy and cast them out of society. People with leprosy were considered unclean, or unfit to live and work in the community. People believed the disease was spread by contact with someone who had the disease. In the Old Testament, in Leviticus, Moses states in the law that people with leprosy should wear torn clothes, not brush their hair, and cry out "unclean, unclean," all day. Lepers lived alone outside of the community. Anyone who touched a leper was considered unclean also, so people stayed as far away as possible from them. Lepers could go to the synagogue to worship only if there was a screen between them and the rest of the congregation. A leper might be healed of the disease, but he would then need to go to a priest to be declared "clean" again and able to live normally within the community.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Are there any diseases in your culture that makes people be separated from the community, or unable to worship God? What do those people have to do to show that they are separated? How do others treat them? How are they able to re-enter the community? Pause the audio here.

The leper in this story goes to Jesus, gets down on his knees and begs Jesus to heal him. The man showed great respect for Jesus when he got down on his knees. He is desperate to be healed and no longer be an outcast in society. The leper begs Jesus, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." The leper has suffered greatly both physically and emotionally. To be an outcast would be a sad and lonely life. The leper is not only focussing on being physically healed but on being "clean" and able to be part of the community again. Although the leper is desperate and begs Jesus, his question is polite and respectful. He asks if Jesus is "willing." The leper knows that Jesus has the power to heal him but does not know if Jesus will. People did not show compassion to lepers, so he does not know if Jesus will help him. Jesus however, is "moved with compassion," or deep emotion. He cares deeply for this man and his suffering.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about someone who felt both compassion, or love, and frustration at the same time. How do you describe these emotions? Pause this audio here.

Jesus actually touches the man, even though this was against Jewish law. The man was not used to people touching him in his unclean state. Jesus did not mind breaking the religious rules—in Jesus' mind the law of love was more important than the religious law.

The leper is healed immediately and is clean. However, in Jewish Law the priests are the ones who had the authority to declare that an unclean person was now clean and allow them to return to the community. Jesus gives the man stern instructions to show himself to the priest. When Jesus showed compassion and when Jesus gave the man a stern warning there was deep emotion—something close to anger and frustration at the evil that caused the man to be sick. Jesus may also be frustrated because he knew the man was about to disobey his order to stay quiet.

Jesus instructed the man very strongly to not tell anyone what had happened. Instead, Jesus told the man to go to the priest to receive the ceremony and make the sacrifices that would make him "clean." The priest would have been at the temple in Jerusalem. Jewish priests offered sacrifices to God on behalf of people. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. Priests were also the ones who examined people and decided if they were able to be made clean again. Again, we are told in the Old Testament in Leviticus that God gave laws to Moses, which include instructions of what a person should do after being healed of leprosy. The man would need to go to the temple in Jerusalem to show himself to the priest and bring his offering—following the instructions given in the law of Moses for when a person is healed from leprosy. An offering is a gift that people offer to God in thanks. The offering for a person healed of leprosy would have included the sacrifice of certain animals as well as grain (probably wheat or barley) and oil.

Pause the audio here and look at a picture of the temple in Jerusalem and grains of wheat. Discuss the following questions as a group: What do you do to give thanks to God?

Jesus asks the man to show himself to a priest and obey the rules so that it would be a "testimony" or proof or witness to the people. Maybe it was a proof of the man's healing, or a proof that Jesus followed Jewish religious laws, or a proof that Jesus had come to heal even the lepers. Jesus cares about all people, even those who are outcast. Jesus healing a leper would be more proof to the religious leaders of the authority of Jesus over nature.

The problem is that the man disobeyed Jesus. He went to tell everyone what Jesus had done. This caused Jesus great difficulty—Jesus could no longer enter towns easily. Mark does not tell us why the man disobeyed Jesus. It may be that the man was so filled with joy and excitement at his healing that he just wanted to share the news with everyone—he probably would have not understood why he had been told not to tell anyone. The man has just seen a miracle and the compassion and love of Jesus and yet he still does not obey Jesus in that moment. Jesus asks us to obey him, but he does not force us. The result of the man telling everyone of his healing was a restriction in Jesus' ministry.

Pause the audio here and discuss the following question as a group: Why might someone not obey Jesus? Sometimes we may not understand why he asks us to do certain things. Sometimes it may feel too hard. Can you think of a time when you've asked someone to do or not do something and they haven't listened? What were the consequences of them not listening?

Every time Jesus went into a town, crowds of people came to be healed by Jesus. Jesus had to stay in places where few or no people lived. Even in these unpopulated places, people still came to find Jesus so he could heal them. We are told throughout the book of Mark of other times when Jesus has performed a miracle and told people not to tell anyone about it. In our last story Jesus tells us that he came to preach and invite people into God's Kingdom. He does not want people to just focus on what he can do for them immediately by healing them. Instead he wants people to listen to his teachings and obey them.

Jesus' withdrawal from the crowds is the end of this part of Jesus' ministry. We transition now to a series of stories about controversies in Jesus' ministry.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:40–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: A man with leprosy comes and kneels in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. He says, "If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean."

Jesus is moved with compassion and touches the man with leprosy. Jesus says, "I'm willing, be healed." Instantly the leprosy disappears, and the man is healed. Jesus sends him away, saying, "Don't tell anyone about this. Go to the priest, let him examine you, and take along an offering required by the law of Moses. This will be the testimony that you have been cleaned."

In the second scene: The man leaves, but instead of doing what Jesus said he tells everyone what happened. As a result, large crowds soon surround Jesus to the point that he cannot publicly enter towns and must stay in secluded places. But even then, people from everywhere keep coming to him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The man with leprosy
- Jesus' companions
- Crowds of people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Jesus would have been traveling with his disciples in the region of Galilee. Mark does not tell us exactly where Jesus was when the leper approached him, but the scene would have taken place outside of the city because a man with leprosy would not have been able to be on the road in the city.

Jesus probably would have had his companions with him. They would have been fearful when they saw the leper approach. They would not want the leper to be near to them in case they caught the skin disease themselves and were made unclean. The leper would be used to people's reactions to him and may have been afraid to approach Jesus or afraid that Jesus would turn him away—but he is desperate to be healed. Mark does not tell us how the leper knew about Jesus' power to heal, but news of Jesus' healing had spread throughout the region. The leper comes to him and gets down on his knees as an act of respect. He asks Jesus to help him. Jesus touches the man and heals him. Jesus' companions would have been shocked that Jesus touched a man with such a contagious disease.

Jesus is moved with compassion. He is not concerned about becoming "unclean" himself by touching the man. He cares deeply about the leper's suffering. Jesus touches the leper and immediately the leper is healed and made clean. Jesus is doing a new thing here. He is showing that his love is for all people, even the outcasts. Jesus' love is more important than the Jewish law, but he still requires the man to be obedient to the Jewish laws and present himself to the priest at the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus speaks sternly to the man to "say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest."

In the second scene, the man leaves and disobeys Jesus—he tells everyone about what has happened. We do not know how long the journey would have been for the man to get to the temple in Jerusalem. He was probably somewhere outside of a city in the region of Galilee, so it would have taken him at least 2 days to travel to Jerusalem. We do not know how many people he told along the way or even if he did eventually go to the temple.

Because the man told many people about what Jesus had done, Jesus is no longer able to enter towns without large crowds coming to him for healing. He can no longer freely walk in public places and teach in the synagogues. People's attention is on Jesus' power to heal instead of his teaching. Jesus now must stay outside of the towns, where few or no people live. Even in these secluded places, people keep coming to Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:40–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The man with leprosy
- Jesus' companions
- Crowds of people

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the man with leprosy coming and kneeling in front of Jesus, begging him to be healed.

Pause the drama. Ask the person who plays the man with leprosy how he feels. You may hear things like, "I'm desperate," "I'm an outcast," or "I see Jesus as my chance for being healed and restored to society." Now ask Jesus' companions how they feel. You may hear things like, "We're a bit hesitant for a man with this contagious disease to be near us." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus who is moved with compassion. He reaches out and touches the man.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus how he's feeling. You may hear things like, "Compassion," "Love," or "Desire to heal this man," or "Deep anger and frustration that there is so much sickness in this world." Ask the people playing Jesus' companions how they feel. You may hear things like, "Shocked that Jesus would have touched this man with this disease." Ask the actor playing the man how he feels. You may hear things like, "This may have been the first time I've been touched for a very long time," or "I feel Jesus' love and compassion," or "Relieved—Jesus didn't turn me away." Continue the drama.

The leprosy disappears instantly, and Jesus tells the man, "Don't tell anyone about this. Go to the priest, let him examine you, and take the required offering. That will be the public testimony that you are healed." But the man goes and spreads the word, telling everyone what happened.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor who plays the man who has been healed, "Why did you go and tell everyone what happened?" You may hear things like, "I was excited and wanted everyone else to know about Jesus," or "I wanted people to know I was healed and cleansed." Continue the drama.

Jesus cannot go anywhere without crowds of people surrounding him. He has to stay in secluded places, but even then, people from everywhere keep coming to him. At the end of the action, ask the group, "Why did Jesus tell the man not to tell anyone?"

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 1:40–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

A man with leprosy approaches Jesus. **Leprosy** in the Bible could refer to any of several types of skin disease. These diseases made a person "unclean," or not able to live in the community. Lepers could only worship in the synagogue behind a screen, and whoever touched a leper would become unclean also. The Old Testament law said that lepers had to wear torn clothes, not brush their hair, and shout out "unclean" in public as they went places.

Stop here and discuss what term you will use for leprosy. For more information on leprosy refer to the Master Glossary, and use the same term here that you have used in other passages. Pause this audio here.

The man asks Jesus to make him **clean**, and then Jesus makes the man clean. The same word is used here when the man asks to be made clean and when Jesus makes him well. The man's physical illness made him unfit for living in community, according to Jewish religious law. That means that when Jesus heals him physically, he is also allowing the man to become clean again after he goes to the priest to perform the religious ceremonies. Some translations put the two concepts together and say, "If you are willing, you can cure me or heal me and make me clean."

To be **clean** or **unclean** refers to a state of being in which someone is fit for service to God, or has some characteristic that makes them unfit for service at this time. People can become unclean or clean again by their actions and state of health.

Pause this audio here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for clean. If you have already translated this term in another book of the Bible, use the same term here. For more information on being clean/unclean refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus is moved with **compassion** when the leper asks for healing. Many translations of the word used for "compassion" mean to show kindness, pity, or favour to someone. Although some original versions of Scripture use the term "anger," it is likely that the term here means deep emotion of some sort. If you must choose which emotion, your term for compassion or kindness would be best here. If you have a term for deep emotion that can include both compassion and frustration, you may use it here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what term you will use for "compassion" or "deep emotion." Remember that compassion is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the man to show himself to the **priest**. Priests in the Jewish religion were the people who connected the people with God by doing sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, taking care of God's temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. Priests were also the ones who examined people and decided if they were able to be made clean again.

Stop here and discuss as a group what term you will use for priest. If you have already translated this term in another book of the Bible, use the same term here. For more information on priest refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

When a leper is healed, they must follow instructions in the Jewish religious law. This would include giving an **offering** or **sacrifice**. An offering or sacrifice is something offered to God. It might be a blood sacrifice which means killing and burning an animal, or a non-blood sacrifice (like incense or grain given as an offering). Animal sacrifice was a common practice in the Old Testament. The worshipper would kill and burn an animal as a gift to God to show that he was fully dedicated to God, and the killing of the animal would take care of, or forgive, his sins or make someone clean again.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for sacrifices. For more information on sacrifice refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The Old Testament books that outlined the laws God gave Moses for his people of Israel are the law of Moses. These particular laws about cleanliness come from the book of Leviticus.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 1:40–45**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (12546252 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (15907194 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 2:1–12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 2:1–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:1–12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story begins a section in Mark about conflict in Galilee between Jesus and religious leaders. These stories begin to set up the problems that eventually lead to Jesus' arrest and death. This story's main theme is that Jesus has the authority to forgive sins on earth because he is the Son of Man, or the person to whom God gave all power and authority.

Jesus had to go out into the wilderness again after the leper told everyone that Jesus had healed him. After some time, Jesus again went back into the city of Capernaum and people heard that he was back. He probably stayed in the home of Peter and Andrew, but we do not know for sure.

Stop here and show the team a map of the Sea of Galilee that includes Capernaum. Pause this audio here.

When people heard that Jesus was in Capernaum, they came to the house where he was staying. So many people came that there was no room inside the house or outside the door. Jesus was speaking "the Word" to the people in the house. The Word is the message from God that God's Kingdom is soon going to start. People need to repent, or turn from their sins, and believe in God. Some people had a friend who could not walk. They wanted to bring the man to Jesus, but they could not get into the house. The house was so full that four of the paralyzed man's friends had to carry him on a mat up to the top of the roof. The houses there had flat roofs with staircases on the outside of the house leading to the roof. People often slept on the roof on hot nights. The roof was usually made of branches and plastered with mud. It would have been easy to take out part of the roof in order to lower the man's mat, probably using ropes, into the house. Mark says they dug through the roof, so that tells us the roof was probably made of dried mud and branches. The people dug the hole, placing the materials aside so they didn't fall on someone.

Stop here and show your team a picture of a typical house in the Galilee region during that time. Show your team a photo of a sleeping mat. Discuss with your team: How do people build houses in your culture? What would be an unusual or surprising way for someone to enter a house where you live? Pause this audio here.

Jesus sees the man and the friends' faith, or their belief that Jesus could heal the man. Jesus calls the man "my child/my son" as a term of affection and love. This has nothing to do with the age of the man. Immediately Jesus says that the man's sins are forgiven. We may wonder why Jesus talked about sins, or disobedience against God, when the man came to be physically healed. However, during Jesus' time people believed that sickness was often a result of sin or lack of belief in people's life. People believed that if God forgave you of your sins, he healed you to show that he had forgiven you. Although Jesus was not saying that he was forgiving a specific sin

of the man, it is true that sickness and death in general are the result of people's sinful nature. Because of this, the most important thing Jesus can do is forgive someone of their sins. Jesus does not specifically say who forgave the sins. This is not unusual—many Jews in that day spoke in such a way that they would not have to use the name of God. Everyone knew it was God forgiving the sins.

Stop and discuss the phrase "your sins are forgiven" with your group. In your language, do you need to say who forgave the sins? If so, you may need to say "Jesus said, 'Son, God forgives your sins.'" Pause this audio here.

There was a problem though. The Jewish teachers of the law interpreted God's law, so they knew that only God could forgive sins, according to the Jewish Scriptures. Prophets, or messengers of God, could claim that God had forgiven sins, like when the prophet Nathan told King David that his sins were forgiven. The teachers were thinking about this—they were "reasoning in their hearts" because Jewish people believed that thinking happened in the heart. The teachers of the law were very offended that it seemed like Jesus himself forgave the man's sins. They believed that Jesus was blaspheming, or insulting God. From this time on, the religious leaders began to accuse Jesus of insulting God. This is one of the reasons they would later have him killed by convincing the government to execute him.

But Jesus knew in his spirit, or realized, what the teachers of the law were thinking. Jesus liked to use a question to confront people who criticized him. So Jesus asked, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk?' But know this—the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." Jesus did not expect the teachers of the law to answer his question. Jesus wants to point out that forgiving is more necessary and more difficult than healing.

Stop and discuss with your team. How do you confront or rebuke someone else in your language? Pause this audio here.

Jesus seems to call himself the "Son of Man." The "Son of Man" is the person to whom, in the writings of the prophet Daniel, God gives all authority and power. That would mean that Jesus was saying he had power from God to forgive sins. Therefore, this title "Son of Man" refers to the humanity of Jesus as well as Jesus' uniqueness, being fully God and fully human. Mark likes to talk about all the times Jesus called himself the Son of Man in order to talk about his destiny to suffer and die, like a human. But at the same time, the Son of Man is more than human, and will be raised from the dead.

This part of the story is difficult to understand. It is possible that when Jesus calls himself the Son of Man it is really the author Mark saying to the Christian readers of the book of Mark that they should realize that Jesus had the authority to forgive sins. Perhaps Mark basically says to his audience, "Know this—the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins." This could be one way for you to translate this hard sentence. It is unclear if Jesus really said out loud at this point that he was the Son of Man with authority to forgive sins or if this was Mark telling his audience the extra information that Jesus was the Son of Man. But the people in the house certainly saw that Jesus had authority when he healed the man.

Mark again talks about someone's immediate healing and the crowd's reaction to it, as he usually does in these miracle stories. The people were amazed, which means that people were happy and surprised that the man was healed. They glorified or praised God.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus returns to Capernaum. He is teaching in a home, and there are crowds of people coming to him. Some men bring their friend who is paralyzed to Jesus, but they cannot make their way into the house through the crowds. So four of them go on the roof of the house and dig a hole through the roof.

In the second scene: The friends lower the paralyzed man down into the crowd, in front of Jesus. Jesus, seeing their faith, tells the paralyzed man his sins are forgiven. The religious leaders criticize Jesus in their hearts, but Jesus knows what they are thinking. Jesus says, "Why do you question this? Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk?' I will prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

In the third scene: Jesus turns to the paralyzed man and says, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home." The man jumps up, grabs his mat, and walks out through the crowd. The crowd is amazed and praises God.

The characters in this passage are:

- Four men (friends of the paralyzed man)
- A paralyzed man
- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Teachers of the religious law
- A huge crowd of people completely filling the house

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This story takes place in a home in Capernaum. The house would have been fairly small, but full of people listening to Jesus teaching.

The teachers of the law would have probably been sitting in a place of honor in the house.

The house would have had stairs leading to a flat rooftop made of mud and straw.

Stop here and make sure the team draws or somehow demonstrates that this house would have had a flat, mud and straw roof to show that it would have been easy for the friends to dig a hole in the roof.

The four friends would have carried the paralyzed man on his bed, which would have been more like a mat. The four friends would have lowered him down on this mat by holding each of its four corners, possibly with rope.

Jesus speaks to the man with affection and calls him "Son." Then he tells the man that his sins are forgiven. The teachers of the law are shocked, because it seems like Jesus has forgiven the man's sins himself! They are thinking things but not speaking them out loud. The teachers are thinking, "Jesus is blaspheming against God! Only God can forgive sins." But Jesus knows what they are thinking and he asks them this question out loud, "Why do you question this in your hearts?" not because he expects an answer, but because he is rebuking the religious leaders and wants the people to think carefully about his authority.

Then Jesus asks another question and does not expect an answer. He asks which is easier—to heal someone or to forgive their sins? Jesus thinks it is easier to heal someone. In order to prove that he has authority to forgive sins, Jesus tells the man to get up and walk. Then Jesus may have said, "I will prove that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." When Jesus says the Son of Man, he is referring to himself as the person to whom God gave all power and authority.

In the third scene Jesus now focuses on the paralyzed man. He says, "I tell you..." meaning that he is speaking directly to the man and he wants the paralyzed man to listen to him. Jesus tells the man to do three things: get up, pick up his mat, and go home. Mark shows quick action by saying, "Immediately the man got up!" Everyone who saw this was amazed. They praised God. They said they had never seen anything like this.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Four men (friends of the paralyzed man)
- A paralyzed man
- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Religious leaders
- A huge crowd of people completely filling the house

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus teaching in a house full of people. There is no room for anyone else in the house. Act out four men carrying their paralyzed friend to Jesus on a mat. They see a huge crowd of people and try to get into the house. As the team acts out the story, make sure the four men bringing their paralyzed friend to Jesus show that they cannot get to Jesus any other way but by going onto the flat rooftop, digging a hole, and lowering the paralyzed man down.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the four friends, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "Frustrated," "Desperate," or "Willing to do anything necessary to have our friend healed." Continue the drama.

The friends go to the roof, dig a hole, and begin lowering the paralyzed man through the hole. Jesus sees the faith of the friends and says to the paralyzed man, "Your sins are forgiven."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This man's friends have great faith," "I want the religious leaders to hear my response to him," or "The man must have also had faith in order to be lowered down in front of me." Continue the drama.

The religious leaders ask themselves, "What is Jesus saying? This is blasphemy against God! Only God can forgive sins." Jesus knows immediately what they are thinking, so he looks at them and says, "Why do you question this in your hearts? Is it easier to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk?'"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm about to make a point. I'm about to show that I am not just saying words, but I am God himself." or "Not only can I say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' but I can also heal," or "I am so happy to heal this man

completely!" Ask the person playing the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Shocked. How did Jesus know what I was thinking?" or "Angry. Is Jesus claiming to be the Promised Savior?" or "Outraged. Who is Jesus to correct us?" Continue the drama.

Jesus says, "I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turns to the paralyzed man and says, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home." The man stands up, takes his mat, and goes home. The crowds leave amazed and praising God.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Surprised. Jesus proved he has authority from God," "Curious. I wonder what the religious leaders think about Jesus calling himself the Son of Man?" or "Wondering whether or not Jesus might be the one we've been waiting for."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus is teaching **God's Word** in a house in Capernaum. God's Word refers to the message of the good news that God's Kingdom was soon going to start.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "word." Look up word in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

While Jesus is teaching inside the house, four friends carry **a paralyzed man on a mat** to the house so that Jesus can heal him. The man was lying on a mat because he had a sickness which caused him to not be able to move. The Scriptures usually tell us that someone has had a condition from birth. Since it is not mentioned here, this man probably developed this disease after birth. However, he probably had had the disease for some time. The mat was probably a stretcher that people could roll up and carry.

The men tear a hole in the roof and lower their friend in front of Jesus. Jesus sees their **faith**, or their confidence in Jesus' ability to cure the man. "Their" probably includes the sick man himself as well as his friends. Faith describes people's response to God's promises. People who have faith agree with the person in whom they have faith. However, they do more than just agree. They trust or have confidence in that person. In some passages, you may need to specify in whom the person is to believe or trust, like, "Jesus saw that they believed in him."

Stop here and do this activity together: Before your group time starts, ask a helper to help you with this. Place a chair in the center of the room and ask the person helping you, "Do you believe that this chair exists? Do you believe that this is a chair? Do you believe this chair is strong enough to hold you?" The helper should say "yes" to all these questions. Then ask, "I know you are tired, so here's this chair for you to sit in." The helper should refuse to sit in the chair. Ask again, "Why won't you sit in the chair? You can see it. You agreed that this chair is strong enough to hold you." The helper should again refuse to sit in the chair. Explain to the group that this is an example of what faith is about. If the person will not sit in the chair, they really do not "have faith" or "confidence" in the chair.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **faith**. Look up faith in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus looks at the paralyzed man and calls him **my child** or **my son**. This term does not describe the age of the man as young, but shows affection and love. The man is not the biological son of Jesus, so you should not use a word that only means biological son. Because it is a term of affection, you may have to use a broader term of affection like "my friend."

Jesus tells the man, "your **sins are forgiven**." Usually Jesus does not say "I forgive your sins." If your language does not use passive constructions, you may need to say who forgave the sins—something like "May God forgive your sins." Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God. Be sure that the word you use here does not mean that someone has failed to perform a religious act like ritual prayer or following certain religious rules. If God forgives someone, their relationship is restored and their guilt is removed.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sin and forgive. Translate these words in the same way you have translated them before. Look up both terms in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Teachers of religious law were also listening to Jesus teach. Teachers of the law is sometimes translated scribes or people who wrote down the law. They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These interpretations were not written down, but memorized and taught orally by the teachers.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **teachers of the law**. Look up teachers of the law in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

The religious leaders think it is **blasphemy** for Jesus to say the man's sins are forgiven. Blasphemy means to offend or insult God through your speech. According to God's law, this was punishable by death.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **blasphemy**. Look up blasphemy in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus knew what they were thinking in his spirit, in his mind. Don't make it sound like Jesus is using some magic power.

Jesus says he will prove the **Son of Man** has the **authority** to forgive sins. In the Old Testament this phrase "son of man" simply meant a human being. Jesus uses this term as his favorite way to talk about himself. The "Son of Man" is the person to whom, in the prophet Daniel's writings, God gives all authority and power. Jesus probably likes this term because the title can refer to an ordinary human being or to a supernatural being like it does in Daniel 7. The term "Son of Man" forces people to decide if Jesus is man or God. The Son of Man is a title that Jews sometimes connected with the Messiah, or Promised Savior that God would send to help them.

But it also avoided the political problems of the title Messiah or Christ—the person that people thought would become the king that would save them all from their oppressors.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Son of Man**. Look up Son of Man in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Authority is the right given to someone to act. It is different from power because power is someone's ability in themselves to do something.

After Jesus heals the man, the people **glorified God**. This means they praised God, or said how good he is. For more information, glorify is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 2:1–12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (14457017 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 2:13–17

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 2:13–17 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:13–17 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:13–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story Jesus performed a miracle, or an action only God can do. Now, he once again goes out into the wilderness (or the lakeshore of the Sea of Galilee), but people keep coming to him. Jesus is in Capernaum when he eats with Levi and other tax collectors. This is a pattern in Mark—the back and forth between the wilderness and the towns where Jesus performs miracles.

Jesus goes out to the Sea of Galilee after healing a paralytic man in Capernaum. Capernaum is on the side of the Sea of Galilee, a very big lake, so Jesus decides to leave that home and go to the shore. But a huge crowd of people follow him there and Jesus continues to teach them and talk to them about God's Kingdom.

Stop here and look at a map of Capernaum in relation to the Sea of Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Romans had conquered the Jews and forced them to pay taxes, or money, to the Roman government. Romans hired Jewish people to work for them as tax officials. No one liked tax officials because they were usually dishonest and took more than their share from people. As a result, they were considered as outcasts from society—they could no longer be a judge or witness in court, they could no longer enter the synagogues, or places of worship, with others, and they were considered a disgrace or shame to their families. When people talked about tax officials, they put them in the same category as murderers and robbers.

The Romans chose Levi to work as a Jewish tax official—that meant that he probably took money from Jewish merchants and fishermen who were selling their products in the market in Capernaum. Capernaum is an important town because it was on the road for travelers coming from other territories into this one.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who are considered outcasts in your society? What kinds of things do outcasts do? Pause this audio here.

While Jesus is walking, either along the shore or on his way back into Capernaum, he sees Levi, son of Alphaeus, sitting in his booth collecting taxes. The booth was probably a small table under a shade where Levi collected taxes from the people. The Gospel of Matthew says that this is Matthew, but both Luke and Mark use the name Levi for this person. Jesus invites Levi to be his disciple. A disciple is someone who follows their teacher wherever he goes. Disciples listen to their teacher's teachings, observe his actions, and learn from him. Immediately, Levi got up and followed Jesus. Capernaum was not that big, and Levi would have been well-known. It's probable that the fishermen already following Jesus and Jesus himself already knew each other and Levi.

Levi immediately followed Jesus. Later, he invited other tax collectors and sinners to a meal. The text is unclear as to which house they ate in—Jesus' house or Levi's house—but it is clear that Jesus is leading the meal. You may leave which house unclear in your translation also. It is shocking that Jesus would eat with people like this, because by now people consider him a respected teacher of religious law. The people at this meal were the very people that teachers would not eat with. Yet, many of them had already become Jesus' followers. In Jewish custom of that time, eating together was one of the most important signs of friendship.

The Jews despised people who did not religiously and ceremonially wash themselves before eating and called them "sinners." Jesus was eating with two groups of people—the tax officials and the sinners—who were outcasts in society.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What role does eating together take in your culture? Is it important to eat together? Are there rules about who can eat together? When you eat together, are there special things you do for important meals—like what you eat or how you sit together? Pause this audio here.

The action here is that the guests "reclined," or lay down, around the table. That's how Jewish people ate at formal meals together. The important thing is that they were at the table in order to eat together.

Stop here and look at a picture of a typical Jewish dining setting with a low table and people sitting on cushions around it. Pause this audio here.

The scribes or teachers from the group of religious leaders called the Pharisees loved to follow the written and the oral law of the Scripture. They were known as people who liked to be "separated" from sinners, so Jesus' actions offended them greatly. The Pharisees rebuke Jesus by asking his disciples a question they do not expect to be answered, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" The Pharisees want people to see how wrong it was for Jesus to eat with people they did not approve of.

Jesus responded to them with a traditional proverb, or wise saying, that everyone would have recognized. Jesus compares healthy people to people who think they are righteous, or that they have a right relationship with God. These people who think they are righteous think that they do not need help. However, sick people, or the outcasts of society, understood that they needed a doctor, or Jesus' help, to be made righteous. Those who thought they were righteous did not understand why Jesus came and did not want to change. Jesus was saying that he wanted to eat with sinners because they *wanted* to change.

The next passages talk about Jesus and his disciples' habit of eating without being ceremonially or religiously clean. Mark places this story here in his larger story about Jesus because it introduces the subject of people who are and people who are not religiously clean.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:13-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus has just healed a paralyzed man in Capernaum. He leaves the home and begins walking to the Sea of Galilee not far away, but many people follow him. Jesus is teaching the people when he sees Levi collecting taxes. Jesus invites Levi to follow him and immediately Levi follows Jesus.

In the second scene: Later on in the day, Levi invites Jesus and his disciples to his home for dinner. Levi has invited other tax collectors and others who are considered sinners. The religious leaders see this and ask Jesus' disciples, "Why does he eat with these kinds of people?" Jesus hears this and responds with a proverb.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Levi
- Jesus' disciples
- Religious leaders
- Crowds of people
- Other tax collectors at Levi's house
- Other sinners at Levi's house

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This story starts with a phrase "once again" to show that Jesus is doing an action he's done before. Make sure to show Jesus walking through Capernaum and calling Levi near the shore of the big lake. There would be crowds of people following Jesus as he teaches them along the way.

Be sure to show Levi collecting money at his tax booth. The Jewish people do not like Levi because he is an outcast.

It is important to remember that by inviting Levi to follow him, Jesus was asking Levi to become his disciple. This meant Levi would have to leave his job as a tax collector and be with Jesus every day, learning from his

teachings and actions. Levi gets up immediately and leaves his tax booth. Be sure that you show that Levi responds immediately to Jesus.

Make sure to show Jesus having a meal with his disciples and other tax collectors in Levi's house later in the evening. The house would probably be a nice house. Everyone would have reclined, or lay down, around the table.

When the religious leaders ask Jesus' disciples a question about why Jesus is dining with sinners, be sure to show this as a rebuke. They asked, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" They did not really want the disciples to answer, but wanted to show the people that Jesus' actions were wrong.

It is important to remember that the Pharisees were not at the meal because they considered it shameful to eat with sinners. Instead, they questioned Jesus' disciples later, after they had already eaten in Levi's house.

Somehow Jesus heard what the Pharisees said to his disciples. Jesus answered with a traditional proverb, or wise saying. This wise saying has two parts. In the first part, Jesus makes the contrast that healthy people do *not* need a doctor and sick people *do* need a doctor. In the second part, in a similar way, Jesus says that he has *not* come for people who think they are righteous, but he *has* come for sinners. In this proverb Jesus is also comparing the fact that healthy people do not need a doctor with the fact that people who think they are righteous do not need him. However, just like sick people *do* need a doctor, sinners need Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:13-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Crowds of people
- Jesus' disciples
- Levi (a tax collector in a tax collecting booth)
- Other tax collectors
- Other people considered to be sinners
- Religious leaders

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus walking through Capernaum. A huge group of people follow him. Jesus sees Levi in his tax booth and says, "Follow me and be my disciple." Immediately, Levi gets up and follows Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Levi, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "A strong desire to follow Jesus," or "Hopeful. He truly sees me," or "Accepted. He wants me to follow him even though I'm an outcast." Continue the drama.

Sometime later Jesus and his disciples go to Levi's house. Now the action is at Levi's house. Jesus and his disciples eat with Levi, other tax collectors, and other outcasts. Act out the religious leaders seeing this happen. Later they ask Jesus' disciples, "Why does Jesus eat with sinners?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Respected religious leaders shouldn't associate with people who are sinners," or "We have already seen Jesus healing the paralyzed man. Now he not only says he forgives sinners, but he also eats with sinners, which is blasphemy," or "We are outside looking in and jealous that Jesus isn't with us." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus hearing the religious leaders talk to his disciples. Jesus told them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor. Sick people do. I've come to call not those who think they are righteous but those who know they are sinners."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "They think they know my Father's law, but they do not know His heart," or "They are too prideful to accept that they need help too," or "Patient. I know there will be more conflict to come."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:13-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in the passage.

While Jesus is walking in Capernaum, he sees Levi working as a **tax collector**. Tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government since the Roman people had conquered the Jews. The Romans forced the Jews to pay taxes to Rome. Jews hated tax collectors because they worked for the Romans. Tax collectors were also known for collecting more money than necessary and becoming rich because of it.

Jesus calls Levi to become his **disciple** or closest follower. Jesus' "closest followers" were with him for much of his public ministry, traveling with him everywhere, learning from him, and sometimes being sent out by him to preach the good news of the Kingdom and heal the sick. If your language has an understood term for the devoted followers of a teacher, you may use that term here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **disciple**. Look up disciple in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Later, Jesus goes to Levi's house and eats with other tax collectors and **sinners**. The word sinners is used in an unusual way here. Here, it means people who consistently violated religious rules about cleaning themselves before eating. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **teachers of the law**, or **scribes**, who were **Pharisees**, asked Jesus' disciples a question. It is unclear if the Pharisees in this story were following Jesus or not, but they tell Jesus' disciples that they think it is wrong for Jesus to eat with sinners. The name "Pharisee" means "to be separated." The Pharisees were regarded as highly influential and righteous. They were good examples for the people because they were devoted to God's law. They recognized both the written and the oral religious traditions and laws. Some of the Pharisees were also **teachers of God's law**, and that is who is talked about in this passage. The term Pharisees is the name of this type of religious leader.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate **teachers of the law who were Pharisees**. For more information on Pharisee and teachers of the law, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus uses a wise saying to compare healthy people to people who think they are righteous. The Old Testament idea of "righteousness" is based on relationship between God and man, or between man and man. Righteousness refers to holiness, right standing, or lack of guilt. You should describe the concept of "righteousness" in the same way throughout your translation. For example, you may describe righteousness as a "right relationship with God." You may also describe it in legal terminology as "blameless/innocent." Other ways to describe these concepts are:

- being right in God's sight
- being in right standing with God
- being accepted by God

Your audience may also have special words that describe the concept of righteousness, such as "having a straight heart, being upright, being blameless/innocent, walking on God's path," etc... Take these into account as you choose the appropriate wording for your story.

Remember that in the Bible, people can never be righteous on their own, or by doing enough good things, although that is how many people understand this term. However, Jesus makes it clear that our righteousness should be even better than that of the religious leaders who follow all the laws of God. That means that the concept of righteousness means more than doing good works. Your term or phrase for "righteousness" should not be based on doing good works.

Stop here and discuss together how you will translate **righteous**. Because this is such an important key term, spend some time on this. You may find some kind of appropriate comparison in the culture. For example, you can use the comparison of something being broken and therefore un-useable. Once the thing is broken, there is really no way to repair it so that it is perfectly restored to its usable condition. Perhaps this could be a clay pot, a gourd, or a bow and arrow. Perhaps it could be a bent arrow that can no longer hit the mark. Righteousness is the concept that God restores those things that are not restore-able. He not only repairs the item, but makes it useful for its purpose again, as if it had never been broken. You may also ask the participants to "show" you "righteousness" in pairs by miming it. The group can discuss what they see and determine if the actions accurately show the concept. If so, you may use those actions to help you find an appropriate way to describe "righteousness." Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 2:13–17**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (12459440 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 2:18–22

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 2:18–22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:18–22 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:18–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The short stories in this section of Mark may not have all happened in this order at this time. However, Mark puts together similar stories and teachings. In the previous passage, Jesus ate with sinners, which seemed to be against the religious law. In this passage, Jesus and his disciples again surprise religious leaders because they do not fast. Fasting refers to going without food or drink to show humility, sorrow, or to ask for God's help. Jesus and his disciples are showing that they are different and don't follow the same religious customs that everyone else does.

Although in the Old Testament times there was only one day set aside for fasting—the Day of Atonement—by the time of Jesus, fasting was more traditional and happened more often in the Jewish culture. The Pharisees, or religious leaders, and those who followed them fasted two days a week. John's disciples, or closest followers, may have been fasting because they were sad or because they wanted to show God that they had turned away from their sins. The original idea of fasting in Old Testament times was to show repentance, or asking God to forgive sin and put everything right again. People in Jesus' day wanted to become more righteous and gain favor with God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What things do people do in your culture to try to become more righteous or to gain favor with God? Pause this audio here.

Some people came to Jesus and asked, "Why don't your disciples fast like John's disciples do and the Pharisees do?" The question seems justified. If Jesus is such a great teacher, why isn't he teaching his followers to fast like all the other followers of other teachers do? In those days, religious teachers often answered questions like this with another question in order to debate the subject. Jesus asks a question and then answers it himself: "Do wedding guests fast while celebrating with the groom? Of course not. They can't fast while the groom is with them." Jesus is comparing himself to a bridegroom, or a man who is getting married. Jesus reminds the people that the bridegroom would be offended if his guests were not joyful with him on his wedding day. Although people would not have assumed he was saying he was the Messiah, or the Promised Savior, they were used to using the idea of a wedding feast to show the joy that the Messiah will bring. Here, Jesus is emphasizing that his disciples find joy in their master who is like the bridegroom, so why would they fast? However, Jesus also talks about a time in the future when he would leave them. Jesus says someone will take him away from his disciples, or force him to leave. When this happens, Jesus says that fasting might then become appropriate. When Jesus says that his disciples will fast when he leaves, he is not giving a command, but a description of what will happen in the future.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What happens at parties or special ceremonies in your culture. Are people full of joy? What things do they do to show their joy at a special ceremony? Pause this audio here.

The verses about old and new clothing and old and new wineskins are probably from a separate conversation Jesus had. But they fit here, because they continue to contrast the old and new way of doing things since Jesus came. The conversation now is not just about fasting.

If Jesus' disciples were to fast and continue to follow the old way, then they would be like people who put new cloth on old garments or clothing. Christianity—Jesus' new way—is the new garment, and Judaism is the old one. New cloth is like unshrunk or unwashed cloth. Everyone knew that if you put new cloth on an old cloth and then wash it, the cloth will shrink unevenly and the new cloth will pull away from the old one and ruin the garment.

Stop here and discuss as a group: It may be helpful to spend time watching a seamstress sew and discover the correct vocabulary for this passage. Pause this audio here.

Jesus then compares his teachings to new wine. New wine is wine that is freshly pressed from grapes and has not yet fermented. The traditions of Judaism were like old animal skins that people sewed together to make wineskins, or containers for storing wine. Everyone knew that if a person poured new wine into an old wineskin, then the skin would burst. This would happen because the wine ferments or expands over time. Jesus was saying his new way was too different to fit into the old traditions of the Jewish people. Jesus is not saying that the old ways are wrong, but that the time for the old ways of doing things is finished.

Stop here and look at a picture of grapes and a wineskin as a group. Pause this audio here.

*Defining the Scenes**Defining the Scenes*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:18–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In the first scene: John's disciples and the Pharisees (religious leaders) had been fasting. So some people come to Jesus and ask, "Why don't your disciples fast like John's disciples and the Pharisees?" Jesus answers them with three examples.

The characters in this passage are:

- John's disciples
- The Pharisees (religious leaders)
- People asking Jesus a question
- Jesus
- Wedding guests with a groom
- Someone patching old clothing
- Someone putting new wine into wineskins

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This story starts at some point when people are fasting. We do not know how long after the previous story this happens.

Be sure to act out the followers of John and the followers of the Pharisees fasting before the people come to ask Jesus a question.

Have your team visualize the three examples as Jesus says them: Guests with a groom at a wedding, old clothing that needs to be patched with old cloth, and new and old wineskins.

Be sure to show that the guests are happy for the groom at his wedding.

When an actor washes the patched clothing, show that the garment is ruined after it is washed.

Be sure to show a person pouring new wine into an old wineskin only to come back later and find the old wineskin had burst and all of the wine spilled on the floor.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:18–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- John's disciples
- The Pharisees (religious leaders)
- People asking Jesus a question
- Jesus
- Wedding guests with a groom
- Someone patching old clothing
- Someone putting new wine into wineskins

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the followers of John and the Pharisees fasting. Later, people come and ask Jesus a question. Jesus replies, "Do wedding guests fast while celebrating with the groom?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the wedding guests, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm so excited my friend is getting married!" or "I'm joyful that I get to be in his presence," or "This is a time to celebrate." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus giving a second example of someone patching old clothing with new cloth.

Pause the drama. Ask the audience listening to Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "No one would do that! The cloth is going to tear," or "Thoughtful, is Jesus really talking about clothing or his new way of teaching?" or "Troubled. I already see things coming apart. The religious leaders disapprove of Jesus." Continue the drama.

Finally, act out Jesus giving an example of someone putting new wine into old wineskins.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the person who poured the new wine, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Embarrassed. I should have known the wineskin would burst," or "I will never do that again!" or "Sad. Now the wine is useless," or "Afraid. Is everything we're used to going to change now?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:18–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Once when John's **disciples** and the Pharisees were fasting, some people came to Jesus and asked, "Why don't your disciples fast like John's disciples and the Pharisees?" Use the same term for "disciples" that you have been using in previous passages. Jesus' and John's disciples were all "closest followers" who were with these men for much of their public ministry, traveling with them everywhere, learning from them, and in Jesus' case, sometimes being sent out by him to preach the good news. If the language has an understood term for the

devoted followers of a teacher, you may use that term here. For more information on disciple, refer to the Master Glossary.

The term **Pharisees** is the name for a type of religious leader. Use the same term here as you have used in previous passages. The name "Pharisee" means "to be separated." The Pharisees were regarded as highly influential and righteous. They were good examples for the people because they were devoted to God's law. They recognized both the written and the oral religious traditions and laws. For more information on Pharisee, refer to the Master Glossary.

They asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples **fast**?" In the Old Testament fasting was only on the Day of Atonement—for cleansing from sin and suffering. Here, it's probably an act of repentance to expectantly wait for the time when God would forgive and save everyone. During fasting people do not eat. Maybe that's why Jesus used a party or wedding imagery here. By Jesus' time fasting had become traditional. Pharisees fasted twice a week. John's disciples may have fasted because their leader died, they were sad, or they wanted to show that they repented from their sins.

The fasting in the Scriptures involves a kind of religious avoidance from food designed to cause greater righteousness or gain more merit or favor with God. It is for this reason that expressions for fasting must in some languages include a description of what fasting involves. For more information on fasting, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus goes on to talk about old and new clothing, and then old and new wineskins. A **wineskin** is a leather bag used for carrying wine. An old bag is brittle and hard and can't expand with fermenting wine. It's important to understand that the beverage used in these wineskins is a fermented beverage that expands over time.

Stop here and look at a picture of wine as a group. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 2:18–22

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9128110 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 2:23–3:6

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 2:23–3:6 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:23–3:6 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:23–3:6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Again, Jesus and his disciples surprise religious leaders when they do not always seem to follow the religious traditions or religious law from Moses. Jesus' disciples, or closest followers, were walking through fields of grain and gathering the heads of the grain with their hands. Moses' law allowed them to pluck heads of grain with their hands from a stranger's field if they were hungry. However, because it was the Sabbath, or the Jewish day of rest and worship, many people thought they were breaking God's law by working.

Stop here and look at a picture of wheat grains as a group. Pause this audio here.

In Jewish culture there were strict rules about the Sabbath day of rest. People were not allowed to work in any way. They were not even allowed to help sick people unless the sick person was going to die without their help. Harvesting food was also not allowed on the Sabbath. The Pharisees, or Jewish religious leaders, heard about what Jesus' disciples were doing and came directly to Jesus. This was because Jesus was the one responsible for the disciples' actions as their teacher. They question why the disciples are doing something unlawful on the Sabbath. They ask this question not because they want an answer, but as a way to rebuke Jesus for allowing his disciples to gather and eat grain on the Sabbath. They are also claiming that the disciples' actions had broken God's law.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: Describe your religious rest days or holidays. What kinds of special rules do you have about these days? Are there certain things you are allowed to do or not do on these special days? Pause this audio here.

Jesus responds to the religious leaders with a story. Jesus asks the religious leaders if they have never read the story about David as a way to rebuke them. Jesus knew the Pharisees had read the story, but their actions showed they were ignoring it. Jesus reminds them of their ancestor David when he was running away from King Saul. David took some bread that only priests were allowed to eat in the House of God. The House of God was the place where God lived among his people. During that time, the House of God was still in a tent, not the permanent building of the temple in Jesus' time. However, even before the Jewish people built the permanent temple, priests served God by offering sacrifices on behalf of the Jewish people for their sin. The high priest was the leader of all the Jewish priests.

In the story, David takes the bread of the presence, or the bread that priests laid out in front of God every week. Every Sabbath, the priests replaced the bread with fresh bread. Only the priests were allowed to eat the old bread. David gave some of this special bread to his companions who were with him because they were in need and very hungry. Although David may not have done this on the Sabbath, what David did seems similar to what Jesus' disciples have done. But God never faulted David for what he did. Jesus is saying that God cares more about meeting people's needs than about people strictly following religious laws.

Jesus then changes from telling the story to speaking directly to the Pharisees. When Jesus says that God made the Sabbath for meeting the needs of people, he is saying something surprising. Then Jesus says something even more surprising! He says, "So...the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath." Son of Man is a title Jesus often used to refer to himself as the one to whom God gave all power and authority. Lord also means master and shows that Jesus had authority to decide what was right or wrong on the Sabbath. Jesus is saying that he is in control of things that the religious leaders used to think they were in control of.

The next section of this story *shows* us that Jesus is truly the Lord over the Sabbath. Jesus is in the synagogue, possibly still in Capernaum, and sees a man with a deformed hand—probably a paralyzed hand. A synagogue refers to a Jewish place of worship.

Stop here and look at pictures of the outside and the inside of a synagogue as a group. Pause this audio here.

However, this story is not so much about the man's healing, but about how healing on the Sabbath breaks what some people see as a religious law. The people in the synagogue are watching Jesus—the word used for watching means to watch in order to catch someone doing something wrong. Jesus asks the man to stand up in the center of the synagogue so that everyone could see him. In synagogues, people sat in a circular way, so this was probably to "stand in the middle" of where the people were sitting.

Before Jesus heals the man, he first asks the people, "Is it permitted on the Sabbath to do good, or to do harm; to save a life or to kill?" This kind of question expects an answer as an official statement from the religious law. The correct answer from the law would be that the law allowed people to do good and to save lives on the Sabbath. Jesus believed that healing this man would be a good thing to do. People would be ashamed if they said it was not a good thing to do, but they did not want to agree with Jesus, so they were silent.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: When a teacher or important person asks a question in your culture, how do people respond? Do they stay silent? Is there a special, respectful way that they respond? Pause this audio here.

Jesus was angry and sad that the people were so stubborn and still didn't believe that he was in control of the Sabbath. But the Pharisees realized that if Jesus broke their traditions about the Sabbath, they would soon lose

the control over the people they once had. Of course, that made them want to kill Jesus because he threatened their way of life.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: What kinds of things do people do in your culture that make the religious leaders angry? What do the religious leaders do when they get angry? Discuss both what happens in traditional religions and in the Christian church. Pause this audio here.

The Pharisees go to meet with the Herodians, or supporters of the ruler of Galilee, Herod Antipas. Herodians were usually enemies with the Pharisees, but because they both wanted Jesus dead, they agreed to meet with the Pharisees. This begins to show us the future of Jesus' suffering.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:23-3:6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has six scenes.

In the first scene: On the Sabbath, Jesus is walking through grain fields with his disciples. His disciples break off and eat heads of grain. There are Pharisees there who say to Jesus, "Look, why are you breaking the law by harvesting grain?"

In the second scene: Jesus talks to the Pharisees. He tells them a story from scripture about David. David ate the sacred bread in the House of God when he and his companions were in need and hungry.

In the third scene: Jesus looks at the Pharisees and says, "The Sabbath was made for people, not for people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. The Son of Man is Lord even over the Sabbath."

In the fourth scene: On a different occasion, Jesus goes into a synagogue and notices a man with a deformed hand. Since it is the Sabbath, everyone is watching Jesus to see if he does something wrong, especially the Pharisees.

In the fifth scene: Jesus tells the man with the deformed hand to stand in front of everyone. He asks those in the synagogue, "Does the religious law allow us to do good deeds on the Sabbath, or to do harmful deeds? Does it allow us to save life or destroy it?" The people are silent. Jesus heals the man's hand.

In the sixth scene: Immediately, the Pharisees go away to meet with supporters of Herod and plan how to kill Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Pharisees
- David
- David's companions
- A man with a deformed hand
- People in the synagogue
- Supporters of Herod

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Jesus and his disciples are going through the grain fields, picking heads of grain to eat. The Pharisees see them and confront Jesus by asking a question. They do this because in Jewish culture, Jesus was responsible for their actions. The Pharisees think the disciples are working on the Sabbath, which was against God's law.

Before Jesus tells a story about David, he asks the Pharisees if they have read the story, not because he thinks they have not, but as a way to rebuke them.

In the third scene, Jesus finishes his story and speaks directly to the Pharisees. Visualize that Jesus is Lord over the Sabbath, and people are supposed to rest on the Sabbath for the sake of people, not for the sake of the Sabbath law.

The fourth scene also takes place on a Sabbath, but happens in a different setting. Visualize Jesus entering a synagogue, a Jewish house of worship. The Pharisees are also there watching to see if Jesus will break God's law. Jesus calls a man with a deformed hand to stand in front of everyone. People in the synagogue were probably sitting along the sides of the wall, and Jesus calls the man to the front and center so that everyone could see him.

Visualize the dialogue in the fifth scene. Jesus asks those gathered in the synagogue, who would have included the Pharisees, "Does the religious law permit us to do good or evil, to save life or to kill?" but no one answers him. Jesus looks around in anger and sadness, and then says to the man, "Stretch out your hand." The man stretches out his hand, and he is immediately healed.

In the final scene, visualize the Pharisees leaving the synagogue. They meet with Herod's supporters and start to plot how to kill Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 2:23-3:6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has six scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Pharisees
- David
- David's companions
- A man with a deformed hand
- People in the synagogue
- Supporters of Herod

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus and his disciples walking through grain fields. As they walk, the disciples break off and eat heads of grain. The Pharisees see this and ask Jesus, "Why are your disciples breaking the law by harvesting grain on the Sabbath?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the Pharisees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We keep seeing Jesus break our religious laws," or "We are upset that Jesus is encouraging other people to break God's law," or "Outraged. We have to confront Jesus about his behavior." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus telling a story about David to the Pharisees. Act out the story as Jesus tells it. David and his companions were hungry, so they went into the house of God and broke the law by eating bread that only the priests were supposed to eat.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing David, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "God would have wanted me to provide food for my companions while we were hungry," or "God's care for us is more important than religious laws," or "Thankful. God always provides in my time of need." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus responding to the Pharisees, saying that the Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, not for people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. Jesus says, "The Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Jesus is unlike any other religious teacher. He teaches with authority," or "Surprised. I've never thought of the Sabbath being created for man," or "I'm honored to be the disciple of the one who has all authority." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus goes into a synagogue again and seeing a man with a deformed hand. Jesus calls for the man to stand in front of everyone, and asks, "Does the religious law allow us to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath? Is it a day to save life or kill?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am about to make a point about the Sabbath," "I want people to understand me," or "I'm angry that people care more about their religious laws and traditions than caring and having compassion for others." Continue the drama.

Act out no one answering Jesus. Jesus looks around, angry and deeply sad at their hard hearts.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the people in the synagogue, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We know he's right, so we do not want to answer him," "Stubborn. We do not want to give in to Jesus," or "We're embarrassed." Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm angry that the religious leaders have twisted my Father's laws," "I'm very sad that they do not understand my Father's purpose for the Sabbath," or "I'm frustrated that these people are not listening to me." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus saying to the man with the deformed hand, "Stretch out your hand." The man stretches out his hand, and it is healed. Immediately, the Pharisees leave. They meet with supporters of Herod to plot how they can kill Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the Pharisees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Angry that Jesus healed on the Sabbath," "Afraid of Jesus' power," "We think that Jesus is blaspheming God," or "We are angry enough to want to kill Jesus."

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

On the **Sabbath**, Jesus and his disciples are walking through grain fields when his disciples pick grain with their hands. Use the same word you have used in previous passages for Sabbath. The Jewish people observed the Sabbath day as a day set aside especially for rest and worship because God gave them this command. This was considered the 7th day of the week. By the time of Jesus, strict, specific rules were in place regarding what kind of work could and could not be done on this day. This was also the day that people went to the synagogue to worship. For more information on the Sabbath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus is walking with his **disciples**, or closest followers. Use the same word you have used in previous passages for disciples. Jesus' closest followers were with him for much of his public ministry, traveling with him everywhere, learning from him, and sometimes being sent out by him to preach the good news and heal the sick. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Pharisees see the disciples pick the grain and rebuke Jesus for their actions. Use the same word you have used before for Pharisees. The name "Pharisee" means "to be separated." The Pharisees were regarded as highly influential and righteous. They were good examples for the people because they were devoted to God's law. They recognized both the written and the oral religious traditions and laws. For more information on Pharisees, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus asks them if they have not read the scripture about David eating sacred bread. **Scriptures** refer to the holy writings of any religious group. In this case, it refers to the Jewish holy writings that were inspired by God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Scriptures**. Remember that the word you use should not refer to a specific religion's holy writing. It should be a general word. Look up Scripture in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that David got the bread during the time of Abiathar as **high priest**. We know that Abiathar was not high priest at that time, but that his rule was around that time. Priests in the Jewish religion were the people who connected the people with God by making sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, and taking care of God's temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. The high priest is the most important or head priest. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary, and translate priest in the same way you have before.

David took the bread from the **house of God**. House of God can refer to the temple or the tabernacle, the tent the Jews used before they had the temple. During David's time, God's House with the Jews was still in the tabernacle. It is best to state this term directly as "House of God." For more information, refer to temple or tabernacle in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says the **Son of Man** is Lord over the Sabbath. In the Old Testament this phrase "son of man" simply meant a human being. Jesus uses this term as his favorite way to talk about himself. The "Son of Man" is the person to whom, in Daniel 7, God gives all authority and power. Jesus probably likes this term because the title can refer to an ordinary human being or to a supernatural being. The term Son of Man forces people to decide if Jesus is man or God. It also avoided the political term of the Messiah/Christ—the person that people wanted to make king. Mark likes to talk about all the times Jesus called himself the Son of Man in order to talk about his destiny to suffer and die, like a human. For more information on the Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary. Translate Son of Man in the same way you have before.

Lord over the Sabbath means master over the Sabbath. Jesus is saying that he has authority to decide what is right or wrong to do on the Sabbath. Use the same word for Lord that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master glossary.

On a different Sabbath, Jesus enters a **synagogue**. This was a Jewish place of worship. Use the same word you have used in previous passages for synagogue. For more information on synagogue, refer to the Master Glossary.

Marks says Jesus **grieved at their hardness of heart**. The Jews used the word heart to refer to the part of a person where feelings and decisions happen. This refers to people choosing to not see the truth that Jesus was saying. This refers to stubbornness in not seeing or following the truth. Jesus' grief was not the kind that was like people crying over someone they had lost, but a deep disturbance at what he was seeing. For more information on heart, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 2:23-3:6

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13530291 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 3:7–12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 3:7–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:7–12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:7–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this section, Mark introduces a summary of Jesus' ministry in the region of Galilee. The climax of Jesus' ministry in Galilee will be when he sends out 12 chosen representatives in the future. Jesus will encounter much rejection because of the miracles he does which show his power. There are two themes in this passage—everyone had heard about Jesus around the entire area, and Jesus has authority over evil spirits.

Jesus has just been rejected again in the previous story when religious leaders rebuked him for healing a man on the Jewish day of rest. We do not know how much time has passed, but some time later, Jesus goes out to the side of the lake, or the Sea of Galilee. A large crowd follows him. The Sea of Galilee was 21 kilometers long and 13 kilometers wide. It was a large body of freshwater that a person could see across. The crowds came from all over, representing two major areas: all of Israel (represented by Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem), and the areas that border Israel where non-Jews lived.

Galilee, Judea, Idumea, "beyond the Jordan," are all areas of land. Jerusalem, Tyre, and Sidon are cities. You may specify the type of area (either land or city) if needed.

Stop here and look at a map of the area, including Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, east of the Jordan River, and Tyre and Sidon as a group. They should see from this the wide area from which people came.

Discuss with your group how you introduce names of areas of land, or of cities. Do you say "the land of..." or "the city of..."? How will you introduce these new names to your audience? Pause this audio here.

There were so many people trying to touch Jesus in order to be healed that they were beginning to crush him. Even so, Jesus was compassionate and healed many people. Jesus asked his disciples, or closest followers, to prepare a boat and put it nearby for him to sit in if he needed it. Sitting on the boat on the edge of the shore would have kept a small distance between Jesus and the crowd. It also would have allowed everyone in the crowd to see and hear him without crushing him. The boat was probably a normal fishing boat that people used on the Sea of Galilee. They could hold about two to fifteen people inside.

Stop here and look at a picture of the average Galilee fishing boat as a group. Pause this audio here.

In those days, some people thought that if you knew the name of a divine being you could control him. The people possessed by unclean, or evil, spirits tried to gain authority and power over Jesus by naming him "Son of God." Son of God is a title that refers to both Jesus being God and being in close relationship to God the Father. The evil spirits cause the people they are controlling to kneel or lie face down in front of Jesus because he had authority over them. Jesus showed his authority over the evil spirits by commanding them to stay quiet. Jesus did not want the evil spirits to show who he was. Instead, he wanted people to recognize themselves that he is God's Son.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do evil spirits act in your culture? How do they try to gain control over you or others? How do you gain control over them? Is it important for them, or for you, to know the names of spirits or other people? Why or why not? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:7-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus goes down to the lake with his disciples. Crowds of people follow him.

In the second scene: Jesus instructs his disciples to have a boat ready on the side of the lake so that the crowd will not crush him.

In the third scene: Jesus had healed many sick people, so people were trying to touch him. Jesus had also healed people who were possessed by evil spirits. When the evil spirits saw Jesus, they would throw people to the ground in front of Jesus and cry out, "You are the Son of God." Jesus would command them not to reveal who he was.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Crowd
- Sick people
- People possessed by evil spirits
- Evil spirits

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This story starts sometime later after Jesus' rejection in the synagogue, but we do not know how much later. It's important to remember that this story happens along the side of the lake. Large crowds of people have heard how Jesus heals people, so they have followed Jesus out to the lake. Jesus asks his disciples to have a boat

ready because there are so many people. This allowed Jesus to teach from the boat to put some distance between him and the crowd, so that he was not crushed by them.

The large crowd of people who surrounded Jesus was made up of people from different places who were all coming to see him. Jesus' popularity had grown because of the miracles he was doing.

It is important to remember that the evil spirits controlled the actions of a person. That is why they caused the people they were controlling to fall down and shout out who Jesus was.

It is important to remember that the crowd was disorderly and that they were forcefully pushing against each other because they desperately wanted to be healed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:7-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Crowd
- Sick people
- People possessed by evil spirits
- Evil spirits

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the crowds of people following Jesus and his disciples to the side of the lake. News about Jesus' miracles had spread far and wide, and many people came to see him.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Desperate. I have to get to Jesus to be healed!" or "Frustrated. There are too many people here. I will never reach him." or "Intrigued. Who is this man who has authority over evil spirits?" Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus instructing his disciples to have a boat ready so the crowd does not crush him.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "We found a boat and brought it slightly off shore so that if Jesus needs to get away from the crowds he can step into it to teach," or "Scared. This is turning into a mob. What if Jesus gets hurt?" or "Tired. We have faced so much already. How does Jesus keep going?" Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Compassion. I will help them," or "Broken hearted. So many people are desperate and in need," or "A bit overwhelmed." Continue the drama.

Act out sick people pushing forward to touch Jesus. Evil spirits see Jesus, and they throw people to the ground in front of him and yell out, "You are the Son of God."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the evil spirits, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "I know who he is! I must try to control him," or "Jesus is too strong. I can't stand up to his authority," or "Afraid. He is about to send me away." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus sternly commanding the spirits to not reveal who he is.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "It is not time to reveal my identity as God's son," "Not yet. My ministry is just beginning," or "Evil spirits will not be the ones to reveal who I am."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:7-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus walks with his **disciples**, or closest followers, to the Sea of Galilee. Use the same term for disciples that you have used in previous passages. Jesus' closest followers were with him for much of his public ministry, traveling with him everywhere, learning from him, and sometimes being sent out by him to preach the good news and heal the sick. For more information on disciple, refer to the Master Glossary.

A large crowd of people followed Jesus because they had heard about him performing many **miracles**. This word refers to powerful actions that only God can do, and make people be in awe of God. Use the same term for miracles that you have used in previous passages. For more information on miracle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus instructed his disciples to keep a **boat** close by while he was teaching. The boat Jesus asked for was about 8 meters long and 2 1/2 meters wide. It was about 1 1/4 meters deep. A boat of that size would have comfortably fit thirteen people.

Stop here and look at a photo of the boat as a group. Choose a way to show the boat size, perhaps by drawing the dimensions on the ground with a stick and asking people to step inside the drawn lines. Pause the audio here.

Unclean or **evil spirits** possessed some people in the crowd. "Unclean" refers to something that is unfit for service for God. All evil spirits are "unclean" because they are unfit for service to God. "Evil spirit" refers to spiritual beings who serve Satan as his agents, being under his authority. These spiritual beings have power to oppress a human being and even take control of him. This is what we see happening in this story. We know from the Bible that God created spirit beings but that some spirits chose to disobey him and become unclean, or evil. Try to choose a word that refers to an independent spirit being that is evil and opposed to God. If there is one, you can also use a neutral word for an independent spirit being and add an adjective like "spirit from Satan," or "bad/evil spirit."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **evil spirit**. Look up evil spirit in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

The evil spirits caused people to fall down and cry out that Jesus was the **Son of God**. In this context, Mark uses the term "Son of God" to describe the unique relationship of Jesus to the true God. The title "Son of God"

expresses that Jesus is God and that Jesus is in close relationship with God the Father. This term implies that Jesus is God's appointed savior described by the prophets in the Old Testament.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Son of God**. Look up Son of God in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 3:7-12

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 3:13-19

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 3:13-19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:13-19 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:13-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In Mark, Jesus' mission with his disciples is very important. At the beginning of Mark we see Jesus calling some of his disciples. In this passage, Jesus appoints his twelve closest followers who will go with him everywhere and work closely with him. Later, Jesus will send these twelve followers out on a mission to share the good news that he has been teaching. The good news refers to God coming to rule in his people's hearts through Jesus. After Jesus' resurrection, we see that these disciples go into all the world.

This story takes place on the side of a mountain. In the Bible, many revelations from God happen on mountains. This was most likely a mountain or hill surrounding the Lake of Galilee.

Stop here and show a picture of the hills surrounding the Lake of Galilee to your group. Pause this audio here.

We know from the Gospel of Luke that Jesus spent all night praying before making this important decision. Jesus probably goes up the mountainside with a larger group of his followers, although Mark is unclear about how many people went with him. Jesus calls 12 men with him to the mountain out of the larger group of his disciples or followers. Some Bible translations include the information that Jesus officially called these men "apostles" at this time, but some translations do not include the title "apostles." Whether or not you include the title "apostles," we know from the instructions that Jesus gave these men that Jesus is appointing and sending these 12 men as his representatives. From this time forward Mark gives them the special title of "The Twelve." The number 12 is significant. There were 12 tribes of Israel, God's chosen people. But God's people, the

Israelites, had turned away from God. Jesus is trying to show that he is going to restore God's people and use them to carry out his mission to the whole world. After this story, we see that Jesus begins to prepare them for the mission he has for them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do important teachers in your community choose their special students? What do those students do? Pause this audio here.

Jesus gives these 12 men the authority, or the right, to teach and to command demons or evil spirits to release people that they controlled. Mark then names the twelve men Jesus chooses to follow him. You may need to clearly state that these are the names of the twelve disciples of Jesus.

Mark doesn't tell us why he gives Simon the second name Peter, or why he gives James and John the names the Sons of Thunder. We also don't know why he doesn't mention Levi, whose story we hear earlier in Mark. We do know that in the Old Testament, giving a surname, or a last name, can mean that God is giving a promise to that person, or giving them a special task. Peter means "rock." This could be because Peter becomes a leader or spokesman of the group. The "sons of thunder" may describe a characteristic of the men, such as the fact that they sometimes speak strongly about a subject. Another Simon is chosen, Simon the Zealot. Zealot most likely refers to someone who is passionate about Israel being free from Roman control. Mark describes Judas Iscariot as a traitor. This is because three years later, Judas Iscariot will betray Jesus to his enemies so that Jesus is arrested.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture use names? Who gives people their names? Who knows each other's names? Do names describe something about people? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:13-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In the first scene: Jesus goes to a mountain and calls a group of his followers to go with him. Jesus chooses 12 of his disciples to be his representatives and calls out their names. Jesus sends them out to preach and gives them authority to cast out demons.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The 12 disciples Jesus calls
- Others Jesus calls

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Have the group show Jesus on the mountain with a group of his disciples. There are probably many people with Jesus on the mountain. Jesus calls out the names of 12 disciples from the many people and chooses them to be his representatives.

It will be important to visualize the descriptors of some of the names of the disciples. For example, the actors for the brothers James and John can pretend to speak strongly when they teach.

Be sure to show the 12 apostles with authority from Jesus to teach in different places and to free people from evil spirits.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:13–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The 12 disciples Jesus calls
- Others Jesus calls

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus walking up the side of a mountain. Jesus calls for a group of his disciples to come to him. Jesus chose 12 disciples to be his apostles.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Humble. Who am I to be chosen by Jesus?" or "Determined. I want to make Jesus proud," or "I have a lot to learn." Continue the drama.

Act out the things Jesus gives the apostles authority to do: They follow Jesus wherever he goes, Jesus sends them out to preach, and the apostles have authority to cast out demons.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing one of the apostles, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Amazed. The people are actually listening to what I am teaching," or "In awe. The demons are afraid of God's power in me," or "Afraid. I have never done anything like this before."

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:13–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus is on a mountain with a group of his disciples. Jesus **appointed the twelve**. This phrase shows that Jesus thought it was very important to appoint or choose these twelve men. Jesus gave them jobs to do, and he gave them names which showed their character or the important job he had for them. Mark uses "The Twelve" as a special title for this group of men. You may need another noun to help your audience understand that this group is a group of "twelve followers."

Jesus gives "the twelve" the **authority** to preach and cast out demons. Authority refers to the right given to someone to act. The disciples could now act on Jesus' behalf. Use the same word or phrase for authority as you used in previous passages. For more information on authority, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop and discuss with your team: You may want to give an example from the team's daily life to show what authority means. It may be useful to use an example from local government or village life. A government worker is just a person. He or she has no power, acting on his own, to enforce anything. Even if he tries to enforce laws, people may or may not follow them. However, when the government gives him authority, he may then act to enforce laws. Pause this audio here.

Evil spirits or **demons** refers to spiritual beings who serve Satan as his agents, being under his authority. Both unclean spirits and "demons" are used interchangeably in the New Testament. These spiritual beings have power to oppress a human being and even take control of him. This is what we see happening to people in this story. We know from the Bible that evil spirits were created by God and chose to disobey him, but some languages do not have a term that can express that adequately. Their "evil spirit" may refer to a dead person's spirit that "haunts" people. Try to choose a word that refers to an independent spirit being that is evil and opposed to God. If there is one, you can also use a neutral word for an independent spirit being and add a qualification like "spirit from Satan," or "bad/evil spirit." Use the same word for demon as you used in previous passages. For more information on demons, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus called them his **apostles**. Some manuscripts don't have this phrase—it may come from the same story in Luke 6:13. Apostles are appointed by Jesus himself as his chosen representatives. Their main functions are to preach the good news, to be founders of the church, to hold spiritual authority in the church, and to be witnesses to the fact that Jesus had been resurrected from the dead. If your language has an accepted term for "apostle" that is readily understood by all, you may use that term here. However, if your audience is un-churched or new believers, they may need further explanation, and a different term may be helpful to them. Some suggestions are:

- representatives of Jesus Christ
- (special) messengers of Jesus Christ
- sent-people of Jesus Christ

Whatever term you choose should imply that these people are in a position of trust and authority. For more information on apostle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Mark says that Jesus called James and John, **the Sons of Thunder**. This is a nickname, or another name, that Jesus gave to these brothers.

Simon **the Zealot** is also a name Jesus gives to Simon. Probably, this meant that Simon very much followed the law that God gave through Moses and tried to follow God well and enthusiastically. It could also refer to his passion to see Israel freed from Roman rule.

Judas Iscariot's name means "Judas from the village of Karioth."

Stop and discuss as a group how you will talk about these names in your translation. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 3:13-19

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 3:20-35

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 3:20-35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:20-35 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?

2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:20–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story may have happened in Simon and Andrew's home in Capernaum. It may not have happened right after Jesus appointed his 12 disciples, but Mark puts it here as a teaching point about the growing controversy that Jesus' ministry is causing. Jesus' family wants to take him away because people think he is insane. The religious leaders say Jesus is working with Satan. Both the religious leaders and Jesus' family are trying to prevent Jesus from continuing his work. This story shows that the real controversy is Jesus' war with Satan himself. Mark sometimes puts stories within stories to draw attention to the teaching point he wants to make.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you tell stories to make a special teaching point? Do you ever tell two or more stories together to make a point? Pause this audio here.

At the beginning of the story, Jesus' family comes to try to take him away, because he is so busy he can't even find time to eat. We are not sure if it is Jesus' family or others of the crowds who say, "He's out of his mind." "Out of his mind" means that someone is almost fully insane, or crazy.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do you do in your culture with people that you think are insane or crazy? Pause this audio here.

Official representatives of the teachers of the religious law come from Jerusalem to check on Jesus because Jesus has become famous. These religious teachers accuse Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebub. Beelzebub is probably another name for the prince of demons, or Satan. Some translations just use the name Satan here. When Jesus responds, he uses the name Satan in his response. Jesus says that a kingdom divided against itself will collapse. A kingdom refers to any territory ruled by a king. Jesus means that if a kingdom's power is divided between two warring sides, then it is weak and eventually collapses.

Jesus responds with a story about a strong man. He says that only someone stronger can overtake a strong man. He implies that he is stronger than Satan. When Jesus then goes on to talk about the Holy Spirit, he implies that he is full of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is stronger than Satan.

When the religious leaders accuse Jesus of blasphemy and of being possessed by an evil spirit, they are saying that Jesus doesn't have the Holy Spirit, and this is the unforgivable sin that Jesus refers to. The sin is to call Jesus, a person filled with the Holy Spirit, evil instead of recognizing God's work in Jesus. The religious leaders are "guilty of eternal sin"—they always have the consequences of the sin because God will not forgive this sin. This sin is not a one-time action—God does not forgive someone who continually says that the work of the Holy Spirit is evil.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what is the worst thing someone can do against God? Pause this audio here.

In the midst of this story, we see Jesus' family again outside the house waiting to see him and take him away. Now Jesus can use this as a teaching point to show us what the real family of God is—those who do what God asks them to do. Jesus knows who his mother and brothers are, but the real question he is asking is, "Who are the sort of people who are my mother and my brothers?" Then Jesus answers this question by explaining that the sort of people who are like his family are those who do what God wants them to do.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:20–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is in a house and crowds have gathered. His family has heard what is happening, and they come to try to take Jesus away, saying, "He's out of his mind."

In the second scene: Teachers of the religious law come from Jerusalem, and say, "Jesus is possessed, that's how he has this power to cast out demons."

Jesus responds, "How can Satan cast out Satan? A kingdom that is divided by a civil war will collapse. The only way you can cast out someone is if you are strong." He illustrates this point by describing who would be powerful enough to enter the house of a strongman and plunder his goods. This can only be done by someone stronger than the strongman, someone who could tie him up to plunder his house.

Jesus ends this scene by saying, "Sin and blaspheming can be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven—this is a sin with eternal consequences."

In the third scene: Jesus' mother and brothers come. Jesus had at least two brothers (and maybe more). They stand outside the house and send someone in to tell Jesus to come out and talk with them. But Jesus is teaching, and the crowd is surrounding him. He responds, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers? These are my mothers and brothers—anyone who does God's will is my mother and sister and brother."

The characters in this passage are:

- Crowds of people
- Jesus' disciples
- Jesus
- Religious leaders
- Jesus' mother
- Jesus' brothers (he had at least two, maybe more)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This story starts with the phrase "one time." We do not know how long after Jesus calls his disciples that this story happens.

Pay attention to the interactions between Jesus, the different characters in this story, and Jesus' response to the characters.

In the first scene Jesus is in a house with his disciples, and many people come to gather. Jesus and his disciples are so busy that they do not have time to eat. His family tries to take him away. Someone—we are not sure who—says that Jesus is out of his mind, or crazy.

In the second scene, Jesus tells two stories, or gives two examples. Pay attention to the two examples Jesus gives. In one he describes a kingdom being divided, or a family split in two, to describe how if Satan is divided against himself he cannot stand.

In the second example or illustration, Jesus explains that only someone more powerful than a strong man can go into a strong man's house, tie him up, and plunder his house. Jesus ends this scene with a teaching on blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Jesus starts with the phrase, "I tell you the truth," to show that what he is about to say is very important. Jesus wants people to stop and listen to what he is about to say.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Do you have a phrase that calls people to attention in your language? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that all sin is forgiven by God, but that God will not forgive blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. You may need to specify that it is God who forgives or does not forgive sin.

In the third scene, Jesus' family comes to stand outside the house where Jesus and his disciples are. These are probably Jesus' mother and at least two of his brothers. Jesus' family sent a message inside the house and asked Jesus to come talk with them. When Jesus hears that his family is asking for him, he asks a question that he does not expect the people to answer. He asks, "Who are my mother and brothers?" Then he looks at the people sitting around him and he answers the question. Jesus says, "Here are my mother and brothers! The people who do God's will are my mother and sisters and brothers."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:20–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Crowds of people
- Jesus' disciples
- Jesus
- Religious leaders
- Jesus' mother
- Jesus' brothers (he had at least two, maybe more)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus in a house and crowds have gathered. Jesus' family hears what's happening from afar, arrive, and say, "He's out of his mind!"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus' family, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "We don't understand," or "Jesus is implying that he is God! That is going to get him in trouble with the religious leaders," or "I've grown up with Jesus. I don't see why everyone is giving him so much attention." Continue the drama.

Act out the religious leaders arriving and saying, "He's possessed by an evil spirit, that's how he has the power to cast out demons." Jesus responds, "How can Satan cast out Satan? A kingdom that is divided by a civil war will collapse. The only way you can cast out someone is if you are strong." Jesus gives the example of the strong man.

Jesus ends by saying, "I tell you the truth, all sins and blasphemes can be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven. That is a sin with eternal consequences."

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm responding to them saying I'm possessed by an evil spirit," or "Because the religious leaders are accusing me of being an evil spirit, they are somehow blaspheming the Holy Spirit," or "They are rejecting the message that I am bringing about the kingdom of God. God will not forgive that sin." Continue the drama.

Jesus' mother and brothers come to see him and send someone in to tell him to come talk with them. Jesus responds, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers? These are my mothers and brothers—anyone who does God's will is my mother and sister and brother."

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "I am now entering into my ministry and my calling," or "I am more fully engaged in my true identity as the son of God, rather than simply being the brother or the son who lived in Nazareth."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 3:20–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Crowds are following Jesus and his **disciples**, or closest followers. Use the same word for disciples as you have in previous passages. For more information on disciple, refer to the Master Glossary.

But the **teachers of religious law** come from Jerusalem and criticize Jesus. These were the experts on the interpretation of God's law. Use the same word or phrase for teachers of religious law as you used in previous passages. For more information on teachers of the law, refer to the Master Glossary.

The religious leaders say Jesus is **possessed**. Demons choose to possess people because they want to destroy people and their relationships in communities. When demons possess people, they control their actions. Use the same word for possess as you used in previous passages. For more information on possessed, refer to the Master Glossary.

The religious leaders think Jesus gets his power from **Satan** to cast out **demons**. Satan is the name of a spiritual being, whom God created. He is the leader of all demons, or evil spiritual beings who decided to rebel against God. Some translations have used the name Satan for Beelzebub when the religious leaders use that name. Use the same word or phrase for Satan and demons as you used in previous passages. For more information on Satan and demons, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group if you will use the name Beelzebub or Satan. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says a kingdom divided against itself will collapse. Here, the **kingdom** referred to is a political kingdom where a ruler rules an area of land. Use the same word for kingdom as you used in previous passages. For more information on kingdom, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says all **sin** and **blasphemy** can be forgiven. Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God. Be sure that the word you use here does not mean that someone has failed to perform a religious act like ritual prayer or following certain religious rules. Use the same word for sin that you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary. **Blasphemy** means to dishonor God and to treat him as less majestic than he is.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **blasphemy**. Look up blasphemy in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Forgiveness involves two people, one of whom has done something wrong to the other. In forgiveness, the one who was wronged sets aside his rights and does not punish the other as he deserves. He does not seek revenge. With God, forgiveness is available to all who stops doing evil and turns towards God. Then God's relationship with them is restored. Use the same word for forgive as you used in previous passages. For more information on forgive, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that anyone who blasphemes the **Holy Spirit** will not be forgiven. The Holy Spirit refers to God's Spirit. God's Spirit equips people to do something. The person who is filled with God's Spirit carries a message from God to the people or to a person. The person who has God's Spirit has divine wisdom and authority. In the New Testament the concept of "holy" refers to people or things that belong to God, are consecrated to him, or are like him. This helps us understand why speaking against the Holy Spirit would be an unforgivable sin. Use the same term for Holy Spirit here as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that anyone who does his will is his **brother and sister**. There may only be one term in your language for "sibling," or "brother and sister." If so, it is fine to just use one term here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 3:20-35

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11359199 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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Mark 4:1–20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 4:1–20 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In previous passages in Mark, you have already had stories of Jesus walking beside the Sea of Galilee and teaching the people. Jesus was doing this near the town of Capernaum where Jesus was living. So many people gathered in that previous teaching time that Jesus got into a boat that floated in the water just offshore. Jesus spoke or taught so the people standing on the shore could see and hear. The people could hear Jesus more clearly when Jesus was in the boat out on the water. Jesus does the same in this passage. This passage is a narrative story. Jesus tells the story to a large group and then explains the story to a small group. Jesus quotes from the prophet Isaiah during the explanation. This quote is poetry.

In previous passages, we were told that Jesus was teaching the people. In this passage, we hear the stories that Jesus was using as he taught. This is the first of two main teaching sections in Mark. The story starts with the phrase, "Once again, Jesus began teaching." This phrase tells us that Jesus has already been teaching the people on several occasions.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sea of Galilee with Capernaum marked on the map. Show a picture of a boat such as one that Jesus might have been sitting in while teaching the people. Pause this audio here.

Jesus begins teaching. Jesus teaches by telling the people simple stories called parables. A parable was a special kind of story that Jesus told. The parable was a story that used something from everyday life to teach people something important about God. Parables were often hard to understand unless people really tried to listen or think about the meaning. When Jesus tells a parable, Jesus expects people to change their attitude or actions. The parables in this part of Mark tell about the mystery of God's Kingdom. The parables are not easy to understand. That's because in God's Kingdom, people do things one way, while on earth people do things in a different way. People have to listen carefully to these parables. People have to "want" to understand what the story is saying about God. Once a person understands the story, that person must want to change his way of doing or thinking. In fact, a person proves that he has understood a parable when he has changed his way of behaving.

The first story that Jesus tells is about a farmer who goes out to sow his seed. In that time farmers scattered seed over the soil rather than place it directly in a hole that he had dug. The farmer carried a bag on his shoulder full of many seeds. He walked along and scattered the seeds on the ground. In some cultures, this is not a good way to sow seeds. However, in that time, the farmer plowed the seeds into the soil later. Despite what we might think, this farmer was not careless.

Stop here and spend some time, as a translation team, discussing how farmers in your culture plant seeds and prepare fields. How is it different than in this parable? How is it the same? Talk about good and bad farmers in your culture.

Show a photo of the type of bag the farmer would carry the seeds in. Pause the audio here.

Jesus tells the story about the 4 places where the seed falls and Jesus tells what happens to the seed in each place. First the seed falls on the hard path and the birds eat the seed before it can be plowed into the ground. Some seed falls on soil which has a thin layer of soil with rocks underneath. The plants can't make good roots. The third set of seed falls on soil which also has thorns already there. These thorns haven't come up yet, so the farmer does not see them. The farmer doesn't know the thorns are in the soil. The last seed falls on good soil and reproduces 30, 60, or 100 times what the farmer sowed. That is a really good harvest.

Stop and show a picture of thorns in Palestine. Also show a picture of a field in Palestine that shows all 4 types of soil in one picture or one field. Notice that all the seed land in one field. The farmer does not go to 4 different fields to sow the seed. Pause the audio here.

Sometime later, when Jesus and the disciples were alone with some other people gathered around, the disciples asked Jesus to explain the stories that Jesus told that day. This occurs after the crowd had left. Jesus is no longer in the boat. We don't know where they were. We don't know if this was the same day.

Remember that in previous stories we have seen that some people do not believe in Jesus. The disciples follow and believe Jesus. Jesus said, "You disciples are allowed to understand the 'secret things' of God." In this story, the "secret things" that Jesus is talking about describe God's future kingdom that God is bringing to earth. Jesus described the two types of people who listen to the parables. There are those who hear but don't want to understand about God's kingdom. They are the outsiders or those who are not in the kingdom of God. There are those who hear and turn to God to be forgiven. They are the insiders, those who are in the kingdom of God.

After saying this, Jesus quoted from the prophet Isaiah. These sentences are in poetry. If your language doesn't use poetry, you can put this into simple sentences.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story in your language. This story has a warning for the people who hear the story. Listen carefully to how the storyteller gives the warning. What form of the language does this storyteller use? This will help you decide how to translate the quote from Isaiah. Pause the audio here.

The passage does not use the name of Isaiah. Instead, Jesus says, "The Scriptures." The Scripture in Jesus' day was made up of the writings of the religious law that God gave Moses, the writings of the prophets, and the history of God's people. Jesus doesn't say which prophet he is quoting.

It sounds like Jesus is saying that he tells parables to hide the truth from people, but that's not what he is saying here. Jesus says that the things Isaiah said will happen will really happen. Outsiders, or those who don't believe Jesus, will not believe the things Jesus says. Therefore, Jesus will not tell them more about the secrets of the kingdom of God.

Mark repeats this same theme of those who hear or see and those who don't want to hear or see throughout the book of Mark.

Then Jesus goes on to explain this parable to his disciples. Sometimes Jesus' explanations do not seem to match the parable. For example, in this parable, the people are the soils, but in Jesus' later explanation it seems that the people (men) are the seeds that the farmer sows. In addition, the word for seed is singular, but the idea of people is plural. The word seeds in the original language are not male or female, but in this story, Jesus refers to them as if they are men.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story that has objects such as trees or plants or rocks or animals that represent something about people. Listen carefully to the storyteller. When talking about these objects, does the storyteller use words to indicate if the objects are male or female? Pause the audio here.

When Jesus told the parable, Jesus talked about how the farmer sows the seed. When Jesus explains the parable, however, Jesus talks more about the seed and what happened to it.

Jesus' interpretation of the parable is only a description of the symbolism in it. Jesus does not give an explanation of exactly who the sower is. Jesus does not explain why the soils are different. Jesus does not explain what the harvest looks like. Jesus doesn't explain if he is talking about Christians who need to grow spiritually, or about non-Christians hearing and accepting God's Kingdom. Parables often have a wider meaning than just one specific situation or time period. Don't assume that this parable has a specific meaning, because Scripture does not give a specific meaning.

Jesus says that the seed the farmer sows is God's word, or the message of good news about God's Kingdom. The farmer plants a crop by taking God's word to other people. The seed that falls on the path represents those people who hear God's word but Satan comes and takes it away. Remember that on the path, the soil is hard. The seed will lie on top of the ground until the plow comes to turn the soil over.

The rocky soil represents those who hear God's word with joy but can't form deep roots because of the rocks under the soil. Problems or persecution have the same effect as the sun shining on the plant. Without good roots, the plant withers and dies.

The soil with thorns represents those who hear and believe but never produce any harvest. The worries of life, the desire to have wealth or other things all crowd out the plants like thorns crowd out good plants. The plant never produces any grain.

Stop and discuss: talk about each of the 4 types of soil and what happens to plants that grow in each of those types of soil. For example, what happens to a plant that doesn't have a root that can get water from the ground. Pause the audio here.

The good soil produces an incredible harvest. This represents people who hear, believe, and tell others so that there is a huge harvest.

Show a picture of loaded heads of wheat or other grain. Talk about what a great harvest would look like. Pause the audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is teaching beside the Sea of Galilee. A large crowd gathers around Jesus. Jesus gets into a boat and sits in the boat near the shore so that the people on the shore can see Jesus and hear Jesus. Jesus tells the people a parable.

In the second scene: Jesus and his disciples along with some other followers of Jesus are in a place alone. The disciples ask Jesus to explain the parables. Jesus says, "You've been given the ability to know the deep things about God. If you don't know this, how can you understand the rest?" He quotes the prophet Isaiah to explain why he tells parables—so that people who are not listening for spiritual things will not understand him.

In the third scene: Jesus explains the meaning of the parable.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Crowds of people
- Others who stay to hear the explanation of the parable

The characters in Jesus' parable include:

- A farmer
- Seeds
- Four kinds of soil
- Birds that come to eat the seed
- The 4 types of people who hear God's word
- Satan

In scene one, the passage starts by saying that "Once again Jesus began teaching by the shore of the lake." This lake is the Sea of Galilee and Jesus is near Capernaum. The words "once again" indicate that Jesus has taught the people before this time. However, this is the first time in Mark that we have the actual teaching that Jesus gave. Jesus taught the people by telling them parables.

The crowd became very large. Jesus got into a boat and took the boat out into the water. Jesus sat in the boat to teach. The people on the shore could see Jesus and hear Jesus as Jesus did his teaching.

Stop and show a picture of a man sitting in a small boat close to the shore of a lake. Pause the audio here.

As Jesus began teaching, Jesus said, "Listen." In the original language, this is 2 words that mean look and listen. These are command words. They are strong words that give the people very specific instructions. Before Jesus begins the story, Jesus tells the people to listen carefully to what Jesus is going to say. By using these words, Jesus tells the people that what Jesus is going to say will be really important for them to hear.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story where someone is teaching a group. What does the person say to the group at the beginning of the lesson so that the group will pay careful attention to what the teacher says? Pause the audio here.

Jesus tells the story of the farmer who goes out to sow the seed. It is important to remember that the word for seed here can mean just one seed or many seeds. In this context the word for seed represents many seeds. You should make it clear that the farmer is throwing out many seeds.

Stop and practice the story. Someone would have a bag full of something such as sand that would represent the seed. This person would walk along taking handfuls out of the bag and use a scattering motion. Mark an area with the path and the 3 types of soil. The different soils are close together and near the path. As the farmer scatters the seed, note how some of the seed fall into each of the 4 areas. The farmer is sowing in one field. Ask someone to describe what the person scattering the seed is doing. Ask that person to describe the soils or areas where the seed is falling. Pause the audio here.

The grain that fell in the good soil, reproduced 30 or 60 or 100 times what was sown.

Stop and see how the grain would multiply. Gather sticks or rocks or even seeds of grain. Put down one rock or seed of grain. In a separate pile put 30 rocks. In a separate pile put 60 rocks and in another pile put 100 rocks. Now work as a team to describe how that one seed reproduced. Pause the audio here.

When Jesus finishes the story about the farmer, Jesus says to the people, "Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand." Jesus is telling the people to pay attention to what they just heard. Jesus wanted them to understand. The word "hear" has two meanings in this sentence. The first time, hear means the ability to hear something. The second time, the word hear means to understand or be able to think about the meaning of what you heard. Some translations use hear for the first word and listen for the second time the word hear is used.

Stop and tell a story about someone with important information for a group of people. What does the person say at the end of the lesson to get the group to pay attention? How does he get the group to think carefully about what he has said? Pause the audio here.

In scene two, Jesus is alone with the disciples and a few other people who follow Jesus. The crowd has gone. Jesus is no longer beside the lake. We don't know where Jesus and the disciples were. The disciples asked Jesus to explain the stories that Jesus had told. Jesus says, You are **permitted to understand** the secret of the kingdom of God. The people who speak your language may need to know who gives the permission. In this case, you can say, "God has given you permission to understand the secret of the kingdom of God." As Jesus talked, Jesus quoted a passage from the prophet Isaiah. The quote is in the form of poetry. The first idea tells an action. The second idea tells the negative result.

They will see. They will not learn.

They will hear. They will not understand.

If they hear and understand, they will turn to God and be forgiven.

Stop and discuss: divide the group into 2 teams. Have one team say a positive action. Have the second team give a negative result. You may start with the two examples from the prophecy. Repeat this until it comes smoothly. Listen to see how the people say this. Do they use poetry? Do they use regular sentences? Pause the audio here.

In scene 3, Jesus explains the symbols in the story. Jesus says that the seeds are God's word or the message from God. The birds represent Satan who tries to keep the message of God from the people. The farmer sows the seed. This represents telling the message of God to the people. You may need to make it clear by saying, "The sower sowing the seed is like someone proclaiming the good news."

Each of the soils represents a different type of person who hears the message.

Stop and practice the story again. This time have people come and stand on each of the different soil types. As the seeds grow, let the people standing there describe what type of plant they have become. Each person should describe what happens to him as he grows. Pause the audio here.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Crowds of people
- Others who stay to hear the explanation of the parable

The characters in Jesus' parable include:

- A farmer
- Seeds
- Birds that come and eat the seeds
- Four kinds of soil
- The 4 types of people who hear God's word
- Satan

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene 1, Jesus steps onto a boat and moves the boat out into the water on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus begins to teach the crowds listening on the shore. Jesus teaches them by telling them parables. Jesus tells them a story of a farmer who went out to plant seeds. As the farmer scatters them, some seeds fall on a hard footpath and birds eat them. Some fall onto shallow soil with rock underneath it. Those seeds grow quickly, but wilt under the sun because they do not have deep roots. Other seeds fall on soil with weeds. The weeds grow alongside the seeds and choke them. Those seeds produce no harvest. Finally, there are seeds that fall on good, fertile soil. Those seeds sprout, grow, and produce a crop, 30, 60, or 100 times as much as what was planted. After telling this story, Jesus says, "Anyone with ears to hear should listen, and understand."

Stop the action: Ask those playing the disciples and crowd, "What are you thinking at this point?" You may hear, "We're confused," "I don't understand this story," "I liked the story, but I don't know why Jesus is telling us about farming," "Some people want to hear more," or "I see that some people are disappointed and walk away." Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What did you mean when you said, 'Anyone with ears to hear should listen, and understand?'" You may hear things like, "I knew some people would be listening and searching, but I also knew most people wouldn't be. I was inviting the people who would listen to pay attention to what I'm saying," or "I was hoping that they would come to me later and ask me for the meaning of this story." Continue the drama.

In scene 2, Jesus is with his disciples and a few others. They ask him what the parable means. Jesus replies, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the kingdom of God. But I use parables when I speak to people on the outside so that scripture may be fulfilled. Scripture says, 'When they see what I do they will learn nothing, when they hear what I say they will not understand, otherwise they would turn to me and be forgiven.'"

Stop the action: Ask those playing the disciples and crowds, "What do you think Jesus is trying to say here?" You may hear things like, "Jesus is telling these stories so that the people who truly want to follow him can understand them, while people who do not truly want to follow him can't understand or won't take the time to understand," or "There are people who are insiders and people who are outsiders." If there is some confusion over what Jesus meant, you might want to spend some time discussing what Jesus was doing in this section of the story. Continue the drama.

In scene 3, Jesus begins to explain what his story means. Jesus says, "If you can't understand this story, how will you understand all the other parables?"

Jesus explains that the farmer in the story represents someone taking God's message (or Word) to people, and the seeds represent God's message. When the seeds fall on the hard footpath and birds eat them, those are people who hear God's message but Satan comes and takes it away. The seeds that fall on the thin soil with rock underneath, whose plants are scorched by the sun, represent people who receive the message but are not deeply rooted in faith. They do not last long when persecuted.

Stop the action: Ask Satan, "Why are you taking God's word from the people?" You may hear, "These people belong to me. I want them to follow me. If I take God's word away, they won't be able to hear and understand it. They will continue following me." Ask the people on the path, "How do you feel about the seed being taken before you can have it?" You may hear, "What seed? It's normal for birds to eat seed. I don't see anything missing. I have what I need. I don't need anything here." Ask the people in the rocky soil area, "Why did you fall away so quickly?" You may hear, "I know someone who is being persecuted. I'm afraid that will happen to me or my family. I don't want anything bad to happen to us." Or, "I have so many problems at home and at work that I can't think about God and religious things. It all sounds good at first but this just takes too much time." Continue the drama.

The seeds that fall among the weeds represent those who hear God's message, but it is crowded out by the worries of life, the desire for things, and the lure of wealth. Those seeds have no harvest.

Stop the action: Ask the person or people who are acting out these seeds, "How do you feel? What is choking out your life or your harvest?" You may hear, "Listen, I have to have enough money for my family." Or, "I'm a leader in the community and that takes time. I don't want to lose my leadership position with the community." Or, "I have my parents to take care of and many children at home. I have no time to go out and tell others about God's kingdom." Continue the drama.

The seeds that fall on the good soil represent those who hear and accept God's word. They produce a harvest 30, 60, even 100 times what had been planted.

Stop the action: Ask the people in the good soil, "How did you manage to have such a harvest? What did you do?" You may hear, "I just tell everyone I know what God has done for me. God has been so good to me that I have to share the good news with others. The best thing about a secret is to learn it and tell it to others. I love to tell people about the secrets of God's kingdom." Or, "I feel like I'm an insider. I want my friends and family to become insiders with me. I have to tell them what I know. Some of them want to know more so I tell them everything I know." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:1-20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus was teaching on the side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus got into a boat and sat in the boat just off the shore while teaching. Use the same words for the **boat** and the **Sea of Galilee** that you have already used.

Stop here and show the map of the lake. Show a picture of a man sitting in a boat from the time of Jesus. Pause the audio here.

Jesus taught the people using parables. A **parable** was a special kind of story that Jesus told. It was told using everyday things to describe deeper things about God. Parables were often hard to understand unless people really tried to listen.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **parable**. For more information on parables, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The word **seed** is in the singular in the original language, but it means many individual seeds of the same kind of plant.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **seed**. For more information on seed, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The **thorns** are weeds or unwanted plants that keep the seeds from growing and producing a harvest. The plant that grew where the thorns still had roots did not produce a harvest, but it did not die.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **thorns**. Pause this audio here.

The numbers **30, 60, 100** may be referring to the numbers of grains per plant, thereby indicating that 100-fold is not necessarily an impossible amount of harvest. Any of these numbers indicate a very good harvest. The **fruit** that is produced refers to the grain that is produced at the head of the stalk. The farmer harvests the fruit or the grain that is produced.

Jesus' closest followers or disciples were with him for much of his public ministry, traveling with him everywhere, learning from him, and sometimes being sent out by him to preach the good news of the Kingdom and heal the sick. Use the same word for **disciple** that you have been using. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus talks about the **secret** of the kingdom of God. In this case, the secret is about the kingdom of God. The kingdom will look so different than anything anyone could have imagined or expected. Understanding what the secret means comes only from God. Here the word secret has a good or happy meaning.

A kingdom is a place where a king rules a group of people. The **kingdom of God** refers to all who follow God. God's Kingdom now is people following Jesus as king, helping each other, and spreading Jesus' love to others. When Jesus talked about God's Kingdom, people did not understand. The kingdom of God felt like a mystery to them. They needed to really listen to Jesus to understand what he was saying. Jesus explained this mystery of God's Kingdom through his parables. Use the same phrase for "kingdom of God" as you did in previous passages, and for more information on the kingdom of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Scriptures means the holy writings of any religious group. Jesus uses the word to refer to the writings from the Old Testament that included the religious law God gave to Moses and the writings of the prophets.

The farmer sows the seed, which is **God's word** or the message of God. You may need to make it clear by saying, the sower is sowing the word of God or the message of God. You could say, "The sower sowing the seed is like someone proclaiming the good news."

The Word refers to the teaching about God's Kingdom. The good news is that when we follow Jesus we are part of God's Kingdom.

Use the term for **Satan** that you have used for the leader of the evil spirits. For more information on Satan, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 4:1–20

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (29149218 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 4:21–25

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 4:21–25 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?

3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:21–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

After explaining the meaning of the parable of the four soils, Jesus continues teaching. This is a narrative story of the next part of the teaching.

In this passage Jesus asks many questions that don't require an answer. We don't know if this parable was told to the large group of people by the Sea of Galilee or to the smaller group of disciples and other followers. In the previous passage Jesus was alone with the disciples and a small group of other followers when Jesus explained the meaning of the parable.

Stop and show the translation team the map of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is near Capernaum in this story. Show the team Capernaum on the map. Pause the audio here.

Jesus often teaches using parables. **Parables** are "everyday stories which have deep meaning from God." The parables in this part of Mark tell about the mystery of God's Kingdom. These parables are not easy to understand.

In this parable, Jesus continues to explain about the kingdom of God. Jesus says that it may seem difficult to understand the secrets of God's Kingdom now. Jesus tells them that the secret will be revealed if they continue to listen closely.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: How do you learn important truths in your culture? Which important truths are kept for only some of the people to know? What do you have to do in order to learn important things in your culture? How do people understand the difficult things? Who do you go to in order to learn these things? Where do you go to learn important things? What kind of person do you have to be in order to learn well? Pause the audio here.

Remember that when Jesus was with the crowd, Jesus is teaching while sitting on a boat, so that the crowd can hear him better.

Stop and show the picture of a man sitting in a boat off the shore of a lake. Pause the audio here.

Jesus has just told the crowd the parable of the four soils, and his close followers have asked for more explanation. He has told this smaller group of disciples and followers that they will learn about God's Kingdom when they listen carefully to Jesus and try to understand. Then Jesus begins to teach again. Jesus does not mention the kingdom of God in this passage. However, the teaching is about the kingdom of God.

Jesus begins this parable by asking 2 questions. Would anyone hide a lamp under a bushel? Would anyone hide a lamp under a bed? This lamp would be made of clay and shaped like a shallow bowl. It would be filled with olive oil and a wick placed in the oil with part of it sticking out. This wick would be lit.

Stop and show a picture of a lamp with the wick that would have been used in the first century. Pause the audio here.

Jesus expects his listeners to answer "no" to each of the questions. Jesus uses the illustration of putting a lamp under a bushel. This is a basket or container that would hold about 8 dry quarts or liters of grain or fruit. It is large enough that it would not catch fire but would hide the lamp and eventually cause the lamp to go out. Then Jesus talks about putting the lamp under the bed. The bed would be on a frame so that there is space under the bed to put the burning lamp and not set the bed on fire. This bed could also be the couch that people lay down

on to eat at mealtimes. Jesus uses these questions to show a contrast. The lamp's purpose is to give light. Hiding the light keeps the lamp from its purpose. By asking the question twice, Jesus shows that this is important.

Show a picture of a bushel basket. Show a picture of a bed mat on a wooden frame to illustrate a simple bed off the floor. Show a picture of a simple wooden stool with the lamp sitting on the stool. Pause the audio here.

After asking the series of questions, Jesus explains that just as the lamp is in the open so all can see, this means that the secrets of God's Kingdom will be in the open for all to see. Jesus uses the word "eventually." This means that the secrets haven't been revealed yet. But eventually, or one day in the future, the secrets will be revealed. Jesus uses repetition in this sentence. The repetition emphasizes the point that Jesus is making. Repeating makes it easier to understand.

Jesus uses the same sentence about having ears to hear that Jesus used in the parable of the 4 soils. The meaning is the same. Jesus wants the people to listen to the story, understand what the story means and change their actions as needed after hearing the story.

Jesus continues to teach about the kingdom of God. Jesus gives the people who are listening a promise. Whoever listens and wants to understand more will understand more. Jesus says that the understanding will increase and increase as the people listen more closely. Jesus also gives the people who are listening a warning. Those who are not interested in understanding will find that they are further and further away from being a part of God's Kingdom. Those who don't listen will not be able to understand anything. God will take away their ability to understand.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 2 scenes.

First scene: Jesus continues teaching by telling a short parable about a lamp.

Second scene: Jesus explains the importance of listening to the parable.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- The group listening to the parable.
- Someone lighting the lamp and placing it in different places.

In scene 1, the passage starts with a time word. Some translations use the word "then." Other translations say that Jesus "also said." The passage begins with some word that indicates that Jesus continues the teaching. This time word indicates that the teaching continues after the parable of the 4 soils without interruption.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story of events that happen in one day. Listen carefully to how the person connects the events. After telling the first event, how does the person start the next event? Pause the audio here.

The passage does not give the setting of this story. Therefore, we don't know if this teaching was for the disciples and small group of other followers or for the crowd by the shore. The teaching could have continued after the parable with the large crowd. The teaching could have continued when Jesus was alone with the disciples and small group of followers.

Jesus begins by asking questions about a lamp that would normally have the word "no" as the answer. Jesus repeats the question twice. Then Jesus tells where people should place the lamp. The lamp would be placed so that the light would shine and everyone could see.

After talking about the lamp, Jesus starts talking about secrets or hidden things. Just as the lamp is placed so all can see the light, the secrets will be exposed for all to see. The light will reveal what has been hidden. Jesus tells the meaning of the lamp by repeating the teaching twice. What is hidden will be brought to the light. Every secret will be brought out to the light. The two statements mean the same thing.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story that has important teaching in it. Listen carefully to how the storyteller lets the audience know that this is important. Pause the audio here.

Then Jesus says, "Those who have ears should listen and understand." This same sentence was used in the parable of the 4 soils. You should use the same words that you used before at this point.

In scene 2, Jesus explains the importance of listening carefully to the people. First, Jesus gives a command. Jesus says, "Pay close attention to what you hear." A command is a strong sentence. The person has to choose to obey or disobey a command.

Then, Jesus makes a promise. Jesus says, "The more you listen, the more you will understand. This understanding will be given to the ones who listen." Jesus repeats this promise.

Then Jesus gives a warning. "If you don't listen, then the understanding that you do have will be taken away from you."

Notice how much Jesus repeats in this teaching.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. As Jesus talks about where the lamp might be placed, someone should demonstrate by placing a light in those places. Any sort of light will work—even a small flashlight. Be careful not to use a candle or anything burning as you demonstrate this parable.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- The group listening to the parable
- Someone lighting the lamp and placing it in different places

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus continues teaching the people. Jesus asks them a series of questions about where to put a lamp. The first two questions expect "no" as an answer. While Jesus is asking the questions and the group is answering the questions, have someone demonstrate what Jesus is saying.

Stop the action: Ask the person placing the lamp in different places, "Why won't you put the lamp under a bushel?" You may hear, "The lamp is to give out light. The lamp has to be placed high and near the center so it will give light to the whole room." Ask one of the listeners, "What do you think the lamp represents?" You may hear, "I think the lamp is God's word or the message from God that helps us understand anything that is hidden from us. Just like the light shows what was hidden in the dark, God's word shows us the things that God wants us to see." Restart the action.

After Jesus talks about secrets being brought to light,

Stop the action: Ask the group, "What kind of secrets is Jesus talking about here? What are the secret things that should be brought to light?" You may hear things like, "Deep understanding or deep teaching about God," or "Secrets about the kingdom of God," or "I don't know yet what the secrets are. I want to keep listening so I can discover what the secrets are." Ask the group, "What are you thinking or feeling about this?" You may hear things like, "I feel so honored that God would explain more about his Kingdom to me," or "I am so happy to learn more!" Continue the drama.

In the second scene, have the actors who are playing those listening to Jesus act out their understanding of what Jesus means by "Listening closely." Jesus says, "When you understand you'll be given more."

Stop the action: Ask one of the actors, "What does Jesus mean when Jesus says you will be given more?" You may hear, "I think it means that I will understand more than I understand now. And if I keep listening, I will understand even more." Ask one of the listeners, what does Jesus mean, when Jesus says, "But if you aren't listening, what you understand will be taken away from you?" You may hear, "Maybe I did understand a bit but now I won't understand anything. I'll lose what understanding I had because I didn't listen carefully." Ask the group, who are some people who might not listen carefully to what Jesus is saying?" You may hear, "People who are just looking for miracles," or "People who are too religious to listen to what Jesus has to say. Some people think they already know and don't need to learn anymore. Some people come to see what is going on but don't pay attention to what is being taught."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:21–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

As you tell this story, use the time word to indicate that the story follows the previous passage. This passage does not give any details about where Jesus is or who Jesus is teaching.

Jesus asks if someone would put a **lamp** under a **bushel** or under a **bed**. The answer to both questions is "no." The lamp is usually placed on a **lampstand** so that it will light up the room. This lamp would be made of clay and shaped like a shallow bowl. It would be filled with olive oil and a wick (made of flaxseed) placed in the oil with part of it sticking out. This wick would be lit. Remember that the basket or bushel refers to a container that holds about nine liters of a dry measure of grain. The container might be a bowl or basket. Remember that the bed is a bench of some sort—possibly the bench that was at the table where they laid down for meals in that culture. This bench has some space beneath it.

Stop and show the pictures of the lamp, the bushel basket, the bed, and the lampstand. Discuss what words you will use to translate each of these ideas. Pause the audio here.

Jesus explains that the purpose of the light is to reveal all that has been hidden. Then Jesus uses the same phrase that Jesus used in the parable of the 4 soils. Jesus said, "Anyone with ears to hear, should listen and understand." Use the same words you used in the previous translation.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 4:21–25**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (15644936 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 4:26-34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 4:26-34 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:26-34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage contains 2 narrative parables that continue the teaching that Jesus is doing. This teaching occurs while Jesus is performing miracles in the area near the Sea of Galilee. Jesus started teaching by the shore of the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum. Remember that Jesus is teaching while sitting on a boat, so that the crowd can hear him better.

Stop here and show the translation team the map of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is near Capernaum in this story. Show the team Capernaum on the map. Pause the audio here.

We don't know where Jesus was when Jesus told these two stories. With the first parable of the 4 soils, Jesus went to a place alone with the disciples to explain the story. The passage does not say if Jesus told these next two parables to all the people or just to the disciples and other close followers.

Jesus often teaches using parables. **Parables** are "everyday stories which have deep meaning from God." The parables in this part of Mark tell about the mystery of God's Kingdom. These parables are not easy to understand.

Stop and discuss: In this time, Jesus chose to use parables to teach truths about God's Kingdom. Talk about how your culture teaches truths to your children and others. Share a few stories that you use in your culture to illustrate an important truth. Pay attention to how you tell those stories. What words or phrases do you use to begin those stories? How does your audience know they are important stories to listen to? Pause the audio here.

Jesus said that the kingdom of God is like a farmer who scatters seed on the ground. When Jesus said "kingdom of God," Jesus was talking about when God would rule and care for God's people. God would be their king. Jesus was not talking about a country. Jesus is comparing the kingdom of God to the action of scattering the seed. Jesus is not comparing God to the farmer.

The farmer is using the same way of sowing the seed as in the parable of the 4 soils. The farmer would have the seed in a bag or some sort of container. The farmer would take the seed out by the handful and scatter the seed over the ground. The word seed is a singular word but in this story, the word seed means many seeds or a lot of seed.

Stop here and show a photo of the type of bag the farmer would carry the seeds in. Pause the audio here.

Jesus explains in the story that the sown seed grows into a plant. The seed and then the plant keep growing even when the farmer is asleep. The plant grows when the farmer is awake. The plant grows when the farmer is asleep. The farmer doesn't understand how the plant grows.

Stop here and discuss: Show the 3 pictures of the stages of the growth of wheat. The pictures will show the first sprouting of the plant, and then a picture of the stalk before the head of grain has formed, and then a picture of a full head of wheat on a stalk. Talk about the growth of a plant. Describe the shoot that first appears from the ground. Describe the stalk that grows. Describe the head of grain that appears. Describe the ripe grain that is ready for harvest. You will use these terms in your translation. Pause the audio here.

Eventually the grain has formed and is ready for harvest. The farmer uses a sickle and harvests the grain. Some will want to use the name of the cutting tool that the people use, such as machete. Some might want to leave off the name of the cutting tool and say that the farmer harvests the grain.

Stop here and show a picture of a sickle that might have been used in New Testament times. Pause the audio here.

In this short simple story, Jesus does not talk about what the farmer may do between the time of sowing the seed and the harvest of the grain.

Stop and discuss: Talk about farmers in your culture. What does the farmer do after he sows the seeds? Pause the audio here.

The harvest in this parable refers to the Jewish prophet Joel's words when he compares the harvest to the coming judgment at the end of time. These parables encourage Jesus' disciples that the harvest will definitely come. They do not have control over the harvest—God does. It is a mystery how the harvest comes, but it does.

Jesus starts the next parable by asking 2 questions that don't require an answer. It's almost as if Jesus is thinking out loud or letting the disciples know what Jesus is thinking as Jesus decides which story to tell.

Jesus tells them about the mustard seed. The mustard seed is a very small seed. However, the mustard seed makes a big bush, about 3 to 4 meters tall. This is a plant that people can eat, and it lives from year to year. This bush is so large that birds can make nests in the bush. Jesus says the kingdom of God is like this small seed.

Stop and show a picture of some seeds of different sizes. One seed should be very tiny. Show your translation team a picture of a mustard plant. If you do not have such a plant, use the idea of a small seed that grows into a large plant. Show a picture of a bird nest built into a bush. Pause the audio here.

In a similar way, Jesus and his followers were like the mustard seed. They were a very small number of people. But from those first believers and the seeds of God's Word, or God's message, God's Kingdom grows to a huge size. This seems impossible, but God will receive all the glory in the end.

Stop here and talk about how your culture talks about sowing seeds and reaping a harvest. What words do you use to describe this process? What does your culture believe about who or what has control over the results of the harvest? Tell each other stories about good and bad harvests in your area. Pause the audio here.

Jesus continued to teach the people by telling them parables. When Jesus was alone with the disciples, Jesus explained the meaning of the parables.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has three scenes.

First scene: In this story, Jesus is still teaching. Jesus tells another story about a farmer.

Second scene: Jesus continues to teach using a story about a small seed that becomes a large plant.

Third scene: After these two descriptions of the kingdom of God, the passage tells us that Jesus always used stories to teach the people. Then Jesus would explain the stories to the disciples later.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Those listening to Jesus
- A farmer
- Someone to be the growing plant.
- A mustard seed
- A bird

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives to visualize the story and the action in it.

Scene one starts with a time word. This word indicates that Jesus continued teaching, or that this story follows other stories that Jesus was telling. Some translations use a simple connecting word like "and." Other translations use the word "again" and others use the word "also." These three words indicate that Jesus continued teaching.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who is teaching. Talk about what the person taught. Listen carefully to the connecting word that the person uses to connect one teaching to the next one. Pause the audio here.

The farmer will act out the sowing of the seed. Then the farmer sleeps and wakes. The farmer sleeps and wakes. While this is happening, the plant grows. The farmer sees the plant grow. The farmer does not understand how the plant is growing. The farmer harvests the grain when the grain is ready for harvest.

Stop and discuss: Show plants at different stages of growth. One plant would be just pushing up through the earth. Another would have a stalk but no grain. Another plant would be ready to harvest. Have the group describe each stage of growth. Pause the audio here.

In scene two, Jesus asks two questions that don't require an answer. It sounds like Jesus is thinking out loud. Jesus is saying what Jesus is thinking: "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like? Or what parable should we use to describe it?"

Stop and discuss: Tell a story in which someone is planning to teach a group a lesson. This person is trying to decide what lesson to teach or how to teach the lesson. Pay attention to what this person says as he tries to decide. Does he ask himself questions that don't require an answer? Does he make statements? Pause the audio here.

Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a mustard seed which is a really small seed. This seed grows into a very large plant. The plant is so large that birds can build nests on the branches of the plant. This is a plant. This is not a tree.

In scene three, the action moves to a general description of how Jesus taught the people. Jesus taught the people by telling the people stories. The stories were similar to these stories that Jesus has just told. Jesus did not explain the meaning of the stories to the people. Jesus explained the meaning of the stories to the disciples when they were alone with Jesus.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Those listening to Jesus
- A farmer
- Someone to be the growing plant
- A mustard seed
- A bird

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus tells a story about a farmer who sows his seeds. The seeds grow into plants even when the farmer is sleeping.

Stop the action: Ask the actor playing the farmer to describe what he is doing to make the seeds grow. You may hear things like, "Nothing. I prepared the field for sowing. Once the seeds are scattered on the ground, I just wait for the plants to grow. If it rains, that's good but I can't control the rain or the sun. It's amazing to me that the plants even seem to grow during the night." Continue the drama.

As Jesus describes the farmer beginning to harvest,

Stop the action: Ask the actor playing the farmer, "What is your responsibility now?" You may hear things like, "To gather in the grain," or "To be thankful for the harvest." Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Jesus describes a mustard seed, which starts as a small seed and becomes a big plant with huge branches.

Stop the action: Ask the actor acting the seed what they did to grow into a large plant. You may hear things like, "It's what I'm meant to be," or "I don't know how this happened to me. I just needed to be planted—I have the potential to become a large plant." Ask the birds, "Why are you building nests in this plant?" You may hear, "This is a good place for a nest. The branches are strong. There is good shade. The nest feels protected. This is a good place for our baby birds to start life." Continue the drama.

In scene 3, Jesus always taught in parables and when he was alone with his disciples he would explain those to them.

Stop the action: Ask Jesus, "Why didn't you explain the stories to the crowd?" You may hear things like, "I spoke in parables so that only the people who were really listening could understand," or "I spoke in parables hoping that people would come to me and ask me to explain." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Jesus talks about the **kingdom of God** in this passage. Kingdom of God is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same term here as you did in the previous parable about the seeds and the sower.

Jesus says that the farmer **scatters seed on the ground**. This refers to throwing seeds on the ground in the process of sowing or planting them. This seed is not just planted on any ground, but on prepared soil in fields. Use the same description for this process you used in the parable of the four soils.

When Jesus was alone with his **disciples**, he explained everything to them. Disciple is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for disciple that you have been using.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 4:26–34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (14390572 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 4:35-41

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 4:35-41 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:35-41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This is the first in a group of 4 stories probably meant to illustrate Jesus' power over nature, evil, and death. Jesus brings life where there is death and destruction. This is a narrative story about Jesus calming a storm on the Sea of Galilee.

When this story starts, evening is coming. It is about the time of sundown. Jesus has been teaching all day about God's Kingdom. Jesus is already sitting in the boat, where he has been sitting all day so that the large crowds on the shore can hear Jesus and see Jesus as Jesus teaches. Jesus says to his disciples, "Let's go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee." Jesus' disciples get into the boat with him. The boat Jesus was sitting in was about 8 meters long and 2 1/2 meters wide. It was about 1 1/4 meters deep. There would be a seat at the back for the person who guided the boat. A boat of that size would have comfortably fit thirteen people. The disciples get into the boat that Jesus has been sitting in. They leave the shore and start across the lake. The crowd that had been listening to Jesus was left on the shore. Other boats that were in the area followed the boat that Jesus and the disciples were in.

Stop and show your translation team a map of the lake. Show them Capernaum, where Jesus was teaching all day, and then show them the area of the Decapolis, where the boat will end up. The Decapolis is another country or territory governed by a different government. Notice that this means that the boat will cross the widest part of the lake. The lake is about 8 miles, or 13 kilometers, wide at the widest point. Show a picture of the boat that is from the first century in Palestine. Pause the recording here.

At some time during the night a storm comes. We don't know how far the boat was from the shore. The Sea of Galilee is more than 50 meters, or 150 feet, deep. It was dark when this storm came up. The Sea of Galilee is surrounded by high mountains, and violent winds can enter from the southwest, causing violent storms.

Stop and show a picture of the Sea of Galilee, showing the high mountains that are near the shore. Pause the recording here.

The winds are almost always stronger in the afternoon than in the morning or night, so fishing is usually done in the night. When a storm develops in the evening, it is very dangerous. Several of Jesus' disciples were fishermen, so they understood the danger of the storm.

Stop and discuss: Describe the kinds of storms you have and how people react to them. Listen to the words used to describe strong winds. What kind of noise does the wind make? How do people describe the noise of the wind? Describe the lakes in your area. How deep is your local lake? How large is the lake? Talk about when and how the people fish. Pause the recording here.

When this storm comes, the wind is so strong that it blows up huge waves. Water crashes over the side of the boat, and the boat begins to fill with water. The boat was about to sink or go down into the water. At least 4 of the disciples with Jesus were fishermen who had fished on this lake all their lives. These fishermen were accustomed to storms on the Sea of Galilee. However, these fishermen along with the other disciples were terrified by this storm. These men all thought the boat was sinking and they were going to drown.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story in which people were very afraid of something. Talk about their fear and how the fear increases as the story goes on. Notice the words that the storyteller uses to describe this fear. Pause the audio here.

At this point the story tells us that Jesus is sleeping in the back of the boat. Jesus has his head on a cushion. Jesus went to sleep before the storm started, and Jesus continues to sleep. The back of the boat usually had a small platform or elevated seat for the person who steered or guided the boat. There was usually a cushion for this person to sit on. This is where Jesus was sleeping. The storm does not wake Jesus up. Because Jesus is sleeping on that seat, the water in the bottom of the boat does not wake Jesus up.

Stop and discuss: Show a picture of the boat again. Talk about the front of the boat and the back of the boat. Does your language have specific terms for these parts of the boat? Does everyone understand those terms? Use words that everyone will understand that Jesus is in the boat with the disciples but Jesus is at the back of the boat asleep with his head on a cushion or pillow. Pause the audio here.

The disciples were in a panic. They woke Jesus up. They shouted at Jesus. They said, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?" Teacher is a term of respect used for someone who had the authority to teach the word of God to the people. The question the disciples asked is one of those questions that don't expect an answer. They are begging Jesus for help. Some would say, "Teacher, we are about to drown, and you don't seem to care."

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a group of people who thought they were about to die. Listen to the way the people talk. Listen to the tone of voice. Pause the audio here.

Jesus woke up and spoke to the storm. Jesus rebuked the wind. Rebuke is a strong word. Rebuke means to command with the idea of a threat. This is a strong way of speaking to the wind. Jesus also spoke to the waves. Wind makes a noise. Jesus told the wind to be quiet. Some translations say "be silent" and others say "hush." The waves were high and crashing into the boat. Jesus said, "be still." Immediately, the wind stopped and became silent and the water became calm.

Then Jesus speaks to his disciples. Remember that they had just heard a full day of teaching about God's Kingdom. Jesus has explained to them deep mysteries of the kingdom. Trust during a time of disaster shows a true disciple. Jesus asked, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" Faith means to have confidence in someone or to trust someone. Jesus is saying, "Don't you trust me yet?" or "Don't you have confidence in my ability to protect you?"

At this point the disciples are even more terrified than they were during the storm. Now they are absolutely terrified. They look at each other. They ask each other who Jesus is. They have just seen that even the wind and the waves obey Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:35–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has three scenes.

First scene: Jesus and the disciples start to cross the Sea of Galilee.

Second scene: A severe wind storm suddenly appears. The disciples are afraid they will die.

Third scene: The disciples wake Jesus up. Jesus calms the wind and the waves. The disciples wonder who Jesus really is.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Other boats
- The crowd
- The wind
- The waves

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, Jesus has been teaching all day. Jesus is in a boat sitting just off the shore. Jesus says to the disciples, "Let's go to the other side of the lake." The disciples get in the boat with Jesus. It is evening or near sundown. There are other boats nearby. These boats follow the boat that Jesus and the disciples are sitting in. The main part of the crowd remains behind on the shore.

The boat starts near Capernaum. The boat is headed across the widest part of the lake towards the Decapolis. The Decapolis is a Greek territory on the other side of the lake. This territory has a different government. The Roman government is over both the area where Capernaum is located and the Decapolis.

Stop and show your translators the photo of the boat again and choose a way to show the boat size. For example, you might draw the dimensions on the ground with a stick. Or you might put sticks down to show the outline of the boat. Ask 13 people to step inside the drawn lines. Identify the front and back of the boat. Jesus would go to the back of the boat to lie down on the seat used by the man who guides the boat. Jesus puts his head on the pillow that the person guiding the boat would sit on. Pause the recording here.

In scene 2, a sudden, severe storm comes up. This is a windstorm. The words to describe this storm should not be words that describe a specific kind of storm such as a hurricane or cyclone or typhoon. The windstorm is strong. The wind is so strong that it produces huge waves. The waves are so large that they come over the sides of the boat and water falls into the boat. The boat starts to fill with water. Boats float on the water. When water gets inside the boat or the boat fills with water, the boat sinks.

Stop and do this activity as a group: Get a large basin or bucket of water. Place a cup or bowl on top of the water. Notice that the bowl floats. Now gradually pour some water into the bowl. Notice that as the bowl fills with water, the bowl goes down into the water. When the bowl is full of water, the bowl sinks. Pause the audio here.

The disciples are afraid that they will die. Jesus is asleep. The disciples wake Jesus up. The disciples are shouting. By shouting and the words they use, we see that the disciples are really afraid. They are so afraid that they are not able to speak calmly and politely. The disciples say, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?" The words the disciples use are really strong words.

In scene 3, Jesus wakes up. Jesus rebukes the wind. Rebuke is a strong word that is a command but also a threat. Jesus says to the wind and the waves, "Silence, be still." Instantly the wind stops and the water calms down and becomes smooth and quiet.

Stop and discuss: Jesus calms the wind and water by speaking. Notice any gestures that the actors might use, such as holding up a hand in a stopping motion. Be sure that all understand that the wind and the water obey the sound of Jesus' voice. Do this activity as a group: Place water in a bucket or large bowl. Use a spoon or something to stir the water until large waves occur with white caps on top of the waves. Then take the spoon out of the water. Notice that it takes time for the water to become still again. In the story, the action is sudden or instant. When Jesus said, "be calm" the water was instantly calm. Pause the recording here.

After Jesus calms the wind and the water, Jesus asks the disciples why they are afraid. Jesus asks when the disciples are going to have faith. These two questions are questions that don't require or expect an answer. Another way to say this is, "Don't be afraid. By now you should have faith in me."

Stop and discuss: Ask a volunteer ahead of time to help you with this. Place a chair in the center of the room and ask the volunteer, "Do you believe that this chair exists? Do you believe that this is a chair? Do you believe this chair is strong enough to hold you?" The volunteer should say "yes" to all these questions. Then ask, "I know you are tired, so here's this chair for you to sit in." The volunteer should refuse to sit in the chair. Go over this several times, asking why the volunteer won't sit in the chair even though he/she knows it is there and says that they believe it is strong enough to hold them. Explain to the group that this is an example of what faith is about—more than just believing in your mind but acting on that belief. Pause the recording here.

Stop and discuss: How does your language show questions like these that have an answer, but the answer is not said out loud? Pause the recording here.

When Jesus asks these questions, the disciples are absolutely terrified. This means that they were more afraid than they were during the storm. They turn to each other and ask each other, "Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey him?" This is one of those questions that don't require an answer, but this question has an answer. The answer is said in your heart, not out loud. The answer is that Jesus is the "Christ, the son of God." The disciples knew Jesus by name. Now they are trying to understand who Jesus really is. They have just seen something that only God would be able to do. In your language, this question should express surprise and awe. The disciples are asking how it is that Jesus could do something that only God can do. They could say, "Jesus is amazing. The wind and the waves obeyed Jesus' commands."

Stop here and discuss as a group: How does your language show questions like these that have an answer, but the answer is not said out loud? Pause the recording here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:35–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The crowd
- Other boats
- The wind
- The waves

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus is sitting in a boat. It is near sundown. Jesus has been teaching all day. Jesus says to the disciples, "Let's go to the other side of the lake." The disciples get in the boat with Jesus. They set sail for the other side of the lake. Some other boats follow them. The crowd remains on the shore.

Stop the action: Ask someone in the crowd, "What did you learn today?" You may hear, "I heard some really interesting stories. I have to figure out what they mean. It seems like there is a meaning behind the stories but I'm not sure of the meaning. I need to hear Jesus some more." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "I'm very tired. This has been a good day. The crowd seemed to be listening. I hope some have understood. I hope some will want to hear more." Ask the disciples, "Why are you going across the lake?" You may hear, "I don't know. Jesus wants to go and I go with Jesus wherever Jesus wants to go. Anyway, this is a beautiful evening and a great time to be out on the lake alone or just us and Jesus and the crowd a long way away from us." Continue the drama.

In scene two, sometime during the night, a sudden windstorm comes. The storm is severe. The wind is strong. The wind causes large waves to form. The waves crash into the boat and water falls into the boat. The boat starts to fill with water. The disciples are terrified that they are about to drown. The disciples believe that the boat is about to sink.

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "Why are you so afraid?" You may hear, "The boat is filling with water. Because of the storm and the wind, I don't know where we are. I don't know which way is closer to shore. I've never seen such a storm as this in my whole life. I've been fishing with my father since I was little and I've seen storms but never anything like this. The boat is filling with water. We can't get the water out fast enough. Why doesn't Jesus help us?" Continue the drama.

During this storm, Jesus is asleep and continues to sleep. Jesus went to sleep before the storm started. Jesus is at the back of the boat. Jesus has his head on a cushion. The disciples wake Jesus up. The disciples shout at Jesus, "Teacher, we are about to drown. Don't you care?"

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "I'm afraid. I've never had fear to this level in my whole life. I think I'm going to die tonight. I don't understand how Jesus can sleep through this storm. Doesn't Jesus care about us? I thought Jesus cared but now I'm not sure." Ask Jesus, "How do you feel after hearing the disciples suggest that you don't care?" You may hear, "I'm sad when I hear this. I was hoping that they were learning to trust me, to have trust that I would take care of them. I understand that they are afraid of the storm. This way of speaking just shows their fear. But it seems like they learned nothing from the stories I told today." Continue the drama.

In scene 3, Jesus commands the wind and the waves to be still. The wind and the waves obey Jesus instantly. At once, everything becomes calm and still. Then Jesus asks the disciples why they are afraid. Jesus asks the disciples when they are going to have faith in Jesus. After Jesus asks these questions, the disciples are even more afraid than they were during the storm. The disciples look at each other and ask each other, "Who is Jesus? Even the wind and the waves obey Jesus."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "Why are you so afraid now? The danger is over. The storm has stopped." You may hear, "Jesus just spoke to the wind and it stopped! I've never seen anything like that. Jesus just spoke to the waves and they stopped. How is it possible that the wind and the waves obey the voice of Jesus. This seems like something that only God could do. Is Jesus God? I don't understand what I just saw with my own eyes. How can Jesus be God? What other explanation could there be for what just happened? Who is Jesus? I thought I knew but now I don't know. I need to learn more. I need to talk to the others and understand what they are thinking."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 4:35-41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus was teaching beside the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was sitting in a boat. Jesus said to the disciples, "Let's go to the other side of the lake." The disciples got into the boat with Jesus. Use the same words for the Sea of Galilee, boat, and **disciple** that you have used in previous passages. Disciple is discussed in the Master Glossary.

The storm that came on the Sea of Galilee doesn't have a specific name such as cyclone. Use a general word for storm and describe the wind as being very strong so that it produced high waves.

Teacher is a respectful form of address used by Jesus' followers to show that he was a teacher of the things of God and had disciples/students who followed him and listened to his teachings. In the versions of this story in other Gospels, other titles were given to him, such as "Lord/master." Mark's title is slightly less important and respectful, possibly showing the followers' frustration with Jesus at the time. Be sure not to use a term that only refers to a schoolteacher.

Stop here and discuss the word for **teacher** that you will use in this passage. Remember that teacher is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

"...that we're going to drown"—in Greek this phrase says "we are dying," and probably means that they believe they are about to die.

Be still comes from the word "muzzle" for an animal's mouth. It means to stop the mouth in order to make it silent. Jesus **rebuked** the storm, he strongly commanded the storm. The verbs used for rebuking and silencing the storm in this story are the same verbs used in other stories for rebuking and silencing demons. You may have a natural expression for rebuking and silencing something. Use the appropriate and descriptive phrase in your language. You may not be able to rebuke an object that is not alive in your language. If so, use a command that indicates Jesus' authority, such as "He commanded the storm strongly to stop."

Your language may have a natural expression for **fear** (for example, "Your heart trembles, shiver in your liver"). If this is the case, you may choose to use it here.

Faith or **trust** describes man's response to God's promise. It probably implies more than mental agreement but putting one's faith/confidence in God. In this case, the followers should trust Jesus himself. Use the same word for **faith** that you used in previous passages, and remember that faith is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 4:35-41

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (22219151 KB)

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Mark 5:1-20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 5:1-20 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This is the second in a group of stories in Mark which show Jesus' power over destructive forces like natural disasters, demons, and death itself. This story shows that Jesus has authority over everything, including over all evil forces. There is so much detail in this story that it shows us that it really must have been told by someone who has seen it themselves. In the previous story, the disciples with Jesus had just experienced the storm and Jesus calmed the storm. The storm happened during the night. It is now morning of the next day. This is a narrative account of Jesus' meeting with a demon-possessed man.

In the morning after the storm, the boat has landed on the other side of the lake, which is actually another country. Jesus and the disciples were in that boat. The passage uses the word "they" to talk about Jesus and the disciples. You may say Jesus and the disciples arrived.

Stop and show a map of the Sea of Galilee with Capernaum marked. This map should also show the land of the Gerasenes and the area of the Decapolis. Stop the recording here.

At this time, the Roman government had divided the land into different countries with a different ruler. The east side of the Sea of Galilee was a country called the Decapolis, which is a Greek area. The word Decapolis which occurs at the end of the story means "10 cities." Gerasa is one of the cities. The boat lands in the region of the Gerasenes. The Gerasenes were not Jewish people. They did not follow the laws that God gave to Moses. The Gerasenes did not worship God.

When Jesus and the disciples arrived they were in an area with hills along the shoreline. These hills had caves in them. These caves were the **burial caves** where the local villagers put the dead bodies. This area was called a cemetery or tombs because dead people were buried in the caves. The hills in this part of the country had many caves in them because the rock was soft. The caves could have been natural or man-made and were often large enough that they needed columns inside to support them; therefore, the caves were large enough to provide shelter for this man. Some of the caves had small areas along the side of them where dead bodies were placed when the caves were used as tombs. The passage says the man lived in the cemetery or tombs. The man was using these caves as a place to sleep. The man was not going into graves dug into the ground.

Stop here and show your team a picture of caves in cliffs. Pause the recording here.

As Jesus gets out of the boat, this man who lives in the cemetery and has an unclean spirit living inside him comes to meet Jesus. "Unclean" means that something is not fit for service to God and a person is unable to worship God. The man is in the area where people bury the dead in caves, so even the area is unclean to Jewish people. The man himself is unclean because he is possessed by evil spirits. The pigs on the hillside are unclean animals. This story is full of "unclean" things.

An evil or unclean spirit lived in and possessed the man who was living in the cemetery. When demons possess people, they control their actions. The word for evil spirit is singular in this part of the story. In this text in the original language, it is actually called an "unclean spirit." All evil spirits are "unclean" because they are unfit for service to God. Already in the book of Mark, Jesus has healed people who were possessed by evil spirits. You would use the same term to describe this evil or unclean spirit as you used before.

The Talmud is the book of traditional Jewish history and law. This book lists four characteristics of people who are mad, or crazy:

1. walking around at night
2. spending the night on a grave or tomb
3. tearing one's clothes
4. destroying one's possessions.

The man showed all four of these characteristics. The usual practice in dealing with crazy people was to tie them up in order to protect them from themselves. The spirits made this man so strong that he broke his chains. The passage tells us that this man also ran screaming around the hills both day and night. The idea is that this man never slept. The story gives us a strong description of this man and his life before he meets Jesus.

Stop and show a picture of chains with shackles that people used to bind up a person. Stop the recording here.

The man ran to Jesus and bowed low before Jesus. Bowing low before someone is a way to show respect to that person. The man is shrieking or screaming or yelling in a really loud voice.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone out of control of himself who is yelling or speaking in a very loud voice. Listen carefully to how the storyteller describes the speech of this person. Some people use word pictures such as yelling at the top of his voice, while others might just say the man was speaking as loudly as he could. Pause the recording here.

The man begins to talk to Jesus. The man asks Jesus why Jesus is interfering with the man. The evil spirit is talking. The evil spirit is really saying, "Why are you interfering with me—the evil spirit?" You have already used this phrase in Mark when Jesus cast out another evil spirit. The man calls Jesus by a title. The man says "Jesus, Son of the Most High God." You have used the term Son of God previously in Mark. Use the same words here. "The most high God" is a way of saying that God is greater and more powerful than the other gods. This is a title that appears several times in scripture.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a man who grows up in the village. As you talk about this man, talk about his father and grandfather. Also describe this man as being from the village and working on a farm. Listen for any titles that might be used. The storyteller may say that this man is the son of someone. The storyteller may also say that this man is a son of the village. What words does the storyteller use to describe this man? Pause the recording here.

Jesus has already told the unclean spirit to leave the man. This means that before this man ran to Jesus and the unclean spirit started talking, Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to leave the man. The words in this story make it clear that this action already happened.

Jesus asks the demon's name. With the answer to this question, we understand that this man is possessed by many demons. The name the demons give, "Legion," is the Roman name for a group of over 6000 soldiers. The Romans colonized or conquered that area during this time, so the name "Legion" they used made sense—everyone in the area understood this word. We don't know how many unclean spirits were in the man. If the people don't know the word legion, you can use other words or titles such as "many" or "a lot." For example, the man could say, "My name is many."

A person who cast out demons in biblical times often banished evil spirits to a remote place far from people so that they could no longer cause trouble. This may be why the evil spirits requested to not be sent to a faraway place—they assumed that is what Jesus would do also.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture normally show that they are demon possessed? How do people in your culture react to people who are crazy or demon possessed? Pause the recording here.

The evil spirits again begged Jesus not to send them to a far away place. Notice that all the talk from the evil spirits is about where they will go. There is no question of staying in the man. Jesus has commanded them to leave the man. The evil spirits know they must leave the man. Finally, the evil spirits ask permission to go to the pigs. Jesus gives the evil spirits permission to leave the man and go to the pigs who were on a nearby hillside.

Stop and show a picture of pigs. Pause the recording here.

The biblical text does not explain why the pigs were destroyed. However, we know from other parts of the Bible that evil spirits want to destroy people. We have a clear picture of the huge number of evil spirits inside of the man—there were 2000 pigs on the hillside! The pigs ran down the steep hillside into the water, and all the pigs drowned, or died, in the water.

The pig herders go to the local town and tell the people what happened. Pig herders are the people who guarded the pigs, made sure the pigs were in a place where they could get food and water and kept the pigs from harm. The pig herders were like shepherds, but they were taking care of pigs. Pigs were unclean animals for the Jewish people. Jews were not allowed to eat the meat or to work with the pigs. This area is a non-Jewish area. The pigs would provide money for the local people. The village lost a large sum of money when the pigs drowned. When the people from the nearby town arrive at the shore, they see a real change in the man. The people hear what happened to the pigs. The people were afraid. The people asked Jesus to leave that area.

Jesus was getting in the boat when the man who had been healed asked to go with Jesus. Jesus said, "No." Jesus did not allow the man to go with Jesus and the disciples. Instead, Jesus told the man to go home and share what the Lord, or God, has done for him with all his family. Some translations say that the man should share with other people and other translations say he should share with friends. Jesus also said that the man was to tell how God had shown the man mercy. "Mercy" means to show compassion or kindness for someone who is suffering. The man was suffering when the demons possessed him. Here the word Lord is referring to God. Jesus is saying that the man should tell the people what God has done for this man. The man did more than Jesus asked. The man went around the whole region. This area is called the "Decapolis," a Greek word that means "Ten Cities." The man told everyone what Jesus had done for him. Everyone who heard was amazed.

Because this story takes place outside of the Jewish homeland, it sets the foundation for the fact that eventually people would share the mission of Jesus in all nations.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

First scene: Jesus and his disciples arrive on the other side of the huge lake. A man who has been possessed by evil spirits meets them. The man is described.

Second scene: The possessed man sees Jesus from far away and runs to meet him. The spirits talk with Jesus.

Third scene: The evil spirits ask Jesus to allow them to go into some nearby pigs. The pigs go crazy, plunging into the lake and drowning in the water.

Fourth scene: Herdsmen see what happened. They go to the nearby town and tell everyone what they saw. The people are afraid and ask Jesus to leave.

Fifth scene: Jesus gets back into the boat to go back to the other side of the lake. The man who had been possessed asks Jesus if he can go with him. Jesus says, "No, go back to your family and tell them everything God has done for you and how merciful he has been." The man goes and tells everyone in that region what Jesus has done for him. Everyone is amazed.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The man who's been possessed
- The evil spirits possessing the man
- The pigs (2,000 pigs)
- Herdsmen watching the pigs
- People from the nearby town who come to see what has happened

In scene one, Jesus and the disciples arrive on the other side of the lake. This is the morning after the storm that occurred during the night. This place is where Jesus was going when Jesus said, "Let's go to the other side of the lake." As the boat arrives a man with an unclean spirit comes out to greet them.

The story action stops while the storyteller gives a description of this man who has evil spirits living in him. The man lives in a cemetery. The dead people are buried in caves that are in the hills near the lake. The man also goes into those caves to sleep. Mark tells us these things about the man.

- He is possessed by evil or unclean spirits.
- He lives in the burial caves.
- He is so strong no one can restrain him even with chains.
- He cuts himself with sharp stones.
- He wanders day and night through the hills howling or shouting in a loud voice.
- At the end of the story, the villagers see that the man is wearing clothes. This implies that the man was not wearing clothes when Jesus arrived.

This information tells us how miserable this man's life was.

In scene two, the man possessed by the unclean spirit sees Jesus and runs towards Jesus. The man bows low before Jesus. The man shrieks and screams. These are loud, unpleasant sounds. People in their normal mind would not make these sounds. The man asks Jesus why Jesus is interfering with the evil spirits. The man calls Jesus "Son of the Most High God." The man accuses Jesus of torturing the man. At this point, we learn that Jesus has already commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man.

The difficulty in this scene is to show the order of the first events. Jesus sees the man and commands the spirits to leave the man. The man runs to Jesus and bows before Jesus. The man calls Jesus the Son of the Most High God.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story that includes an event that has already happened. How does the storyteller make it clear to the audience that the event happened prior to the story being told? Stop the recording here.

Now work out the sequence of events for the story. Practice telling the sequence of events so that it is clear to everyone when Jesus tells the evil spirits to leave the man.

Jesus asks the possessed man his name. The man says, "My name is Legion." In this time, the people all knew that a legion of soldiers was about 6000 soldiers. The name Legion means that the man had many demons inside him. It does not mean that the man had 6000 demons. In most cultures today, people don't know what the word legion means. It is okay to give the man a proper name such as "Many." This type of name would indicate that the man has many spirits living in him. The word you choose would mean many and be a word that could be used as a name in your language.

All the action in the story occurs near the lake. The hills with the burial caves are near the lake. Jesus has just gotten out of the boat at the shore. The pigs are on a hillside near the lake. The pigs fall into the lake and drown.

In scene three, we learn that there is a large herd of pigs on a hillside near the water. The evil spirits ask Jesus for permission to go into the pigs. Jesus gives them permission—he does not send the spirits into the pigs but gives them permission to go into the pigs. When acting out the story, be careful that you do not show by your gestures or hand motions that Jesus commanded the spirits to go to the pigs. Jesus commanded the spirits to leave the man. Jesus gave the spirits permission to go to the pigs. When the spirits go into the pigs, the pigs rush or plunge down the slope of the field, fall over the cliff, and drown in the lake. The story uses strong action words to describe what happened to the pigs. The pigs didn't just run down the hill. The pigs rushed down the hill or plunged down the hill. This means they were going so fast that when they got to the edge of the cliff, they fell over into the water and drowned.

In scene four, the herdsmen see what happens to the pigs and go into the nearby town to gather the townspeople. The townspeople then come to the lake's shore and see Jesus speaking to the formerly possessed man, who is now clothed, calm, and in his right mind. The townspeople also listen to the herdsmen explain what happened to the pigs. The townspeople are afraid. The townspeople pleaded with Jesus or begged Jesus or implored Jesus to go away. These words are all much stronger than to ask. The people saw things they didn't understand and were afraid. They wanted Jesus to go away.

In scene five, Jesus agrees to leave. Jesus is stepping off the shore and back into the boat to cross the lake again. The man who has been healed begs to go with Jesus. Jesus says, "Go to your family and tell them everything God has done for you and how merciful God has been."

After Jesus leaves, the man goes to the towns in that region and tells them what Jesus did for him, and people are amazed at what he tells them. There were ten towns in that region. The name of the area was "the Decapolis" which means "Ten Towns." We don't know how many of the towns the man actually went to visit. The man told everyone he saw what Jesus had done for him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 5 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The man who's been possessed
- The evil spirits possessing the man
- The pigs (2,000 pigs)
- Herdsmen watching the pigs
- People from the nearby town who come to see what has happened

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus and the disciples arrive at the other side of the lake. It is morning after the storm during the night. A man possessed by an evil spirit runs to meet Jesus.

Pause the action: Ask the disciples, "What do you think when you see this man?" You may hear, "That poor man looks miserable. He must live a terrible life. I can see sores on his body from here. How awful to live like this. I hope Jesus can help him like Jesus helped that other man possessed by evil spirits." Ask the man, "Why are you running to Jesus?" You may hear, "Jesus is telling the evil spirits to leave. I want them to leave. I'm out of control, I'm desperate, I'm completely ruined, I'm alone, I'm an outcast, I'm possessed," or "I can't control myself." Or the spirits might answer in place of the man, "Jesus is telling us to leave. Where is Jesus going to send us? We want to stay in this area." Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling as you see this man?" You may hear, "I feel compassion on the man," or "Anger at the spirits because they are destroying this man." Continue the drama.

In scene two, the man comes to Jesus and bows before Jesus. Then Jesus and the spirits have a conversation. The spirits are screeching and screaming. The spirits beg Jesus not to torture them. In this instance, to torture the spirits would be to send them to a far away place. They want to stay in that area. Jesus asks the man, "What is your name?" The man says, "My name is Many." Or, "My name is Legion." The spirits beg to remain in that region.

Pause the action. Ask the spirits, "Why don't you want to leave here?" You may hear, "We have found a home here. It's comfortable here. The people don't worship God here. But we have to obey Jesus. That's why we are begging Jesus to let us stay here. It was so comfortable before Jesus came. Why did Jesus have to come and disturb us and our home?" Ask the disciples, "What are you thinking as you hear this conversation?" You may hear, "This is astonishing! It sounds like the spirits are saying they must obey Jesus or go where Jesus sends them. Does this mean that Jesus has power over the evil spirits? I know Jesus healed that other man. But this makes it seem like all evil spirits have to do what Jesus says." Continue the drama.

In scene 3, the evil spirits ask permission to go to the pigs. Jesus gives permission. Once the evil spirits enter the pigs, the pigs rush down the hill and fall over the cliff into the water and drown. The herdsmen see this and run to the nearby town to tell the people what happened.

Pause the action. Ask the actors playing the herdsmen, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "All of our money has been destroyed," "Our livelihood is gone," "Afraid," "Angry," "Confused," or "We don't understand what we just saw." Continue the drama.

In scene 4, as the crowd of townspeople arrive, they see the man who was possessed now sane and clothed. They listen to the herdsmen who are telling them what happened to the pigs. They are afraid.

Pause the action. Ask the actor playing the demon possessed man, "How do you feel now?" You may hear things like, "I'm healed," "I'm in my right mind," "I'm grateful," or "I'm no longer ashamed." Now ask those playing the crowd of townspeople, "How do you feel?" Listen for, "Afraid," "Confused," "A bit angry," or "We don't want Jesus around." Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "I don't understand why the people are angry and afraid. This man is obviously well now. Pigs are unclean so the people should not be upset about losing them. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "This man is now about to live as God intended him to live. I'm really glad I could help him. It makes me sad that the people don't understand that I can help them also. Maybe when I come back they will accept my help." Continue the drama.

In scene five, as Jesus steps into the boat, the man begs to go with Jesus. Jesus says, "No, go home to your family. Tell them what God has done for you and his mercy towards you."

Pause the action. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "Sadness that the people are asking me to go away," "Accomplishment because I did what I came to do," "Intentional about sending the man back to his home area," or "Happiness for this man who is restored." Ask the man, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "I'm so glad to be normal again. I can look around me and see and hear

and feel things like normal people. I wanted to go with Jesus. I would love to spend more time with Jesus. Jesus healed me. But Jesus wants me to go to my family. It will be good to see my family again. I can have a good relationship with my family. I'm so happy about that. I just want to tell everyone what has happened to me." Continue the drama.

The man tells everyone what Jesus has done for him, and everyone who hears is amazed.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the morning, after the storm, they arrived in the region of the **Gerasenes**. The word "they" refers to Jesus and the disciples. The region of the Gerasenes is an area on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. We are not sure exactly where it would be, but the map shows the most likely place. Different versions say this name differently.

Stop and show the translators where this area is on the map. Pause the audio here.

The man was **possessed** by an **evil spirit** or an unclean spirit. Evil spirit is discussed in the Master Glossary. "Possessed" means that the evil spirit lives in the man and has taken control of the man's thoughts and actions. Use the same term for evil spirit you have used in previous passages.

This man came and **bowed before Jesus**. The spirits in the man were showing that they knew Jesus had authority over them. To bow before someone is to show respect for that person.

And they said, "**Why are you bothering me?**" The evil spirits are trying to defend themselves—this is their reaction to suddenly being put in front of Jesus himself. Use the same wording for this phrase that you used in the previous passage where Jesus cast out an evil spirit.

They called Jesus the **Son of the Most High God**. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about Son of God. Use the same words you used previously for the Son of God.

The term **Most High God** was a Jewish title for God that showed that he was greater and more powerful than any other god. Be sure that the literal translation of this word "high" does not just refer to physical size. You could translate this term in ways like: "greatest," or "most powerful" God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Most High God**. Pause this audio here.

Legion is a military term designating 6826 Roman soldiers. It is a Roman word. The peoples of that area of the world were familiar with Roman legions and would have seen them. This is the name that the evil spirits give to Jesus. Most Bible scholars believe that the name itself is not as important as the concept that there were many evil spirits inside of this man. One of the English translations chooses to change the name "Legion" to "Many" to make the name understandable to everyone. Be careful that your audience does not think that the evil spirits have many names.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **legion**. Pause this audio here.

After Jesus heals the man and the villagers come out to see them and they see that he is healed they ask Jesus to leave. And the man asks to go with Jesus. But Jesus tells the man, "No, go home to your family and tell them everything that the **Lord** has done for you. Lord refers to God the Father. God is the source of mercy. Use the same word for Lord that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Lord is in the Master Glossary. **Mercy** means to show compassion on or kindness to someone who is suffering. Mercy is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells the man to go home and tell his **household**, or family. This refers to family members, or people who live in a house including servants. These are people that you have some sort of connection or bonding with—you have a responsibility to them. See the Master Glossary for more information about the word household.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **household**. Pause this audio here.

So the man started off and he went to visit the Decapolis. **Decapolis** is a Greek word that means 10 towns. Maybe the man did not go to each town himself, but to the region in which these 10 towns were.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 5:1–20

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (26247988 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 5:21–34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 5:21–34 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:21–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus was asked to leave the region of the Gerasenes after he healed the demon-possessed man. He and his disciples got back into the boat, crossed the lake again, and returned to the area of Capernaum, where they had left the evening before. The disciples are not mentioned by name during the time Jesus is with the demon-possessed man. The disciples were in the boat during the storm. The disciples are with Jesus in the boat when they get back to Capernaum. In terms of time for these stories in Mark, Jesus taught all day, crossed the lake during the night when a big storm came, arrived on the other side in the morning and cast out the demons and now, later that same day has arrived back in Capernaum. It has not yet been 24 hours since Jesus left Capernaum. This is a narrative account of the next events after Jesus returned to Capernaum.

Stop and show your translators the map of the area where Jesus was with the demon-possessed man, and where he is now on the shore by Capernaum. Pause the recording here.

Mark likes to tell stories within stories. This story begins with Jairus asking Jesus to heal his daughter, and then ends with Jesus healing Jairus' daughter. On the way to Jairus' house, Jesus encounters the woman—this is the smaller story within the bigger story of Jesus healing Jairus' daughter. This is Mark's special way of storytelling—he likes the events of one story to highlight what happens in the next story. The bleeding woman touched Jesus. Even though she was unclean because she was bleeding, she didn't make Jesus unclean. Instead, Jesus healed her and made her clean. Jesus touched Jairus' dead daughter. Even though the daughter was unclean because she was dead, the touch didn't make Jesus unclean. Instead, Jesus made her clean by touching her and raising her to life. We saw in the previous stories that Jesus has power over nature (the storm) and power over evil or unclean spirits. Now we will see that Jesus has power over sickness and death.

This story shows both Jairus' and the woman's strong faith in Jesus. Jairus believes Jesus can heal his daughter with a touch. The woman believes so much that touching Jesus will heal her that she bravely goes through a crowd even though she makes everyone she touches unclean. Most Bible scholars believe that the woman's bleeding was a problem that women sometimes have—but this illness was so difficult that she probably was in pain and very tired. In biblical culture, this illness made the woman unclean, or unfit for service to God. The people might get angry with her for touching them because she makes them unclean too.

Stop and discuss as a translation team the customs around "uncleanness" in your culture. Are there people in your culture who are "unclean," which means "unfit to serve God or be in community"? In biblical culture "unclean" people were unable to be a full part of the community. They were outcasts. What makes someone unclean or an outcast in your community? How do people feel about and treat outcasts in your community? Pause the recording here.

Jesus arrives at the shore of the lake, but Mark does not tell us how quickly the crowd gathered around Jesus—whether it was immediately after Jesus reached the shore, or sometime later.

After Jesus gets out of the boat and the crowd is surrounding Jesus, a man named Jairus comes. Jairus is a leader of the synagogue, or local Jewish place of prayer. In each synagogue there was usually a group of governing elders. The people appointed one chief leader from the group of elders. The chief elder directed the worship and teaching. Although these men were basically administrators and not teachers of Scripture, they would be highly influential and people in the community would have respected them. Jairus is probably one of the elders in the synagogue rather than the chief elder who has ultimate responsibility and authority, but Mark does not give us that detail.

Jairus falls at the feet of Jesus. This means that Jairus knelt in front of Jesus and lowered his face to the ground. It does not mean that he fell accidentally. Bowing down like this was a way to show respect and honor to someone of high position. To say that Jairus falls at the feet of Jesus indicates some urgency in Jairus' manner. We see that Jairus comes quickly, falls and pleads or begs Jesus to come to lay Jesus' hands on Jairus' sick and dying daughter. The action words used indicate that Jairus thinks his daughter is going to die soon. Jairus wants Jesus to come quickly and put his hands on the girl to heal her.

Jesus agrees to go to Jairus' house. They start for the house, walking through the streets of Capernaum. In towns like Capernaum at this time, the streets were narrow. We have Jesus, Jairus, the 12 disciples, and the crowd all walking through the narrow streets. Mark says the crowd was coming around Jesus. And in the crowd there was also a woman. This statement starts the story within the story.

Stop and show a picture of the streets in Capernaum. Pause the recording here.

When Mark describes the woman, he uses words that highlight how the woman's problem got worse and worse through the years.

Stop and tell a story about someone who had a chronic illness. This illness lasts for years and each year the person is worse off or sicker than the year before. Notice the language that the storyteller uses to indicate how the person's condition gets worse and worse. Pause the recording here.

Mark describes the woman's life during the 12 years of constant bleeding. This bleeding is from the woman's womb. Mark tells about the doctors but does not describe the woman's daily life. Mark's audience knew the religious law which said that menstrual blood or bleeding from the womb was unclean. Mark did not put this information in the story. However, according to the religious law, this woman was unclean and anything or anyone she touched became unclean. Therefore, she was very isolated and alone in her daily life. The woman risked making every man in Capernaum angry with her when the woman decided to go through the crowd to touch Jesus. Every person she touched on her way to Jesus became unclean.

Stop and tell a story about a woman with a chronic problem of woman's bleeding or menstrual flow. The storyteller will use language to describe the problem that can be used in any group with men, women, and children listening. The language used would be acceptable to everyone who is listening. Pay attention to the words used and the way of describing the problem. Pause the recording here.

The woman reached out and touched Jesus' garment. The text says that "The bleeding stopped immediately, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed." The original language of this expression tells us that the healing was complete, and later Jesus makes it clear that the healing was permanent. Jesus said, "Continue being complete, or healed." Complete healing means that all the effects of the chronic bleeding were gone. Complete healing also means that Jesus healed the woman both physically and spiritually.

Jesus felt the power go out from him and stopped to ask, "Who touched my robe?" This power that left Jesus was the power to heal or do miracles. This was not Jesus' physical strength. Some translations say that the power to heal went out of Jesus' body and healed the woman. The disciples' response shows their surprise that Jesus would ask such a question. The people were all around. The people were pushing and trying to get closer to Jesus. The streets were narrow. Of course people were touching Jesus. The disciples ask a question that doesn't require an answer. This question can be turned into a positive statement, "It seems strange that you would ask 'who touched me?'" When Jesus says, "Who touched me?" Jesus means, "Who touched my garment to be healed?"

Jesus kept looking for the person who had touched Jesus' garment. The story says that the woman was afraid but doesn't tell us why the woman was afraid. The woman was trembling as she realized all that had just happened to her. The woman came and fell to her knees in front of Jesus. This was not an accidental stumbling and falling. The woman bowed to show her respect. The woman intentionally got on her knees before Jesus and bowed with her face to the ground. The woman told Jesus the whole truth. This means that she told Jesus about her illness, what she had done for treatment and why she had decided to touch the garment of Jesus. After the woman finished talking, Jesus said, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace." Jesus did not mean that the woman was the daughter of Jesus. Jesus uses the term daughter to show that Jesus has concern for her, and also to reassure the woman. If you can't say daughter in your language, you could use culturally appropriate words such as "good woman," or "my little woman." When Jesus said "your faith," Jesus was talking about the woman's belief that Jesus could heal her, or the woman's trust that Jesus would heal her.

Jesus tells the woman to go in peace. Her time of suffering is over. Jesus is telling the woman that she has been completely healed. This bleeding problem is over. This bleeding problem will not happen to her again. If necessary, you may say something like "your disease will never come back to you."

This story shows a full healing!

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:21-34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

First scene: After crossing the lake again, as Jesus gets out of the boat, a ruler of the synagogue comes and begs Jesus to come and lay hands on his sick daughter so that she may live.

Second scene: Jesus, his disciples, Jairus, and the crowd are all walking through Capernaum. A woman sick for 12 years with a woman's problem of bleeding is in the crowd.

Third scene: The woman comes through the crowd from the back and touches Jesus' garment. She is immediately healed. Jesus feels the healing power leave him and stops to see who touched him.

Fourth scene: The woman comes forward and tells Jesus her story. Jesus says, "Because you believe in me, you are healed. Your time of suffering is over. Go in peace."

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The crowds of people
- Jairus
- The woman

In scene one, Jesus and the disciples return to Capernaum from the other side of the lake where Jesus healed the man from the evil spirits. It has not yet been 24 hours since they left Capernaum the evening before. Crowds gather around Jesus. Jairus, a leader of the synagogue comes through the crowd and falls at the feet of Jesus. Jairus begged Jesus to come and lay Jesus' hands on Jairus' daughter who was about to die. Jesus agreed to go. Jesus, Jairus, the disciples and the crowd all start moving towards Jairus' house. They go through the streets of Capernaum. The streets in Capernaum would have been very narrow.

Stop and discuss: As you act out Jairus, select action words that would indicate that Jairus is in a hurry. Jairus' daughter is about to die. Jairus wants Jesus to come now. Jairus pleads or begs Jesus to come and lay his hands

on Jairus' daughter. Jairus falls at the feet of Jesus. This would indicate that Jairus came quickly and fell rather than walking slowly and with dignity to bow. Pause the recording here.

In scene two Jesus, Jairus, the disciples, and the crowd are walking through the streets. There is a woman in the crowd. Mark tells us about this woman's illness. The words in the original story tell us that she was continually thinking to herself that she should touch Jesus in order to be healed. The story goes from present action to past thoughts and actions and back to present action. Mark describes her life and the illness. Mark describes her pain and suffering at the hands of different doctors. Mark tells us that she has spent all her money on doctors and now has no money. Mark tells us that this woman has heard about Jesus. Mark tells us about her decision to touch the garment of Jesus. Mark tells us that she approaches Jesus from behind. Mark does not tell us that this illness makes the woman unclean. This fact was well known in that culture.

Stop and practice this part of the story until you can make smooth transitions between the actions she did in the past and her decisions that she is making in the present. Pause the recording here.

The woman's illness is continuous bleeding from the womb. Normally this happens a few days each month. For this woman, the bleeding didn't stop.

Stop and discuss: Every culture has a way of describing this bleeding that can be talked about in groups with men and women, with old people and young people present, so that one is offended or disturbed by the wording. Talk as a group and decide on the terms you will use to describe this bleeding so that everyone can listen to the story. Pause the recording here.

As Mark describes this scene, we can imagine that everyone in the crowd is trying to see Jesus and working to get closer to Jesus. No one is paying attention to this woman. Everyone's eyes are turned towards the front of the group where Jesus is walking. The woman approaches from the back. She has to work her way through the crowd in a way that no one notices her or recognizes her. She knows that she is making everyone she touches along the way unclean. They will all be very angry with her if they recognize her.

In scene three, the woman arrives close enough to reach out and touch Jesus' outer garment. This garment would have tassels on the corners. The woman probably touched one of the tassels. The woman may have touched the hem or bottom edge of the outer garment.

Stop and show a picture of these tassels. Pause the recording here.

When the woman touches the tassel or the outer garment, she feels a change in her body immediately. She knows she has been healed. In the same moment, Jesus feels the power to heal go out of him. Jesus stops and asks, "Who touched me?" The disciples are surprised by this question. They see all the people pushing and shoving and trying to get closer to Jesus. Of course someone is touching Jesus. But Jesus has felt the power to heal go out from him. Jesus knows someone has touched Jesus to be healed. Jesus is looking for this person.

Stop and discuss: Jesus felt the power go out from him. This was a healing power. Jesus did not lose all his power or strength. Jesus still had power. Discuss how you will tell about this. Pause the recording here.

In scene 4, the woman realizes that Jesus is looking for her. Now this woman is afraid. This woman also is trembling at the realization of what has happened to her. This woman comes forward and falls on her knees before Jesus. Again, this is not stumbling and falling. This is deliberately getting on her knees before Jesus. By getting on her knees before Jesus, the woman is showing her respect for Jesus. The woman tells Jesus her story. She tells Jesus the whole truth or all that has happened to her. Mark doesn't mention Jairus at this point but we later learn that Jairus is standing near Jesus while this is happening. We don't know how long the woman talked. Jesus does not interrupt the woman but lets the woman tell her story. Jairus is waiting beside Jesus. When the woman finishes, Jesus uses tender or kind words to the woman. Jesus says "daughter." In some cultures, you might have to use another kind term such as "dear woman" or "my little woman." Jesus says, "Your faith has made you well. Your time of suffering is over. Go in peace."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:21–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The crowds of people
- Jairus
- The woman

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The first time the team acts out the story, pay attention to the spacing of the story. The story begins on the shore of the lake, with Jairus pleading with Jesus to come and heal his daughter. Jesus agrees, and as Jesus walks with Jairus, crowds of people follow them.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

In scene one, the story begins as Jesus and the disciples return to Capernaum. The crowd comes and surrounds Jesus. Then Jairus comes and falls on his knees before Jesus. Jairus pleads with Jesus to come lay his hands on Jairus' dying daughter so that she can live.

Pause the action. Ask Jairus, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "Desperate," "I love my daughter," or "I am willing to do anything for my daughter. I know most of the religious leaders don't like Jesus but if he can heal my daughter, I'm willing to let the leaders be angry with me. My daughter means everything to me." Continue the drama.

In scene two Jesus, Jairus, the disciples, and the crowd all start walking towards Jairus' house. They are walking through the narrow streets of Capernaum. There is a woman in the crowd who has suffered with a woman's problem of bleeding for over 12 years. She has heard about Jesus, and she thinks to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be healed." The crowds push against Jesus on the narrow street. The woman makes her way through this crowd.

Pause the action. Ask the woman, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Desperate," "Exhausted—I've been bleeding for 12 years. I've spent all my money on doctors and I have no money left. I've tried every treatment but nothing has worked. I'm in far worse condition now." Or, "Determined—I'm willing to go through this crowd, despite a disease that has made me unclean in the crowds' eyes." Ask the woman, "Why do you want to get to Jesus?" You may hear, "I've heard about Jesus and how Jesus has healed other people. I know a woman

who had a fever and Jesus healed her so that she was able to get up and feed a crowd right then. I want to be well. I think Jesus can help me, if I can just get near enough to touch his clothes." Continue the drama.

In scene three, the woman makes her way through the crowd, coming up from behind, and touches Jesus' outer garment. She instantly feels in her body that she has been healed.

Pause the action. Ask the woman, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "Relieved," "Joyful," or "Excited. I can feel changes in my body. My heart is beating normally. Look, my skin is normal color. I suddenly feel like I have energy to do something. I haven't felt like this for many years!" Continue the drama.

At the same time the woman touched Jesus, Jesus feels that healing power has gone out from him. Jesus knows that someone has just touched Jesus to be healed. Jesus asks his disciples, "Who touched my robe?"

His disciples answer, "Look at this crowd pressing around you! How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

Pause the action. Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling about Jesus at this moment?" You may hear, "I don't understand. Look at all these people pushing and shoving and trying to get close to Jesus. They are about to push us down. Of course people are touching Jesus. Why would Jesus ask such a question? It doesn't make sense." Or, "I'm just tired. I've come from a long journey, there's a crowd bustling all around me, and now Jesus is asking a question that I think is ridiculous." Ask Jesus, "How do you feel right now?" You may hear things like, "I know that I've healed someone, and I want them to show themselves. I need to make sure this person understands what just happened. I want the healing to be complete. I need to restore this person to the community." Continue the drama.

In scene four, Jesus keeps looking around. The woman, who is trembling with fright, comes and falls at Jesus' feet. She tells him what she has done. The woman tells Jesus her whole story. Jairus is standing near Jesus while the woman is talking.

Pause the action. Ask the woman, "Why are you afraid?" You may hear things like, "I was unclean and I touched a holy man. I've just walked through this crowd and touched many people. They will all be very angry with me because I made all of them unclean. I don't know how Jesus is going to react to my touching him and making him unclean. I hope Jesus isn't too angry with me." Or, "I was planning to touch Jesus' garment and leave without being noticed. I had no idea I would have to admit to touching Jesus. But it's worth this because I know I'm healed." Continue the drama.

Jesus says to the woman, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, your suffering is over."

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "Happy about the woman's faith," or "I'm happy to call her daughter. I'm so glad she had the faith to come and touch me. I feel sad that all these other people didn't have faith like she has. None of them who have been pushing to get close have the faith to be healed." Ask the woman how she feels. You may hear things like, "Relieved," "Joyful," or "As if I belong—I've been called daughter, and it feels like everything has been made right." Ask Jairus, "How are you feeling right now? You may hear, "I am so frustrated and frightened. My daughter is so sick. We must hurry or she will die before we get there. This woman has been sick for 12 years. I know her. Everyone knows that we have to keep away from her or be unclean. I don't know why we had to stop now to listen to her. I want to pull Jesus away and run to my house. We must go or it will be too late." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:21–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jairus was a leader of the **synagogue**. Synagogue is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same term you have previously used. As a ruler or leader of the synagogue, Jairus would be one of those responsible for the teaching and reading of the scriptures. Some people use the word "elder" to describe this position.

Use the same words for the **Sea of Galilee** and **boat** that you have used before. Use the same word for **disciple** that you have used before. Sea of Galilee, boat, and disciple can all be found in the Master Glossary.

The word for heal that both Jairus uses and Jesus uses to tell the woman that she is healed has a large meaning. It can mean physical as well as spiritual healing, or to be made complete or whole.

The **robe** that the woman touched could have referred to any piece of clothing, but in this case it was probably the outer piece of cloth that most people wore over their main clothes. It was usually made of an almost square large piece of cloth made from sheep's wool. It was wrapped around a person and fastened around the shoulders. People often used it as a cover at night, and when not needed, they laid it aside. This robe probably had tassels at the bottom of the robe.

Stop here and show your team the picture of the robe and tassels. Robe is in the Master Glossary. Pause the recording here.

The woman touched Jesus' garment. Jesus felt the power to heal go out from him. Be sure that the translation indicates that Jesus did not feel the touch. Jesus felt the power to heal leave him.

The woman's healing is immediate and complete. She could feel the changes in her body.

Jesus told the woman that her **faith** healed her, or made her complete. This "faith" describes people's response to God's promise. This is about putting your faith or confidence in God. In this case, the woman trusted Jesus himself. Faith is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for faith that you have used in other passages.

Teaching tool: Ask a volunteer ahead of time to help you with this. Take a clear glass and fill it with clean water. Make sure that all can see that the glass is full of clean water. Select your volunteer and ask the person if this is a glass of water. Ask if the water is clean and suitable for drinking. Ask the volunteer if he is thirsty. Ask the volunteer if drinking the water will help his thirst. The volunteer should answer every question with "yes." Then ask the volunteer to drink the water. The volunteer would refuse to drink the water. Go back over the questions again and then ask the volunteer to drink the water. The volunteer will refuse to drink the water. Explain to the group that this is an example of what faith is about. If the person will not drink the water they really do not have faith in the water or believe that the water is clean and will help their thirst. Pause the recording here.

Go in peace is a traditional good-bye, but here Jesus uses it to explain the completeness of the woman's healing which includes the deep peace found in her salvation. Your language may have a special way of showing this, and some (especially Muslim cultures) may give a peaceful blessing when someone says good-bye. Some languages have used "go with sweet insides," or "go with quietness of heart."

Jesus calls the woman daughter to reassure her because the woman was fearful. In some cultures, the word **daughter** could not be used because its only meaning is that of a biological child. Use a term that shows the same kind of affection that Jesus showed here. Examples from other translations include phrases like "my little woman."

Your suffering is over has also been translated to "be made complete after your suffering." The phrase in Greek refers to physical healing or spiritual healing from evil forces. Jesus wants to tell her that her healing is permanent and that he is giving her spiritual salvation, and her healing restores her to community because it makes her clean again.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 5:21-34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (26652553 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (18499546 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 5:35-43

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 5:35-43 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:35-43 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?

4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story continues the story of Jairus and Jairus' sick daughter. Jesus was on the way to Jairus' house to lay Jesus' hands on the daughter to heal her from her sickness. The daughter was very ill and close to death when Jairus came to Jesus. On the way to Jairus' house Jesus stopped to listen to a woman that Jesus had healed. The woman had already been healed when Jesus stopped to talk with her. This is a narrative account of the next part of the story.

Stop and show the map of the Sea of Galilee with Capernaum marked. Show a picture of the narrow streets of Capernaum. Pause the recording here.

Jesus was still talking with the woman who had been healed when some men came from Jairus' house. The men spoke to Jairus and gave Jairus the news that Jairus' daughter had died. The men said, "Your daughter is dead. You don't need to bother the teacher anymore." We don't know if these men were servants or family members or friends. The men came to give Jairus this message. The men believe that Jesus can do nothing at this point. There is no need for Jairus to stay with Jesus or to bring Jesus to the house.

The men called Jesus the "Teacher." This word is a title of respect for a man who had the authority to teach the Word of God or teach people about God.

Jesus overheard the men as they were talking to Jairus. This means that Jairus was standing close to where Jesus was talking with the woman. Jesus could talk with the woman and still hear what the men were saying to Jairus.

Jesus interrupted the men and said to Jairus. "Don't be afraid. Just believe." Then Jesus stops the crowd. Jesus would not allow the crowd to continue walking through the city with Jesus and Jairus. Jesus also made 9 of his disciples stay with the crowd. Jesus took 3 of the disciples with Jairus to go to Jairus' home. The 3 disciples were Peter, James, and John who was the younger brother of James. Jesus has told Jairus to believe. At this point it seems that Jairus does believe because Jairus goes with Jesus to the house. Jairus has no idea what Jesus can do at this point. Jairus' daughter is dead. Jairus must be holding on to some hope that Jesus can do something.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who asks people in the community to believe something that seems impossible. How do the people respond? What words or actions do they do that show you that they believe? Pause the recording here.

When they got to Jairus' house, they could see the people weeping and hear the people wailing. There was a lot of confusion and excitement. People were wailing, or giving long, loud cries that express grief or great sadness. The people were mourning, or showing sadness when something happens like a severe loss or the death of someone. The people making all this noise and commotion were professional mourners. Even the poorest family would hire professional mourners when someone died. Professional mourners were paid a sum of money to go to the house of someone who has died and show signs of grief such as crying and wailing. Jairus was an important leader of the synagogue. Jairus would have a large number of professional mourners. The professional mourners were not actually sad. They were acting as if they were sad and in grief over the death of this girl. They were paid to act in this way.

Stop and discuss: Talk about what happens in your community when someone dies. How does the family mourn? What are the customs that must be observed by the family? What does the community do to help the family with their mourning? Do you use any special words to describe the weeping of the mourners? Pause the recording here.

Jesus went to where the professional mourners were gathered. Jesus asked the professional mourners why they were making all that commotion and wailing. Jesus said, "The child isn't dead. She is sleeping." The crowd laughed at Jesus when Jesus said the girl is sleeping. This girl is 12 years old. Use the appropriate word for a 12 year old girl when you translate the word "child." We don't learn that she is 12 until the end of the story but you still should use appropriate words for a 12 year old girl when talking about this girl.

Jesus often said that someone dead was only sleeping. Jesus used the term sleeping for someone who has died but is going to be raised back to life again. The girl really was dead and the crowd of mourners knew she was dead. They thought Jesus was really saying the girl was just sleeping. This is why the mourners laughed. When the professional mourners laughed, they were making fun of Jesus or ridiculing Jesus. This was more than laughing at something amusing. They knew the girl was dead. Jesus also knew the girl was dead. Jesus also knew the girl was going to come back to life.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story in which the main character does or says something that seems strange to the people. They begin to laugh at this person or mock or ridicule this person. Notice the words the storyteller uses to describe the laughter. Pause the recording here.

Jesus made all the professional mourners leave the house. Then Jesus took Peter, James and John, and the girl's mother and father and went into the room where the girl was lying. Jairus is the girl's father. We don't know how long this girl has been dead. She died after Jairus left the house to go get Jesus. There has been enough time to prepare her body and room for her burial. In this culture and time, burial usually occurred the same day that the person died.

Jesus went to the side of the bed where the dead girl was lying. Jesus took hold of the girl's hand. The religious law said that to touch a dead person caused the person doing the touching to become unclean. Jesus knew the law. Jairus knew the law. Jesus took the dead girl's hand even though it made Jesus unclean according to the law.

Jesus spoke to the dead girl using his own language, or the language that Jesus and this girl spoke at home. Jesus said, "Talitha koum." Use these same words as you tell the story. Mark then gives the translation of the two words, or the meaning of the two words. Jesus was saying, "Little girl, get up." When translating the word, "Talitha," be sure to use a word that is appropriate for a 12 year old girl. Get up is a command. This can also be translated as "stand up." The girl immediately stood up and started walking around. This is when Mark tells us that the girl is 12 years old.

Jairus and the girl's mother were overwhelmed with joy. This is a feeling of surprise mixed with fear and awe. They were very happy. They were totally amazed. They knew their child was dead and now she is walking around the room. Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone what had happened. Then Jesus said to give the girl something to eat.

In looking at the two stories, the story of the bleeding woman and the story of the dead girl, Mark tells us that the woman was sick or bleeding for 12 years. The woman had probably been unclean and isolated for about 1/3 of her life. Now the girl who has died is 12 years old. She is just ready to start her life as a young woman. Jesus heals both of these women and Jesus shows that Jesus has power over sickness and death.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

First scene: Messengers come to tell Jairus that his daughter is dead. Jesus tells Jairus to believe. They go to Jairus' house.

Second scene: When they arrive at Jairus' house, they see mourners who are weeping and wailing. Jesus says, "Why all this commotion? The child isn't dead, she's only sleeping." But the people laugh at him.

Third scene: Jesus takes Jairus, the girl's mother, and his three disciples and goes into the room where the girl is lying. Jesus brings the girl back to life and tells her parents to give her food to eat.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Jairus
- The crowds
- The woman
- Messengers from Jairus' home
- People mourning the death of Jairus' daughter
- The mother
- The girl
- Three of Jesus' disciples (Peter, James, and John)

The first scene is still located on a narrow street in the city of Capernaum. Jesus is talking to the woman who has just been healed. While Jesus is still talking with the woman, some men come from Jairus' house. The men tell Jairus that his daughter has died. The men tell Jairus not to bother the teacher anymore.

Jesus overhears the men.

Stop and practice this scene. Work out the position of each person so that Jesus is able to hear the woman and hear the messengers. Jesus is talking to the woman. The woman is on her knees in front of Jesus. Jairus is standing near Jesus. The men come to talk to Jairus. Jesus overhears the men. Jesus speaks to Jairus. Pause the recording here.

Jesus tells Jairus to believe in Jesus. Jesus does not say what Jesus plans to do. Then Jesus makes the crowd stay back in the street. Jesus also leaves 9 of the disciples with the crowd. Jesus takes Peter, James, and John and walks with Jairus to Jairus' house.

In the second scene, Jesus arrives at Jairus' home. Because Jairus was an important man, Jairus probably had a large house with a gate and courtyard. The professional mourners would be in this open space inside the gate but not in the house. Jesus and Jairus can see and hear the commotion. The professional mourners are weeping and wailing. Wailing is a loud cry that expresses great sorrow. Jesus enters the courtyard and asks the mourners why they are weeping and wailing. Then Jesus says, "The girl is not dead. The girl is just sleeping." When the professional mourners hear Jesus say the girl is asleep, the crowd of professional mourners start laughing in a scoffing and mocking manner. They know that the girl is dead and they act like they think Jesus is foolish. Jesus commands them all to leave the home.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story in which someone says something that seems foolish or crazy to everyone else. They all laugh at the person who said this thing. They are laughing in a way that mocks the person. Listen to the laughter. Describe the laughter. What words are you using to describe this way of laughing? Pause the recording here.

The third scene starts after the professional mourners leave. Jesus takes Jairus and the girl's mother plus Peter, James, and John and goes inside the house. They all go into the room where the dead girl is lying on a bed. This bed could be a mattress on the floor or it could be on a frame up off the floor. Jesus walks over to the girl and takes her hand. Jesus says, "Talitha kum." These two words are in the language that people in this area spoke at home. This is the language that the girl would have spoken to her mother in their home. This is not the trade language. Then Mark gives the translation of these two words. Jesus was saying, "Little girl, I say to you, get up." Be sure to use the appropriate word for a 12 year old girl when you say "Little girl." "Get up" is a command word. Koum also means stand up. The girl became alive again and stood up. The action is immediate. She doesn't

slowly wake up. She instantly stands up as soon as Jesus tells her to stand up. She started walking around the room. This is when Mark tells us that she is 12 years old. Because she is 12, you need to make sure that all words used to describe her are appropriate words for someone who is 12 years old.

They were amazed and overwhelmed. This means all the people in the room. This was Jairus, the mother, and Peter, James, and John. This means that they had a mixture of fear and awe in their amazement.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story of a miracle. Talk about how the people who saw the miracle responded. Listen carefully to the words or phrases used to describe their feelings. You may have a special way of describing the amazement, fear, and awe that the people were feeling. Pause the recording here.

Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about what had happened. Jesus also told them to give the girl something to eat.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Jairus
- The crowds
- The woman
- Messengers from Jairus' home
- People mourning the death of Jairus' daughter
- The mother
- The girl
- Three of Jesus' disciples (Peter, James, and John)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one Jesus has stopped in the street and is speaking to the woman who has been healed. She is telling Jesus her story of her illness. Jairus is waiting for Jesus to finish with the woman and continue to Jairus' house where Jairus' daughter is very sick.

Pause the action: Ask Jairus, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "Anxious," "Concerned for my daughter," or "Wondering why Jesus is wasting his time with this woman." Continue the drama.

Jesus is still talking with the woman when the messengers from Jairus' home arrive and say, "Your daughter is dead, there's no use troubling the Teacher anymore."

Pause the action: Ask Jairus, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear things like, "I can't believe this. Why did Jesus stop to talk with this woman? She's been sick 12 years. This could have waited! If we had kept going, we might have gotten there in time for Jesus to lay hands on her. My daughter is dead! How will I be able to bear this?" Continue the drama.

Jesus overhears the messengers saying Jairus' daughter is dead. Jesus tells Jairus, "Don't be afraid, just have faith."

Pause the action. Ask the actor playing Jairus, "How do you feel now?" You may hear things like, "Sad," "Devastated," or "Confused at Jesus' words. What does Jesus mean when Jesus says have faith? She's dead. What can Jesus do?" "I'm going to go with Jesus and see. Maybe Jesus knows something I don't know." Continue the drama.

In scene 2, Jesus and Jairus see the commotion and hear the wailing when they arrive at the house. Jesus asks the mourners, "Why are you making all this noise?" Jesus tells the mourners that the girl is not dead but only asleep, the crowd laughs at him.

Pause the action. Ask the crowd, "Why are you laughing?" You may hear things like, "We know the girl is dead, and we don't believe that Jesus could think that she's only asleep," "Who does Jesus think he is? Jesus hasn't even seen her. How can Jesus know that she is sleeping. We all know she is dead." Continue the drama.

In scene 3, Jesus makes all the professional mourners leave. Then Jesus takes Jairus, the girl's mother, and Peter, James, and John and they all go into the room where the girl is lying. Jesus reaches out and takes the dead girl's hand and says, "Talitha, Koum" which means, "Little girl, get up." Immediately she stands up and walks around.

Pause the action. Ask the mother and father, "How do you feel right now?" You may hear things like, "We're overwhelmed," "We're amazed," "We're overjoyed that our daughter is alive," or "We believe now. How can this be? I know she was dead but here she is alive again. This is a miracle!" Ask Peter, James, and John, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "Astonished. Beyond amazement. When the wind and the water obeyed Jesus, I thought we had seen everything. This is so much more amazing! How can Jesus do these things? I don't understand who Jesus really is but I want to know more." Continue the drama.

Finally, Jesus gives orders to those in the room not to tell anyone what has happened and to give the girl something to eat. After the action ask the team, "Why do you think Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what had happened?" You may hear things like, "It wasn't time for him to show who he really was," or "He was concerned for the little girl. He didn't want her to become some object people wanted to come see, and he didn't want her future to be shaped by the fact that she was dead and is now alive."

Ask why Jesus told them to give her something to eat. You may hear things like, "He was concerned not just with raising her to life, but with her needs—she was hungry," or "Maybe he wanted to prove that she really was alive and wasn't a ghost."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 5:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Use the same terms for synagogue and **ruler** or leader of the synagogue as you have been using.

The messengers called Jesus Teacher. This is a respectful form of address to show that Jesus was a teacher of the things of God and had disciples/students who followed him and listened to his teachings. Be sure not to use a term that only refers to a schoolteacher. Use the same word you used in the calming of the storm story.

Jesus **overheard** the messengers tell Jairus not to bother Jesus. Some translations say that Jesus ignored the message because that is really what happened. Jesus actually interrupted the messengers while they were still talking to Jairus.

Jesus told Jairus, "Don't be afraid, just believe." **Faith**, or **belief**, describes people's response to God's promise. This is about putting your trust in God. In this case, Jesus was telling Jairus to believe in him. Jairus went with Jesus to the house. Jairus allowed Jesus to send the professional mourners away. These are actions that show that Jairus believes Jesus is going to do something. Jairus does not know what Jesus will do. Use the same word for faith or believe that you have been using. Faith is discussed in the Master Glossary.

When Jesus arrived at Jairus' house, the mourners were **wailing**. The word used for "wailing" sounds like wailing or crying sounds in that language. If your language has a similar way to talk about crying loudly that actually sounds like crying sounds, you may use it here.

In those days, people hired professional Jewish **mourners** when someone died. The more influential or wealthy a person was, the more mourners he would be expected to hire. A leader of a place of worship would be considered influential enough to be required to hire several people. The professional mourners danced while singing and clapping, and they became more and more intense as the burial drew near. This was the loud noise that met Jesus when he arrived at the house. But the mourners turned quickly from weeping to laughing at Jesus. They were not really sad, but just pretending to be.

The crowd laughed at him may need to be translated differently in some languages. The audience should understand that the people were laughing because they thought Jesus was crazy to say that the girl was only asleep. This kind of laughter was mocking or scoffing or making fun of Jesus. This was not the laughter that comes when you hear something amusing.

He made them all leave is a strong command that implies that he forcefully drove them out of the house.

Jesus gave them strict orders is a strong command that should be translated as such.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 5:35-43

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (20500019 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (13788082 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 6:1-6a

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 6:1-6a and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:1-6a in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this story Jesus has just performed amazing miracles and he is becoming famous. However, Mark begins talking more about people's rejection of Jesus again. In a previous passage in Mark, we see the religious leaders

plotting against Jesus. This story is a narrative account of the next event in Jesus' ministry after he raises Jairus' daughter from the dead.

In this story, Jesus returns to his hometown. Although it is not stated, biblical scholars believe this is referring to Nazareth. A hometown is the town or village or place where someone is born or grows up. Jesus was born in Bethlehem but Mary and Joseph returned to Nazareth and Jesus grew up in Nazareth. People would consider Nazareth the hometown of Jesus.

Stop here and show your team a map with Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee and Capernaum marked. The normal route between Capernaum and Nazareth should be marked. Pause the recording here.

The disciples accompanied Jesus to Nazareth. Jesus had asked 12 men to be disciples. Usually when the scripture says the disciples were there, it means that the 12 chosen men were there. Sometimes Jesus takes fewer than 12 with him. We saw this in the Jairus story where Jesus took three from the disciples with Jesus to the house of Jairus. Probably all 12 went to Nazareth with Jesus.

As a well-known teacher, Jesus often taught in the synagogue, or Jewish place of prayer, on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was the Jewish day of rest and worship. On this day in Nazareth, the people were "amazed" at his teaching, but not in a positive way. The amazement was mixed with resentment. They were displeased or offended that an ordinary person could have such wisdom and power. Wisdom refers to having an understanding of spiritual things that doesn't come from studying.

The people ask a series of questions that don't require an answer. These questions can be stated in positive statements. For example, "Where did Jesus get this wisdom?" could be stated as "Jesus should not have this kind of wisdom. Jesus is just a carpenter." Or, "We don't know how Jesus got this wisdom. Jesus is just a carpenter." By asking these questions, the people are saying that a common carpenter who grew up in Nazareth couldn't normally have this wisdom and the power to perform miracles that Jesus has.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who left the community and then returned as a famous person. The people in the community remember when this person was living there. How would the community feel about this person that they saw grow up among them now as he returns to the community? Listen carefully to how the storyteller describes his reception by the community. Pause the recording here.

The people refer to Jesus as "this man." This is a way of showing disrespect or rejection. They knew Jesus. By talking in this way, they are showing that they don't accept Jesus as a teacher.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone the community doesn't like. Listen carefully to how the storyteller describes the person. Pause the recording here.

Next they talk about Jesus' background—he's just a carpenter, a common workman.

The word carpenter could refer to any kind of men who worked with their hands, including a mason (someone who works with bricks), a blacksmith (someone who works with iron or metal), a shipbuilder (someone who builds ships), or sculptor (someone who carves things out of stone or wood). The people in Nazareth thought of Jesus as the son of Joseph who was a carpenter. Jesus would have learned the trade from Joseph. Jewish people usually respected those who worked hard.

Then the people refer to Jesus as the son of Mary. Jewish people usually referred to a man as the son of his father even if the father is dead. This way of talking about Jesus might show that they believed that Jesus was illegitimate—or born to a mother and father who were not married to each other.

Stop and discuss: How does your community feel about someone who is poor and works hard for a living? How does your community feel about someone who might be illegitimate? Pause the recording here.

The passage lists the names of 4 brothers of Jesus. These 4 brothers are all younger than Jesus. Jesus was Mary's first-born son. The sisters are not named. The sisters are also younger than Jesus. Saying that they live there among the people might suggest that the sisters are married. Jesus was 30 when Jesus started his public ministry. Therefore, any siblings of Jesus would probably be old enough to be married. The people are saying that Jesus' family is "here with them" because they know who Jesus is and they know the family of Jesus. They think that there is no way that Jesus has the education and training to be speaking with wisdom like this.

Stop and discuss: Talk about large families with many brothers and sisters. What words do you use for the oldest brother or oldest sister? What words do you use for the younger brothers and sisters? Pause the recording here.

The people in Nazareth were offended. This means that the people were unhappy and angry with Jesus. The people were angry and shocked that Jesus would come and teach in this manner. The people rejected or stopped believing in Jesus.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who left the village but then later returned to the village. People did not understand the changes in this person. People did not like the way this person now behaved or talked. Listen to the words used to describe this person. Pause the recording here.

Jesus responds with a statement that is common in that time—communities seem to often reject prophets, or people who are well-known to them or from their community. Jesus says, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown." Jesus means that people in other places will accept and listen to the teaching of a prophet. But in his hometown or among his family, the prophet is usually rejected. People refuse to listen to him. As a result, Jesus does not do many miracles there, not because he "cannot"—we know Jesus has the power—but because Jesus chooses not to. Jesus did heal a few sick people before Jesus left Nazareth.

This story ends in "amazement" again. Although this is a different word, it also implies a negative reaction. Jesus is amazed, or not happy that people still do not believe in him.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:1–6a in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus leaves Capernaum, the part of the country he was in, and goes to Nazareth. The first scene is his journey there.

In the second scene: On the Sabbath, Jesus teaches in the synagogue. People are amazed. And the people refuse to believe in him.

In the third scene: Jesus says, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own town among his own relatives and his own family." Jesus is amazed at the people's unbelief.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Men in the synagogue from Nazareth
- A few sick people who are healed

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Scene one starts with Jesus leaving Capernaum and returning to Nazareth. The scripture says that Jesus left there, or left that place. This means that after raising Jairus' daughter from the dead, Jesus left Jairus' house, or left Capernaum to go back to Nazareth.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story in which an event happens. Then the main character leaves that place and goes somewhere else for the story to continue. Listen to how the storyteller connects the story. Pause the recording here.

In scene 1, Jesus leaves Capernaum and goes to Nazareth. The disciples travel with Jesus. Nazareth is the hometown of Jesus. This means that Jesus grew up in Nazareth. The family of Jesus lives in Nazareth.

In scene 2, Jesus goes to the synagogue on the Sabbath and begins to teach. The people of Nazareth are amazed. This is not a good feeling. The people are amazed in a negative way. The people question how Jesus who is a carpenter can have the wisdom to teach and the power to perform miracles. The people in the synagogue talk in a negative way about Jesus. They ask a series of questions about Jesus and his family, like "Is this not a carpenter?" This question does not have an answer, or as in this case, the answer is already known. The passage has several of these types of questions. In your language you may need to make these as positive statements rather than questions that don't require an answer. For example, you can simply say, "Jesus is a carpenter." The questions are a way for the people to say that they don't think that Jesus can have wisdom from God to teach like he does. They talk about Jesus' brothers and sisters. They talk about Jesus' mother, Mary. In all this, they are showing that they don't respect Jesus. They refuse to believe Jesus.

In scene 3, Jesus speaks. Jesus says to the people, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and family." Jesus means that in other places, people are willing to listen to the teaching and learn from the teaching. Here in Nazareth, the people refuse to accept that Jesus could be giving a message from God. The people also refuse to believe that Jesus can perform miracles.

Because of this unbelief, Jesus healed just a few sick people. Jesus did not perform many miracles while in Nazareth. Jesus is amazed at the unbelief of the people. This word amazed also has a negative meaning. Jesus was unhappy with their unbelief.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:1–6a in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Men in the synagogue from Nazareth
- A few sick people who are healed

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene 1, Jesus and his disciples are returning to Nazareth from Capernaum. Nazareth is the hometown of Jesus.

In scene 2, on the Sabbath, Jesus goes to the synagogue and begins to teach. The people are amazed at what Jesus is teaching. They ask, "How is Jesus getting all this wisdom and power to perform such miracles?"

Stop the action: Ask the people, "Why are you amazed at this? How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I have known Jesus since he was a boy. Jesus has not had the special instruction for a teacher. Jesus is just a carpenter. How can Jesus have the wisdom to teach us about spiritual things?" "I don't know where the power to perform miracles comes from. I know Jesus. I know his brothers and his sisters. I know his mother, Mary. Jesus isn't special. This doesn't make sense." "I find it offensive that Jesus, a carpenter, would try to teach us about God." Continue the drama.

The people begin to scoff at Jesus, saying, "He is just a carpenter—the son of Mary, the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. His sisters live right here among us."

Stop the action: Ask the scoffers, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear things like, "We are offended," or "We do not believe that Jesus has special power." Or, "How dare Jesus come home and start teaching us. We know he is not educated as a religious teacher. I will not believe anything Jesus says." Continue the drama.

In scene 3, Jesus says, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his hometown, among his relatives, in his own family." He is amazed at the people's unbelief.

Ask Jesus, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "Sad," "Angry," or "Amazed at their unbelief. I had hoped I would be able to teach these people who are my people about the kingdom of God, but they won't listen. They have hard hearts. It makes me really sad and disappointed." Continue the drama.

Jesus only healed a few sick people. Jesus was amazed at the unbelief of the people.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:1–6a in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus left Capernaum and went to Nazareth. Jesus took the **disciples** with him. On the **Sabbath**, Jesus went to the **synagogue**. Use the same word for disciples, Sabbath, and synagogue that you have used in previous passages. Each of these words is discussed in the Master Glossary.

The two different words for **amazed** in this story both have negative meanings. People were surprised that someone like Jesus, with a background in manual labor, could speak with such authority. And at the end of the story, Jesus was amazed/surprised that people still didn't believe in him. People use this word "amazed" to talk about being unpleasantly surprised.

People were amazed at Jesus' **wisdom**. Wisdom includes the ideas of "thinking things that are true and doing things that are good." Only God can cause someone to be wise.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about **wisdom**. Wisdom is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that a **prophet** is not honored in his hometown. Choose a term for prophet that adequately describes the prophet's function. A prophet:

1. receives a call and message from God
2. takes God's message to people
3. knows that his most important job is to bring the Word or message of God to people

To honor a prophet means to listen to the message and accept the message of the prophet. The people in Nazareth did not honor Jesus. Use the same word for prophet that you have used in previous passages.

Jesus chose not to do many **miracles** in Nazareth. These words refer to powerful actions that only God can do, and make people be in awe of God.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about **miracles**. Miracles is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 6:1–6a**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (14938332 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 6:6b-13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 6:6b-13 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Jesus had just been rejected at Nazareth, his hometown. Jesus began to travel from village to village, teaching people. These villages were around Nazareth. This is the third time that Mark tells us that Jesus travels around from village to village teaching the people. Then Jesus sends the disciples to the villages. This story is a narrative account of what Jesus told the disciples to do.

Stop and show the map with Nazareth marked. Help the team to see that Jesus would have gone to villages surrounding Nazareth. Pause the recording here.

This story begins here, but actually ends after the next story about John the Baptist, when the disciples come back to report all that happened.

The disciples have been with Jesus for some time. The disciples have seen Jesus cast out evil spirits from people. The disciples have heard the teaching that Jesus was giving the people. The disciples have seen a number of miracles. Now Jesus sends them off with power to cast out evil or unclean spirits. They are to do what they have seen Jesus do.

As Jesus sent out his disciples, Jesus gave them authority over evil spirits. In Jewish culture, people could give a representative his authority and power to do a job or to give a message. It was even better to send out two representatives at a time. Jewish law, given by Moses, tells us that the testimony of two witnesses is valid.

Jesus told his disciples not to take any food, money or extra clothes with them. This is not a command for all people at all times, but a command just for this situation. They could only take what they were wearing, including their shoes, plus a walking stick. People used a walking stick to help with difficult places like hills and for protection against wild animals. The disciples were not allowed to take a change of clothes or food or money. The disciples were not allowed to take a traveler's bag.

Stop and show a picture of the type of sandal worn in the first century. Show a picture of a traveler's bag. Show a picture of a walking stick such as one in the first century would use. Show a picture of some first century coins. Show a picture of the type of tunic a man would have worn in first century Palestine. Pause the recording here.

Jesus told them to stay in the first home that offered hospitality in a village. They were to remain in this home the entire time they were in the village. They could not move to another house to stay while they were in that same village. Jesus was telling the disciples to do something different than what religious teachers normally

did. Usually religious teachers went from house to house and took as much as they could from as many people as they could.

Stop and discuss as a group: How do religious leaders interact with people in your culture? Do they travel, and what do they do when they travel? Pause the recording here.

By taking nothing with them, the disciples had to rely on food and shelter from God. Someone in the village needed to offer them a place to sleep. Someone in the village needed to offer them food to eat. The disciples had no way of paying for food or shelter.

Then Jesus gave them instructions about what to do if no one offered hospitality or offered food and shelter. They were to leave the village and shake the dust off their feet as they left. The custom of this time was for someone who worshipped God to shake the dust off his feet if he visited a pagan place. This action is a symbol of getting rid of anything that isn't pure or clean. Jesus tells the disciples to do a public display of shaking the dust off their feet. This will tell the villagers that they have rejected God's message and now must answer to God. This shaking of the dust was a public warning or testimony to the people.

Very much like the hints from previous events in Mark, we know that Jesus will be rejected more and more as time goes on. Jesus reminds his disciples that they might be rejected also and that they should shake the dust off their feet if they are. Jewish people believed that foreign lands are polluted because they are not the lands of God's chosen people, so Jewish travelers would want to clean themselves after a journey. In this case, the disciples were to show that those that reject God's mission would have to face God himself and the consequences of their decision. Jesus' disciples are a lot like Jesus—their teachings show who wants to follow God through Jesus and who doesn't.

Stop and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a traveler who comes to a village. The people in the village do not offer hospitality to this traveler. What does the traveler do as he leaves the village? Pause the recording here.

The disciples went out to other villages as Jesus told them to do. The disciples told everyone they met to repent of their sins and turn to God. To repent means to be sorry for the sin you committed and make a vow that you won't repeat that sin again. Repent is a strong word. If a person truly repents, then the person will try not to repeat the sinful action again.

The disciples cast out demons. Some translations say "forced out" and others say they "drove out" the demons. When the disciples commanded the demons to leave, the demons had no choice. The demons had to leave the person. Jesus has given the disciples the authority to cast out demons. When the disciples tell the demons to leave, the disciples are using the power that Jesus gave the disciples. The demons obeyed that power and left the person.

The disciples used olive oil to anoint the sick people. Olive oil was often used as a medicine. Olive oil was the common oil used in cooking, as a medicine, and even burned in the lamps. Everyone had olive oil. To anoint a person, the disciples would put a few drops of the oil on the person as a symbol that God was blessing the person and God was healing the person. After this anointing, many of the sick people were healed, or got well, or were no longer sick.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:6b-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus leaves Nazareth and teaches in the villages.

In the second scene: Jesus sends the disciples to the villages and gives the disciples the power to cast out demons. Jesus gives the disciples instructions for their journey.

In the third scene: The disciples go out and tell everyone they meet to repent of their sins and turn to God. They cast out many demons and heal many sick people.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 12 disciples
- People who invite the disciples into their homes
- People who refuse to welcome the disciples
- Sick people who are healed
- People healed of demons

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Try this activity as a group: Work out a way to show the meaning of repentance through some type of action. One suggestion would be to put something to represent sin on one side of a person and something to represent God on the other side of the person. The person would start off facing the sin. Then this person would turn around and face God. His back would be towards the sin object. Each time you say "repent," you can do this turning motion to turn away from sin and towards God. Another action is for the person to point his hands towards the floor when talking about sin. Then turn around and point the hands towards the sky to represent turning to God. This action puts the person's back towards the sin. What other actions might your team suggest that would be a visual representation of repenting? Pause the recording here.

In the first scene, Jesus has left Nazareth and is going from village to village teaching people. These villages are in the area around Nazareth.

In the second scene, Jesus calls his twelve disciples to him, meaning that he spoke especially to the twelve disciples. Jesus sends his 12 disciples out two by two. This means, for example, that two men went in one direction, and two men went in another direction. Jesus gives the disciples power to cast out demons or evil spirits.

Jesus gives his disciples instructions before they leave in pairs of two people each. First, he tells the disciples that they are to take nothing with them except a walking stick. They cannot take a change of clothes or food or money. They cannot take a traveler's bag. They can wear their shoes. When they reach a village, they are to stay in the house of the first person who invites them. They are to stay in this house as long as they are in the village.

If they go to a village and no one offers them a place to stay, and no one is willing to listen to them, the disciples are to leave that village and shake the dust of the village off their feet. This is a symbolic action to say that the people have refused to listen about God and now God will judge them for this. This action is a testimony that God will punish the people because they did not accept the disciples and their message of repentance.

In the last scene, the disciples go out and do as Jesus said. They go from village to village. They cast out demons. The disciples anoint the sick people with olive oil and heal sick people.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:6b-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 12 disciples
- People who invite the disciples into their homes
- People who refuse to welcome the disciples
- Sick people who are healed
- People healed of demons

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus leaves Nazareth and goes to the surrounding villages to teach the people.

Stop the action: Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling about these villages?" You may hear, "I am pleased that the people in the villages are listening to the teaching about the kingdom of God. There is hope for these people." Continue the drama.

In scene two, Jesus gathers his disciples together. He begins to explain to them what they are going to do. They are going to go two by two, or in pairs, to the villages. Jesus gives the disciples authority to cast out evil spirits. Jesus tells them to take nothing on their journey.

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How do you feel? What are you thinking?" You may hear things like, "We are excited to have authority to cast out evil spirits," "We are a bit afraid and timid that we are going out without anything," or "We are confused by Jesus' instructions." Or, "It feels strange to go without any money or food. I hope someone in the village will offer us something to eat and a place to stay." Continue the drama.

Jesus says, "Wherever you go, stay in the same house until you leave town. If any place refuses to welcome you, shake the dust from your feet as you leave it. You have abandoned those people to their fate."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "Why do you think Jesus says this?" You may hear things like, "He's looking for people who accept him and welcome his message," "He's not forcing anyone to follow him," or "He's showing that those people who refuse him have made their own decision about their fate," or "Shaking the dust off makes it seem like these people are rejecting God. It is a powerful symbol and I hope it will make them change their minds and listen to us." Continue the drama.

In scene three, the disciples go out and tell people to repent of their sins and turn to God. They cast out demons and heal many sick people.

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How do you feel now?" You may hear things like, "I feel such success. Those demons obeyed us just like they obey Jesus. It's because Jesus gave us power to cast them out," or "I'm so glad some of the people are repenting of their sins and turning to God. This is so important for all of us," or "We are excited that we are able to join Jesus in this ministry." Continue the drama.

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

The **Twelve** refers to Jesus' 12 closest disciples. They are often just called "The Twelve" as a title for the group.

Jesus gave the disciples power to cast out **demons** or **unclean spirits**. Use the same word for demons or unclean spirits that you have been using. Demons/unclean spirits are discussed in the Master Glossary.

When talking about the things that Jesus said they could take, and the things that they cannot take, pay attention to how your language works. Put these items in the most natural order. For example, you may put everything they can take at the beginning of the sentence all together, or at the end all together.

Stop and show the pictures again of the staff, bag, money, sandals, and tunic. As you talk about the staff, bag, money, sandals, and tunic, show pictures of each thing to the translation team. Pause the recording here.

Repentance was one of Jesus' key teachings. In this story, the disciples tell people to **repent**, or turn away from their sins and turn to God. Use the same word for repent as you have used in previous passages, and remember that repent is discussed in the Master Glossary.

The disciples **anointed** the sick people with oil. Olive oil was used as medicine, and that is one of its purposes in this story. The oil is also a symbol of God's presence and grace. People probably rubbed a little oil on one part of the body as a symbol. The most likely place to rub the oil would be on the head.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about **anointing** sick people with oil. Anoint is discussed in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 6:6b-13**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (14547157 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (10371190 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 6:14–29

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 6:14–29 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Remember John the Baptist from earlier stories in Mark?

Stop here and remember together as a translation team what you know about John the Baptist. Pause the recording here.

Mark interrupts the story of sending out the disciples to tell about the death of John the Baptist. This is a narrative account of the death of John the Baptist.

Herod Antipas is the ruler over the region of Galilee. Herod Antipas is the son of Herod the Great who was the ruler over all Judea when Jesus was born. Herod Antipas was appointed to his position as ruler by the Roman government who ruled the area at that time. Herod Antipas did not follow the religious law of the Jews. Mark refers to Herod as the king. However, Herod was not a king. Herod Antipas ruled over about one fourth of the Jewish territory.

Stop and show a map of the area of Galilee that Herod ruled over. Pause the recording here.

Mark puts the story about John the Baptist here because Herod has now heard about Jesus and the many things Jesus taught and did. Herod did not know much, if anything, about Jesus until this point.

The first part of this story starts with Herod hearing of Jesus and Herod's reaction to what Herod is hearing. Then the story switches to events that happened before Herod has heard of Jesus. Mark tells us about the arrest and death of John the Baptist.

People are talking about Jesus. Herod had killed John the Baptist. Some thought that Jesus was John the Baptist who had been raised from the dead. John never performed any miracles. John only talked to the people about repenting or turning from their sins and turning to God and being baptized to show that they had done this. Other people thought that Jesus must be the prophet Elijah who had returned. Elijah was one of Israel's greatest prophets. Elijah had lived many hundreds of years before this story. Some people were thinking that Elijah had returned and was performing miracles. Some people just thought Jesus must be a prophet like some of the prophets God had sent in the past.

A prophet is someone who brings God's message to the people. A prophet receives a call and message from God, takes God's message to people, and knows that his most important job is to bring the Word, or message of God, to people. This all means that the people were trying to figure out who Jesus is. Herod heard what the people were saying and Herod thought that Jesus must be John the Baptist come back to life. It was a common Jewish thought that someone who is resurrected then comes to judge you, so Herod was afraid that John was resurrected and Herod was about to be judged for his murder.

The story now changes to tell us what happened to John the Baptist. John the Baptist was Jesus' cousin. John had been preaching that people should repent of their sins. John baptized many people who wanted to follow God. John was very bold and told people when they were doing the wrong thing or sinning.

John boldly said that Herod, the ruler of that area of Israel, was sinning. Herod married his brother's wife, Herodias. This was very clearly breaking the Jewish religious law that God had given to Moses. Herod arrested John and put John in prison as a favor for his wife, Herodias. Herodias had a grudge against John. A grudge is a strong feeling of hostility against someone over a grievance. Herodias didn't like it that John said her marriage to Herod was breaking God's law. But Herod thought John was a good or righteous and holy man. Righteous means that John does what is right according to God's standards. A holy man is someone set apart to serve God. A holy man isn't sinless but does keep himself morally pure and clean. Herod was afraid to hurt John. In fact, Herod liked to listen to John. Herod protected John.

Herodias, however, was angry and wanted to kill John. One night at a great banquet or feast to celebrate Herod's birthday, Herodias got her chance to have John killed. Herodias' daughter danced for the party. Herod and Herodias were known to be very immoral, and it was not a surprise that a young woman would dance like this in front of many people. Guests included high government officials and military commanders and leading or important citizens of the area. Normally a daughter would not dance in such a way before these men who were not from her family. The daughter's dancing was probably the kind of dancing that was improper for a woman to do in front of a man. Everyone at the party was pleased with her dance. Herod offered to give the daughter anything she wanted. He offered her "up to half the kingdom," or half of the land he ruled. Herod made an oath, which meant that he made a serious promise that if he didn't keep, he was saying God could punish him for it. Herod made this oath in front of all the guests. Herod did not have the authority to give away part of his kingdom. Only the Romans could do that. Because this party was Herod's birthday party, it means that Herod was probably drunk when Herod made this vow. To be drunk is to be controlled by the alcohol that you have taken in. You don't make good decisions when drunk or when alcohol controls your actions.

The daughter knew that Herod did not literally mean "half the kingdom," but that she could ask for something very big or important. The daughter asked her mother, Herodias, what to do, and Herodias told the girl to ask for John's head on a serving tray.

Show a picture of a platter. Pause the recording here.

Herod was very, very sad about this. Because Herod had made his promise or oath in front of all the guests at the party, Herod could not refuse to give the daughter her wish. Herod sent an executioner or a soldier to cut off John's head with a sword. The soldier brought John's head on a serving tray to the feast. The daughter took the head to her mother. Herod had to do this—he would have been ashamed if he did not keep his promise. John's disciples came to take his body to bury John in a tomb out of respect for him. The tomb was probably a cave. The customary burial place was a cave.

Show a picture of a tomb.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The first scene gives the background for this story. Many people are talking about Jesus, and King Herod hears about Jesus.

This first scene happens after the next three scenes. It is background given before telling a story that happened in the past. You may want to clearly put markers in the story to explain that scene one happens after scene two, three, and four.

Scene two describes why Herod put John to death.

Scene three describes the banquet Herod had as a great birthday party.

Fourth scene tells the actual death and burial of John the Baptist.

The characters in this passage are:

- Herod, the king
- People who are talking about Jesus
- John the Baptist
- Soldiers Herod sent to imprison John
- Herodias
- Herod's guests (who included high government officials, army officers, and leading citizens of the Galilee)
- Herodias' daughter
- An executioner
- John's disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Before beginning to act out the story, talk about how to tell the story so that people understand the sequence of events. The beginning of this story actually occurs after John's death. Herod hears about Jesus and the things people are saying about Jesus. Many, including Herod, think Jesus is really John the Baptist come back to life. Then Mark tells us the story of how John died.

Stop here and tell a story. The first part of the story deals with something that is occurring now. This can be a happy story such as a wedding or new house or it can be a sad story. After telling what is happening now, the storyteller will go back and tell of events that happened before this time. Pay close attention to the way the storyteller tells what happened in the past. Pause the recording here.

Scene one talks about how Herod Antipas hears about Jesus. By now, Jesus has been going about teaching and healing for some time. People are trying to figure out who Jesus is. Some think Jesus is John the Baptist who has come back to life. Others think Jesus is the prophet Elijah who has come back. Others think Jesus is some other prophet. Herod hears these things. Herod thinks Jesus must be John the Baptist, the one that Herod had ordered to be killed by beheading.

Scene two describes the background of Herod's marriage to Herodias. Herodias had been married to Herod's brother. Religious law did not allow for a man to marry the wife of his brother who was still living. John told Herod that Herod was breaking God's law, which is sin. Herodias hated John the Baptist because John was saying these things. Herodias wanted John killed. Herod had John arrested and put in prison to please Herodias. Herod respected John and listened to John. Herod thought John was a righteous man. Herod thought John was a holy man. Herod protected John. John made Herod very uneasy when John talked but Herod liked to listen to John.

Scene three happens in the palace with the birthday party and the guests. Herod invites all the leading men including government officials and military officials to the banquet. Herodias' daughter dances in front of the king and all the king's guests. They are all pleased with her dance. Herod promises her anything she would like, up to half of his kingdom. Herod makes this a vow or oath, which means that Herod must do as he has promised. He can't later decide not to give her what she asks for. The daughter went out and asked her mother what she should ask for. This assumes that the mother was not in the room at the party at the time of the dance or the promise. Herodias replies, "Ask for the head of John the Baptist."

In scene four, Herodias' daughter hurries back to the king and asks for the head of John the Baptist on a tray. Immediately the king fulfills his promise because he made the promise in front of his guests and cannot now refuse her. Herod sends the executioner to the prison. The executioner goes to the prison, cuts off John's head in the prison, brings the head back on a tray, and gives it to Herodias' daughter. Herodias' daughter takes the platter with the head on it to her mother. This all happens while the banquet is still going on.

John's disciples hear what happened. John's disciples come and get John's body and bury it in a tomb.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Herod, the king
- People who are talking about Jesus
- John the Baptist
- Soldiers Herod sent to imprison John
- Herodias
- Herod's guests (who included high government officials, army officers, and leading citizens of the Galilee)
- Herodias' daughter
- An executioner
- John's disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, as the story begins, Herod hears about Jesus. People say, "Maybe Jesus is Elijah or maybe John the Baptist or maybe some other prophet." But Herod begins to think that Jesus is John the Baptist, the man Herod had beheaded, come back from the dead.

Stop the action.

Ask Herod, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear things like, "I am confused. How could John come back to life?" or "I am afraid. What if this person really is John?" or "I am sorry that I had John killed."

In scene two, Herod had sent soldiers who had arrested and imprisoned John. John had been telling Herod that it is against God's laws for Herod to marry his brother Philip's wife. This woman's name was Herodias. Herodias had a grudge against John and wanted to kill him.

Stop the action.

Ask Herodias, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I'm angry with John," "I hate John," or "How dare John tell people that I'm living in sin! I'm the king's wife. I can do what I want! Those religious laws are old. We live under Roman law now. John needs to stop talking like this."

Herod respected John. Herod knew John was a good and holy man. Herod protected John, even though Herod was disturbed whenever he talked to John.

Stop the action.

Ask Herod, "Why does John disturb you or make you feel uncomfortable?" You may hear, "John is a holy man. John speaks about God. John reminds me of things I learned about God but don't do any more. John reminds me that God wants me to obey God. I have decided to obey Roman laws. John puts God above everything. John also challenges me to think."

In scene three, we have Herod's birthday. Herod had a party with government officials, army officers, and leading citizens of Galilee. Herodias' daughter came in and danced in front of Herod and all the male guests. Herod said, "Ask me for anything you like, and I will give it to you. I will give you whatever you ask, up to half of my kingdom." Herod made this statement as a vow or oath meaning Herod couldn't change his mind later.

Stop the action.

Ask Herod, "Why are you promising to give Herodias' daughter whatever she asks?" You may hear things like, "I was very pleased with her dancing. I was very happy with her," or "I wanted to show my generosity," or "I wanted to impress my guests." Or "She is a good girl. I want her to be happy."

The daughter asked her mother what she should ask for, and her mother told her, "Ask for the head of John the Baptist."

Stop the action.

Ask Herodias, "How are you feeling as you tell your daughter to ask for John's head?" You may hear, "Happy. At last, I can get rid of that troublemaker. He keeps talking to Herod and Herod listens to him. He is going to convince Herod to leave me and divorce me. I have to take this chance to get rid of John."

Herodias' daughter hurried back to the king, and said, "I want the head of John the Baptist right now, on a tray."

Stop the action.

Ask Herod, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I regret making the promise," or "I am very sad because I can't refuse her request."

In scene four, Herod immediately sent an executioner to cut off John's head and bring it to him. Herod brought John's head on a tray and gave it to the girl, who took it to her mother.

Stop the action.

Ask Herod's wife, Herodias, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I feel triumphant. I won," "I am very pleased," or "I wanted to see John killed. I am happy. That troublemaker is out of my life finally. Now I can live in peace."

When John's disciples heard what had happened, they came to get his body and buried him in a tomb.

Ask John's disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Very sad, we are devastated," or "We do not understand why this happened. John was a good man who was doing God's will. Why did this happen to him? I don't understand. I know John continued to serve God. I will do the same."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

People who were talking about Jesus thought Jesus might be a **prophet**. Use the same word for prophet that you have already used. Prophet is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Herod believed that John the Baptist was a righteous and holy man. The Old Testament idea of righteousness is based on relationship between God and people, or between people. **Righteousness** refers to **holiness**, right relationship with someone, lack of guilt.

You should describe the concept of righteousness in the same way throughout your translation. For example, you may describe righteousness as a right relationship with God. You may also describe it in legal terminology as blameless/innocent. Other ways to describe these concepts are:

- being right in God's sight
- being in right standing with God
- being accepted by God

Your audience may also have special language that describes the concept of righteousness, such as having a straight heart, being upright, being blameless/innocent, walking on God's path, etc... Take these into account as you choose the appropriate wording for this translation. Remember that in the Bible people can never be righteous on their own, or by doing enough good things. Your term or phrase for "righteousness" should not be based on doing good works.

Teaching Tool: Because this is such an important key term, spend some time on this. You may find some kind of appropriate analogy in the culture. For example, you can use the analogy of something being broken and therefore un-usable. Once the thing is broken, there is really no way to repair it so that it is perfectly restored to its usable condition. (perhaps this could be a clay pot, a gourd, a bow and arrow, etc... Perhaps it could be a bent arrow that can no longer hit the mark.) **Righteousness** is the concept that God restores those things that are not restore-able. He not only repairs the item, but makes it useful for its purpose again, as if it had never been broken. You may also ask the participants to "show" you "righteousness" in pairs by acting it out. The group can discuss what they see and determine if the actions accurately show the concept. If so, you may use those actions to help you find an appropriate way to describe "righteousness." Use the same word for righteous that you have used in previous passages, and remember that righteousness is discussed in the Master Glossary. Pause the recording here.

The word **holy** or **holiness** refers to a separation from what is common and a dedication to what is pure. When "holy" refers to God himself, it signifies that he is different from his creation, and that he is morally perfect. It refers to his majesty and power. Holy is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Herod had a huge banquet. A **banquet** is a formal dinner that people are specially invited to.

Some cultures celebrate a person's **birthday**, to celebrate on the date when someone was born.

Herod invited many high officials, military commanders, and leading men to his birthday party. **High officials** refers to chief men or important men in the area who have official duties helping rule the area. The word for **military commanders** was for men in charge of 1000 soldiers, but means any high ranking army leader. The **leading men of Galilee** are the important men who everyone knows and who have been important for many years.

Herodias asked for John's head on a platter. A **platter** is a big flat plate for food at a large banquet or meal. It can be made of pottery, but this one was probably made of silver or gold.

Show a picture of a platter. Pause the audio here.

Herod made an **oath**, which is a very serious promise in which the person making it says that if they do not keep it, God can punish them.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for oath. Look up oath in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Herod was **deeply grieved**, or very sad, when Herodias' daughter asked for John the Baptist's head.

John's disciples laid his body in a tomb. A **tomb** is a cave carved out of the side of a hill into rock. It was usually big enough to stand inside, with a shelf on one side on which people could lay a body wrapped in cloth. John's disciples wanted to show him respect, so they came to bury his body.

Show a picture of a tomb.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 6:14–29

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (21012476 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 6:30-44

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

Hear Mark 6:30-44 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:30-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story happens right after the disciples come back from their mission of going out 2 by 2. The story was interrupted by giving the account of the death of John the Baptist. The disciples come back and tell Jesus everything they did and everything they taught as they traveled from village to village. After they reported, Jesus suggested that they all go to a quiet place for some rest. By this time so many people were coming to Jesus and the apostles that they did not have time even to eat. This is a narrative account of how Jesus fed a large crowd of people.

This passage is the only time that Mark calls the group of twelve disciples "apostles" or "sent out ones." Apostles are appointed by Jesus himself as his representatives. Jesus sent them out to the people and gave them power to cast out demons.

This story is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all four Gospels. Apparently, the early church saw this event as very important, since it is recorded four times. Mark especially showed its importance by the way he talked about the event. He gave a long introduction to set up the meal, explaining why Jesus and his disciples went to a lonely place. And this story also looks forward to the Lord's Supper—much of the language is similar. In both stories Jesus "takes bread, gives thanks, breaks bread," and "gives" it to the people. This story shows that Jesus is the provider and full of compassion. He has authority over the natural world.

Jesus and his disciples just crossed over a corner of the lake to Bethsaida. They didn't go to the town but to an uninhabited area between Capernaum and Bethsaida. They went in a boat. Because the distance isn't far, the people could keep up, following them around the shore of the lake. Jesus and the disciples were going to a lonely place, or an isolated place. This means a place that is not in a village. No one lives there. Jesus wanted to be alone and quiet so that the disciples could rest.

Show a picture of a map of the lake, and show the translation team the route from Capernaum, where Jesus probably was, to Bethsaida. Show a picture of a first century boat. Pause the recording here.

Jesus and the disciples went by boat. This would be the same type of boat that you have used in previous stories. The boat would be large enough to take 13 people. The people saw them leaving and ran along the shore and got there before Jesus and the disciples arrived in the boat.

Jesus had compassion for this crowd. Compassion is a feeling of pity for the sufferings of others. The person also feels a strong desire to help those people who are suffering.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a group of people who are poor or sick or have lost their home through a tragedy. One person sees these people and feels a desire to help. Listen to the storyteller describe this person's feelings and actions. What words does he use? Pause the recording here.

Jesus thought of the people who followed them to the lonely place as being like sheep without a shepherd. Sheep without a shepherd probably won't survive. They need a shepherd to find grass and water. They need the shepherd to provide protection from wild animals. They need the shepherd to guide them to their shelter at night. Jesus had planned a time of rest. But because Jesus had compassion for the people and Jesus saw them as sheep without a shepherd, Jesus began to teach the people instead.

This event probably took place in the spring of the year, when there was plenty of grass, since the story mentions green grass. In Israel, the rainy season is in the winter and provides green grass in the spring. It does not rain in the summer in Israel and the grass turns brown.

It was getting late in the day. The disciples went to Jesus to ask Jesus to send the people away so the people could buy something to eat. Jesus didn't send the people away. Instead, Jesus told the disciples to give the people food. Jesus spoke this as a command.

The disciples told Jesus that it would take 200 denarii to feed everyone—that was almost a year's worth of wages! Denarii were small silver coins. A worker might earn 25 of these silver coins in a month. Some translations just say that it would take a year's wages to have enough money to feed the crowd.

Villages usually had about 2000 people living in them. This crowd would have overwhelmed the villages. The villages would not have had enough food for such a crowd even if the disciples had the money to purchase the food.

Jesus asked how much bread there was. The disciples went to check and came back with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. A loaf of bread would be flat and round. The bread would be made from a grain such as barley. The fish would have been small and already prepared to eat. This was enough food for a meal for 2 adults.

Stop and show a picture of barley. Show a picture of a loaf of bread. Show a picture of fish from the Sea of Galilee. Pause the recording here.

Jesus told the disciples to put the people into groups and tell the people to sit down. The people sat in groups of 50 or 100 people per group. The nearby villages only had populations of 2,000 to 3,000 people, so 5,000 men plus women and children was a very large crowd! Jesus said that the people should sit down.

Before Jesus gave the food, Jesus gave thanks in the typical way that Jewish heads of households always gave thanks before a meal—the only difference was that Jesus looked "up" to heaven rather than downward as Jewish people did. Jesus was thanking God for the bread. Jesus looked toward heaven or toward where God lives. Some translations use the word "blessed." Jesus blessed the food. Here the word "blessed" means the same as giving thanks for the food.

Stop here and discuss as a team: How do people give thanks to God publicly in your culture? How is it different than what Jesus did? Pause the recording here.

Then the miracle occurred. Jesus began breaking the bread into pieces. Jesus gave the pieces to the disciples to distribute to the people. Jesus kept giving bread to the disciples. Every person there had enough bread to eat. Jesus also divided the fish and gave the fish to the people to eat. Everyone ate as much as they wanted.

Bread was seen as a gift from God, so people always gathered leftovers after meals. The disciples gathered the leftovers in handwoven baskets that every Jewish person would have had with them to carry their food throughout their day. The disciples gathered 12 baskets of leftover bread and fish.

Stop here and discuss: Bread was a gift from heaven. What kinds of food are like that for your people? Pause the recording here.

Stop and discuss: What happens to left over bread in your culture? Show a picture of a handwoven basket. Pause the recording here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:30-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The disciples return from their mission to the people and report on what they did and taught. The term apostle is used in this scene. So many people came to Jesus that Jesus and the apostles did not have time to eat.

In the second scene: Jesus and the disciples leave by boat to go to an isolated place to rest. The people follow them along the shore. Jesus begins teaching the people.

In the third scene: It is late in the afternoon. The people have no food. Jesus tells the disciples to feed the people. The disciples find 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.

In the fourth scene: Jesus tells his disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the grass. Jesus takes the bread and breaks it to give pieces to the people. Everyone eats as much as they want. The disciples pick up the leftovers and there are 12 baskets of bread and fish left. The five loaves and two fish fed a total of 5,000 men and their families.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 12 disciples
- The crowds of people who follow them.

In the first scene, the disciples return from their trip where Jesus had sent them with the power to cast out demons. They report to Jesus what they taught and what they did. In this scene, Mark uses the word "apostles" to describe the disciples. Jesus wanted to go to a quiet place to rest after the report. There were so many people coming and going that Jesus and the apostles didn't have time to eat.

In the second scene, Jesus and the disciples get into a boat and cross over the corner of the Sea of Galilee. They are going north towards a place where there is no village. They were looking for a quiet place where Jesus and the disciples could be alone. The crowds of people could see them as they were traveling by boat, which is why they were able to run ahead, following the shore of the lake. When Jesus got off the boat, there are crowds of people waiting.

Jesus had compassion for these people. Jesus thought of the people as being like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus began to teach the people.

In scene three, Jesus has been teaching the crowds all day and it's getting late. The disciples come to Jesus and ask Jesus to send the crowds away so that they can find food to eat. So Jesus says to the disciples, "You feed these people."

The disciples answer, "We have nothing to feed them with." The disciples say that it would take a year's wages to have enough money to purchase enough food to feed all the people. Jesus sent the disciples to find out how much food was available. The disciples go into the crowds. The disciples find five loaves of bread and two fish and bring this bread and fish to Jesus.

In the fourth scene, Jesus has his disciples put the people into groups and tell them to sit down. The disciples put the people into groups of 50 or 100. Jesus takes the bread and the fish and looks up to heaven. Jesus blesses the loaves and the fish or gives thanks for the bread and the fish. Jesus breaks the loaves of bread into pieces. First he gives the bread to the disciples, and they distribute it to the people. Then he divides the fish into pieces, and the disciples also distribute it to the crowd. After everyone eats as much as they want, the disciples gather

the leftovers and fill 12 baskets. The five loaves of bread and two fish fed 5,000 men plus their wives and children.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:30-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 12 disciples
- The crowds of people who follow them.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, the disciples come to Jesus after their trip to the villages. Now they report to Jesus all they taught and all they did. There are lots of people coming and going, and they do not even have time to eat. Jesus suggests that they go to an isolated place for some rest.

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am very tired," "I am very hungry," or "I want to spend time with my disciples that I just sent out." Or, "I'm so pleased with their report. I want us all to have some time to rest now." Or, "I have just learned that my cousin John was killed and I'm sad." Continue the drama.

Ask the disciples, who are now referred to as apostles, or sent out ones, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are very tired, we have been on a journey and now we have come back and there are crowds of people here," "We just wanted to spend time with Jesus and now all these crowds of people are here," or "We were very excited about what God did when we went out and we wanted to share these things with Jesus." Continue the drama.

In scene two, they get in the boat and cross the corner of the Sea of Galilee. The people see where they are going and run along the shore. The people arrive before Jesus and the disciples arrive at an isolated place. When Jesus and the disciples get there and Jesus gets out of the boat, there is a crowd waiting for them.

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Very tired," "I feel sorry for these people who would run ahead just to have someone lead them and teach them," or "I have compassion for these people who don't have anyone to lead them," "I know we are tired but these people need my help." Ask the people, "Why are you following Jesus to this isolated place?" You may hear "I want Jesus to heal my wife or my

child." Or, "Jesus tells such interesting stories. I want to hear more." Or, "Sometimes Jesus performs miracles. I hope I get to see one today." Continue the drama.

In scene three, Jesus teaches the people all day. Late in the afternoon, the disciples come to him and say, "This is a remote place, it's getting late, please send the crowds away so they can buy some food."

Jesus says, "You feed them."

Pause the action. Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Frustrated," "Confused," "Exhausted, and Jesus now wants us to feed these people." Or, "We have no idea what to do, we have no food," "How can we feed them? We don't have the money to buy food and there is nothing in this area to buy anyway. It would take a year's wages to buy enough food for all these people." Continue the drama.

Jesus asks, "How much food do you have? Go and find out." The disciples come back with five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus tells the disciples to have the people sit in groups. The crowd of people, 5,000 men and their families, sit down in groups of 50 and 100.

Pause the action. Ask the groups of people, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Confused," or "We are hungry and tired, but we still want to hear the teaching of Jesus," or "I wonder why they want us to sit down on the grass. I hope we can find some food soon. I didn't think to bring any with me." Continue the drama.

In scene four, Jesus looks up towards heaven and blesses the 5 loaves and the 2 fish. Jesus is giving thanks for the food. Then Jesus breaks the bread into pieces and starts giving it to the disciples. The disciples hand the bread out to the people. There is enough bread for everyone to have enough to eat. Jesus breaks the fish and gives pieces to the disciples. The disciples give the people pieces of fish. There is enough fish for everyone to eat. Everyone eats as much as they want. The disciples pick up enough leftover bread and fish to fill 12 baskets.

Pause the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear things like, "We are amazed! I've never seen anything like this. Where did all that bread come from? Jesus just kept handing me bread!" "We are still tired, but we are happy to see God at work," or "How is it possible that 5000 men plus their wives and children all had enough to eat?" Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "I'm content with today. I think my disciples learned a good lesson. I hope the people have learned something also. Maybe now, they will go home and we can have a time of rest. It's important for us to have time to rest." Ask the people, "How are you feeling now that you have eaten?" You may hear, "I am full. I don't know when I had so much to eat. I don't know where all that bread came from. I didn't see any bread when I got here and no one left to go and get it. I don't understand. But the bread was good and plenty of it. My children should sleep well tonight because they are full." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:30-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story is the only place in Mark where the disciples are called "apostles," which means "sent out ones." **Apostles** are appointed by Jesus himself as his representative. If your language has an accepted term for "apostle" that is understood by all, you may use that term here. However, if your audience does not go to church or are new believers, they may need further explanation, and a different term may be helpful to them. Some suggestions are:

- representatives of Jesus
- (special) messengers of Jesus
- sent-people of Jesus

Whatever term you choose should imply that these people are in a position of trust and authority. You will use the same term in the book of Acts.

Stop and discuss: What word would you use for **apostles**? This word is most commonly used in the book of Acts and in the letters. Be sure that the word you choose indicates that these people are in a position of trust

and authority. This term is usually only used by the disciples and Paul after the ascension of Jesus. Apostles is in the Master Glossary. Pause the recording here.

Use the same term for **disciples**, boat, and Sea of Galilee that you have been using in the rest of Mark. Disciple is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Jesus looked up to **heaven** and **blessed** the bread. In this case, "heaven" refers to the place where God and his angels live, depending on the context. The place where God lives is often thought to be "up" in the sky, so looking up can be a way to pray to God in this context. Use the same word for heaven as you have in previous passages, and remember that heaven is discussed in the Master Glossary.

In this case, Jesus "blessed" the bread in order to set it apart for the special task of being eaten. However, this is not a magical ritual that Jesus does on the food. You can avoid this misunderstanding by saying something more general that means "to give thanks" for the food.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **bless**. Bless is discussed in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The people were **satisfied** after they ate the fish and bread. This word "satisfied" means to be filled—not overfull with food, but to be satisfied to the point that there is no more hunger.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 6:30-44

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (19427356 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 6:45–56

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 6:45–56 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:45–56 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:45–56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story is a continuation of the feeding of the 5,000 story right before it. This is a narrative account of the next events which happened the same evening right after the people were fed.

Stop and show your team a map of the Sea of Galilee which includes Bethsaida. Jesus was near Bethsaida but out in an isolated place when Jesus fed the 5,000 men and their families. Pause the recording here.

Something happened after the people ate their meal that caused Jesus to tell his disciples to leave right away. The account of this event in the gospel of John chapter 6 tells us that the people wanted to use force to make Jesus their king. Mark does not tell us why Jesus wanted the disciples to leave immediately. As soon as the disciples had finished gathering the leftovers, Jesus sent the disciples in the boat to the town of Bethsaida. Then Jesus sent the crowd home. Then Jesus went by himself into the hills that were nearby to pray. These events happened quickly. The disciples departed. The crowd left. Then Jesus left that place.

In this story the crowds are probably trying to force Jesus to become the king, and Jesus responds by praying to his Father. Jesus went up into the hills to pray. Mountains are close to the northern end of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had been close to the shore of the lake. Now Jesus goes up somewhere on the side of the mountain and has a time alone while Jesus talks with God. Jesus was praying. To pray is to speak to God. Jesus was in a conversation with God. The word for pray would be a general word meaning to communicate with or speak to God. Do not use a specific word that means to give thanks or uses magical words.

Stop and discuss: Tell some stories of different people praying for different reasons. Pay attention to the words that you use for the different kinds of prayer. Pause the recording here.

Late that night during the fourth watch, or between 3 am and 6 am, Jesus was still alone on the mountainside. Jesus could see the disciples out on the lake. The wind was blowing hard making large waves. The disciples were really struggling to row the boat. The Roman government divided time into periods called a watch. Nighttime had 4 watch periods and each was 3 hours. The fourth watch was from 3 to 6 a.m. It is still dark in this story, so it may be closer to 3 a.m. than to 6 a.m.

Stop and discuss: Talk about how your culture tells the time. How would you tell someone when this event happened? Some might say "around 3 a.m." while others might say "late at night" and others might say "early in the morning before sunrise." Pause the recording here.

Jesus was on the mountainside. Jesus saw that the disciples out on the lake in the boat were in trouble with the wind and the waves. Jesus started walking down the mountainside and to the lake. Then Jesus walked on the water going towards the boat. Jesus was walking on the surface, or on top of the water. Jesus was not swimming. Jesus intended to keep walking and go on past the boat. However, when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, they were terrified. They thought Jesus was a ghost. Each one of the disciples was terrified.

The disciples are tired, both physically and emotionally. They had had a long day that finished with seeing the miracle of feeding the 5,000 men and their families. Then they got into a boat intending to go a short distance. The windstorm came and the wind was blowing the boat plus making large waves. The disciples were really struggling to control the boat. No one has ever seen a person walk on the water before this time. Popular Jewish superstitions of that time said that water spirits came at night and brought disaster. That may be why when they see Jesus walking on the water, they think they are seeing a ghost, which is a spirit of some kind, sometimes of a dead person.

It is difficult to understand what it means when the story says that Jesus intended to pass by the boat. The language here most likely shows that Jesus actually "wanted" to go near them in order to show them that he was there. As soon as Jesus realized the disciples were terrified, Jesus spoke immediately. When Jesus says, "I am he; fear not," there must have been such a relief. The disciples would have remembered the way God describes himself as "I am," and how he speaks words of comfort the many times he says to "fear not."

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone trying to offer comfort to others who are in distress or trouble. What does the storyteller say that gives comfort? What does the person do to give comfort? Pause the recording here.

When Jesus got into the boat, the wind stopped. Stories in the book of Mark are often dependent on each other, and this story reminds us of the previous story about the bread and fish. The disciples did not fully understand that when Jesus made the bread and fishes multiply, he was showing his role as Provider. If they had understood that Jesus was God himself, they would have understood that when Jesus walked on water, he was revealing that he had power over nature. They would not have been afraid. Their hearts were "hard," or "blind." They did not understand or have faith or trust in Jesus. Hard hearts is a word picture that describes someone who refuses to understand.

Stop and discuss: In your culture, there may be people who cannot or do not understand truth, no matter what miracles they see. Tell a story about someone who saw a miracle or had a miracle occur in his life, but this person did not believe in Jesus after the miracle. How would you describe this individual? What kinds of descriptions do you use to describe someone who does not believe after the miracles? Pause the recording here.

When the disciples got into the boat, they were headed north towards Bethsaida. The storm had blown the disciples' boat southwest-wards, and they landed in the region of Gennesaret. This area is south of Capernaum.

Stop and show your team a map of the Sea of Galilee and trace the route from Bethsaida to Gennesaret. Notice that the disciples went southwards but didn't cross over the lake as you might have expected from the English phrase "cross over." You will want to use an appropriate term for "reaching the shore" or "crossing over the water to another point on land." Pause the recording here.

The people in the region of Gennesaret had heard about Jesus healing people. They recognized Jesus immediately. Jesus had recently been in Capernaum, near this area. The people of Gennesaret would have heard all about others coming to touch Jesus and being healed. That's what the people wanted here—to be allowed to touch him. This follows the same pattern as other healings in Mark, where people trusted that Jesus had healing power and came to him in faith that if they touched him, they would be healed. The same word for "healed" is used here as in the story of the bleeding woman. It is a word that means completeness or wholeness. It includes the meanings of physical and spiritual salvation or healing.

This time in Gennesaret included going to the surrounding villages and the countryside, or the markets outside the villages. The marketplace is where the people gathered on a market day to sell their harvest or things they wanted to sell to other people. They carried the sick on mats. The mat was like a stretcher or pallet that is strong enough for people to take the corners and carry the sick person who is lying on the mat.

Stop and show a picture of a mat with someone being carried. Pause the recording here.

People asked Jesus to allow the sick people to touch the fringe of Jesus' robe. The fringe of the robe refers to a tassel. Jewish men wore an outer garment that often had a tassel on each corner. The purpose of the tassel was to remind the person to keep God's commandments. Jesus was a Jewish man, which means Jesus wore a robe with the 4 tassels.

Stop and show a picture of a Jewish man wearing a robe with the 4 tassels showing. Pause the recording here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:45–56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Immediately after feeding the people, Jesus tells his disciples to get back into the boat and head across the lake while he sends the people home. Jesus then goes into the hills by himself to pray.

In the second scene: Near 3 a.m., Jesus walks on the water of the lake towards the disciples who are in the boat.

Third scene: Jesus speaks to the disciples, saying, "Do not be afraid, I am here." Jesus gets into the boat and the wind stops. The disciples are amazed.

Fourth scene: They cross to the other side of the lake. They get to shore and climb out. Sick people from that area come, and everyone who touches Jesus is healed.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The crowds of people that Jesus sends away
- The crowds of people who recognize Jesus on the other side of the shore
- Sick people who touch Jesus and are healed

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The first word in this passage is "immediately" or some other word or phrase that means the same thing. This is the next thing that happened. There was no time between the previous event of feeding the people and Jesus telling the disciples to get into the boat and leave.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story with two events. The second event occurs the same day and just a few minutes after the first event finishes. Listen to the words that the storyteller uses to link the two stories. Pause the recording here.

Before acting out the whole story, have someone or a group stand in one place. Have someone else walk towards the group but keep walking and go past the group.

Stop and discuss: How will you describe the action that just happened? How will you say what the person who kept walking without stopping did? Pause the recording here.

This passage uses directional words. The passage says the boat was in the middle of the lake. The boat was not in the middle or center of the lake. The boat was out on the lake some distance from the shore but near enough to be seen from the shore. They crossed the lake. The disciples did not go across the lake as from one side to the other side. The disciples went from a point north of Capernaum to a point south of Capernaum. This is on one side of the lake but a straight line between the two cities. The boat crossed a portion of the lake.

Stop and either use the map or draw an outline of the lake on the ground. Put something to represent the boat on the lake. Now discuss the words you will use to indicate where the boat is located and what the boat does. You may say the boat is in the middle of the lake unless this confuses people. You may say the boat crossed the lake unless this confuses people. Pause the recording here.

In the first scene, Jesus is in the same place where he fed the 5,000—a remote, very grassy area that would have been a kind of plain. It is close to the lake. Immediately after the leftover food is collected, Jesus sends the disciples back in the boat to leave for Bethsaida. Jesus says goodbye to the people and sends the people home. Jesus leaves to go up into the hills. Jesus goes to this area to be alone and pray. Remember that the Sea of Galilee had hills all around it.

Stop and show the team a picture of the Sea of Galilee with these hills. Pause the recording here.

In scene two, the disciples are in the boat. The wind is strong and blowing up big waves. It is the middle of the night. The disciples are struggling to control the boat. Jesus sees them while he is still on the shore. Jesus walks out onto the lake on top of the water, or on the surface of the water. It is the fourth watch of the night or between 3 and 6 a.m., but it is still dark when Jesus walks out to the disciples. Jesus intends to walk past the boat.

In scene three, the disciples are terrified when they see Jesus. They think Jesus is a ghost. Jesus speaks to them, saying, "Do not be afraid, take courage, I am here." Jesus gets in the boat. The wind stops. The water becomes calm. The disciples are amazed. They still do not understand the importance of the loaves of bread. They know this was a miracle but they don't understand what the miracle means. Their hearts are too hard to understand.

In scene four, they cross over to the other side of the lake. They arrive at a town called Gennesaret which is south of Capernaum. This is the opposite direction of Bethsaida where they had planned to go. The disciples brought the boat to the shore. People immediately recognized Jesus. Jesus went through that area to villages, cities, and the countryside. People ran carrying sick people on mats to wherever they hear Jesus is. They beg Jesus to let the sick touch him. The original language is unclear here—we are not sure if it was the people who carried the sick, or the sick people themselves, who were asking to touch the edge of Jesus' cloak. If you can leave it unclear, it would be better. If you must say which people asked Jesus to touch his cloak or robe, it is

better to say that the sick people themselves asked to touch Jesus' cloak. All who touch Jesus, even if they only touch the fringe of Jesus' robe, are healed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:45–56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Crowds of people Jesus sends away
- The crowds of people who recognize Jesus on the other side of the shore
- Sick people who touch Jesus and are healed

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus immediately sends the disciples away. Jesus tells the people to go home. Jesus goes up into the hills by himself to pray.

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am very tired" or "I have just performed a great miracle and want to spend time with God, my father." Ask the disciples how they are feeling. You may hear, "I am really tired." Or, "I don't understand why Jesus sent us away. I wanted to ask Jesus about that bread." Or, "I've just seen the most amazing thing. I don't know how Jesus was able to make that bread multiply like that. I don't understand how Jesus can do these things. I want to know more." Continue the drama.

In the second scene, the disciples are in their boat in the middle of the lake. It is during the night. Jesus is on the land. There is strong wind and high waves. Jesus sees that the disciples are struggling with the boat. About 3 a.m. Jesus walks on the water towards the boat. Jesus intends to keep walking and go past the boat. The disciples see Jesus walking on the water and think Jesus is a ghost. The disciples are terrified.

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are terrified," "We just don't understand," or "We are confused. Is that really Jesus or is that a ghost who looks like Jesus? No one can walk on water like that. Who is Jesus?" Continue the drama.

In scene 3, Jesus speaks to them at once. "Don't be afraid," Jesus says. "Take courage, I am here." Jesus climbs into the boat, and the wind stops.

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I'm frustrated that they still don't understand who I am" or "I am trying to teach my disciples to understand more clearly who I am." Continue the drama.

The disciples are amazed. They still do not understand the miracle of the loaves and their hearts are too hard to take it in.

Pause the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "Much better. Things are always better when Jesus is with us. The wind stopped just like it did when we had that other terrible storm. Jesus is amazing. But I don't understand how it is that Jesus can do these things. I don't know how Jesus was able to give bread to everyone who was there today. Only God can do things like that. Who is Jesus?" Continue the drama.

In scene 4, they arrive on the other side of the lake, and the people recognize Jesus. The people run through the whole area, carrying sick people on mats to wherever they hear Jesus is. Wherever Jesus goes, in the villages, cities, or countryside, people bring the sick out to the marketplace. The people beg Jesus to let the sick touch at least the fringe of Jesus' robe. All who touch Jesus are healed.

At the end of the action: Ask sick people, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "I was desperate, and now I am healed," "I am so happy," or "I believe in Jesus." Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "I am amazed when I see all these sick people being healed. Where does this power to heal come from? Jesus gave us some of this power when we went to the villages to cast out demons. I had that power but I don't understand it or where that power comes from." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 6:45–56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat to go to the other side of the **lake**. Use the same words for the lake and the disciples as you have been using in previous texts.

Jesus went off to be by himself and to **pray**. The word "pray" means to be in communication with God. Pray is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for pray that you have used before.

The disciples made the boat move with wooden poles that are flat at one end. When the wind came, it was much harder to keep the boat moving in the direction they wanted it to go.

Show your team a picture of a boat and oars and remind them that this is the same type of boat as those used earlier in Mark. Pause this audio here.

Later, Jesus came out to the boat walking on water. He was about to **pass by them**. This does not mean that Jesus was passing by them without stopping. The way the original language uses the words, it actually means that Jesus was coming to join them, or to pass where they could see him. He wanted them to see him.

The disciples thought they saw a **ghost**, or the spirit of a dead person.

The disciples were **amazed**, or relieved and surprised that they had been saved from the storm. They were surprised because they did not understand who Jesus was.

Many people were healed. The term for **healed** in this story is the term that refers to a complete healing—spiritually and physically.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 6:45-56

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (19119082 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 7:1-8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 7:1-8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:1–8 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

We do not know when this teaching happened—if it happened right after the events before it in Mark, or if Mark puts this teaching from Jesus here to show us something in the middle of the stories he tells about Jesus.

This teaching is the first part of a longer teaching. The longer teaching is in three parts. This section describes the problem the Pharisees had with Jesus and how Jesus first responds to it. In the second part, Jesus will explain that the religious leaders' tradition is not the same as God's law, and sometimes their tradition is the opposite of God's law. In the third part, Jesus will explain how people really become defiled, which means that they become not acceptable for God's work. This teaching happens right before we see how Jesus helps non-Jewish people three different times! This teaching may be here to show us that even non-Jewish people can be acceptable to God if they follow him in their hearts, even if they are not following all of the Jewish customs.

The Pharisees and other teachers of the law have come from the temple in Jerusalem to where Jesus was. They wanted to see him. Pharisees were a group of Jewish religious leaders who were very careful to obey all Jewish laws and traditions in detail. Teachers of the law, sometimes called scribes, were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. They gather around Jesus and his disciples, who are eating, and notice a problem—the disciples have not washed their hands before eating their food in the specific way required in Jewish tradition. The Pharisees and teachers of the law thought that this makes the disciples unclean. Unclean does not mean that the disciples were physically dirty, but instead the Pharisees thought they were ritually unclean or unfit before God. In God's sight true uncleanness is not caused by external things, like dirt or not following man-made rituals or ceremonies, but instead by sinful things a person says or does. In this passage, Jesus teaches us the difference between ritual cleanness and moral cleanness—what is in our hearts and minds.

We have seen in earlier parts of Mark that Jesus does not always follow the traditions of the religious leaders. Jewish religious traditions were sometimes called oral law. The Jewish people had the written law of Moses, but sometimes the law was not totally clear. Over the years, the elders—religious leaders of previous generations—interpreted the written law and gave extra instructions to try to make the law more clear. People passed down these extra instructions to the next generations by word of mouth. These instructions became traditions that religious leaders commanded the Jewish people to do in order to get closer to God. It was hard to keep all these rules. In this section, Mark helps us to understand the religious leaders' extra laws by giving us a bit of extra explanation.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: What kinds of religious rules and rituals do the people in your community do? How do the people feel about these religious rules and rituals? Who tells them to do the rituals and why do they think they have to do them? Pause this audio here.

The ceremonial law of the Old Testament did not say it was necessary for all people to wash before every meal in order to be acceptable to God. This instruction and the specific way of washing hands was added by religious leaders over time. The written laws of Moses only required the priests in the temple to wash their hands, but the Pharisees wanted everyone to be just as devoted to God as the priests. Over the years, everyone became

required to wash their hands before eating bread. It was not a complete washing to get all the dirt off—all the people had to do was rinse their hands once with water. We think they did this by filling one hand with water, making it in the shape of a cup, and pouring that out over the other hand.

Then Mark tells us what the religious leaders do when they come back from the market. The language is hard to understand, so we are not sure exactly what the religious leaders do. Either the religious leaders wash everything that comes from the market, or they wash themselves when they come back from the market. They would wash themselves either by sprinkling themselves or covering themselves completely with water. Because we are not sure whether Mark is telling us that the religious leaders wash themselves or the things they bring from the market, you can say either thing in your translation.

Mark goes on to explain all the things which people have to wash and how they have to wash them according to the religious leaders' law. There were many things that had to be purified or made acceptable for service to God. Mark gives a long list as an example: cups, pitchers, kettles," so that we will see how much extra work the religious leaders gave to people. The Pharisees believed that people could get closer to God if they would do all these things.

The cups mentioned here are containers used for drinking. Pitchers are containers such as a jug that people pour liquid from, and kettles refer to metal containers used for cooking.

Stop here and look at a picture of cups, pitchers, and kettles. Tell each other a story of a time when you know someone who did something in order to gain God's or a spirit's favor. Pause this audio here.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law rebuke Jesus—asking him why his disciples are not following Jewish tradition and instead are eating with defiled or unclean hands. Jesus does not explain to them directly why his disciples did not follow these traditions. Instead Jesus responds with a quote from one of their most famous prophets, Isaiah. This quote from Isaiah about hypocrites shows that people may wash themselves and keep all the strict rules about making themselves and other things clean, but that does not mean that their hearts are clean or that they are acceptable to God. Isaiah says that God says, "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." God's message shows us the difference between external worship, praising God with our words or "with their lips," and the internal reality of what is happening in our hearts and minds. Jesus is telling the Pharisees and teachers of the law that Isaiah's prophecy is being fulfilled here. The Pharisees and teachers of the law are the hypocrites God described through Isaiah. To be a hypocrite is to have the appearance of being something you are not. God says, "They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules." The Pharisees worship with no purpose because they are thinking only of the human traditions and laws. They have replaced God's commands with their own man-made teachings.

They are not closer to God because they do these things: they are closer to God when their hearts are close to God. This quote shows the religious leaders that God's law itself has authority over their traditions, even though their traditions might have been made in order to help people.

Stop here and discuss: Who has religious authority in your community? Is it the Bible/Scripture itself, or certain church leaders? Describe any religious rituals your community does that is more than the Bible tells them to do. Pause the audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: The Pharisees and teachers of the religious law notice that Jesus' disciples did not wash their hands before eating, as is a part of the Jewish tradition.

In the second scene: The Pharisees and the teachers of the religious law ask Jesus, "Why don't your disciples follow our tradition?"

Jesus responds that they are hypocrites. Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah, who said "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God."

Jesus says, "You ignore God's law and substitute it with your own tradition."

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The Pharisees
- The teachers of the religious law
- The prophet Isaiah (who is quoted)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: We do not know when or where the first scene happens, but Jesus is with his disciples, and they are eating. The Pharisees and the teachers of the religious law have come from Jerusalem to see Jesus. We do not know why the Pharisees have come to see Jesus; it may be that they came with the purpose of finding fault with Jesus' teachings and actions. We see throughout Mark that many of the religious leaders are unhappy with Jesus' teachings.

These Pharisees and teachers of the religious law notice that the disciples do not wash their hands before eating, as was expected in Jewish tradition.

Now Mark gives his audience background information so that they can understand the passage. Mark explains that the Jewish people, especially the Pharisees, traditionally washed their hands and ceremonially washed cups, pitchers, and kettles. Although the passage says "all Jews" this is probably an exaggeration and means "most Jews." The specific way of washing hands and many of the other traditions were not from the law of Moses but were instructions added by religious leaders over time. The Pharisees had invented and developed 613 laws and were more concerned about their religious habits than about their hearts and having a relationship with God. It was hard for the Jewish people to follow so many specific laws and rituals. Ceremonial washing was important to many Jews, especially to the Pharisees. The command to wash hands comes from the tradition of the elders, not from the law God gave to Moses.

In the second scene, the teachers of the religious law and the Pharisees ask Jesus why his disciples do not follow these traditions. They rebuke Jesus for the actions of his disciples. The Pharisees think if Jesus' disciples are not behaving in a way they believe to be acceptable before God, then Jesus is also not behaving in an acceptable way, because he is their teacher. Jesus does not answer the Pharisees' question with a direct explanation for why the disciples have not followed the tradition. Instead, he responds by telling the teachers of the religious law and Pharisees that they are hypocrites. Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah, who said, "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is a farce, because they teach man-made ideas as commands from God."

Jesus says, "You ignore, or let go of, God's law and substitute, or hold on to, your own tradition."

Jesus is not saying that all traditions are wrong. Many people and cultures follow many traditions. Jesus is showing the Pharisees the problem with religious traditions that have become more important than God's word. Mark wants us to follow Jesus in our hearts rather than follow man-made religious traditions. The Pharisees would judge someone as being acceptable before God based on a person's habits and behaviors. If they saw someone not following the traditions, they viewed them as sinning against God or being unclean. The Pharisees loved religious traditions and taught them as if they had the same authority as the commands of God. They loved these traditions and habits more than they loved God.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The Pharisees
- The teachers of the religious law
- The prophet Isaiah (who is quoted)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, the Pharisees and teachers of the religious law come from Jerusalem to see Jesus. They notice that some of his disciples failed to follow the Jewish ritual of hand-washing before eating.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the Pharisees and teachers of the religious law, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are shocked," "We knew there was some problem with this Jesus and his disciples," "We feel like this is blasphemy," "We feel like they don't respect us," or "We feel like the disciples are disrespecting God." Now ask the actors playing the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are not even paying attention to things like washing our hands, we are with Jesus, we are just doing what he does." Continue the drama.

Be sure to act out the traditions of pouring water over cupped hands, not eating anything from the market until you put your hands under water, and ceremonially washing cups and pitchers.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the Pharisees and teachers of the religious law, who would be doing these traditions, "Why are you doing these things?" You may hear things like, "This is what we have always done" or "We thought this is what God required of us." Continue the drama.

The Pharisees and teachers of the religious law ask Jesus why his disciples do not follow the tradition. Jesus replies, "You hypocrites. Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am angry," "I am frustrated, these are supposed to be religious leaders, but they do not really understand what God wants," or "I feel like these people are trying to burden my disciples with things that God does not require." Continue the drama.

Jesus quotes Isaiah, who said, "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is not true or genuine. They teach man-made ideas as commands from God, ignore God's law, and substitute their own traditions."

At the end of the drama, ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am angry that these people are teaching man-made ideas as commands from God" or "I am protecting my disciples from this man-made religion."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **Pharisees** and **teachers of the law** come to see Jesus. A "teacher of the law" is sometimes translated as **scribes** or people who wrote down the law: They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These teachers did not write down the interpretations, but they memorized them and taught them orally. For more information on teacher of the law refer to the Master Glossary and use the same term here that you have used in other passages.

The name "Pharisee" means "to be separated." The **Pharisees** were regarded as highly influential and righteous. They were good examples for the people because they were devoted to God's law. They recognized both the written and the oral religious traditions and laws. The term Pharisees is the name of this type of religious leader. For more information on Pharisee refer to the Master Glossary and use the same term here that you have used in other passages.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law travel from **Jerusalem** to see Jesus. Jerusalem is the name of the religious capital of the Jewish people. The official place where Jews went to sacrifice to God, the temple, was located in Jerusalem. This was the holiest place for Jewish people, and the place where the leaders of Jewish religious law met.

The Pharisees notice the **disciples** are eating without washing their hands, as was expected by Jewish tradition. For more information on disciples refer to the Master Glossary and use the same term here that you have used for "disciple" throughout the book of Mark.

Mark explains that the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands. **Jews** refers to the people group descended from Isaac, son of Abraham. This is the group God covenanted with to give them the land of Israel. They began to be called Jews when, 500 years before Jesus, they were conquered by enemy armies and taken to another country. They called themselves Jews to preserve their identity as God's chosen people. "The Jews" is both an ethnic group (Isaac's descendants) and a group of people who practice the religion of Judaism. In this story Mark says that the Jews always wash their hands before eating. This is probably an exaggeration to say that most Jews, if they follow the religious rituals of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, will wash their hands.

Stop here and discuss what term you will use for **Jews**. For more information on Jews refer to the Master Glossary and use the same term here that you have used in other passages. Pause this audio here.

Jesus responds to the Pharisees' rebuke by quoting Isaiah. Jesus says that Isaiah was right when he prophesied about the people's **hypocrisy**. Isaiah is a Jewish prophet who prophesied to the Jews, God's people, over 700 years before Jesus' time. Isaiah warned God's people that they would be conquered by the enemy and taken away from their land if they did not follow God. He also prophesied that they would be saved from their exile and brought back to the land. He prophesied that a saviour would come to save them. In this case, Jesus quotes Isaiah to show that God cares more about what is inside a person's heart than what rules he follows. Use the same word for **prophecy** and **hypocrisy** as you have in previous passages, and remember that prophecy and hypocrisy are in the Master Glossary.

Jesus talks about holding on to **human tradition** or the **tradition of men**. This refers to the oral tradition that the scribes passed down to the people and told them that they must follow. Jesus calls it the "tradition of men"

in order to show the difference between these rules and the more important rules that God wants people to follow.

Stop here and discuss what term you will use for **tradition of men**.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 7:1-8

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11214977 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 7:9–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 7:9–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:9–13 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:9–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous section Jesus has told the religious leaders that God's laws are more important than the oral, extra traditions that the religious leaders made the people follow. In this section, Mark introduces more things Jesus says to the Pharisees and teachers of the law and gives a specific example of how their man-made laws actually go against God's laws.

Jesus says, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!" Jesus' tone was sarcastic here. He is making a point that the Pharisees and teachers of the law find clever ways to disobey God's laws in order to keep their own man-made traditions. Jesus uses the example from Moses' law about honouring parents to show how the religious leaders' oral laws allowed people to avoid having to honour their parents. Moses talks about honouring parents twice in the Old Testament:

The first time Moses mentions honouring parents is the fifth commandment, which states that people should honour their parents so that they will live a long life. The second time Moses mentions this, he says that if someone does not honour their parents, they should be killed.

To honour someone is to show respect to someone. A person could honour their father or mother in many ways. A person could honour them practically with things such as money or food, or in other ways such as kindness or help. This law given to Moses by God was for all the people of Israel to obey. It was very important for a person to honour their father and mother in Jewish law—the consequences of not behaving respectfully

and honouring your father and mother were serious. Moses' law said a person should be killed if they disobeyed this command. Some translations use the term, "Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death." This does not mean to actually put a curse on someone, but instead means to insult someone or speak badly of them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who do you honour in your culture and how do you show this? Pause this audio here.

Jesus goes on to say to the Pharisees and teachers of the law that their teaching is quite different from Moses' law. They teach human traditions and give those traditions greater authority than God's law. The Pharisees not only disregarded God's law themselves by following these traditions but also taught others to do the same. The religious leaders had said that people don't have to help their parents if they had already vowed to give whatever they would have used to help their parents as an offering to God. Jesus is referring to a special kind of vow in this passage—a "corban." Corban comes from the original Hebrew word for "gift dedicated to God or offering." When people made this kind of offering, they also vowed that the items would be dedicated to God and could not be taken back from God. This was a very serious vow. There were serious consequences if someone broke the vow by giving the offering to someone else. Even though the item belonged to God, a person did not actually have to give it as an offering, they could keep it for themselves. Jesus is saying that the Pharisees made these vows for selfish reasons, to keep things for themselves and avoid having to help their father and mother.

In fact, if someone had offered these gifts to God in this special kind of vow, they "should not" give it to their parents, even if their parents needed it, because that would be breaking their vow to God. The person is forbidden from doing anything to help. This is not an exaggeration, as a person could avoid even assisting or being kind to their parents by saying they had religious duties.

It is true that breaking a promise to God was unacceptable when a person made this kind of vow to make an offering. It is also true that God should be more important to us than anyone else, including our father and mother. However, Jesus says here that it is not right to use one law of God to break another law of God. That is not how God's laws are meant to be used. Jesus is telling the Pharisees and teachers of the law that their traditions are causing people to disobey God's Word. Jesus goes on to say that this is just one example of the many ways the religious leaders cause others to disobey.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Give some examples in your culture of times when religious leaders twist their laws in order to benefit themselves.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:9–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the first scene: Jesus continues to rebuke the Pharisees and teachers of the law by giving a specific example of how they are finding clever ways to ignore the command of God so they can follow their own traditions.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees
- The teachers of the law
- Moses (who gave the law from God)
- Children who refuse to help their parents (in Jesus' example)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: In this passage, Jesus continues to speak to the Pharisees and teachers of the law. He tells them that they are disobeying God's law so that they can fulfil their own traditions. He gives them an example. Moses, in the ten commandments in God's law, said, "Honour your mother and father." In another part of his writings Moses also said, "Anyone who speaks disrespectfully of their father and mother must be put to death."

Jesus says, "But you say it is okay for people to say to their parents, 'I can't help you' if they have vowed to give the items they would have given to their parents to God." Jesus' argument is, "You are using these traditions for people to disregard their needy parents, and you have cancelled the word of God in order to hand down your own traditions." This tradition allowed people who may be angry with their parents or even just greedy to declare their items or possessions to be dedicated to God. However, it did not mean that a person had to take the items to the temple as an offering, and also did not mean that they could not use the items themselves—it just meant that they would not have to give them to their parents. In fact, they were forbidden to do so.

Traditions like this example that Jesus gave make people disobey God's law and lead us away from what God intended for us. In this case, through the laws God gave to Moses, God has shown us the importance of caring for our mothers and fathers when they can no longer care for themselves. This oral law or tradition of men allowed people to behave selfishly and not care for their parents. When we commit ourselves to God, that commitment includes a commitment to our families, people in need, and even our enemies. Jesus says we should always care for people in need. If we don't care for others, then we aren't really obeying God.

Jesus ends by saying there are many other examples of the religious leaders making God's laws invalid.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:9–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees
- The teachers of the law
- Moses (who gave the law from God)
- Children who refuse to help their parents (in Jesus' example)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus responds to the Pharisees and the teachers of law. He quotes Moses, who said, "Honour your father and mother. Anyone who speaks disrespectfully of their mother and father must be put to death."

Jesus then gives an example of children who say to their needy parents, "Sorry, I can't help you, for I have vowed to give to God what I would have given to you."

Pause the drama. Ask the people who are playing the parents in Jesus' example, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Disappointed," "I feel like my children are not respecting or honouring me," or "I'm so sad. I feel like no one loves me. My children are trying to get out of helping me by using God." Continue the drama.

Jesus goes on to argue, "You cancel the word of God in order to hand down your own traditions. This is only one example among many others."

Pause the drama. Ask the people who are playing the Pharisees and teachers of the law, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "Angry, how dare Jesus question our traditions?" "Insulted," "Afraid. I know I can never follow all of God's laws. It is too hard."

At the end of the action, ask the actor playing Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am angry that these Pharisees and teachers of the law are cancelling the word of God for their own traditions" or "I am trying to show people what their hypocrisy looks like."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:9–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus quotes from **Moses' law** when he gives the religious leaders an example of their hypocrisy. God gave the prophet Moses the laws from God to give to God's people before they entered the land God had given them. These laws were written and became the foundation for the Jewish people's religious laws. The religious leaders then added more oral laws onto the written law, adding unnecessary and extra burden to the people. The New Testament often simply says that **Moses** or **the law** said something. Both "Moses" and "the law" refer to the same thing.

Stop here and discuss what term you will use for **Moses' law**. The law of Moses is discussed in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

In Jewish tradition a person could make a vow or offering called a **Corban**. The word corban comes from the original Hebrew word for "gift dedicated to God or offering." When people made this kind of offering, they also vowed that the items would be dedicated to God and could not be taken back from God. This was a very serious vow. There were serious consequences if someone broke the vow by giving the offering to someone else.

Stop here and discuss what term you will use for **Corban**. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 7:9–13

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (7220328 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 7:14–23

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 7:14–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:14–23 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus has just been rebuking the Pharisees and teachers of the law for finding clever ways to disobey God's laws through the traditions that have been passed down through generations. Jesus now talks again about what defiles a person and makes them clean or unclean. It is not the things we do or show on the outside but what is in our hearts that God cares about. Jesus now calls the crowd to gather around him so everyone can hear the important message he has to give. Jesus tells the crowd to "listen and understand." He is asking them to listen carefully—what he is about to say is important. Jesus wants the crowd to pay attention and understand that he is trying to reveal God's truth to them.

Stop here and discuss how your teachers or wise men get the attention of people when they teach in order to show them that the teaching is important. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells a parable. A parable was a special kind of story that Jesus told. Parables used everyday things to describe deeper things about God. Parables were often hard to understand unless people really tried to listen. Jesus says, "Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them." When Jesus says "nothing outside a person" here, he is referring to any kind of food. He is saying the food you put in your mouth does not make you unclean, or unfit for service to God. Instead, it is what comes out of a person that makes them unclean. Jesus means that what comes out of person is our inner thoughts, our hearts, who we really are.

In the Old Testament there were certain foods that people shouldn't eat. These foods were considered unclean. The Pharisees believed that if a person ate unclean foods, that person would need to go through a cleansing ceremony to be clean again and acceptable before God. The Pharisees and disciples had misunderstood the purpose of the unclean foods in the Old Testament. These foods along with other purification rituals such as sacrifices served as a reminder that everyone was born with sin in their hearts and needed a savior to cleanse them of their sin. Jesus is the promised savior the people have been waiting for. He is the one who will finally make all things right again. He will even clean the inside of a person and make their thoughts and heart pure and good.

People are unclean or defiled when they are not fit for service to God. Religious traditions gave people lists of rules to stay "clean" or "pure"—things that they must do to wash themselves, and things that they should not eat or touch. When people were "pure" or "clean" they could worship God and be a part of the society. Jesus overturns this traditional way of thinking and explains that no one can follow enough rules to be "clean," or "acceptable for service to God." A person's heart is the most important—their moral character—whether or not they behave in a way that pleases God. Jesus is not in any way saying that the Jewish laws about purity are wrong or that people should stop following them, but he explains where true cleanliness comes from. Jesus explains that following the Jewish rules makes us look clean outwardly, but it is what is in our heart that God is interested in. People described the heart as the place where the emotions and characteristics of a person were.

Stop here and discuss: What kinds of things in your culture make someone acceptable to worship and serve the gods in your culture? Are there special ceremonies you have to do? Describe them. Pause this audio here.

The book of Mark shows a common cycle of Jesus teaching publicly and then explaining to his disciples in private. It happens again here. Jesus says something in public to a large crowd, and then he goes away (or into a house) and his disciples ask for more explanation.

Jesus begins to explain his teaching. First, Jesus says that food cannot make someone unclean. Food goes into our stomach, not our hearts. Mark gives us the extra interpretation that Jesus is declaring all foods acceptable, based on Jesus' teaching. Then Jesus gives a list of 13 evil things—things that truly defile a person or make them unclean. After "evil thoughts," Mark gives us six evil actions, and then six evil moral characteristics.

The actions that Jesus talks about are sexual immorality (or fornication). This is a broad term that refers to any kind of sexual immorality. He then talks about theft, or stealing, and murder.

He talks about adultery, which is sexual immorality with someone who is not your wife or husband. He talks about greed, which can refer to jealousy in a sexual way. He talks about wickedness, which is a general term referring to deliberate acts of evil.

Then Jesus lists characteristics about a person that are evil. The first one Jesus mentions is deceit, which is when someone is lying and full of treachery. Then he mentions lustful desires and envy, which is when someone wants something that someone else has. Jesus mentions slander, which is saying something bad about someone else, but most often is used about saying something bad about God. He talks about pride, which is arrogance or thinking of oneself as better than others, and foolishness, which refers to the characteristic of someone who does not know God and does not wish to know him.

Stop here and discuss what kinds of characteristics make someone a "bad person" in your culture. What makes someone a "good person" in your culture? Describe them to each other.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus calls the crowd to come and hear him. He has just been talking to the Pharisees and the teachers of the religious law. He says to the crowd, "All of you listen and try to understand. It is not what goes into your body that defiles you. You are defiled by what comes from your heart."

In the second scene: Jesus goes into a house, and his disciples ask him what he means by this. He explains to them what he meant.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees and the teachers of the religious law are still there (though they are not mentioned in the story)
- A crowd of people
- Jesus' disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: In the first scene, Jesus has just finished his argument with the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. The crowd were already with Jesus and the Pharisees, but he had been speaking directly to the Pharisees in the previous passage. Jesus now draws the crowd to him and tells them to listen and try to understand—what he is going to say is important. When Jesus asks the crowd to try to understand, it is not because the message he has is too complicated but because it may be hard for people to accept. People, particularly the Pharisees, followed closely to their religious traditions and thought that if they washed things in a certain way and didn't eat certain foods and follow many other traditions and

purification rituals, they could stay away from sin and be spiritually clean and acceptable before God. Jesus makes the statement that you are defiled by what comes from your heart, not what goes into your body. We are not told how the Pharisees or the crowd respond to Jesus' teaching. Jesus doesn't explain any more to the crowd; instead, he walks away. This was probably a difficult statement to accept, it would mean a complete change in people's understanding of how to be acceptable before God. We know that even the disciples who have a close relationship with Jesus did not understand the meaning of what Jesus was saying, not because they were not intelligent but because this was a new way of thinking.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a time when your understanding of something changed. How easy was it to accept the new way of thinking? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Jesus is inside a house. His disciples come to him and ask what he means. It was common for the disciples to ask questions about what Jesus meant. They are learning from Jesus; he is their teacher. Jesus asks his disciples questions that he does not expect an answer to. Jesus asks if they do not understand. What Jesus is really saying is that it is not food that can defile you. Food does not go into your heart—it goes into your stomach and then goes out of your body. Then the action changes from Jesus talking to Mark giving us extra information. Mark says that by declaring this, Jesus declared that every kind of food is acceptable in God's eyes. Some foods were considered unclean in the Old Testament, to serve as a reminder that we are all born with sin in our hearts and need a savior. Mark is now telling us that Jesus is declaring all foods "clean" ("clean" means acceptable to God). Jesus is the promised savior, who will cleanse people of their sins and change the desires of their hearts.

Jesus goes on to say that what comes out of a person is what defiles them. What is inside of someone's heart is what comes out of them—evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All of these come from within, and they defile a person.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about evil actions and characteristics when you are teaching someone what is wrong to do? How will you describe this list of characteristics? How will you remember the actions on the list? Practice saying the list of 13 actions and characteristics and decide what the best way to talk about them is. You may re-order the list if it's easier to remember it another way. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees and the teachers of the religious law are still there (though they are not mentioned in the story)
- A crowd of people
- Jesus' disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus calls the crowds to him. He explains to them that nothing outside a person that goes into them can defile a person. It is the things that come out of him that defile him.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "I want to make sure that everyone understands," "I am frustrated with the Pharisees and teachers of the religious law," or "I am trying to help people who don't really understand the true things about God." Continue the drama.

Jesus goes inside a house. His disciples ask about his teaching.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are still confused," "We do not understand," or "It seems like Jesus is going against our traditions and we do not understand." Continue the drama.

Jesus says to them, "Are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from the outside cannot defile him? It enters not his heart, but his stomach, and then it leaves his body." Then he explains, "What comes out of a person is what defiles them."

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "Frustration" or "I'm trying to move them from just looking at people's actions and what they present on the outside to look at what is inside of people's hearts." Continue the drama.

After the action: Ask the people playing the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We feel like everything is changing" or "We still don't understand."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus called the crowd to come and hear, and he said, "All of you listen. Try to understand. It's not what goes into your body that defiles you. You are defiled by what comes into your heart."

When Jesus talks about **defile**, he's referring to a state of being in which someone or something is fit for service to God or has some characteristic that makes them unfit for service at this time. People can become unclean or clean again by their actions and by their health.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **defile**. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says you are defiled by what comes from your heart. The **heart** was considered the place where emotions and characteristics of people were. Use the same word or phrase for "heart" as you used in the previous passages.

Jesus went into a house to get away from the crowd, and his disciples asked him what he meant by the parable he had just used. Remember to use the same word for disciples in this passage as you have used in previous passages in Mark.

A **parable** was a special kind of story that Jesus told. It was told using everyday things to describe deeper things about God. Parables were often hard to understand unless people really tried to listen.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **parable**. Look up parable in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus goes on to talk about evil things.

Evil thoughts are the thoughts of people that cause them to do evil things. Then, we can divide evil things into actions and characteristics.

The actions that Jesus talks about are **sexual immorality** (or **fornication**). This is a broad term that refers to any kind of sexual immorality.

He then talks about **theft**, or **stealing**, and **murder**.

He talks about adultery, which is sexual immorality with someone who is not your wife or husband.

He talks about **greed**, which can refer to jealousy in a sexual way.

He talks about **wickedness**, which is a general term referring to deliberate acts of evil.

Then Jesus lists characteristics that are evil:

- **Deceit** which is when someone is lying and full of treachery.
- **Lustful desires**
- **Envy** when someone wants something that someone else has.
- **Slander** which is saying something bad about someone else, but most often is used about saying something bad about God.
- **Pride** is arrogance or thinking of oneself as better than others.
- **Foolishness** refers to the characteristic of someone who does not know God and does not wish to know him.

These are things which come from within someone's character. These are the things which cause someone to be defiled or unclean, or unfit for service to God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for these evil actions and characteristics.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 7:14–23

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9893729 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 7:24–30

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 7:24–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:24–30 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:24–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

We know that this story happened after the teaching right before it, but we do not know how long after. Be sure that you use a general term for the time that has passed. We know from the same story in Matthew that the disciples went with Jesus, although they are not mentioned here. In the previous verses Jesus has just taught that inner purity is better than outward ritual purity. One of the Jewish ritual rules was that if they touched or did anything with non-Jewish people (called Gentiles) they would be unclean. However, Jesus goes to the region of Tyre in Syrian Phoenicia, north of the Jewish land. This is the only time when Jesus traveled outside of the borders of Israel. Jesus is showing us in actions what he has just taught in words—that we are not made clean or unclean by our outward actions. Remember that Mark is talking to new Gentile believers (non-Jewish believers) in his book. Mark may have also wanted to remind the new Gentile believers that Jesus really did see them as clean and worthy of his notice.

Show the translation team maps showing Galilee and Syrian Phoenicia in which Tyre is the central city. Pause this audio here.

Jesus wanted to get away to rest because of all the work he had been doing, and he didn't want to be noticed by anyone. But the people of Tyre had already heard about his miracles. We know this because some of them came to see Jesus when he was by the Sea of Galilee. The people of Tyre wanted to meet Jesus. One woman, a Gentile, or non-Jew, from this area heard Jesus was there. This woman was Syrophenician, which means she came from a part of the province of Syria called Phoenicia. She came to Jesus because her daughter was demon possessed. From other stories in Mark, we know that demons were cruel to the people they possessed. The demons can control a person's thoughts or actions. This girl may have been having seizures or falling into fire or water. The woman fell at Jesus' feet. This does not mean that she stumbled and fell down, but instead means she bowed down at Jesus' feet—she got down on her knees and put her face to the ground—to show her deep respect and grief at her situation. She begged and continued begging Jesus to cause the demon to leave her daughter and stop controlling her. Her daughter was still at home—she was not with her mother.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team. How do you show respect for a teacher to whom you are begging help? In your culture, what does bowing down in front of someone mean? Pause this audio here.

Jesus replies to the Gentile woman using a parable, or a story, to explain to her. He says, "It is not right to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs. First let the children eat all they want." The woman would have understood this story, but your audience may not. Here's what this story means: Jesus is giving us a picture of a family home where the children are sitting and eating a meal. The "children" in this story refer to the Jewish people. The dogs in the parable are the loved family dogs that are allowed in while eating—they are not stray dogs or wild dogs. They usually sit or wait under the table for the family to give them food from the table. Jesus is telling the woman that he came to serve the Jewish people first. In the Old Testament, the Jewish people of Israel were the children of God, or God's chosen people. Jesus shared the gospel or good news with the Jews before the Gentiles. This might seem like a harsh response from Jesus. However, this is also like a test for the woman. Jesus does not want her to think that he is a magician who will just do whatever she wants. How much faith—trust—in Jesus does she have? The woman is not insulted by the comparison to a dog. Instead, she knows that in the house, the children usually purposely drop crumbs of bread for the dogs during the meal. The woman is not asking to receive more than the Jews, or instead of the Jews. She has faith and confidence that Jesus can do it all at the same time!

Stop here and discuss as a translation team—are there certain people who might be considered "unclean" around your communities? How do you treat them? Pause the audio here.

Jesus shows happiness at the woman's faith. Then he tells her to go home as a way of saying, "Your daughter is healed."

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:24–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus leaves the area of the Galilee and goes north of the region of Tyre. He goes to a house where he does not want to be found, but a woman hears about him and comes to him. She asks him to cast out the demon from her daughter, who is possessed.

In the second scene: There is a discussion between the woman, who is not Jewish but is a Gentile born in Syrian Phoenicia. Jesus says that he should feed his own family, the Jews. He says, "It is not right to take food from children and throw it to the dogs."

She replies, "That is true, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat scraps from the children's plates."

In the third scene: Jesus says, "Good answer. Now go home, the demon has left your daughter." The woman arrives home to find her little girl lying quietly in bed, the demon has gone.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- A Syrophenician woman
- The woman's demon possessed daughter
- There are references to the Jews and the Gentiles

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: In the first scene, Jesus leaves the region of Galilee with his disciples and goes to the region of Tyre. We do not know exactly where Jesus was, but the journey was probably about 20 miles, or 32 kilometers. Jesus was in the "vicinity" of Tyre, which means he was in an area near the city called Tyre which is northwest of Lake Galilee. Jesus probably did not enter any towns as he did not want to be noticed by anyone, he wanted to rest. However, people did notice Jesus, his presence in the area could not be kept a secret. This was probably frustrating for Jesus.

Stop here and show a map that shows the Galilee and the region of Tyre. Pause the audio here.

Jesus finds a house to stay in. Mark does not tell us whose house it is. A non-Jewish woman comes to him at the house and falls at his feet. She bows down and lowers her face to the floor as an act of respect. The woman repeatedly begs Jesus to cast the demon out from her daughter. The woman would have been very distressed at her daughter's suffering. We do not know how long the daughter had been possessed by a demon or the age of her daughter. The same word, however, is used for Jairus' daughter in an earlier story in Mark 5. So, she was probably unmarried and in her early teenage years. Some translations say "little daughter." This does not mean physically small or short but is a term of affection.

In the second scene, Jesus gives a small parable to explain that he should feed his children, his own family, the Jews first. He says, "It is not right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs." When Jesus says "it is not right," he does not mean it is a sin, he means it is not proper or not good. Jesus is saying that it is not good to take bread from the children. Bread was the main food for people in this area, but here it means, it's not good to take things that benefit the Jewish people, which is Jesus' giving help to heal people. We see in other passages of Mark how Jesus' actions show love to all people, even the outcasts. It may therefore seem that his response here is harsh and not the same as the other messages. However, Jesus is testing the woman's faith.

The woman responds and calls Jesus "Lord." This title would be given to someone who was in a high position or had authority, but was also used as a title to refer to God. We do not know in which way the woman was using this term, but we know that she has confidence in Jesus' power and goodness, and had faith in his authority to heal. The woman goes on to say, "Even the dogs have a right to eat the scraps from the children's plate."

There is a contrast here between the previous passages where we see the unbelief of the Jewish religious leaders and the lack of understanding that even the disciples had when Jesus told the parable about what causes a person to be unclean. This woman is a Gentile and yet she understands Jesus' message and has faith in him and his power to heal.

Immediately, Jesus says, "Good answer. The demon has already left your daughter." Jesus tells the woman to go. This is not a rebuke. Jesus is telling her he has given her what she has asked for and healed her daughter. Jesus did not need to speak words of healing or be in the presence of the daughter in order to heal her.

The woman finds her daughter healed, laying quietly in bed, the demon gone.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:24-30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- A Syrophenician woman
- The woman's demon possessed daughter
- There are references to the Jews and the Gentiles

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus has left the region of Galilee. He goes to the region of Tyre. He does not want anyone to know the house that he is staying in, but he cannot keep it a secret. Right away a woman who has heard about him comes and falls at his feet. Her little girl is possessed by a demon, so the woman begs Jesus to cast the demon from her daughter.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "Frustrated. I wanted to keep my location a secret, but people found out," "Inconvenienced," or "Interested that this non-Jewish person has come to me." Continue the drama.

Act out the dialogue between Jesus and the woman. Jesus says, "I should feed the children, my own family, the Jews. It is not right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the woman, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "I have just been called a dog by Jesus, the one I came seeking help from, the one I have heard so much about," "I am so desperate, I do not care," or "I am determined to convince Jesus to help my daughter." Continue the drama.

The woman replies, "Even the dogs are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates." Jesus says, "Good answer. Now go home, the demon has left your daughter." When the woman arrives home, she finds her little girl lying in her bed, the demon gone.

At the end of the action, ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" You may hear things like, "Very happy that this woman had such faith" or "Impressed by the determination of this woman."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:24–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

To begin, show the team the maps showing Galilee, Syrian Phoenicia, and Tyre in Syrian Phoenicia.

We know that Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He couldn't keep it a secret where he was staying, and so a woman heard about him and came and fell at his feet. Her daughter was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged Jesus to cast out the demon.

Use the same term that you have been using for both **evil spirit** or **demon**. If you are using two separate words for evil spirit and another for demon, use each of the two separate words: her little girl was possessed by an "evil spirit," and she begged him to cast out the "demon" from her daughter. For more information on evil spirit and demon, refer to the Master Glossary.

This woman was a **Gentile**, born in Syrian Phoenicia. "Gentile" in this context means that she was a Greek person. The important thing to show is that she was not a Jewish person like Jesus was.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for Gentile or Greek. Use the same word you have used before. For more information on Greeks or Gentile, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus told her, "First I should feed my own family, the Jews." **Jews** refers to the people group descended from Isaac, the son of Abraham. This is the group God covenanted with to give them the land of Israel. It is both an ethnic group and a group of people who practice the religion of Judaism, or who are Jews. Use the same word you have used before for **Jews**. For more information on Jews refer to the Master Glossary.

She replied, "**Lord**, that's true. But even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates." This word "Lord" refers to a Master, or someone who has authority over others. Lord was also sometimes the title given to refer to God. Use the same word you have used before for Lord. For more information on Lord refer to the Master Glossary.

This word **dog** does not refer to stray or wild dogs that communities try to get rid of. The families would have fed these dogs.

The dogs are usually fed scraps, or crumbs. **Crumbs** are pieces of the food that fall to the ground just naturally as people are eating.

Jesus tells the woman, "It is not right to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs. First let the children eat all they want."

Stop here and discuss how you will translate this parable. You can either translate it just as it is. Will your audience understand that the "children" refer to the Jews? If not, you could keep the language, but make the meaning clear by saying something like "First allow me to help my own people, the Jews." If the parable just does not make sense to your audience, you could not use the parable at all and just say something like "I should help the people of Israel first before I help the people of other nations."

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 7:24–30

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9347264 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 7:31–37

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 7:31–37 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:31–37 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:31–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story happens right after Jesus casts the demon out of the Phoenician woman's daughter. Jesus leaves Tyre. Jesus travels northward up the coast from Tyre about 32 kilometers, to the area of Sidon. Then Jesus travels south-eastward to the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus stays in more non-Jewish, or Gentile, areas during this time. As mentioned before, Jesus was probably trying to get away and rest a little with his disciples. The disciples are not mentioned in the passage, but they are with Jesus later on this journey. This means that the disciples were with Jesus when Jesus performed the miracle in this passage.

Stop here and show your team the map of Tyre, Sidon, and the Sea of Galilee with the Decapolis, with the route that Jesus took. Notice that Tyre and Sidon are in a different country and the Decapolis is a different country. Pause this audio here.

Tell a story about someone traveling from one place to another place. Listen to how the storyteller describes the journey or the way the person travels from one place to another. Nothing happened in Sidon—this is just a description of where Jesus traveled. Pause this audio here.

Many years before this time, the prophet Isaiah had said that God comes to open the eyes of the blind and open the ears of the deaf. The writer Mark knew this Scripture. He wanted to show that Jesus was the fulfillment of that promise.

Jesus and the disciples came to the area of the Decapolis, or Ten Towns, on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. This is the same general area where Jesus cast out demons from a man in Mark 5. At that time the people were afraid and asked Jesus to leave. This time when Jesus returns to this area, the people don't seem to be afraid of Jesus. The region of the Ten Towns or Decapolis was ruled by a different ruler appointed by the Roman government and was not a Jewish area.

A crowd brought a man to Jesus. We do not know if these were Jews or non-Jews, but Jesus was in a mostly non-Jewish area. In any case, the crowd had heard something about Jesus. The crowd had heard that Jesus had already healed other people. The crowd brought a man to Jesus. This man was deaf and could not speak well. According to the word used in the original language, he could speak some, but with great difficulty, so he was probably not born deaf. A speech impediment means that the man can make sounds but the sounds are not clear. Some deaf people are mute, meaning that they cannot make sounds. When a person can't hear as a child, that person doesn't learn how to pronounce words correctly so that the word can be understood. Other things such as a stutter can also be called a speech impediment. Some people who can't speak clearly have a condition in which the tongue is tied to the mouth or the tongue doesn't move properly when the person tries to speak. Mark doesn't tell us what the speech impediment was so we don't know if this was a stutter or tongue-tied or what caused the man to speak so that people could not understand what he said.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about someone who is deaf and can't speak clearly. Listen to the storyteller's description of the person. How is the storyteller describing the deaf person? How is the storyteller describing the deaf person's speech? Pay attention to the descriptive words used. Pause the recording here.

The people asked Jesus to lay Jesus' hands on the deaf man. Jewish teachers and religious leaders often laid hands on people to give them blessing and healing. Jesus did even more. He wanted to show a relationship with this man, so Jesus took the man aside from the crowd in order to interact with the man personally. Then Jesus went through a series of actions. Jesus used his fingertips to touch inside the man's ears. Jesus spit—probably on the ground—and then Jesus touched the man's tongue. We are not sure if he spit onto his fingers before touching the man's tongue, or if he just spit on the ground. Then Jesus looked up "to heaven," or "to the sky." This showed that he was speaking to God. He sighed deeply to show great emotion. To sigh is to take a really deep slow breath. Normally we sigh several times each hour. Jesus said, "Ephphatha" which means "be opened." Jesus wanted the man's ears to hear and his tongue to speak without any problems.

Ephphatha is a word in Aramaic, which is the local language spoken in the homes of the people in this area. If this man had been able to hear as a child, this is the language the man would know. The first word that this man would hear would be something in his own heart language. The healing was instant and complete. The man could hear and could speak clearly. The speech impediment was gone.

Stop here and discuss how you would describe this healing of deafness. Repeat the steps in the process of what Jesus did. Notice the words you are using to describe each step. Jesus said, "be opened." How would your audience understand this command? Pause the recording here.

Tell a story about a religious leader who comes to the village to heal or bless someone. Describe what this person does. Is there a ritual, like spitting or looking upwards and talking to God, that they do when they heal? Pause the recording here.

Jesus asked people to not say anything about this healing. However, the crowds were so excited that they told everyone. The more that Jesus said don't tell, the more the people told. The people may have heard the Prophet Isaiah's writings before. Perhaps the people saw that Jesus was fulfilling the words of Isaiah.

Stop here and discuss as a team: The crowd says that Jesus makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak. In your language, how do you talk about healing? Pause the recording here.

The people were amazed. In a previous passage when Jesus went to Nazareth to teach, the people were amazed. In that passage, the amazement was negative. It was not a good feeling. Here the word amazed means that the people were astonished or surprised but in a good way. They said, "Everything Jesus does is wonderful." The people talked about how Jesus was able to make the deaf hear and make those who can't speak be able to speak clearly. Because they were so amazed, they told others what they had seen.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:31-37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is traveling to the Decapolis, a region of ten towns. A deaf man is brought to him.

In the second scene: This scene describes the process Jesus uses to heal the deaf man.

In the third scene: Jesus speaks to the crowd, telling them not to tell anyone what happened. The crowd tells everyone what happened.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples (who were probably with him but not mentioned)
- A crowd of people
- A deaf man

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: In the first scene, Jesus travels from Tyre north to Sidon and then south and east to the Decapolis.

Stop and show the map with these locations marked. Discuss how best to describe this journey. Pause the recording here.

In the first scene, Jesus and the disciples go north from Tyre to Sidon. Then Jesus and the disciples go south and east to the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee and the region of the Decapolis (a region with ten towns).

When Jesus arrives in the region of the Ten Cities, or Decapolis, a crowd of people bring a deaf man to him. The man is not only deaf, but also has a problem speaking. The people beg Jesus to lay his hands on the man to heal him.

Stop and discuss: We don't know which city or to which part of the Decapolis Jesus was when this event occurred. Talk about how to describe where Jesus was when this miracle occurred. Pause the recording here.

In scene two it is important to recognize each of the actions that Jesus does. First, Jesus leads the man away from the crowd. Jesus is all alone with the deaf man. Then Jesus puts his fingers into the man's ears. Jesus spits on his own fingers. Jesus uses his own fingers and touches the man's tongue. Jesus looks up to heaven and sighs (he lets out a deep breath). Jesus declares, "Ephphatha," which means "be opened," and the man can instantly hear perfectly and speak plainly.

Stop here and practice the sequence of events. Then describe what the person is doing at each step. Pause the recording here.

In the third scene, Jesus speaks to the crowd. They see that the man has now been healed, but Jesus tells them not to tell people. But the more Jesus tells them not to tell others, the more they tell everyone. The people are amazed, and say, "Everything Jesus does is wonderful. Jesus even makes the deaf hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:31–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples (who were probably with him but not mentioned)
- A crowd of people
- A deaf man

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus leaves Tyre, goes to Sidon, and goes down to the Decapolis. When Jesus arrives somewhere in the Decapolis, a crowd of people bring a deaf man to Jesus. The crowd begs Jesus to lay his hands on this deaf man with a speech impediment. But Jesus leads the man away from the crowd so they can be alone.

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I want to be alone with this man to heal him because he wants to be healed, not because of others," "I want to focus on this one person," or "I do not want to be entertainment for people who just want me to heal, that's why I took the man away." Or, "I'm so glad this time that the people are not afraid of me. This is not like the other time when I healed the demon possessed man." Continue the drama.

In scene two, Jesus has the man alone, away from the crowd. Jesus puts his fingers in the man's ears. Jesus spits on his own fingers. Jesus touches the man's tongue. Jesus looks up to heaven. Jesus sighs.

Pause the action. Ask the deaf man, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I feel hopeful but I'm also afraid. This man is doing strange things to me. I don't understand why this man is putting his fingers in my ears and touching my tongue. It seems like this man wants to help me. Is this man going to make me able to hear?" Ask the crowd, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "I am confused. I don't know what Jesus is doing. Jesus went off over there with the man so we can't see or hear what is happening. I hope Jesus is helping my friend. I wish I could see what Jesus is doing." Continue the drama.

Jesus says, "Ephphatha," which means, "be opened," and immediately the man can hear perfectly. At the same time his tongue is freed so he can speak plainly.

Pause the action. Ask the man who was deaf, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am amazed and full of joy," "I can hear, finally," or "I can speak so that people can understand me," "I'm hearing birds singing and people laughing. This is wonderful!" Continue the drama.

In scene three, Jesus tells the crowd not to speak about this miracle to anyone. But the more Jesus tells them not to speak the more they spread the news. They say, "Everything Jesus does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak."

At the end of the action, ask the crowd, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are amazed," "We are happy that our friend has been healed," or "We have never seen anyone like this before." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I wish they would not tell everyone. I need some time to be with my disciples and teach them well."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 7:31–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The disciples are with Jesus on this trip. You may need to state this by saying Jesus and the disciples came to the region of the Ten Cities. Use the same word for the Decapolis or Ten Cities that you have used previously.

Jesus left Tyre and went up to Sidon, before going back to the Sea of Galilee and the Ten Towns, or the **Decapolis**. Somewhere in the region of the Ten Towns, Jesus met a deaf man with a **speech impediment**. This

means that the man can speak, but with a lot of difficulty. When the man speaks, people have difficulty understanding what the man says. The man cannot pronounce the words correctly.

The people asked Jesus to **lay his hands** on the man to heal him. To place your hand on someone to heal them is a Jewish custom that was done to bless someone—show them favor—or to heal them. You may say something like, "They begged Jesus to lay his hand on the man to heal him," if that is necessary for your audience to know.

When Jesus looked up to heaven to speak to God, he sighed to show deep emotion and he said **Ephphatha**, which means, "be opened." Ephphatha is probably Aramaic language. It is inserted to show Jesus' exact words, but is immediately translated in the text as "be opened." Jesus is telling the ears to open so they can hear, but he is probably also talking to the whole person. He wants the man to be open to hearing and understanding all that God wants to show and do for him. You may need to say "Jesus spoke 'Ephphatha' in his own language" before this sentence to show your audience why you have a foreign word in the translation.

Stop here and discuss as a team the phrase "be opened." When you say this to your audience, what do they understand happened to the man? Is there another way that you talk about ears being able to hear after being deaf? Jesus also said for the tongue to "be loosened." This means that the man could talk normally again. How would you say this in your language?

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 7:31-37

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (16053555 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 8:1–10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 8:1–10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:1–10 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus has just healed the deaf and mute man. Jesus and the disciples are still in the area of the Ten Cities or Decapolis and near the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and the disciples are in a remote area with no village or town close by. This is a narrative account of the next event.

Jesus has been teaching the people and a large crowd has gathered. Just like in the other story where Jesus fed 5,000 men plus the women and children, the crowd in this story is out in the countryside away from the town and has no food to eat. This is not a retelling of that story of feeding the 5,000. This is a different story that

happened at a different time. As you work through this story, notice the differences. Almost every detail except for multiplying the food is different.

Jesus continues to be in a mostly non-Jewish (Gentile) area. Remember, even the government of the Ten Cities region was different from the government in Israel. In this story, there may be both Jews and non-Jews present.

As usual, large crowds come to hear Jesus teach. Jesus is near the Sea of Galilee but in a remote area where there are no villages. Jesus has been teaching the people for 3 days. The people apparently brought food with them but their food has run out. It is only on the third day that the crowd needs to be fed. Jesus again has compassion and wants to feed them. He knows that they will grow weak from hunger. Compassion means to feel sympathy for or to feel pity for someone so that you want to help that person. Jesus calls the disciples together. Jesus says the people are hungry and need food.

Stop and show a map of where Jesus is when he is feeding the 4,000. Show a picture of the wilderness in the area where Jesus might be near the Sea of Galilee. Pause the recording here.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who is weak from hunger or very hungry in your culture. Notice the description or the words used to describe this person. Pause the recording here.

Again, his disciples seem not to know what to do. This is surprising. Maybe some time has passed since the feeding of the 5,000 and the disciples have forgotten. Or, maybe the disciples know and believe that Jesus will feed the crowd, but they are just asking how Jesus will do it. The disciples talk about being in the wilderness. Some translations say desolate place. Others describe the place as a desert and others say remote place.

Stop and show a picture of the wilderness or desert area. What words would you use to describe what you see? The words would indicate that there is no food to buy nor to pull from the ground or from trees. There is nothing to eat there. Pause the recording here.

The disciples ask Jesus how and where they are to find food for the people. Notice that the disciples don't suggest sending the people to the villages and towns. This is a remote or desert area. There are no villages nearby. Jesus asks how much bread the disciples have. This time, the disciples have found 7 loaves of bread. A loaf of bread was like a small round cake. One person would normally eat 2 or 3 loaves at a meal.

Jesus tells the people to sit down. Then Jesus takes the bread and blesses the bread. This blessing is to give thanks to God for the bread. The Jewish custom was to give thanks before eating a meal. After blessing the bread, Jesus broke the bread into pieces and gave the pieces to the disciples to give out to the people sitting on the ground.

The disciples discovered a few small fish and gave these fish to Jesus. This means that someone or some people in the crowd had some fish with them and were willing to share the fish with others. The fish would be dried or preserved in some way so that the fish were ready to eat. Jesus blessed the fish and then broke the fish into pieces for the disciples to distribute to the crowd. Blessing the fish at a separate time was unusual. The blessing was usually given at the beginning of a meal. Some think that Jesus was teaching the people to give thanks to God for their food.

Stop and show the picture of the loaves of bread and a picture of the fish. Pause the recording here.

The people ate as much as they wanted. The disciples picked up 7 large baskets of leftover food. The disciples picked up the leftover pieces of bread and fish that they had passed out. This means that many more people could have eaten. Jesus provided more than enough food. These baskets were larger than the baskets in the other story of feeding the 5,000. These baskets were made of reeds and used to carry fish.

Stop here and show a picture of the baskets that the disciples used to gather the leftover food. Pause the recording here.

The number 4,000 probably refers to the number of men. This would mean that with the women and children there would be many more who ate.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, how do you count people? Do you include children and women in your counting? Do you give exact numbers? When do you think it's important to count people? Describe a time when someone counted the number of people at an event. Why did they do that? Pause the recording here.

After Jesus feeds the people, Jesus sends the people home. Then Jesus and his disciples get into the boat and cross to the western shore of the Sea of Galilee (back in the Jewish area). We are not sure where Dalmanutha is.

If it's helpful, stop here and show the same map as before, pointing out where Jesus was when he fed the 4,000, and where Dalmanutha might be.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Crowds are gathered. Jesus has been teaching them for 3 days. Jesus decides to feed the people before they go home.

In the second scene: Jesus tells the people to sit on the ground. Jesus blesses the bread and distributes it. Jesus blesses the fish and distributes it. Four thousand people eat.

In the third scene: Jesus gets in a boat with his disciples and crosses back over the lake.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- A crowd of 4,000

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: As the group visualizes this passage, make sure that they do not mix in details from the feeding of the 5,000 story. The details of this passage differ in almost every detail.

In the first scene, Jesus has been teaching for three days in the Decapolis (the area with ten cities). This is on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. They are in a remote area near the Sea of Galilee and away from cities or villages. A large crowd has gathered to listen to Jesus' teaching. The people have run out of food. Jesus feels compassion on them, or feels pity for them.

Jesus calls his disciples to him. Jesus explains to them that if he sends the crowd of people away hungry, the people may faint along the way. The people have come from very long distances. Jesus' disciples ask Jesus how they can find food where they are, in the remote wilderness with no cities around them.

In the second scene, Jesus tells the people to sit on the ground. The disciples have found 7 loaves of bread. Jesus takes the 7 loaves of bread and thanks God for them. Jesus breaks the bread into pieces, gives those pieces to his disciples. The disciples distribute the bread to the crowd.

Someone finds a few small fish. Jesus blesses the fish. Jesus breaks the fish into pieces and gives the pieces to the disciples to distribute to the people. Everyone eats as much as they want. When everyone has finished eating, the disciples gather the leftover pieces of bread and fish into 7 baskets. There were about 4,000 men plus the women and children in that crowd.

The story concludes with Jesus getting back into the boat with his disciples and crossing the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and the disciples go to the area of Dalmanutha which would be somewhere on the western side of the lake.

Stop here and show the map again of the Sea of Galilee, the region of the Ten Cities, or Decapolis, and where Dalmanutha might have been. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- A crowd of 4,000

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene 1, Jesus is in a remote area of the Decapolis near the Sea of Galilee. Jesus has been with a large crowd for three days. The people have nothing left to eat, and they are hungry. Jesus calls his disciples and tells them he cannot send the people away without giving them food first. Jesus feels sorry for the people. Jesus' disciples reply, "How are we supposed to find enough food to feed them out here in the wilderness?"

Pause the action. Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We remember that Jesus fed the 5,000, but we are not sure if he's going to do the same thing again," "Jesus keeps asking us to do impossible things," or "We are looking forward to Jesus providing food for the crowds of people." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "I feel sorry for these people. I can't send them away without some food first." Continue the drama.

In scene two, Jesus asks the disciples, "How much bread do you have?"

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am wondering why my disciples are asking me how they can find enough food to feed these people when they have seen me feed 5,000 people before" or "I am giving my disciples a chance to bring what they have to me so I can show them again what I can do with what they have." Or, "I'm frustrated with the disciples. They saw the 5,000 people get fed. Why can't they remember that and know what to do this time?" Continue the drama.

The disciples reply, "We have seven loaves of bread." Jesus has all the people sit on the ground. Jesus takes the loaves, thanks God for them, breaks them into pieces, and gives the pieces of bread to his disciples to distribute to the people. The disciples hand out the food to the crowd.

Someone finds some small fish. Jesus gives thanks for the fish, breaks the fish into pieces and gives the pieces to the disciples to distribute. Everyone in the crowd eats as much as they want, and the disciples pick up 7 large baskets of leftover food. There were 4,000 in the crowd that day.

Pause the action. Ask the crowd, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I feel satisfied," "I feel cared for," or "I am amazed that Jesus provided this miracle. Or I don't know where all that bread came from but it was good. I was really hungry but now I'm quite full." Or, "This has been an amazing three days with this man

Jesus. I have learned much from Jesus. I want to know more." Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "That was an amazing miracle. Jesus turned those 7 loaves of bread and few fish into a huge meal for that crowd. I don't understand why Jesus asks us what to do first. Jesus knows we can't multiply bread like that. I still don't know what Jesus wants us to do." Or, "I'm so glad I got to see Jesus do this. It makes me believe that Jesus will provide for my needs also." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear, "I am happy that the people had enough to eat and can go home safely now. I am hopeful that my disciples are beginning to understand more but they still have much to learn." Continue the drama.

Immediately after this, Jesus sent the crowd home. Then Jesus gets in a boat with his disciples and crosses over the sea.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus had remained in the Gentile area called the Ten Cities. There would be some Jews there also. The crowd probably had both Jews and Gentiles who came to listen to Jesus. Jesus called his disciples to him. Use the same term here you have been using for **disciples** throughout the book of Mark.

Jesus had compassion on them because they had eaten nothing for three days. But Jesus' disciples answered, "Where in this wilderness, or remote place, can you get enough to eat?" **Wilderness** refers to an area of land where no one lived and very little food grew. Some translations use the word desert. Others say remote area.

Show a picture of the wilderness and describe what you see. Pause the recording here.

Jesus asked his disciples how many **loaves of bread** they had. The disciples said seven. A loaf of bread was like a small round cake. Most people would eat two or three loaves at a meal.

Jesus told the crowd to sit down. Jesus blessed the bread. **Bless** refers to when God helps, does good to, or favors someone or something. Here the blessing was in the form of thanks to God for providing the bread. Use the same word for bless that you have used in previous stories. Bless is discussed in the Master Glossary. You may say, "Jesus thanked God for the bread."

Jesus also blessed the fish. This was a later blessing and Jesus did not give it at the same time as he blessed the bread. This was unusual. Again, here, the word bless means to give thanks. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

The people ate and were satisfied, and then the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces. In Mark 8 this basket is a large wicker or rope basket made for carrying larger provisions. So it is larger than the daily **baskets** described in Mark 6.

Show a picture of the basket and of the bread. Pause the recording here.

After Jesus sent away the 4,000 men, Jesus got into a boat with his disciples. The usual **boat** was about 8 meters long and 2 1/2 meters wide. It was about 1 1/4 meters deep. A boat of that size would have comfortably fit thirteen people. Use the same word for boat that you have used in previous passages.

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Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 8:1–10

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 8:11–21

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 8:11–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:11–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?

2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Show a map of the Sea of Galilee and the western side, where this story takes place. Pause the recording here.

We do not know what happened right before this story. We know it happened on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, because that is where the Pharisees would be. The western side of Galilee is where the Jewish people live, and the Pharisees are a certain type of Jewish religious leaders. This passage is a narrative account of Jesus' meeting with the Pharisees and then Jesus' teaching about the Pharisees to the disciples.

The Jews considered the Pharisees to be highly influential and righteous. The Pharisees were good examples for the people because the Pharisees devoted themselves to obeying God's law. The Pharisees recognized both the written and the oral religious traditions and laws. The Pharisees kept themselves apart from the people. The name Pharisee means "separated one."

Jesus and the Pharisees have been having a conversation, but we do not know what they said. The Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign to prove that what he did was true and from God. A sign would be something unusual or something that did not ordinarily occur. Many would consider the sign to be a miracle. The passage uses the term "miraculous sign." These signs could either be another prophecy that would happen immediately, or an immediate and big miraculous action. When the Pharisees saw Jesus' miracles, they were not sure if the miracles were from God or from Satan, so the Pharisees wanted another sign to prove that Jesus' actions were from God. The Pharisees did not see the miracles that Jesus performed as proof that Jesus was from God. In previous passages, the Pharisees have accused Jesus as acting from Satan. The Pharisees were convinced that Jesus was acting with the authority of Satan.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team. Tell a story of a teacher or religious leader who has been teaching in your village. In your culture, how do you know that this teacher or religious leader is teaching the right things? What things does the teacher or religious leader have to do in order to prove that they have the authority from God to teach? Pause the recording here.

Jesus' first response was to sigh deeply. A sigh is taking a slow deep breath and letting it out slowly. Usually there is sound when the person lets the slow breath out. This kind of sigh is different from the normal sighs that humans make several times an hour. This type of sigh is to show sadness or anger or frustration. Another word for this type of sigh is groan.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What kinds of things do you do with your body to show frustration or anger? Pause this recording here.

Jesus was showing that Jesus was frustrated with the Pharisees. Jesus did not agree with the religious leaders who wanted signs. Jesus wanted people to respond to him with faith and trust that Jesus is who he says he is. Jesus asks why this generation, or the people living now, ask for a sign? Jesus refused to give them a sign.

Jesus and the disciples got back into the boat and went across the lake. Jesus and the disciples were on the western side of the lake. Jesus and the disciples went north to the town of Bethsaida. The passage says they went across the lake. This means that they went from one point to another point across the water.

Stop and look at the map. Trace the route on the lake from the western side to the north where Bethsaida is located. How would you describe this voyage? Pause the recording here.

The disciples had only brought one loaf of bread with them onto the boat. Jesus uses this to teach them a lesson from his conversation with the Pharisees. Jesus used this bread to warn them to not be like the "leaven" or "yeast" of the Pharisees and of Herod. Leaven (or yeast) is what makes bread rise when it is baked. In Jesus' time, talking about leaven in bread was used as a way to describe corruption. A very small amount of yeast, such as 1 or 2 teaspoons, spreads throughout a kilogram or more of flour to make bread rise. With this illustration, Jesus is saying that a small amount of evil or corruption can spread throughout a whole person or group of people.

Stop and discuss: Describe the process of making bread. Ask someone to tell about the yeast. Talk as a group. What other illustrations might your culture use to describe how a small amount of something spreads through the whole product? Pause the recording here.

Jesus is saying that the Pharisees do not have true faith—they are corrupt—because they insist on getting a sign from Jesus. Herod was the name of the political ruler of that time. He and his family were also corrupt and greedy. Jesus wants people to believe in him voluntarily, not because a sign has made them believe in him.

When Jesus warns the disciples about the yeast or leaven, the disciples do not understand Jesus. They think Jesus is talking about actual bread, so the disciples begin arguing among themselves about who forgot to bring bread. Jesus realizes the disciples have not understood what Jesus is talking about. Jesus answers them with questions. Jesus is surprised that the disciples still do not understand who Jesus is after seeing so many miracles and being with Jesus for so long. Jesus asks many questions, but Jesus is not expecting an answer. The questions are showing that Jesus is frustrated and surprised at how the disciples do not believe or trust Jesus. Jesus says that their "hearts are hard," which means that the disciples do not have faith to understand who Jesus is or why Jesus does the things he does. Jesus thinks that the disciples' unbelief is almost like the Pharisees. Hard hearts is a word picture used to describe someone who refuses to understand or believe. Other ways to say this might include, your minds are dull, your minds are closed, or you don't want to understand.

Stop here and discuss with your team. Tell a story about someone who has been taught something important but refuses to believe the teaching. Do you have special phrases to describe people like this? Listen to how the storyteller describes this person. Pause this recording here.

Jesus asks the disciples questions about the two miracles of feeding the crowds. First Jesus reminds them of feeding the 5,000. Then Jesus reminds them of feeding the 4,000. Each time, the disciples seem to remember perfectly what happened at the miracle. However, it seems that the disciples have not understood what Jesus is trying to teach them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:11–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus comes back to the western side of the Sea of Galilee. The Pharisees hear that Jesus has arrived. They come and start arguing with him, testing him. Jesus gets back in a boat and leaves them, crossing back over to the eastern side of the lake.

In the second scene: As Jesus and his disciples are crossing the lake in the boat, Jesus warns them, "Watch out, beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod." The disciples think Jesus is talking about bread. Jesus reminds them of the two miracles regarding multiplication of bread.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees
- Jesus' disciples
- Herod (who is only mentioned)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, Jesus and the disciples cross over from the eastern side of the Galilee, the Decapolis, to the western side where the Jews live. Some Pharisees hear that Jesus has arrived and come and argue with Jesus. The Pharisees want to see a miraculous sign to prove Jesus' authority. Jesus sighs deeply to show his anger and frustration with the Pharisees. Jesus says, "Why do they keep demanding a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, I will not give this generation any such sign."

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who does something that frustrates or disappoints the storyteller. The storyteller would show this disappointment by taking a deep breath and slowly letting it out. Now as a group, how would you describe the action of the storyteller? Pause the recording here.

Jesus gets back into the boat and leaves the Pharisees behind. Jesus and his disciples begin to cross to the other side of the lake. They are heading northeast to Bethsaida.

Stop and show the map of the Sea of Galilee. Have the group trace the route from the Decapolis to the western side of the lake, then from the western side to Bethsaida. Pause the recording here.

In scene two, while Jesus and the disciples are crossing the lake in the boat, Jesus warns the disciples, "Watch out, beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod." Jesus uses this illustration because the Pharisees wanted Jesus to prove his authority by showing miraculous signs, and Herod, the king, wanted to see Jesus perform a miracle.

Stop and visualize what yeast does. A small amount of yeast, when put into dough, spreads throughout the whole dough and makes it rise. Jesus is telling the disciples that if the disciples start just thinking just about miracles, they will be allowing the way of the Pharisees and Herod into their own hearts. The Pharisees and Herod just care about seeing outward signs and miracles. Pause the recording here.

But the disciples had forgotten to bring food with them on the boat (they only had one loaf of bread left for them). The disciples think Jesus is talking about the fact that they have not brought any bread. The disciples begin to argue with each other. Jesus says, "Why are you arguing about no bread? Do you not understand yet? Are your hearts too hard to understand? You have eyes but you can't see. You have ears but you can't hear. When I fed the 5,000 with five loaves of bread, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up?"

"Twelve," they answer.

"When I fed the 4,000, how many large baskets of leftovers did you pick up?" Jesus asks.

"Seven," they answer.

Notice that Jesus refers to both the miraculous feedings, both of the 5,000 and of the 4,000.

Stop and review what happened in the two miracles of multiplication of bread. Pause the recording here.

Jesus finishes by asking the disciples, "Don't you understand yet?"

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:11–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The Pharisees
- Herod (who is only mentioned)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus and the disciples arrive back to the western side of the Sea of Galilee. The Pharisees hear that Jesus has arrived. The Pharisees come to Jesus and start to argue with Jesus. The Pharisees demand that Jesus show a miraculous sign from heaven to prove his authority.

Stop the action: Ask the Pharisees, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are trying to trap Jesus" or "We are angry with Jesus. We keep hearing about miracles that he is performing, and we want Jesus to prove his authority by performing a miracle in front of us. We need to see the miracle or special sign happen so we know where Jesus' authority comes from." Restart the action.

When Jesus hears this, he sighs deeply in his spirit. Another way to say this is Jesus groaned inwardly. Jesus says, "Why do these people keep demanding a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, I will not give this generation any such sign."

Stop the action: Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am very frustrated," "I'm angry with the Pharisees," or "I refuse to perform miracles for the sake of people who do not believe in me." Continue the drama.

Jesus gets back in the boat with his disciples. Jesus and the disciples leave that area to cross over to the other side of the lake. They are going toward Bethsaida, which means they cross the northwestern corner of the lake. The disciples forgot to bring any food. The disciples only have one loaf of bread with them. Jesus warns them, "Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod."

Stop the action: Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am still angry with the Pharisees" or "I am trying to warn and teach my disciples. They need to know how easy it is to become corrupted just like the Pharisees or Herod." Continue the drama.

The disciples do not understand the warning about yeast. The disciples begin to argue with each other because they forgot the bread. Jesus knows what they are saying. Jesus says, "Why are you arguing about having no bread? Don't you people understand? Are your hearts too hard to take it in?"

Stop the action: Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am frustrated with the disciples," or "I am sad my disciples still do not understand after everything they have seen." Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling when you hear Jesus ask these questions?" You may hear, "I don't understand what Jesus is talking about. I thought Jesus was talking about bread but now I don't know." Or, "I am confused. I am not like the Pharisees or Herod. Why is Jesus telling me about how to make bread?" Continue the drama.

Jesus says, "You have eyes, can't you see? You have ears, can't you hear? Don't you remember anything at all?" Jesus reminds the disciples of all the leftovers they picked up after he fed the 5,000 and all the leftovers they picked up after he fed the 4,000. Jesus asks, "Don't you understand yet?"

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are still confused, we still do not understand," "Of course, we remember the miracles that Jesus performed. How can Jesus think we would forget what we saw? But I don't understand what Jesus is trying to say now. How does yeast apply to those miracles?" or "We want to understand, but we keep forgetting." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "I am still frustrated with my disciples. They hear but act like they are deaf. They see but act like they are blind. They are just refusing to believe. I will continue trying to teach them. I believe they will be able to understand." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:11–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **Pharisees** came and began to question Jesus. The name "Pharisee" means "to be separated." Use the same name for Pharisees that you used in previous passages. Pharisees are discussed in the Master Glossary.

The Pharisees wanted to test Jesus, so they asked him for a **miraculous sign from heaven**. Miracles are something that are wonderful and that people normally cannot do. A sign is also like a miracle, but it can include a prophecy that happens immediately. A prophecy is a prediction of something that will happen. Miracles, signs, and wonders are in the Master Glossary. Translate "miraculous sign" in the same way you have translated it before.

Heaven can refer to the sky, or to the place where God and his angels live, depending on the context. Because it is linked so closely to the place where God is, one can replace "a sign from heaven" with "a sign from God."

Jesus sighed deeply and he asked, "Why does this generation ask for a sign?" This is a question that doesn't require an answer. Jesus is showing his sadness and anger when he says this. Jesus used the sigh to express sadness and anger. Use the same word for sign that you used in a previous passage when Jesus healed a deaf man.

Jesus then says that the generation—or the people living today—will not receive a sign. You may need to say who it is who will not give the sign. If so, you may say something like, "I will not show you a miracle to prove that I am from God."

Jesus and the disciples got into the boat and went to the other side. The word for **boat** is not in the original text; however, the action word used means that they got into a boat to go to the other side of the lake. If you have a word like that, you may use it. If not, you may say that they got into a boat to go to the other side. If you use the word for boat, use the same word that you have used in previous stories in Mark. Here, the other side of the lake does not mean the eastern shore. Jesus and the disciples went across the northwestern corner of the lake from the western shore to Bethsaida.

Stop here and show the picture of the boat if needed. Pause this audio here.

Use the same word for disciples that you have used in previous stories in Mark.

Jesus warns his disciples to watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of **Herod**. Herod and his family ruled the land of Jesus during this time. They were corrupt and greedy. One of them killed John the Baptist. The Jewish people did not like Herod.

In the last questions Jesus asks his disciples, he is reminding them of the two times he fed thousands of people. Use the same words for baskets (small baskets for the 5,000 and large baskets for the 4,000) that you used in those stories.

Show the pictures of the baskets again if needed.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 8:11–21**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (18053297 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 8:22–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 8:22–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:22–26 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

After Jesus left the Pharisees who asked him for a sign, Jesus and the disciples crossed over to the northeastern part of the lake and landed in Bethsaida. Bethsaida was a large village where both Jews and non-Jews lived. This is a narrative account of what happened in Bethsaida.

Stop and show the translation team a map of the Sea of Galilee with Bethsaida. Notice that the boat is crossing the upper northwestern corner of the lake. Pause the recording here.

The passage says, "They arrived at Bethsaida." This means that Jesus and the disciples arrived by boat at Bethsaida. You may need to make it explicit that Jesus and the disciples arrived.

People brought a blind man to Jesus and asked him to touch the man. The people were the ones who asked Jesus to lay hands on the man. The man did not ask for anything. The people did not specifically ask Jesus to heal the man. In that culture, asking someone to put hands on someone, or to touch them, was the same as asking for blessing and healing. You may make this explicit in your translation if needed. You could say something like, "They begged Jesus to touch the man and heal him."

This healing happened in a similar way to the healing of the deaf man in a previous story in Mark 7. Jesus led both men away, and he spit in both stories. At the end, Jesus seemed to not want everyone to know what had happened. We do not know why Jesus led this man away from the village. Maybe Jesus knew he needed to show these men, or the deaf man and now the blind man, that Jesus loved them, so Jesus took them aside to have a chance to talk with them and help them believe that Jesus could heal them.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who was healed. Listen to the storyteller describe how the person was healed. How does this differ from what Jesus did to the blind man? Pause the recording here.

Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village.

Stop and discuss: How do blind people get around in your culture? How do blind people move from place to place? Who guides the blind person? How does this person guide the blind person? Pause the recording here.

The passage seems to indicate that when Jesus took the blind man outside the village, they were alone. The people were not close to Jesus and the man. However, the people were close enough for the man to see people moving around.

Jesus spit on the man's eyes. Jesus laid his hands on the blind man. Then Jesus asked the blind man what he could see. The man could see but not clearly. We know that this man must have become blind later in life, because he knows what trees and people look like. A person blind from birth would not know what trees and people look like.

This healing story is very different than others because it happens in two stages. Jesus spit directly into the man's eyes. Jesus then laid his hands on the man. Then Jesus asked the blind man if he could see. The man could only see partly—not very clearly. The man described what he could see—people but not clearly walking around. They looked like trees walking. Jesus had to put his hands on the blind man a second time for complete healing.

Do you know anyone who was healed in stages, over time? If anyone on your translation team has a story like that, have them tell it to the group. Pause the recording here.

Jesus laid his hands on the blind man twice. The passage doesn't tell us where Jesus placed his hands the first time. The second time, Jesus places his hands on the blind man's eyes. After this second time, the man could see clearly. The man's sight was completely restored. The man was looking around intently or staring.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a man who was blind and now can see. Maybe this is someone who had cataracts removed by surgery and now can see clearly. Listen to the storyteller describe how the man looks at things around him. How does the man talk about what he can now see? Pause the recording here.

Like in other stories, Jesus tells the man to go directly home without going through the village. Jesus does not say why he has commanded this. Jesus probably did not want the man to tell everyone what had happened.

This story is the first of Jesus healing blind men in the book of Mark. Throughout Mark, Mark wants to show the difference between those who see and understand who Jesus is, and those who do not. Mark also wants people to see that Jesus fulfills the prophecies of Isaiah that say that the promised savior will open the eyes of the blind and open the ears of the deaf—or in other words—heal the blind and heal the deaf.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:22–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus arrives on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, to a village called Bethsaida. People bring a blind man to Jesus and ask Jesus to heal him. Jesus takes the blind man out of the village.

In the second scene: Jesus heals the man and tells him, "Do not go back into the village on your way home."

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The blind man
- Jesus' disciples (though not mentioned in the story, they would have been with him)
- The villagers of Bethsaida

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Jesus arrives in Bethsaida. People bring a blind man to Jesus and beg Jesus to touch the man and heal him. Jesus takes the blind man by the hand and leads him out of the village.

In the second scene, Jesus begins by spitting on the man's eyes. Then Jesus lays his hands on the man, and asks, "Can you see anything now?"

The man looks around and says, "Yes, I see people, but I can't see them very clearly. They look like trees walking around." He would have been seeing blurry images of people walking, but not the details of their features.

Jesus places his hands on the man's eyes again. This implies that the first time Jesus laid his hands on the man, he laid his hands on the man's eyes. The man's eyes are opened, which means he is able to see clearly, and his sight is completely restored. Jesus sends him away and tells him not to go back into the village on his way home.

Stop here and discuss: How would you talk about seeing again? Is it natural in your language to say "eyes were opened" to talk about seeing again? Pause this recording here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:22–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The blind man
- Jesus' disciples (though not mentioned in the story, they would have been with him)
- The villagers of Bethsaida

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus and the disciples arrive in Bethsaida. People bring a blind man to Jesus and beg Jesus to touch the man and heal him. Jesus takes the blind man by the hand and leads him out of the village.

Pause the drama. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I have compassion on this blind man," or "I took this man away from the people because they just wanted to see a miracle, but I wanted to heal the man." Ask the blind man, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am confused, I do not know what is happening" or "I have heard that Jesus heals people. I hope Jesus can heal me." Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Jesus spits on the man's eyes and puts his hands on the man's eyes. Jesus asks the man, "Can you see anything now?"

The man looks around and says, "Yes, I see people, but I can't see them very clearly. They look like trees walking around." Then Jesus places his hands on the man's eyes a second time. The man's eyes were opened. The man can see clearly.

Pause the drama. Ask the blind man, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am relieved. I thought I was only going to be partially healed, but now I am fully healed" or "I am overjoyed. I can see again. This is wonderful. I won't have to be led around anymore. I can be independent!" Continue the drama.

The man's sight is completely restored, and he can see everything clearly. Jesus sends him away, saying, "Don't go back into the village on your way home."

At the end of the action, ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" or "Why did you say that to the man?" You may hear things like, "I am happy for the man," or "I do not want him to go back into the village because I do not want word to spread of this miracle," or "I do not want people to see the miracle and then just want to see more miracles, like the Pharisees did in the previous story." Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "I'm amazed. I don't know how Jesus does these things. That man couldn't see and now that man can see clearly. Where does this power that Jesus has come from?" Ask the crowd, "How are you feeling?" You may hear, "I'm so disappointed. I wanted to see this Jesus perform a miracle. I wanted to see how Jesus does these things." Or, "I'm happy for my friend. He can see now. He can have his life back and work again." Or, "Why did Jesus send him home without letting us see our friend? I don't understand why Jesus took him off alone. I am glad that he can see again. Jesus is a powerful person. I want to know more about Jesus."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

They came to Bethsaida and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. Jesus and his disciples came to **Bethsaida**, which was a village where both Jews and non-Jews lived. Some translations state that the disciples were with Jesus. The word "they" means that it was Jesus and the disciples who came to Bethsaida.

The people did not specifically ask Jesus to heal the man, but they asked him to **touch** the man. In those days, this was a way to ask for blessing and healing. If you need to say that they "begged Jesus to touch and heal the man," you can.

The man's **eyes were opened**. His eyes were not physically opened because they were already open, they just could not see. This phrase means that he could see again perfectly. Some translations say the man stared while other translations say he looked intently. All of these expressions are ways to say that the man could see perfectly.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 8:22–26

Audio Content

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Mark 8:27–30

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 8:27–30 put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:27–30 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Jesus and his disciples left Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee and walked 40 kilometers to the area around the town of Caesarea Philippi. They may have been in the villages in the area around the city. We do not know how long this was after Jesus healed the blind man. This is a narrative account of their trip to Caesarea Philippi.

Stop and show your translation team the map of the Sea of Galilee which includes Bethsaida and the northern city of Caesarea Philippi. Pause the recording here.

Caesarea Philippi was in an area where there was a temple dedicated to the Greek god (from the country of Greece) called Pan. Later, the Romans invaded this area. They built a city and named it after the Caesar, or the king, of the Romans. This was a place where the people saw the Roman king as a master over them and almost worshipped him. This was a good place for Jesus to have a conversation with his disciples about who he really was and why he came.

Most students asked their religious teachers questions, but Jesus was a different kind of teacher. He asked his students questions. Jesus asked his disciples who people thought he was. He was not asking them what his name was, but what kind of person he was and what his purpose was. Their responses showed that the people still had no idea who he was. One response was "John the Baptist." John the Baptist was Jesus' cousin, the man who preached in the wilderness and told people to repent and come back to God. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. John was later killed by the king. Some people thought Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead. Others said he was Elijah. Elijah was a famous prophet who did miracles. There was a prophecy that Elijah would come back one day, so some people thought that maybe Jesus was him. The people assumed Jesus was some sort of prophet, because he taught and did miracles like the prophets.

Then Jesus wanted to know what the disciples thought about who Jesus was. Jesus contrasts what other people thought about him with what his disciples thought by saying "What do *you* think" very strongly. Peter answered. Peter was acting as a leader among the disciples. Peter said to Jesus, "You are the "Messiah" or "Christ." David was an important king in the Old Testament. God promised that someone from the line of David would reign over Israel forever. When the Israelites had no king, prophets prophesied that God would anoint or commission someone to come and take over King David's reign and do many miraculous things. This king would be called the "Messiah" or "Christ." "Messiah" and "Christ" are the same terms in different languages. In those days, people anointed others with oil to show that they were dedicated to God. The Messiah is someone dedicated to God and special to God, so he is anointed.

Stop and discuss: The word Messiah and the word Christ are titles used throughout the New Testament. Messiah is also used in Old Testament prophecies. Discuss as a group how you will pronounce this title. Pause the recording here.

Jesus strongly warned the disciples not to tell anyone that Jesus was the Messiah. The Messiah was expected to become a king like all the other kings, but Jesus was going to do something different. He did not want to publicly call himself Messiah yet when people were expecting something different.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:27–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In the scene: Jesus and the disciples walk towards Caesarea Philippi. Jesus has a conversation with the disciples about who people think Jesus is. Peter says that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus warns the disciples not to tell anyone about him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Peter, one of Jesus' disciples
- John the Baptist is mentioned
- Elijah and other prophets are mentioned

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus has left the village of Bethsaida, on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and his disciples are walking north, into the higher elevations of the mountains towards Caesarea Philippi. Jesus is walking with the disciples. The crowd is not with them at this time.

As they are walking, Jesus asks, "Who do people say I am?"

The disciples answer that some say Jesus is Elijah or another prophet while others say he is John the Baptist.

Jesus then asks, "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answers, "You are the Messiah," who is the one they are waiting on. Jesus warns the disciples not to tell anyone that Jesus is the Messiah.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:27-30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Peter, one of Jesus' disciples
- John the Baptist is mentioned
- Elijah and other prophets are mentioned

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples are walking north, towards Caesarea Philippi, which is at a higher elevation. As they are walking, Jesus asks the disciples questions. Jesus asks, "Who do people say I am?"

His disciples reply, "Well, some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, others say you are one of the other prophets."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are wondering why Jesus asked us that question," "We are wondering if Jesus is going to explain to us who he is," "Some of us believe Jesus is John the Baptist," or "Some of us believe Jesus is Elijah, or another prophet. Some of us aren't sure yet who Jesus is." Continue the drama.

Then Jesus asks the disciples, "Who do you say I am?"

Peter replies, "You are the Messiah."

Stop the action: Ask Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am confident that Jesus is the one we have been waiting for" or "I am waiting for Jesus to say that he is truly the Messiah. The Messiah is going to be our king and get us away from Rome. I believe Jesus will do this." Or, "I hadn't really thought about it until Jesus asked and that answer just came out. But now that I think about it, I do think Jesus is the Messiah." Ask the other disciples, "How are you feeling when you hear Peter say Jesus is the Messiah?" You may hear, "Peter doesn't always think before answering. Can Jesus really be the king we have been waiting for? Jesus always goes away from the people when they try to make Jesus king. I'm not sure Jesus is the Messiah we have been waiting for." Continue the drama.

Jesus warns the disciples not to tell anyone about him.

Stop the action: Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling? Why did you tell them not to tell anyone about you?" You may hear things like, "I am very proud that the disciples seem to be beginning to understand who I am" or "It is not time for this to be known, so I want to keep this just among me and my disciples." Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are confident in who we are following" or "We are confused, why can't we tell people Jesus is the Messiah?" Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. They left the area of Galilee and went to **Caesarea Philippi**.

As they were walking along, Jesus asked his **disciples**, "Who do people say I am?" And the disciples replied, "Some say **John the Baptist**." John the Baptist is the messenger that God sent ahead of Jesus. Use the same name and title for John the Baptist and for disciples here that you did in previous Mark passages. Disciples is in the Master Glossary.

Other people say that you are Elijah or one of the **prophets**. You may want to include the phrase "Prophet Elijah" so that people will know that **Elijah** was a prophet. Use the same word for "prophet" as you have in previous passages, and remember that prophet is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus asks his followers, "Who do *you* say I am?" And Peter answered, "You are the Messiah." The **Messiah** is a title, like other titles. Another term for Messiah is **Christ**. Messiah is the Hebrew term, in the original language of the Jewish people. Christ is the Greek term, which is the language of the time when Jesus lived. Most translations use the title Messiah. Some use the title Christ.

You can re-say the word itself using your language's way of making names, but it would also be good to include a short phrase that explains the meaning. You could say something like: "Christ, the appointed one" or "Christ, the promised Savior" or "Christ, who comes from God."

Both Messiah and Christ are discussed in the Master Glossary. The word you use will be used often in the New Testament as well as in Old Testament translations.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 8:27-30

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11299153 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 8:31–9:1

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 8:31–9:1 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:31–9:1 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this passage, Jesus and the disciples continue walking towards Caesarea Philippi. Jesus continues teaching the disciples. This passage is a narrative account of this teaching.

Stop and show the map of the Sea of Galilee and Caesarea Philippi. Pause the recording here.

Peter said in the story before this that he believes Jesus is the Messiah, or the Christ. Jewish people thought the Messiah would come and save them from the bad government. Although Jewish Scripture (or the Old Testament) said that the Messiah would suffer and die, in Jesus' time no one understood that. But Jesus wants to tell his disciples what the Messiah will really do.

Jesus did not say that he was the Messiah, but he called himself the "Son of Man." The Son of Man can mean any man, or it can be used as a special title for the Messiah. Jesus is referring to himself when he uses this title.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a man who comes from your village or your country. This man may be a farmer. The storyteller would describe this man as a son of the village and a son of the soil. The storyteller would also say that the man is the son of someone and give that person's name. Listen to the word the storyteller uses for son in each situation. Some languages have more than one word for son. Now choose the word for "Son of Man." Pause the recording here.

Mark likes to talk about all the times Jesus called himself the Son of Man in order to talk about his destiny to suffer and die, like a human. But at the same time, the Son of Man is more than human, and will be raised from the dead.

Jesus began to explain that he would suffer terrible things and be rejected by the elders, the leading or chief priests, and the teachers of religious law. Elders were non-religious leaders in the community. They were usually older men who helped the community live together well.

Chief or leading priests in the Jewish religion were the people who connected the people with God by doing sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, and taking care of God's temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. The chief priests were the ones who were the most important. Teachers of religious law is sometimes translated scribes or people who wrote down the law. They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the holy scriptures. These interpretations were not written down, but they were memorized and taught orally by the teachers.

Stop here and discuss what kinds of terms you use for religious leaders in your culture. Pause the recording here.

Jesus said that all the Jewish leaders, including the leading priests and teachers of God's law, would not accept him. Jesus told the disciples that Jesus would be killed and raised from the dead three days later. Jesus was talking about these things openly. This means that Jesus was explaining to all of them and in a normal voice. Jesus was not whispering to one person.

Peter did not like to hear that Jesus would suffer terrible things, die, and be raised from the dead on the third day. Peter pulled Jesus to one side to rebuke or reprimand Jesus. This means that Peter said to Jesus, "You should not talk like this."

The people really wanted a Messiah to come and save them from the harsh ruler they had and restore their nation to them. That's why Peter was surprised and rejected Jesus' idea. In fact, Mark uses the same word for Peter rebuking Jesus as he uses when Jesus rebukes demons.

Jesus understood his purpose on the earth, and Jesus wanted to obey this purpose. Peter did not like this idea and did not want Jesus to suffer and die. But Jesus wanted to obey God. Jesus saw Peter's reaction as a temptation to disobey God. Jesus rebukes Peter, again using the same word Jesus uses to rebuke demons. Jesus is not saying that Peter is Satan, but Jesus says that what Peter says is from Satan. Jesus wants the temptation from Satan to stop, or to go away completely—out of his sight. Jesus is not telling Peter to go away. Jesus tells his disciples that they have to understand what God is trying to do and give up their own ideas of what the Messiah should do.

Jesus said to Peter, "You are seeing things from a human point of view, not from God's point of view." Peter wanted Jesus to be the king that would free the people from the Romans. God had a different plan for Jesus as king.

Then Jesus calls the crowds of people to come and join with the disciples. This means that there was a crowd of people following closely but not close enough to hear what Jesus had been saying to the disciples. Jesus began to teach them about what they should do to be followers of Jesus. Mark probably put together a lot of Jesus' similar teachings in this section.

Jesus is talking to anyone who wants to listen. Jesus tells people that they have to give up their own way of doing things and do things the way Jesus does them. Some translations use the phrase, "deny yourself." To deny yourself means that you put what you want to do away, or off to one side, and put what Jesus wants you to do in the most important place.

When Mark told this story, Christians in that time knew very well what a cross was. A cross was a symbol to them of execution. The Roman government made people carry the crosspiece of their own cross to their place of execution. This cross piece was the bar that the hands would be nailed to as the person was crucified. "To take up your cross" did not mean that you had to be crucified, but it was like a death in that your old ways "died," so that you could do things the way Jesus does them.

Stop and show a picture of a cross. Show a picture of someone carrying the cross beam. Pause the recording here.

"Giving up your life for my sake" means to stop doing your old things and start doing things in order to share the good news about Jesus. Jesus says three things here. People must first stop doing things their own way. Then people must do the things of Jesus (when Jesus says "take up your cross"). And then people must follow Jesus as his disciples by sharing the good news with others.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: What do people do when they follow a popular religious leader? How do they show their devotion to him? Do they give up everything when they follow him or her? Pause the recording here.

Jesus then talks about life using market language. He talks about gaining a profit and losing and exchanging something.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone in the market who buys things and then sells these things. What words does the storyteller use to describe the gaining or losing of money that occurs? Pause the recording here.

Jesus asks questions here, but he does not expect an answer.

Discuss as a group what to do with these questions that don't require an answer: You may either ask the question like Jesus did, or you may make a statement like, "You will not gain anything if you have the whole world but lose your souls." Do whatever is most natural in your language. Pause the recording here.

Jesus talks about losing your soul. The soul represents your life and living forever with God. If we gain the whole world, it means that maybe we gain riches or power or become famous here on earth. But what we really want is to live forever with God. Although our bodies die, our souls live forever with God if we follow Jesus. So we should not be ashamed of Jesus. The people in this world are unfaithful to God. Adulterous people or generation means that people are not faithful to God, just like a husband or wife is not faithful to the other one. Jesus says that even though we live among people like that, we should not be ashamed of Jesus. Jesus goes back and forth here between calling himself "I" and calling himself "Son of Man." In this way, Jesus is clearly saying that he is the Son of Man—he is the Messiah.

Jesus will come back in God's power and authority—in other words, he will come back in glory. Jesus is talking here about what will happen in the future. Jesus has to die and be resurrected and then ascend to be with God. After that, Jesus will return. When Jesus comes back, the angels will come with Jesus. The angels are always holy, meaning that angels are set aside for special service to God.

Jesus gives encouragement to people who are giving their entire lives for him. He promises that what he is about to say will happen. He says that some of them will not "taste death," or "die," before they see God's Kingdom. That means that some people in the crowd will see Jesus get glory and honor. In the next story, some of Jesus' disciples will see Jesus shining and wonderful. And later, they will see Jesus carry out God's will and win the battle against death. This is the first part of God's Kingdom coming to Earth.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:31–9:1 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus continues to walk with his disciples towards Caesarea Philippi, and he begins to tell them that he, the Son of Man, will suffer and die.

In the second scene: Peter takes Jesus aside and tells him that he should not say such things. Jesus says, "Get away from me, Satan."

In the third scene: Jesus calls a crowd of people to join with his disciples, and he begins teaching them what one must do if they want to be his follower.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Jesus references the Jewish elders, leading priests, and teachers of the religious law
- Jesus references Satan
- Jesus references God the Father and holy angels
- Peter, who is one of Jesus' disciples
- A crowd of people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The first scene begins with a time linking word. This word shows that this passage is immediately after the previous passage. This passage happens as Jesus and the disciples continue walking towards Caesarea Philippi.

As Jesus walks along, Jesus explains to the disciples that Jesus will be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of the religious law. Jesus says he will suffer and be killed, but three days later he will rise from the dead. Jesus is talking about this openly with the disciples.

In the second scene, Peter takes Jesus away from the other disciples, and strongly rebukes Jesus for saying these sorts of things. Then Jesus, slightly separated from the other disciples with Peter, turns around, looks at his other disciples. Jesus reprimands Peter in front of the other disciples. Jesus tells Peter, "Get away from me Satan!"

Scene three of the story, in which Jesus gives a sermon, may be particularly difficult. The group may need to break it into parts and work on learning this sermon before acting out the whole passage. There are three parts of this sermon.

After rebuking Peter, Jesus calls a crowd of people to come and join with the disciples. In the first part of his teaching, Jesus explains that if someone wants to be his follower, they must give up their own life and way of living. If they try to hang on to their own life they will lose it, but it will save their life if they give up their life for Jesus' sake and the sake of the good news (in this case, Jesus is referring to the message he was giving about his death and resurrection as the good news).

The second section of Jesus' sermon is the market speech. Jesus explains that, in a market, there is profit and gain. Jesus says, "How do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? There is nothing worth more than your soul."

In the third section, Jesus says, "If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns with the glory of his Father and the holy angels." The "message" Jesus refers to here is the message that he will die and be raised again. Peter may have been reflecting here that Jesus might be speaking about him being ashamed of the words that Jesus had just been speaking.

Jesus concludes by saying, "I tell you the truth, some standing here will not taste death (or die) before they see the kingdom of God arrive in great power."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:31–9:1 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Jesus references the Jewish elders, leading priests, and teachers of the religious law
- Jesus references Satan
- Jesus references God the Father and holy angels
- Peter, one of Jesus' disciples
- A crowd of people

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus is walking with his disciples and explaining to them that he will suffer and die but will rise from the dead. He has just talked about this openly with his disciples.

Pause the action. Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are shocked, we thought the Messiah would be a great king, but now Jesus is talking about a Messiah who will be killed," "We thought the Messiah would come and make everything right—why would he be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the leaders of the religious law?" or "We still do not fully understand." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling as you give this teaching?" You may hear, "I'm sad, but I feel that the time has come that they must know what lies ahead. If they are going to follow me, they need to know what is going to happen. I must warn them." Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Peter takes Jesus aside and reprimands Jesus.

Ask Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am shocked to hear Jesus saying such things," "I am trying to protect Jesus, he is saying things that will anger people," or "Angry and confused—this is not the Messiah that I am waiting for. I don't want Jesus to talk like this. We may lose some of our group of disciples if Jesus talks like this." Continue the drama.

Jesus turns around and looks at his disciples. Then Jesus reprimands Peter, saying, "Get away from me, Satan!"

Pause the action. Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am upset and angry that Peter still doesn't understand who I am," "I am upset and frustrated because I think that Satan is blinding Peter to who I really am," or "I want to make sure that I share how serious it is that I must follow God's plan of being killed and being raised from the dead." Ask Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am completely devastated that Jesus would reprimand me and call me Satan" or "I am embarrassed in front of the other disciples. I was only trying to help. Jesus needs to be careful of saying things like this." Continue the drama.

In scene three, Jesus preaches his sermon to the crowds. At the end of this sermon, Jesus says, "I tell you the truth, some standing here right now will not die until they see the kingdom arrive in great power."

At the end of the action, ask the crowds, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are confused," "This is strange and completely different from what we thought the Messiah would be," "I am wondering if I will not die before I see the kingdom of God arrive," or "I am wondering what it looks like for the kingdom of God to arrive in great power." Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling now that you have heard this message from Jesus?" You may hear, "Jesus has said some hard things. I need to think about what I'm doing here. I want to follow Jesus. I want to learn more. I want to understand what it means to give up my life and follow Jesus. I don't want Jesus to be ashamed of me when Jesus comes back. But I don't understand what Jesus means about coming back. It sounds like Jesus is going to leave us for a time and I don't understand." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "I feel good. I have explained it. I know they don't fully understand yet but they will remember this teaching and will understand it better later. I'm glad I taught them this." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 8:31–9:1 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus then began to tell them that the son of Man must suffer and be rejected by the elders, the leading or chief priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but three days later he would rise from the dead. Jesus called himself the **Son of Man**. In the Old Testament this phrase "son of man" simply meant a human being. Jesus uses this term as his favorite way to talk about himself. The "Son of Man" is the person to whom, in Daniel 7, God gives all authority and power. Jesus probably likes this term because the title can refer to an ordinary human being or to a supernatural being like it does in Daniel 7. The term Son of Man forces people to decide if Jesus is man or God. It also avoided the political term of the Messiah/Christ, who is the person that people wanted to make king.

Mark likes to talk about all the times Jesus called himself the Son of Man in order to talk about his destiny to suffer and die, like a human. But at the same time, the Son of Man is more than human, and will be raised from the dead.

Jesus speaks of himself in the third person when he gives himself this title. Be sure that it is clear by the way you translate this that Jesus is speaking about himself.

Use the same term for Son of Man that you have used throughout Mark and remember that Son of Man is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group. Make sure that your audience understands that Jesus is talking about himself when he says the Son of Man. You may need to add a short phrase to make it clear. How will you talk about Jesus talking about the Son of Man? What words will you use for Son of Man? Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that he would be rejected by the elders, the leading or chief priests, and the teachers of religious law.

Elders were non-religious leaders in the community. They were usually older men who helped the community live together well.

Chief or leading priests in the Jewish religion were the people who connected the people with God by doing sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, and taking care of God's temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. The chief priests were the ones who were the most important.

Teachers of religious law is sometimes translated **scribes** or **people who wrote down the law**: They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These interpretations were not written down, but they were memorized and taught orally by the teachers.

Stop here and discuss what kinds of terms you will use for elders, chief priests, and teachers of religious law and use the same terms you have been using throughout the book of Mark. These words are in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that **three days later** he would rise from the dead. This means "on the third day." You can state this however you need to in order to make it clear.

Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke Jesus for saying these things. Then Jesus said to Peter, "Get away from me, **Satan**." This name Satan refers to the spiritual being, whom God created, who is the leader of the evil spiritual beings who decided to rebel against God. Use the same term for Satan that you have used throughout the book of Mark, and remember that Satan is in the Master Glossary.

"Get behind me Satan" means that Jesus wants the idea from Satan to go away completely.

Jesus calls the crowd to him with his disciples and he says, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your **cross**, and follow me." The cross was the Roman form of execution. The Romans nailed together two pieces of wood in the form of a cross and stretched out the arms and legs of the prisoners on it. They nailed the arms and legs to the wood, and the prisoner usually died after several hours, when they could no longer breathe.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **cross**. Cross is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says, "If you try to keep your life, you will lose it, but if you give up your life for my sake or the sake of the **good news**, or the **gospel**, you will save it." The gospel, or the good news, refers to the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, and how he brings new life to people on earth.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **good news**. Good news, or gospel, is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says, "If you gain the world, but lose your **soul**, what good is that to you?" Our soul is our full life which includes our physical life, and our spiritual, mental, and emotional life. We live forever with God. You may even translate this word as "life," if your people understand that life represents our thoughts and emotions also.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **soul**. Soul is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that he will be ashamed of anyone who is ashamed of him when he returns in the glory of God his father with the **holy angels**. **Glory** means God's power and splendor.

An "angel" is a supernatural, spiritual being who is a messenger from God. Angels appear to humans in human form, they are inferior or less than Jesus, and they often come with a specific message to do or a specific task. You may need to include "spirit (messenger from God)" to this description. Mark added the term holy to angels to show that the angels are set apart for God's purposes. Use the same term for **angels** and **holy** here that you have used in other parts of your translation. Angels and holy are in the Master Glossary.

He said that some people here will not die, or will not **taste death**. To taste death means "to die."

Jesus said, "They won't die before they see the **kingdom of God** arrive in great power." A kingdom is a place where a king rules a group of people. The kingdom of God in the New Testament refers to the time when God comes to rule-his reign and authority which begins its fulfillment with Jesus' ministry on earth and people's acceptance of him. Later, the perfect Kingdom will come. We experience God's Kingdom now when we listen to him and obey him by following Jesus. Be sure to use the same term for "kingdom of God" that you have used in other passages. Kingdom of God is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 8:31–9:1**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (18139284 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (12331908 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 9:2–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 9:2–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:2–13 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:2–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The last passage ended with Jesus explaining that the Messiah would have to suffer. Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, did not want to believe that Jesus would suffer and so Peter rebuked Jesus. But Jesus then rebuked Peter. Jesus tells the disciples that they will have to suffer to follow Him as well. However Jesus also promises that some people in the crowd would see the kingdom of God come in glory. Then, 6 days later, Jesus and three

disciples go up to the mountain. In this story, Peter, James, and John begin to see Jesus' glory. Even though Jesus will still have to suffer, this story gives a picture of what his glory and majesty will look like.

This passage takes place on top of a mountain. We do not know which high mountain it was. In the Old Testament, or the Jewish Scriptures, God often revealed himself to his people on top of a mountain in the middle of the wilderness. God's glory or splendor is often shown as very bright white light. Jesus was "transfigured." This means His appearance was changed or transformed. He glowed like a bright light. His appearance changed, and he looked like a spiritual being instead of a human being.

There are two men with Jesus—Moses and Elijah. These two prophets were very important to the Jewish people. Moses symbolized the old religious law and the promise that a savior would come to save them from their sins. Jesus came to make the old religious law complete and to save them. In the Jewish Scripture, it says that the prophet Elijah will come back to prepare the way for the Messiah or Savior. Elijah symbolizes that Jesus is truly the Messiah the Jews have been waiting for.

Peter and the other disciples are frightened. That's why Peter seems to say the first thing he thinks of. Peter suggests building shelters for the three men. Peter may have been wanting to keep Jesus, Elijah, and Moses there indefinitely, as places for them to meet with God's people. God used to meet with Moses and God's people in the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. Peter may have wanted to start that communion with God again. God stopped Peter because it was not time to build memorials to Jesus. First, Jesus has to suffer and die and be raised from the dead. Peter uses the same word for "shelter" that Jewish people used in their special "Feast of Tabernacles" or "Feast of Shelters." These shelters were probably made with branches of trees. People lived in them for 7 days to celebrate God's protection for them.

Stop here and look at a picture of shelters built for the Feast of Tabernacles, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus does not say anything to Peter; instead, God answers. When God speaks, as usual, there is a cloud. This cloud casts a shadow over the group. The voice coming from the cloud, like the voice at Jesus' baptism, is from God. God's voice affirms to Peter, James, and John that Jesus is His Son and that they need to listen to Him. The word for listen here also means to obey.

On the way down the mountain, Jesus told the disciples not to tell anyone what happened. He knew that the disciples still did not fully understand Jesus' purpose on the earth. Jesus tells them that after he rises from the dead they can tell people. But of course the disciples do not know what Jesus means. The disciples expected everyone to be raised from the dead at the end of times. Still, the disciples do not tell other people, but they talk about it among themselves. The three disciples ask Jesus why Elijah must come before the Messiah. People understood from the Old Testament that Elijah would come back to prepare the people by asking them to repent, or to turn away from their sins. But the disciples thought that Elijah would prepare the people for a Messiah that would save them from their rulers. Instead, Jesus reminds them that the Messiah must also suffer. The disciples have a wrong idea of what Elijah's job and the Messiah's job is. Then Jesus identifies who Elijah is. He says that Elijah has already come and has also suffered. Jesus is describing John the Baptist here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe important religious leaders in your community. What kinds of things do they do? Are they involved politically or socially? Or do they only talk about religious subjects? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:2–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus takes three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John, up a high mountain where he changes in his appearance and Elijah and Moses appear. Peter says to Jesus, "Let's build tents for you, Moses, and Elijah."

In the second scene: A cloud comes over them and God speaks from the cloud to the disciples about Jesus.

In the third scene: They go back down the mountain and Jesus tells the three disciples not to tell anyone what they have seen.

In the fourth scene: The disciples ask Jesus, "Why do the teachers of the religious law insist that Elijah must return before the Messiah comes?" Jesus responds.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Peter
- James
- John
- Elijah
- Moses
- The voice of God
- The teachers of the religious law (who are referred to in the disciples' question)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Not much is known about the location of the mountain where this passage takes place. Jesus and His disciples were on their way to Caesarea Philippi in the previous passages. This is now six days later, so they may still be in Caesarea Philippi or on their way back to Galilee.

This passage takes place six days after the previous section. Jesus takes only three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John, up onto a high mountain to be alone. While these three disciples are watching, Jesus changes his appearance. His clothes become extremely white, and Elijah and Moses appear and talk with Jesus. This is when Peter, in his fear and enthusiasm, suggests making tents, or dwellings, for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah.

A cloud comes and covers the disciples. God's voice says, "This is my dearly loved son, listen to him." The disciples must have had their eyes closed—another gospel describes them as having their faces to the ground—because the text says, "When they looked around Moses and Elijah were gone and they were only with Jesus."

As they walk down the mountain, Jesus tells the three disciples not to tell anyone what they have seen until he rises from the dead. Here Jesus says "the Son of Man," referring to himself.

From that point forward, Peter, James, and John did not tell anyone what they had seen, but they would talk to each other about what they saw and what Jesus meant by rising from the dead.

The three disciples ask Jesus why the teachers of the religious law insist that Elijah must return before the Messiah comes. This was a teaching that the teachers of the religious law taught about the Messiah coming. Jesus tells them that Elijah gets everything ready. Then he asks them a question he does not expect an answer to: "Why does the scripture say that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be treated with utter contempt? But I tell you Elijah has already come and they chose to abuse him just as the scriptures predicted."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:2–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Peter
- James
- John
- The voice of God
- Elijah
- Moses
- Teachers of the religious law (who are referred to in the disciples' questions)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage. Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Six days after the previous passage where Jesus and the disciples were walking north from Galilee, Jesus takes Peter, James and John up to a high mountain to be alone. Jesus completely changes his appearance and Elijah and Moses appear and begin talking with Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are completely confused," or "We are terrified, we do not know what's happening," or "We just know that this is Elijah and Moses, we do not know how we know." Continue the drama.

Peter says, "Teacher, rabbi, it's wonderful for us to be here, let us make three tents." Then the cloud overshadows them, and a voice from the cloud says, "This is my dearly loved son, listen to him." When the disciples look around, Moses and Elijah are gone and they only see Jesus with them.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am terrified, I am confused, I do not know what to think." Ask the other actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "We have heard the voice of God, and it terrified us" or "We have heard the voice of God and now we know who Jesus really is." Continue the drama.

As the disciples and Jesus go back down the mountain, Jesus explains to them not to tell anyone what has happened until the Son of Man has risen from the dead. The disciples often ask each other what Jesus meant by "rising from the dead."

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "It is not my time to tell them who I really am" or "I am frustrated, I keep telling them I will have to die and rise from the dead but they still don't understand." Continue the drama.

The disciples ask Jesus why the teachers of the religious law insist Elijah must return. Jesus responds that Elijah has come and he was abused, just as the scripture predicted. He says that the Son of Man will also suffer just as scripture predicted.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I know that everything is happening as it should," or "I have been speaking to the prophets Moses

and Elijah and God has spoken, affirming that God's plan is happening," or "I am sad that I will have to be treated this way by the ones who are supposed to be the teachers of the religious law."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:2–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was **transformed**, or **transfigured**. Transformed or transfigured means to change appearance—to look very different than before. It does not mean to change magically or in a bad way. Jesus did not look like a different person, he just became very bright. God is the one who made this happen.

His clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could make them. **Bleach** is a chemical that is used to make cloth and other things white. If you do not have bleach, you may need to say that this is something that makes clothes pure white. Or you may say that his clothes were whiter than any person could wash them.

Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus. **Elijah** is a prophet that lived long ago. God told the Jews that someone like Elijah would come before the Messiah to prepare the way for him. **Moses** is a prophet that also lived long ago. God gave Moses the law that the Jews followed.

Peter exclaimed, "Rabbi, it's wonderful for us to be here." **Rabbi** is a Jewish title that means "my great one" or "my great teacher." It does not mean a school teacher. It is a different word from "Lord." Lord means a master or maybe even a divine being. Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for rabbi. Look up rabbi in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here. Use the same word for rabbi throughout the book of Mark.

Peter suggests building three shelters, tents, or tabernacles for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus. Peter uses the same word for **shelter** that Jewish people used in their special "Feast of Tabernacles" or "Feast of Shelters." These shelters were probably made with branches of trees or cloth. People lived in them for 7 days to celebrate God's protection for them. The tents were also homes of people who moved place to place and so they were easy to take down and put up.

Stop here and look at a picture of shelters built for the Feast of Tabernacles as a group. Pause this audio here.

Later, the disciples and Jesus went back down the mountain and Jesus told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the **Son of Man** had risen from the dead. Son of Man is the one that God gives all authority to. Use the same phrase for Son of Man that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus speaks of himself in the 3rd person when he gives himself this title Son of Man. Be sure that it is clear by the way you translate this that Jesus is speaking about himself.

Jesus' disciples asked him, "Why do **teachers of religious law** insist that Elijah must return before the **Messiah** comes?" **Teachers of the law** is sometimes translated scribes or people who wrote down the law: They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These interpretations were not written down, but memorized and taught orally by the teachers. Use the same word for teachers of the law that you've used in previous passages. For more information on teachers of the law, refer to the Master Glossary.

Messiah is the name for Jesus that means "God saves." Christ is the word "Messiah" in Hebrew, and it means someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed for special tasks. Jesus is all of those things, but Mark tends to see Jesus as a king appointed by God for a special task. Use the same word here for Messiah as you have used in other parts of Mark. For more information on Messiah, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 9:2–13**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (13860264 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (9662683 KB)

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Mark 9:14–29

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 9:14–29 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:14–29 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus has just been up on a high mountain with Peter, James, and John. While there, Jesus' appearance is transformed and Elijah and Moses appear next to Jesus. The voice of God comes from heaven saying about Jesus, "This is my Son. Listen to Him."

Jesus comes down from the mountain with Peter, James, and John and goes to where the rest of the disciples are. Jesus finds a crowd of people around the rest of the disciples. When the crowd sees Jesus they are amazed that Jesus is there. The people run to greet Jesus, or welcome Jesus. In the crowd are teachers of the law. The teachers of the law and the disciples are arguing about something. In fact, when Jesus asks them, "What are you arguing about with them?" we do not know who he is talking to—to the religious leaders or to the disciples. Most scholars believe Jesus is talking to the disciples. Some versions say something like, "What is this argument about?"

The fact that a person in the crowd answers Jesus is not uncommon. The man who answered Jesus is the one who is probably the cause of the argument. This tells us a little about what the argument may have been about. This man brought his demon possessed son to see Jesus in order to be healed. To be possessed is to be taken over by something.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about someone you know who might have been possessed. How did you know they were possessed? What did they do? Pause this audio here.

This evil spirit shows the nature of evil spirits, which is to destroy life. The boy has many different symptoms like not being able to talk. The spirit throws the boy to the ground, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth together, and becomes stiff, which can also mean to be very tired. The father asks the disciples to heal his son. In that time, people believed that disciples do what the master does when the master is not there. The disciples were also confident that they could heal the boy. They had been commanded by Jesus to do these kinds of things before, and they had succeeded. But the disciples are not able to heal the boy, and no one seems to understand why.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what kinds of things can disciples of a religious leader do even when the leader is not there? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus gets there, he asks a question that he does not expect an answer to. He asks, "How long do I have to be with you," or "How long do I have to put up with you?" He is frustrated with their lack of belief and trust

in him. Jesus calls the people "a generation who do not believe in him." Some translations just say "faithless people." Jesus is probably not only talking to his disciples, but the teachers of the law, as well as the people who were standing in the crowd. When the crowd brings the boy to Jesus, the demon responds to Jesus' presence by throwing the boy into convulsions or fits.

Jesus asks how long the boy has been possessed. Jesus will heal the boy regardless of the father's answer; however, more than likely the father's answer makes Jesus very compassionate towards the boy. Also, the crowd may have thought that the longer the possession has been happening, the harder it might have been to cure. The father says since the boy was little, the demon would often try to kill the boy by throwing him into fire or water. The man asks Jesus to help if he can. Jesus is surprised! Jesus asks, "Why are you asking *if I can?*?" Jesus says that anything is possible for those who believe that Jesus is who He says He is. The man responds in a very honest way. He wants to believe that Jesus can do anything, but he recognizes how hard it is to believe. He asks for help. Because he asks for help from Jesus, Jesus gives him help.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time that you struggled to believe that God was able to take care of a situation. What made it hard to believe God in the moment? Pause this audio here.

As Jesus is talking with the man, the crowd gets bigger. Jesus normally does not like to heal people from evil spirits in front of huge crowds, so it seems that he perhaps acts quickly before the crowd gets much bigger. When Jesus commands the spirit to come out of the boy, the spirit again causes the boy to have a violent reaction. Then the boy looks like a corpse, or a dead body. He looks like he has died. However, the language suggests that the boy is not actually dead, but he looks like he is dead. Many people think the boy is dead, but Jesus helps the boy get up.

Later Jesus is alone with his disciples in a house. They would often gather together after a miraculous healing. Jesus uses these times alone, away from the crowds, to explain things to his disciples. In this story Jesus' disciples are confused. They had been given authority to cast out demons before, why did it not work in this case? Jesus tells the disciples that this kind of spirit only comes out by praying. Jesus' answer shows them that they should not trust in the authority that they were given once before. They should believe and pray each time they come into this situation. They can only trust in God, not in their own abilities. That is why they need to pray each time.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus, James, John, and Peter return to the other disciples. They find the disciples in a large crowd, arguing with teachers of the law. When the crowd sees Jesus, they are amazed and run up to greet him.

In the second scene: Jesus asks, "What is this argument about?" A man in the crowd says, "Teacher, I brought my son to you. He is possessed by an evil spirit that makes him mute, throws him to the ground, makes him foam at the mouth and grind his teeth, and paralyzes him. I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they were not able to." Jesus says, "How long must I put up with you people! Bring him to me!"

In the third scene: People bring the boy to Jesus. When the evil spirit in the boy sees Jesus, it throws the boy to the ground, and the boy begins to roll around, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asks the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" The father replies, "He's been like this from childhood. The evil spirit has often thrown my son into water or fire to try to kill him. If you are able to, have compassion on us and help us!" Jesus replies, "What do you mean by 'if I am able to'? Everything is possible for someone who believes." The man immediately says, "I believe. Help me overcome my unbelief!"

In the fourth scene: When Jesus sees that the crowd is growing, he commands the evil spirit to leave the boy. The evil spirit screams, shakes the boy violently, and leaves. The crowd says that the boy looks as if he is dead, but Jesus takes the boy by the hand and raises him up. The boy stands up.

In the fifth scene: Afterwards, Jesus and the disciples are alone in a house. His disciples ask him, "Why weren't we able to cast out the evil spirit?" Jesus answers, "That kind only leaves by prayer."

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- A large crowd
- Teachers of the law
- A man whose son is possessed by an evil spirit
- A boy who is possessed by an evil spirit

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This story takes place right after Jesus, James, John, and Peter have been up on the mountain and Jesus was transformed. Most of the story takes place in a village, possibly in Galilee, but we do not know exactly where. It is only the last portion of the story that takes place in a house.

They are coming back down the mountain to rejoin the rest of the disciples. When they find the rest of the disciples, the disciples are arguing with the teachers of the law and a large crowd is around them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when you came back from a peaceful time of rest or quiet to moments of chaos. How were you feeling? Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks the group "What is this argument about?" He may have been talking to the disciples and the teachers of the law, or he may have been asking the whole crowd. A man in the crowd answers, explaining that he brought his son, who was possessed by an evil spirit to Jesus' disciples to be healed, but they could not cast out the evil spirit.

Jesus is probably talking to the whole crowd when Jesus says, "You unbelieving generation! How long will I put up with you?" He then asks for the boy to be brought to him. When the evil spirit sees Jesus, the spirit throws the boy to the ground, and makes the boy roll around, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asks the father how long the boy has been like this.

The father replies, "He's been like this from childhood. The evil spirit has often thrown my son into water or fire to try to kill him. If you are able to, have mercy on us and help us!"

Jesus replies, "What do you mean by 'if I am able to'? Anything is possible for someone who believes."

The man immediately says, "I believe. Help me overcome my unbelief!"

Jesus commands the evil spirit to leave the boy as he sees a larger crowd gathering. The evil spirit shrieks, violently shakes the boy, and leaves. The boy looks as if he has died, and most of the crowd thinks he has. But Jesus takes the boy's hand, raises him to his feet, and the boy stands.

Jesus and his disciples have left the crowd and are now alone in a house. The disciples privately ask Jesus why they were not able to command the evil spirit to leave the boy. Jesus answers, "This kind can only come out by prayer."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- A large crowd
- Teachers of the law
- A man whose son is possessed by an evil spirit
- A boy who is possessed by an evil spirit

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and James, John, and Peter come down from the mountain where Jesus had just been transformed. As they return to the other disciples, they see a large crowd gathered, and the disciples arguing with the teachers of the law. The crowd runs up to Jesus, amazed.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Amazed at Jesus' power," or "Excited to see Jesus," or "We really want this boy to be healed and we know Jesus can do it!" Continue the drama.

Jesus asks, "What is this argument about?" A man in the crowd responds, "Teacher, I brought my son, who is possessed by an evil spirit, to you to heal. The evil spirit makes my son mute. It seizes him, throws him to the ground, and makes him foam at the mouth and grind his teeth. Your disciples tried to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn't do it."

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing the father, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Desperate for my son to be healed," or "I am so relieved Jesus is here since his disciples couldn't help." Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They may answer things like, "Embarrassed that we cannot cast out this evil spirit," or "Angry—we have just been arguing with the teachers of the religious law," or "Embarrassed that all these people see us as unable to cast out this evil spirit." Continue the drama.

Jesus says, "You faithless people! How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me." They bring the boy to Jesus, and as soon as the demon in the boy sees Jesus, it throws him to the ground in convulsions.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Frustrated," or "Sad at the faithlessness of the disciples or people," or "I wish they would just trust me." Continue the drama.

Jesus asks the father how long the boy has been possessed. The father tells him since the boy was little, and says, "Have mercy on us and help us, if you can."

Jesus answers, "What do you mean by 'if I can'? Anything is possible for those who believe."

The father immediately answers, "I believe! Please help the unbelief I have!"

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Surprised that this man thinks I might not be able to heal his son." Ask the actor playing the man, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Desperate," or "I don't know where else to go, I've tried everything else. But I don't know if Jesus can heal him," or "Torn between belief and unbelief." Continue the drama.

As the crowd starts to grow, Jesus commands the evil spirit to leave the boy. The evil spirit violently shakes the boy, throws him to the ground, and leaves. The boy looks like he's dead, but Jesus takes him by the hand and helps him to his feet.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing the boy, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "So much lighter, like I can see again," or "Free! I feel like myself again!" or "I can't believe it's gone! I'm so grateful!" Continue the drama.

Afterwards, when they are alone in a house, Jesus' disciples ask him why they were unable to cast out the evil spirit. Jesus replies, "That kind can only be cast out by prayer."

Pause the drama, ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They may answer things like, "Still confused why it didn't work for us," or "Humbled, I had started thinking it was my power, not Jesus'."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

When Jesus returned to the other **disciples**, they saw a large crowd surrounding them, and some **teachers of religious law** were arguing with them. The teachers of the law are generally the scribes who have studied the books of the law and are experts at interpreting them. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages for disciples and teachers of religious law. For more information on disciples and teachers of religious law, refer to the Master Glossary.

When the crowd saw Jesus they were overwhelmed with awe, and they ran to greet him. "What is all this arguing about?" Jesus asked. One of the men in the crowd spoke up and said, "**Teacher**, I brought my son so you can heal him. He's possessed by an evil spirit that will not let him talk." The word teacher is a term of respect that the Jews used for people who taught things of God and had disciples following them. Use the same word you've used for teacher in previous passages. For more information on Teacher, refer to the Master Glossary.

In most texts, the word for **evil spirit** in Greek is actually **unclean spirit**. In this story, the first mention of an evil spirit is just about a spirit that makes the boy unable to talk. But later, the spirit is referred to as "unclean" or "evil." Unclean refers to something that is unfit for service for God. All evil spirits are unclean because they are unfit for service to God. Evil spirit refers to spiritual beings who serve Satan as his agents, and are under his authority. These spiritual beings have power to oppress a human being and even take control of him. This is what we see happening to this boy in this story. In fact, the boy's father tells us that this spirit makes the boy unable to talk. Later, Jesus mentions that the boy also cannot hear. Use the same word for evil spirit and later

in this story for unclean spirit that you have used in previous passages. For more information on evil or unclean spirits, refer to the Master Glossary.

The father asks Jesus to take the evil spirit out of his son. And he mentions to Jesus that his disciples could not cast out the evil spirit. Jesus says to them, "You **faithless** people" or "you people with no faith." **Faith** describes people's response to God's promise. This is about putting your trust or confidence in God. In this story Jesus calls the people "faithless," meaning that they do not trust Jesus' power.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **faithless**. Look up faith in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

The father asks Jesus to "Have **mercy** on us, and help us." To show mercy is to show compassion for those suffering or in need.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **mercy**. Look up mercy in the Master Glossary for more information. Use this same word for mercy throughout the book of Mark. Pause this audio here.

Jesus **rebukes** the evil spirit. This means that he spoke sternly to the evil spirit.

And then later Jesus tells his disciples that this kind of spirit can only come out through **prayer** and fasting. Be sure that the word you use here does not refer to only ritualistic communication, but something more personal. Some translations of the Bible mention fasting, and some do not. You will need to decide if you include the idea of fasting, or not eating in order to be close to God, in this story or not.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **prayer**. Look up prayer in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word for prayer throughout the book of Mark.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 9:14–29

Audio Content

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Mark 9:30–50

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 9:30–50 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:30–50 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:30–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples leave from the northern area of Caesarea Philippi and travel south, through Galilee, towards Jerusalem. Jesus knows that he is going to Jerusalem to suffer and die. He does not stop on his way to Capernaum because Jesus does not want anyone to know that Jesus and the disciples are passing through. He probably avoids the highly populated areas of Galilee on the way to Capernaum. He wants to be alone with his disciples to teach them before he goes on to Jerusalem to suffer.

Stop here and show your translation team a map of Caesarea Philippi and Galilee, including Capernaum.

As they are walking, Jesus teaches and tells his disciples about the suffering that will happen to Him. He says that He will be "given" or "delivered" into the hands of men. Many scholars think that Jesus is talking about Judas betraying him. However, most scholars think that Jesus is talking about God giving control to powerful men to judge Jesus and execute him. His disciples do not understand what Jesus is saying, but they are afraid to ask him more about this. Maybe they are worried about what will happen, or maybe they do not want Jesus to rebuke them like he rebuked Peter earlier.

Then Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, where they had stayed many times before. As usual they went to a house where they could be alone to talk. Jesus asks His disciples what they were discussing on the way to Capernaum. None of the disciples wanted to answer Jesus because they were discussing who of them was the greatest. Jesus sat down and called his disciples to come near and listen. This is the way that Jewish teachers called their disciples. This is the second time that Jesus has told the disciples of Jesus' upcoming death. Both times the disciples have responded either by rejecting the idea, or by being prideful. Jesus again starts to teach the disciples about humility and being a servant to others.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about someone you know who is a true servant of others, who is humble and not seeking things for themselves. Pause this audio here.

First, Jesus talks to his disciples about their argument about who is the most important among them. Jesus' disciples believe what their culture has taught them—that each of them should try to be the greatest of the disciples. But Jesus answers in a surprising way. He went against what their culture taught—whoever wants to be first, or greatest, must be last. Jesus explains this idea by bringing a child to stand among them and then hugs the child to show love for the child. Children were not important or great in that culture. Jesus wanted to show the disciples that they have to serve, welcome, and care for unimportant people rather than try to be in a high position. He tells his disciples that the people who care for these children are showing their love for Jesus and for God himself.

The disciples asked Jesus a question about something they don't understand. They saw another man casting out demons in Jesus' name, which means he was casting them out with Jesus' authority. The disciples told the man to stop because he was not one of Jesus' closest disciples. Just before this story, the disciples had been surprised that they could not cast out a demon, so they were probably confused that this man could. Jesus tells his disciples that they should accept this man because they should accept anyone who follows Jesus. There are two kinds of people—those that follow Jesus and those who do not. Jesus says this man who cast out demons in Jesus' name would not quickly talk badly about Jesus. Jesus is saying that someone cannot be hostile and friendly at the same time. Jesus explains with this important statement: If anyone gives them a drink of water because they belong to the Messiah, or Christ, they will be rewarded. Jesus was showing that a gesture that seems unimportant to us, is not unimportant to God. Israel was a hot country, and giving water was an important way to welcome people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture show people that they are welcome, in the city and in homes? Pause this audio here.

Jesus refers back to the child he put in the middle of the group earlier. It is wrong to cause anyone who trusts in Jesus to "stumble," which means to disobey God. Jesus wants to emphasize this. He says that it is better to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone hung around your neck and die, than to cause someone else to sin, or lose faith in God. This millstone is specifically one that a donkey had to turn because it was so large. It was used to grind flour. At this time, the Jews considered a death without burial, including death at sea, to be the worst kind of death.

Stop here and look at a picture of a millstone as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus talks about hands, feet, and eyes causing people to sin. These different parts of the body represent the specific things that people can do wrong. The hand, foot, and eye cannot act independently of someone, but are instruments that people can use to sin against God. Jesus is not telling people to literally cut off their arms or legs. Some Jews believed that they would be resurrected to life exactly the way that they died, with limbs missing. This may be why Jesus tells them it's better to enter life, or the resurrected life, without a limb than to have all of your limbs and be thrown into "hell," or "Gehenna." Jewish people knew that if they sinned against God, they would be punished and sent to "hell," or "Gehenna." There was a valley called Gehenna next to Jerusalem where the ancient people sacrificed children. Later the Jewish people threw their garbage there and

the garbage was destroyed by worms and fire. This valley became the symbol of a place of punishment. The Jewish prophets described hell, or the place of punishment, as a place where worms and fire ate away at people forever.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe hell, or eternal punishment. What are the different beliefs people have about death, hell, and resurrection? Pause this audio here.

Finally Jesus talks about a different kind of fire. Jewish people made burnt sacrifices to God at their temple. They had to bring salt along with their sacrifices that were burned on an altar—salt added flavor and preserved the meat. The salt Jesus talks about represents our commitment to Jesus and sharing the good news about Jesus. "To be salted with fire" means that the people would suffer persecution and become like a sacrifice to God because they are committed to God. Their commitment, persecution, and suffering would show that the good news of God is real. But some salt is not pure and then does not work well, just like sometimes we lose our commitment to Jesus. But if we are committed to Jesus, we will continue to love each other. As we love each other, we are at peace with each other and not arguing and fighting. Jesus brings the conversation back around to the original problem at the beginning of this story when the disciples were trying to decide who was the greatest. Jesus tells his disciples that living at peace with one another is the most important thing.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:30–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his disciples travel through Galilee. Jesus does not want anyone to know he's there so that he can spend time teaching his disciples. He tells them that he will be betrayed and killed, but three days later he will rise from the dead. The disciples are too afraid to ask Jesus what he means.

In the second scene: Jesus and his disciples arrive at Capernaum and go into a house. Jesus asks his disciples what they were talking about on the road, but they do not answer because they had been arguing over which of them was the greatest. Jesus calls the disciples to him and tells them that whoever wants to be first must become last, and be the servant of everyone else. Jesus then picks up a young child and tells them, "Anyone who welcomes a little child like this, welcomes me, and welcomes my Father who sent me."

In the third scene: John tells Jesus that they saw someone casting out evil spirits in Jesus' name, and told him to stop since he was not one of Jesus' disciples. Jesus says, "Don't stop him! Anyone who does miracles in my name will not be able to speak badly about me right afterwards. Anyone who is not against us is for us. Anyone who even gives you a cup of water because of me will be rewarded."

Jesus then continues to teach them. He says, "It is better to be thrown into the sea with a large weight around your neck than to cause someone else to sin. It is better to lose a body part but live forever with God as your King than to have all your body parts and be thrown into hell, where there are maggots and never-ending fire. Everyone will be tested. Salt is good for seasoning, but if salt loses its flavor, how can it become salty again? You must be like salt with each other and live in peace with one another."

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- John, one of Jesus' disciples, is mentioned by name
- A young child

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: During the first part of the passage, Jesus and the disciples are walking back from the area of Caesarea Philippi to Capernaum, through the Galilee. When they get to Capernaum, they go into a house and there they have the rest of their conversation.

Stop and look at a map of Caesarea Philippi to Capernaum as a group. Look at the route that Jesus and His disciples may have taken as they walked. Pause this audio here.

As they travel, Jesus tells his disciples that He will die and rise from the dead. His disciples do not understand Him and are afraid to ask Him questions.

When they get to Capernaum they go into a house. More than likely this is Peter's house, where Jesus often stayed. Jesus asks his disciples, "What were you talking about on the road?" Since they had been talking about which of them is the greatest, they do not answer. Jesus calls the disciples to him and begins teaching them. Jesus teaches about several subjects, but they are all connected to each other. Jesus probably uses memory helps like repeated words and ideas to help connect the teachings. He mentions little children more than once, he talks about doing things "in his name," he lists parts of the body that cause people to sin, and he repeats ideas like "hell," "kingdom of God," "fire," and "salt."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Listen to Mark 9:35-50 again. Which words and ideas do you hear Jesus repeat? Discuss how this is different or similar to the way the religious teachers in your culture teach. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells them that the greatest will be the person who takes last place and becomes the servant of everyone else. He takes a young child in his arms and tells them that anyone who welcomes a child in his name welcomes him, and anyone who welcomes him welcomes the Father who sent him.

John tells Jesus that they had seen a man casting out demons in Jesus' name, and they had told him to stop since he was not one of the disciples. Pay attention to the flow of thought and examples in Jesus' teaching. Jesus says, "Don't stop him! Anyone who does miracles in my name will not be able to speak badly about me right afterwards. Anyone who is not against us is for us. Anyone who even gives you a cup of water because of me will be rewarded."

Stop here and as a group discuss who you can give a cup of water to. In your culture that may look like taking someone food who has need, or bringing someone a refreshing drink if it's hot, or a coat if it's cold. This could be welcoming someone to your house for a meal. It may mean bringing some food or clothes to someone who might have a need. When you're done discussing, decide who you will do this for, and do it. Pause this audio here.

Jesus then continues to teach them. He says, "It is better to be thrown into the sea with a large weight around your neck than to cause someone else to sin."

Stop here and look again at the picture of the millstone as a group. Pause this audio here.

It is better to lose a body part but live forever with God as your King than to have all your body parts and be thrown into hell, where there are maggots and never-ending fire. Everyone will be tested. Jesus says that everyone will be **tested with fire** or **salted with fire**. Jewish people made burnt offerings or sacrifices to God at their temple. They had to bring salt along with their sacrifices that were burned on an altar, because the sacrifices were meat and salt added flavor and preserved the meat. The salt Jesus talks about represents our commitment to Jesus and sharing the good news about Jesus. "To be salted with fire" means that the people would suffer persecution and become like a sacrifice to God because they are committed to God. You can follow other translations and say that everyone will be tested by fire if it is too difficult to say that everyone will be salted by fire.

Then Jesus says, "Salt is good for seasoning, but if salt loses its flavor, how can it become salty again? You must be like salt with each other and live in peace with one another."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:30–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- John, one of Jesus' disciples, is mentioned by name
- A young child

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples travel through Galilee. As they travel, Jesus tells them once again that he will be betrayed, killed, and rise from the dead. The disciples are too afraid to ask him what he means.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking? Why are you too afraid to ask Jesus what he means?" The people may answer things like, "We're afraid of what Jesus means," or "We are confused and do not understand what Jesus means," or "We remember the last time we talked about this with Jesus and Jesus rebuked Peter, and so we are too afraid to ask Jesus what he means." Continue the drama.

When they arrive in Capernaum, they go into a house. Jesus asks them what they were talking about on the road. The disciples had been arguing about which of them was the greatest, so they do not answer. Jesus calls his disciples to him. He tells them that the greatest is the person who chooses to be last and is a servant to others. He takes a young child into his arms, and tells them that anyone who welcomes a child in his name welcomes Jesus, and anyone who welcomes Jesus welcomes the Father who sent him.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "Embarrassed at what we were arguing about" or "Our understanding of the way the world works is being challenged." Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "I am curious about what they were arguing about," or "I want to teach my disciples something important," or "I want them to learn to be humble." Continue the drama.

One of the disciples, John, tells Jesus that they saw someone cast out demons in Jesus' name. They told the man not to cast out demons, since he wasn't one of Jesus' disciples. Jesus says, "Don't do that! No one who does a

miracle in my name can speak badly about me soon afterward. Anyone who is not against us is for us. If anyone even gives you a cup of water because of me, they will be rewarded."

Jesus refers back to the child from earlier, saying, "But if you make any of these little ones stumble, it would be better for you if you were thrown into the sea with a heavy weight around your neck. It is better for you to lose body parts and live forever than to have all your body parts and enter hell, which is full of fire and maggots. Everyone will be tested with fire. Salt is a good seasoning, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? You should live in peace with each other."

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "Curious about this teaching," or "Confused. Do we really have to cut off our hand or foot?" or "Astonished—Jesus is challenging the way we think things should be."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 9:30–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his **disciples** left where they were and traveled through **Galilee**. Jesus didn't want anyone to know that he was there, because he wanted to spend time with his disciples. Disciples are the closest followers of Jesus. Galilee is a northern region or province of Israel. Use the same words for disciples and Galilee that you have used in other parts of Mark. For more information on disciples and Galilee, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said to his disciples, "The **Son of Man** will be betrayed and killed but will rise from the dead." The Son of Man is the term Jesus uses most often for Himself. It describes the person that God gave all authority to. Translate Son of Man in the same way you have translated it in previous passages of Mark. For more information on Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary.

Later they arrived at **Capernaum**. Capernaum was an important trading town on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Translate Capernaum the same way you have in previous passages of Mark. For more information on Capernaum, refer to the Master Glossary.

Later Jesus puts a little child in the middle of the group and he says, "Anyone who welcomes a child like this **in my name** or **on my behalf** welcomes me. When Jesus uses the phrase in my name he is talking about his power or authority to do something. Use the same word or phrase for "in my name" throughout Mark.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **in my name**. Pause this audio here.

John then asks Jesus, "**Teacher**, we saw someone using your name to cast out **demons**." Teacher is a respectful term used to address someone who was a teacher of the things of God and who had disciples. Use the same word for Teacher that you have used in previous passages. In this story the word demon is used, but this means the same thing as evil spirit. Evil spirit or demon refers to spiritual beings who are messengers and servants of Satan as his agents, being under his authority. These spiritual beings have power to oppress a human being and even take control of him. Use the same word for demon that you've used in previous passages.

Jesus said, "Don't stop that man. No one who does **miracles** in my name or with my power will soon be able to speak evil of me. Miracles refer to powerful actions that only God can do, and they make people to be in awe of God. Use the same word for miracles that you've used in previous passages. For more information on miracles, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus goes on to say, "If anyone gives you even a cup of water because you belong to the **Messiah**, or **Christ**, that person will be rewarded." The name Jesus means "God saves." Christ is the word "Messiah" in Hebrew, and it means someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed for special tasks. Jesus is all of those things, but Mark sees Jesus as a king appointed by God for a special task. Use the same word for Messiah or Christ that you've used in previous passages. For more information on Messiah or Christ, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus goes on to say that if we cause someone who believes in him to fall into sin or to do a sin, it would be better to have a large **millstone** hung around your neck. A millstone is a stone of about 200 kilograms. It is circular, with a hole in the middle, and it is used for grinding grain. A donkey pushed a bar tied to a stone in order to rotate the millstone.

Stop here and show a picture or photo of a millstone to your translation team. Pause this audio here.

Jesus goes on to say that we should do whatever it takes not to sin, even to cutting off your hand or your foot. It is better to enter into eternal life with only one foot or one hand than to be thrown into **hell** with two feet or two hands. Hell is the name for the place where unbelievers go at the end of the world to be punished. Satan and his angels will also go there. There will be fire that lasts forever there. The Jewish prophets described hell, or the place of punishment, as a place where worms and fire ate away at people forever.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **hell**. Look up hell in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here. Use the same word for hell through the book of Mark.

Use the same word for **worms** that you would use for worms that eat a dead human body.

In this story Jesus is talking about many worms.

Jesus also talks about entering into the **kingdom of God**. A kingdom is a place where a king rules a group of people. The kingdom of God in the New Testament refers to the time when God comes to rule—his reign and authority which begins with Jesus' ministry on earth and people's acceptance of him. Later, the perfect Kingdom will come. Use the same words for kingdom of God that you've used in previous passages. For more information on the kingdom of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 9:30–50

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 10:1–12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 10:1–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:1–12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus left Galilee and began to travel south on his way to Jerusalem. He traveled through the mountains of Samaria and went east of the Jordan River. He had been east of the Jordan River before when he was visiting John, his cousin. We are not sure the exact order in which he went into each place. But we do know that probably in each place he went, a crowd of people (or, many people) gathered around him.

Stop here and look at a map of Galilee, Judea, Samaria, and the area east of the Jordan River, called Perea. Pause this audio here.

In this passage, Jesus was also in the area that King Herod, or Herod Antipas ruled. John the Baptist preached in the same area where King Herod ruled. John was put in prison because he told King Herod that his divorce and remarriage to his brother's wife was wrong. The Pharisees, or Jewish religious leaders, wanted Jesus to stop teaching. They knew that if they could get Jesus to say something against King Herod, King Herod would also arrest Jesus. They asked Jesus his opinion on divorce, or when a husband and wife separate permanently. The different kinds of Jewish religious leaders believed different things about what Moses meant in Deuteronomy when he explained Jewish religious laws about divorce. In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses said that a man can divorce his wife in certain situations. In Jewish culture, a man could divorce his wife simply by writing a letter to his wife in front of witnesses with no legal government involvement. Each religious sect believed differently about what were good reasons for divorce. Some believed that only if the woman committed adultery, or had sexual intercourse with someone besides her husband, was a good reason for divorce. Others believed that a wife only needed to displease her husband in order for him to divorce her. Another group believes that if the husband found a more pleasing woman than his wife, he could divorce her. Each belief centered around the guilt of the woman, or the wife. The religious leaders were listening carefully to Jesus' answer in hopes that he would say something that would offend King Herod and get him arrested.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are your culture's rules about marriage? Are these rules from your religious leaders, from your political leaders, or from your tribal leaders? Are there different words for each of these kinds of rules? Pause this audio here.

Jesus did not fall into the religious leaders' trap. Instead, he asked a question about what Moses said. Jesus did not say whether or not divorce was right. But, Jesus agrees with Moses. Moses tolerated divorce because people are evil. Jesus said people have "hard hearts," which means that people do not want to follow God's will. Moses allows for the man to write the letter of divorce for his wife, but divorce is not a good thing. Moses wrote this law in order to protect women in bad marriages by giving them a way out of the marriage.

Jesus then reminds his audience about creation and how God designed men and women. He wants to show them the most important point, that God planned marriage as a permanent union between husband and wife. He planned this since the beginning of the world. Jesus then gives a command, "Let no one split apart, or break up, what God has joined together." Jesus is showing here that he is the Promised Savior, and he has God's final authority in this matter. Jesus shows that he does not like divorce.

Again, Jesus goes into a house and teaches his disciples when they are alone and away from the crowds. Jesus makes it clear that both men and women commit adultery when they divorce and then remarry someone else. Before Jesus said this, religious leaders believed that only women were sinning when they committed adultery against men. In this statement Jesus puts men and women at the same level. Both men and women have to follow the same rules.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are your culture's rules about divorce? Is divorce approved of by religious groups, or political groups? What do people in your culture say about men and women when they divorce? How are they treated?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus travels to Judea from Capernaum and crowds gather around him as usual. Jesus is east of the Jordan River now.

In the second scene: The Pharisees come and try to trap Jesus by asking him a question: Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife? Herod divorced his wife and remarried, so the Pharisees hope that Jesus will say Herod is guilty. The Pharisees could then use this to try to get rid of Jesus. However, Jesus refers to Moses' law

in the Old Testament. He goes on to talk about God's original purpose for marriage, and ends by saying that God has put husbands and wives together in marriage and we should not divorce.

In the third scene: Jesus goes into a house alone with his disciples. This is where he teaches them more things about divorce. His disciples ask Jesus more about the subject. Jesus says that both men and women are sinning by committing adultery when they divorce and remarry.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The crowds of people who are gathered around Jesus
- Pharisees (religious leaders)
- A father and mother
- A man or husband
- A woman or wife
- The other man or woman the husband or wife remarries

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Jesus and His disciples have left the Galilee and moved south through Samaria, into the region of Judea, and then Jesus goes east beyond the Jordan river. This area was known as Perea where King Herod Antipas ruled.

Stop here and look again at a map of Galilee, Judea, and the Jordan river area, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus is teaching the group as He is traveling. It is important to remember that the action of the story happens as Jesus is teaching in a crowd of people. This story happens in the area that King Herod ruled, so the question the Pharisees asked Jesus could have gotten Jesus into trouble, or could have had him arrested.

It is important to describe the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees. Jesus answers them by asking a question that refers them back to their religious law.

The Pharisees answer Jesus with Moses' law, which says that a man can give his wife a letter that says he wants to divorce her.

Then Jesus says that Moses only wrote the commandment because people had hard hearts, or, do not want to follow God's will. But Jesus goes on to say that God made a husband and wife to be unified so that it seems like they are one person. The man leaves his father and mother's household to make his own household with his wife. No one should break up a husband and wife, because God is the one who put them together.

It is important to think through the distance and spacing of the scenes in this story. In scene 3, Jesus moves into a house and is alone with His disciples. This is the second time on Jesus' journey that Jesus ends up in a house with only His disciples. Jesus' disciples want to know more about the subject of divorce. Jesus now tells them that a man is guilty if he divorces his wife and remarries, and a woman is guilty if she divorces her husband and remarries.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The crowds of people gathered around Jesus
- Pharisees (religious leaders)
- A father and mother
- A man/husband
- A woman/wife
- The other man or woman the husband or wife marries

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples are traveling. They have just come from Capernaum right before this story, where they were alone with Jesus. Now a huge crowd gathers.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I love these people and want to teach them." Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Frustration that Jesus always stops to teach" or "Curiosity at what Jesus will teach next." Continue the drama.

The Pharisees come to ask Jesus a question, "Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife?"

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Compassion on the Pharisees," or "Anger that they always try to trap me," or "Realizing that my end is coming." Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Curiosity about how Jesus will handle this question," or "Anger at the Pharisees for interrupting and always trying to trap Jesus." Ask the actors playing the Pharisees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "Confidence that we have finally caught Jesus," or "Curiosity at what Jesus will say," or "Hopeful that Jesus will get himself into trouble." Continue the drama.

Jesus answers with a question about what Moses wrote in the law. The Pharisees answer with the permission for the man to write a letter of divorce. Jesus responds, explaining that Moses only did this because of the hard hearts of people, but that God had a better plan at creation.

Pause the drama. Ask the Pharisees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "Angry that Jesus again had a good answer" or "Angry that Jesus does not accept the way out of marriage for the man." Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Confusion at Jesus' teaching," or "Pride that Jesus always knows how to answer the Pharisees." Ask the actors playing the husband and wife, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Understanding of how serious marriage is" or "Awe that God puts people together." Continue the drama.

Jesus goes to a house to be alone with his disciples. The disciples continue to ask questions, and Jesus does a surprising thing. Before, in Jewish culture, only the woman who divorced her husband and remarried sinned, but the husband could do what he wanted to. But now Jesus says that the man is also guilty of sin if he divorces his wife and marries someone else.

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking now?" The people might answer things like, "I'm surprised, confused, amazed that now women are on the same level as men."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Then Jesus left **Capernaum** and went down to the region of Judea and into the area east of the Jordan River.

Show your team a map of Capernaum, the region of Judea, and the Jordan River.

Capernaum is a village large enough to contain a religious place of prayer, called the synagogue. It was an important trading village on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The region of Judea is an area about 73 kilometers wide and long. The Jordan River was a major river in the Jewish area during Bible times. It ran from the Sea of Galilee about 360 kilometers to the Dead Sea. Use the same words you've used in previous passages for Capernaum, Judea, and the Jordan River. For more information on Capernaum, refer to the Master Glossary.

Some **Pharisees** came and tried to trap Jesus with a question. The name Pharisee means "to be separated." They believed the best way to follow God was to separate themselves from ordinary people. The Pharisees were regarded as highly influential and righteous. They recognized both the written and the oral religious traditions and laws. The term Pharisees is the name of this type of religious leader. Use the same term for Pharisees that you have been using throughout the book of Mark. For more information on Pharisees, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Should a man be allowed to **divorce** his wife?" Divorce is a permanent separation between a husband and wife.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **divorce**. Look up divorce in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus asked "What did Moses say in the **law** about divorce?" The **law of Moses** are the rules from God that Moses wrote down for the Jewish people to tell them how to live. Use the same word for law that you've used in previous passages. For more information on the law of Moses, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Pharisees answer that Moses allowed divorce if a man writes a letter to send his wife away.

Jesus goes on to talk about God's original plan for marriage. He says that the husband and wife **become one flesh, or are united into one**. This means that the two people are just like they are one person. In your culture, how do you see the relationship between a husband and wife?

Stop here and discuss as a translation team the best way to state how a husband and wife together become like one person. Pause this audio here.

Jesus goes into a house alone with his **disciples**. The disciples are the closest followers of Jesus. Use the same term for disciples that you have been using throughout the book of Mark. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells his disciples that anyone who divorces his or her wife or husband and remarries commits **adultery**. God considers it a sin whenever people have a sexual relationship with someone to whom they are not married. Use the same word for adultery that you've used in previous passages. For more information on adultery, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 10:1–12**Audio Content**

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Mark 10:13-31

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 10:13-31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:13-31 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:13-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story happens some time after Jesus teaches about divorce. We do not know how long afterwards.

We don't know if it was the mothers, fathers, or older children who brought, or led, children to Jesus. They wanted Jesus to touch the children. In Jewish culture, touching a child meant to bless the child, or give them favor and good things for their life to come. These children could have been from 0 to 12 years old. The disciples probably thought Jesus was too busy or too important to be bothered by children, who are considered unimportant in Jewish culture, so the disciples told the parents that they should not bother Jesus. Jesus was angry with his disciples for stopping the people bringing the children.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture show giving blessing or favor to others? Do you touch people, like Jesus did here, or do you do something different to show blessing? Pause this audio here.

Jesus said it was important for children to come to him. Jesus shows this by restating twice in both a positive and a negative way: "Let the children come, and do not stop them from coming."

Then Jesus begins to explain something very important: He explains the requirements for being a part of or included in God's Kingdom. Everyone, even adults, need to be a little like children in order to live under God's rule, doing what God asks them to do without questioning God. People must, like children, know that they are helpless and must depend on others for what they need. People have to receive the Kingdom, like a child receiving a gift from someone that loves them. The child has not earned it or deserves it, but simply receives it because someone loves them very much.

Then Jesus shows his teaching by picking up children and putting his hands on their heads to bless them. He takes them in his arms, probably lifts them onto His lap, to bless them one by one, which is a way to show affection.

As Jesus went on His way, a man ran up to Jesus, and knelt in front of Jesus to show his genuine respect for a teacher of the religious law. This man called Jesus "Good Teacher," or says, "Teacher, you are good," and asked Jesus how to inherit or be given the gift of eternal life. This man wanted to make sure that he was doing enough good things so that he could have life with God forever. People called only God "good," so Jesus was curious, why did this man call him "good"? Jesus reminds this man of the laws Moses wrote down about how to have a good relationship with other people. The man declares that he has kept those laws! The man says he has obeyed

these laws "since he was young," which means since he did the Jewish ceremony at the age of 12. At the age of 12, all Jewish boys promised to keep the commandments.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of rites of passage do you have in your culture for young people learning to follow your culture's religious rules? Pause this audio here.

Jesus loves the man deeply, meaning that he admires and respects the man. Jesus invites the man into an even deeper relationship with Jesus and the 12 disciples. This means that the man must do something even harder than keep the commandments. Jesus said there was one thing the man had not done. The man needed to sell every valuable thing he had and give his money to poor people so that he could experience truly valuable things from God. Jesus knew that what the man lacked was love for God above all else. The man's possessions possessed, or ruled, his heart. The man cared more about his possessions than about following Jesus. If the man gives up his greed and love of money, and follows Jesus, the man can then inherit eternal life.

The man's "face fell," which means that he was disappointed and sad, because the man was very rich. So the man left the group while he was sad.

The disciples are very surprised! Jewish people believed that God rewarded people for their goodness by giving them a lot of money and property.

Jesus exclaimed to his disciples that it was hard for rich people to enter the Kingdom. Jesus calls his disciples "dear children" and gives them a very clear example of how hard it is for a rich person to become a part of God's Kingdom. Jesus used the largest animal, a camel, that the Jewish people knew, and the smallest opening, the eye of a needle, that humans could see. He wanted to show the contrast between the two things to show how impossible it is for rich people to get into God's Kingdom on their own goodness and strength.

Stop here and look at the picture of the camel and the needle as a group. If you have access to a camel and a needle in your culture, look at them side by side.

Stop and discuss: What is the largest animal that you know? What is the smallest hole in an object you know? Pause this audio here.

The disciples are amazed and ask Jesus, "Who then can be saved?" meaning, "Who can be a part of God's Kingdom?" Jesus tells them that God can do things that seem to be impossible. This statement tells of God's ability to change people's hearts.

Peter is proud that he and the other disciples have already given up everything to follow Jesus. Jesus agrees. He assures them by starting with "Truly I say to you," or "It is true that..." Jesus assures the disciples that when anyone gives up possessions or relationships for the kingdom of God, they will be repaid many times over in this life and in the life to come. Jesus is not saying that those who follow Jesus should have total disregard for their home, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, or fields. Jesus is saying that these relationships cannot take priority in their hearts, above God.

However, Jesus reminds his disciples that along with rewards there is also persecution. People who follow Jesus have to accept the consequences of their commitment.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What thing in your life would be the hardest thing to give up for the sake of the kingdom of God? Is there anything in your heart that is more important than Jesus? Pause this audio here.

Jesus concludes this teaching with a summary of the lesson. He says that many who seem to be most important will be least important, and those who seem to be least will be most important.

Stop here and discuss the kind of language that your culture's teachers use when they finish a teaching.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:13–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: people brought children between 0 to 12 years old to Jesus to touch and bless them. The disciples rebuke the people, but then Jesus rebukes the disciples for stopping the children. Jesus tells the disciples to let the children come to Jesus. Jesus tells them that God's Kingdom is for those who are like children. And then Jesus puts his hand on their heads and blesses each child one by one.

In the second scene: Jesus starts to travel to Jerusalem. A man ran up to Jesus and knelt down. He shows Jesus respect by calling him "Good Teacher," and asks Jesus how he can receive eternal life with God forever. Jesus is curious about why the man calls him good because only God is good. Jesus reminds the man of the commandments about being in good relationship with others. The man says that he has been obeying these commands since he was young. Jesus tells the man that there is only one thing he hasn't done, to sell everything he has and give the money to the poor. The man's face fell, showing his sadness, because he was rich, and the man walked away sad.

In the third scene: In the third scene Jesus teaches his disciples. He shares the surprising fact that it is difficult for a rich person to enter God's Kingdom. It is so difficult that it is like a camel going through the eye of a needle. The disciples are so surprised that they ask, "Who in the world can be saved?" Jesus states the teaching clearly. He says, "It is impossible. Only God can save." Peter seems to be proud that, unlike the man who came to Jesus, the disciples have given up everything. Jesus agrees and assures them strongly that they will receive a reward that is more than everything they gave up. This section concludes by Jesus stating that those people we think are the greatest will be least important, and those we think are least important will be the greatest.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- children between toddlers and 12 years old
- people bringing children (probably parents or older siblings)
- man who comes up to Jesus and wants eternal life

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that the action starts with the phrase "one day." We do not know how soon after the previous passage this happened. It is important to know that Jesus really did touch each child to show them he blessed them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you start a story like this when you do not know exactly when it happened? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus makes an important statement about how someone can enter the kingdom of God if they are like little children. We know that Jesus makes an important statement because he says, "I tell you the truth."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you introduce important statements in teachings? Pause this audio here.

After this, it is important to remember that Jesus and his disciples began to travel to Jerusalem. A man ran up to Jesus—he was running because he really wanted to talk with Jesus. He respected Jesus and showed him that by kneeling in front of him and calling him "Good Teacher," with the word "good" usually only used for God. Since this man has kept the commandments given to Moses, he is a Jew. Notice how at first Jesus did not address the first commandments about loving God and having no other gods or idols before God.

Jesus then talks about the man's love for riches and wealth as an issue that will keep the man from inheriting or gaining eternal life. This makes the man sad because he was very wealthy, and the man walks away sad. Jesus sees the man's sadness and says that it is very hard for a rich person to get into the kingdom of God. It would be easier for a very large animal to go through the hole in a sewing needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Stop and make a list of things your culture would think is impossible, as a group. Make a very small hole in a leaf or a piece of fabric. Try to squeeze yourself through this hole. Pause this audio here.

His disciples were surprised at Jesus' teaching because it was different from what they had been taught. Most Jews believed that God would reward a person with wealth and property if they did all of the right things in God's eyes. However, Jesus wants to teach the disciples that the heart is what is important to God. Jesus ends this teaching with an important summary statement that the first will be last and the last will be first.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:13–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- children between toddlers and 12 years old
- people bringing children (probably parents or older siblings)
- man who comes up to Jesus and wants eternal life

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the people bringing the children to Jesus. The disciples stop them and scold them.

Pause the drama. Ask the people, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like, "I'm ashamed I tried to come to Jesus," or "I'm embarrassed," or "I'm angry with the disciples for stopping me." Ask the disciples, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people playing the disciples may answer things like, "I'm angry because our master is too important to waste his time with them." Continue the drama.

Jesus is upset with his disciples and tells them to let the children come to Jesus, because God's Kingdom belongs to them.

Pause the drama. Ask the children and their parents, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like, "I'm curious. No one has ever treated us like they liked us like this," or "For the first time I feel valuable." Ask the disciples, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like, "I'm so confused," or "Now I'm embarrassed." Ask Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person may answer things like, "I am sad and disappointed that my disciples would treat people like this," or "I love these people so much." Continue the drama.

As Jesus and the disciples head on their way, a man comes running up to Jesus and kneeling in front of him, calling him "Good Teacher." He asks what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus asks the man why the man calls Jesus good, and reminds him of the commandments. The man answers, "I've done this since I was young."

Pause the drama. Ask the man, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person may answer things like, "I feel proud that I've done this" or "I'm surprised it is so easy." Continue the drama.

Jesus loves the man and tells him that he must do one more thing. The man must sell all his things and give the money to the poor. The man felt disappointed.

Pause the drama. Ask the man, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person may answer things like, "I am sad that what I did is not enough," or "I am ashamed because I know my heart is not right," or "I am sad because I love my money and things and have so much." Ask Jesus, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person may answer things like, "I feel so sad that this man will miss out on the best I have for him," or "I am hoping this man will make the right decision." Continue the drama.

The man leaves and Jesus turns to his disciples. Jesus says with emphasis, "It is hard for rich people to enter into God's Kingdom!" The disciples are surprised because they thought it was good to be rich. Jesus calls them children as a sign of affection, and Jesus gives them an example. It is harder for the rich to enter God's Kingdom than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. The disciples are again surprised, and they ask "Who can be saved and able to enter God's Kingdom?" Jesus tells them that only God can make this happen.

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like, "I don't understand. This has changed everything" or "I'm afraid. It seems impossible to enter into God's Kingdom." Continue the drama.

Peter says, "We've given up everything to follow you." Jesus agrees with him and assures the disciples that if they've given up homes and family and property for Jesus in order to tell the good news about Jesus, then they will be given even more. This includes persecution in this life, but life with God forever. Then Jesus finishes his teaching: "Those that seem important now will be least important then. Those who seem least important now will be greatest then."

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like, "I feel hope that even though I've lost a lot, I will receive something," or "I feel confused because there is also persecution," or "I don't understand how everything I've been taught is so different now."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:13-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

People wanted to bring children to Jesus so he could touch them. In Jewish culture, to ask a teacher to touch someone was to ask him to **bless** or show favor to someone. The **disciples** told the parents that they were wrong to bring their children to Jesus. Use the same term for bless and disciples that you have used throughout the book of Mark. For more information on bless and disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

But Jesus said, "The **kingdom of God** belongs to those who are like children." Use the same phrase here for kingdom of God that you have been using throughout Mark. For more information on the kingdom of God refer to the Master Glossary.

After Jesus blessed the children, he began to travel to **Jerusalem**. Jerusalem is where the Jewish temple is and where all Jews went to worship God in the temple. Use the same word for Jerusalem that you've used in previous passages. For more information on Jerusalem, refer to the Master Glossary. Jesus is traveling there because he knows that is where he will suffer and die.

A man came running up to Jesus and called him **Good Teacher**. This means a teacher who is good. Use the same word for teacher that you've used in previous passages. For more information on teacher, refer to the Master Glossary. The man asked what he should do to inherit, or receive, **eternal life**. Eternal life is life with God that

never ends, or living forever with God. Use the same word for eternal life that you've used in previous passages. For more information on eternal life, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus then seems to answer the man's question with a repetition of some of the ten commandments, or laws from God. Jesus mentions, "Do not commit **adultery**." To commit adultery is to have a sexual relationship with someone other than your husband or wife. Use the same word that you've used for adultery before. Refer to the Master Glossary for a definition of adultery. Jesus also mentions do not murder, or intentionally take someone's life; do not steal; do not bear false witness, or lie about someone; and honor, or show respect to and help, your father and mother. The man has kept the law since he was younger. Jesus heard this and said that there was one thing the man still lacked, or did not possess. Jesus tells the man to sell all of the man's possessions and give the money to the poor. Then the man will have **treasures in heaven**. Treasures in heaven mean life that lasts forever with God. Then the man is to come follow Jesus.

The man's **face fell**, which means that the man's face went from showing happiness to sadness and disappointment.

Jesus gave his disciples an example of how hard it is for someone to enter into God's Kingdom. He said it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. A camel is the largest animal in Israel. It can weigh 600 kilograms and is about 2 meters tall at the shoulder. A camel carries people and materials.

Show the photo of a camel. Pause this audio here.

An **eye of a needle** is a small hole in a sewing needle that the thread passes through.

Show the photo of an eye of a needle. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that everyone who has given up houses or family for the sake of the **good news**, or **gospel**, will receive a **hundredfold** back. The gospel is the good news that Jesus came to earth to dwell with humanity. He brought the kingdom of God to earth. Jesus died for our sins, and was raised from the dead. This is also called the good news. Use the same word for gospel or good news that you've used in previous passages. For more information on gospel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Hundredfold does not mean exactly one hundred times the amount someone lost, but that someone will receive a great reward from God.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 10:13–31**Audio Content**

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Mark 10:32–45*Hear and Heart**Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Mark 10:32–45 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:32–45 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

*Setting the Stage**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:32–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus, his disciples, and others were continuing their journey to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is where the Jews worshiped God in the temple. It is also on a hill. When people traveled to Jerusalem they often said that they were going "up" to Jerusalem. Jesus walked ahead of his disciples like most religious teachers walked ahead of their students. His disciples were amazed, or surprised, at his actions and teachings they saw. The other people who also followed were afraid. We do not know exactly why they were surprised and afraid. However, they may have realized that Jesus might face danger from the religious leaders in Jerusalem.

Like before, Jesus takes his disciples aside to tell them about what will happen to him. This time he gives them more details. Jesus gets their attention by saying "listen," or "pay attention." He says that someone will betray him to the Jewish religious leaders. Those Jewish religious leaders will then give him to the Roman (or Gentile, non-Jewish) government. The Roman government authorities will do shameful and hateful things to him. They will mock him, or say bad things to him. They will spit on him to show that they think he is worthless. They will flog him with a leather whip that has sharp pieces of lead in it. Then they will sentence him to die, or be executed, by the government.

Stop here and look at the picture of a leather whip with lead tied to it, as a group. Pause this audio here.

The disciples do what they did last time Jesus told them about how he would suffer. James and John ask if they could be honored as the greatest disciples when Jesus becomes king of the kingdom. Maybe this was because Jesus also talked about coming alive after being dead. His disciples continued to misunderstand—they continue to think that he will bring a new and perfect kingdom right away. Kings in that culture sat on a throne, or a special chair made just for kings. John and James ask to sit on Jesus' right and left sides. In the Jewish culture, sitting on the right side of a king's special chair was the most important place, and the left side was the next most important place.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture show someone is important? Do they have special places to sit, or special things to do or to wear? Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks them a question, and he expects James and John to answer "no." He asks if they can "drink the cup" that he drinks. A "cup" was considered either a symbol of joy or a symbol of God's anger and suffering. Some translations include the phrase "cup...of suffering" to make it clear that here Jesus is talking about suffering. Jesus then talks about being baptized with the baptism of suffering—which was another way to explain suffering, like the cup. Baptism in those days was when someone was submerged in or put under water to show that they were fully following a certain way. Jesus uses the symbolism of baptism to show that he is fully giving in to the suffering God has called him to, or he is overwhelmed by the suffering. He is not going to turn back from the path of suffering God called him to.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture talk about suffering? Will you be able to use these descriptions of a "cup of suffering" or "baptism of suffering," or will you need to use a more general description about suffering? Pause this audio here.

The other disciples become angry because they thought John and James were asking an unfair or wrong question. Jesus then reminds his disciples that his followers will have to suffer because they follow him. He reminds them that only God can decide who sits in places of honor in his kingdom. He describes how authority looks different in God's Kingdom than it does in the world. Jesus says that world rulers lord over their people—or rule in a harsh way. Then he says that their officials show great authority over their people. Jesus is saying the same thing, but in two different ways. Then Jesus says that leaders are different in God's Kingdom. He says that whoever wants to be great should be like a servant. Whoever wants to be first—or most important—should be like a slave. Again, Jesus is saying the same thing, but in two different ways. Leaders in God's Kingdom serve and love others. Jesus again calls himself the Son of Man. The Son of Man in this case means that Jesus is the one who is coming to save God's people. Jesus himself is serving and loving people by paying the price for the sins of the people. This means Jesus will die so people themselves do not have to die as punishment for their sins. Only Jesus can do that job as the Son of Man.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do your leaders lead people? How do leaders serve and love people? What kinds of things does a "good leader" in your culture do?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:32–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: In the first scene, Jesus is walking ahead of his disciples and others on the way to Jerusalem. Jesus takes aside his twelve disciples and warns them about what will happen to him in Jerusalem. He tells them in detail about how someone will give him to the religious leaders, and then the Roman government will torture him and kill him. But he will rise from the dead.

In the second scene: In the second scene, Jesus' two disciples James and John very respectfully ask Jesus if they can have the two best places of honor next to him when he sits on his throne as king. Jesus tells them that they do not understand—he will suffer. They assure Jesus that they can join in his suffering. Jesus tells them that they will also suffer, but that only God decides who will have places of honor next to him.

In the third scene: In the third scene, Jesus' disciples are angry at James and John. Jesus then teaches his disciples about how leaders in his kingdom will lead differently than world leaders. He reminds them that even he came to serve and to love others, not to be a harsh ruler.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples, including James and John
- the others who follow Jesus
- the leading priests and teachers of religious law
- the Gentiles, in this case the Romans

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Remember that this scene takes place on the road to Jerusalem. The disciples are behind Jesus, and behind them are others who are following the group. At one point, Jesus takes just the twelve disciples aside to talk to them.

In the first scene it is important to remember that Jesus' disciples are amazed and surprised, and that the other people are afraid. We do not know why. It is important to remember that Jesus takes aside his disciples, away from the rest of the crowd, to talk with them in detail about his suffering. He gets their attention by telling them to listen.

In the second scene it is important to remember that James and John asked Jesus their question privately. They were respectful when they spoke to Jesus. Jesus very clearly told them they did not understand the suffering he was about to have. The disciples show that they do not understand by saying that they are able to suffer like him. There is back and forth dialogue between Jesus, John, and James.

In the third scene it is important to remember that the other disciples are angry with John and James. Jesus calls them all together again. Jesus explains that his kingdom will be different than the world's kingdoms. Jesus says twice, in two different ways, that rulers in this world rule harshly. Then he says twice, in two different ways, that in his kingdom the greatest people will be the people who serve and love others. Then Jesus ends by calling himself the Son of Man again. He explains that he also came to serve and love others by paying the price for their sins.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:32–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples, including James and John
- others who follow Jesus
- leading priests and teachers of religious law
- the Gentiles, in this case the Romans

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the disciples and other people following Jesus on the way to Jerusalem.

Pause the drama. Ask the people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "I'm afraid of what will happen to Jesus in Jerusalem" or "I'm amazed and proud that I get to follow Jesus." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" Maybe Jesus answers, "I'm trying to get ready for the suffering I know will happen to me." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus taking the twelve disciples aside and telling them in detail what will happen to him in Jerusalem.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "I'm confused" or "I think Jesus is talking about becoming a king and conquering the government." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "I wish my disciples understood me more" or "I feel alone in this world." Continue the drama.

Act out James and John coming to Jesus to ask him if they can sit in places of honor next to him when he is king. Act out Jesus asking them if they can suffer like he will, and them answering him that they can. Jesus says that they will suffer, but he has no right to choose the people who will sit in places of honor.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing James and John, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "I'm disappointed," or "I'm sad that Jesus doesn't trust me," or "I feel like I could do anything for Jesus." Continue the drama.

The other disciples get very angry. Jesus calls the Twelve together and speaks to them. He explains how the rulers of the world rule differently than the rulers in his kingdom. He describes the world's rulers ruling harshly, and his rulers ruling as a servant. Jesus then talks about how, as the Son of Man, he will die to pay the price to free people from the punishment for their sins.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like, "I'm so angry at James and John," or "I wanted to be the greatest in Jesus' kingdom!" or "I don't understand how to be a leader who is also like a slave." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "I wish my disciples understood me better" or "I know this is hard for them to understand."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:32–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his **disciples** began going to **Jerusalem**. Jerusalem is the name of the religious capital of the Jewish people. The official place where Jews went to sacrifice to God, the temple, was located in Jerusalem. This was the holiest place for Jewish people, and the place where the leaders of Jewish religious law met. Use the same word for "Jerusalem" that you've used in previous passages. Use the same word for "disciples" that you have used throughout the book of Mark. For more information on disciples and Jerusalem, refer to the Master Glossary.

Mark likes to talk about all the times Jesus called himself the **Son of Man** in order to talk about his destiny to suffer and die, like a human. But at the same time, the Son of Man is more than human, and will be raised from the dead. The Son of Man comes in power and authority to rule over all the nations. God gives the Son of Man authority. The title Son of Man shows us that Jesus will both suffer and die, and also be raised back to life. Jesus speaks of himself in the third person when he gives himself this title. Be sure that it is clear by the way you translate this that Jesus is speaking about himself. Use the same phrase that you've used for Son of Man in previous passages. For more information about Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that the **leading or chief priests and teachers of the law** will give Jesus to the Gentiles to be killed. Priests in the Jewish religion were the people who connected the people with God by making sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, and taking care of God's temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. Translate priests and teachers of the law in the same way that you have translated the phrase throughout the book of Mark. For more information about priests and teachers of the law, refer to the Master Glossary.

Gentiles is a general term for any people who are not Jews. In this case Jesus is talking about the Romans specifically. The Romans conquered the Jewish homeland and ruled over them. Be sure to use a word that would show that these are non-Jews who are the ruling people of the land.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Gentiles** in this passage. Look up Gentiles in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee came to ask Jesus a question. James and John were two of Jesus' disciples. Their father was Zebedee.

James and John called Jesus **Teacher**. This is a respectful form of address used by Jesus' followers to show that he was a teacher of the things of God and had disciples or students who followed him and listened to his teachings. Do not use a term that can only refer to a schoolteacher. Use the same word for Teacher that you've used in previous passages. For more information on Teacher, refer to the Master Glossary.

James and John asked if they could sit next to Jesus when he rules in his **glory**. In some contexts, glory can refer to how God shows his power and splendor—his presence. In this case, it refers to Jesus' power as king in the new Kingdom he will bring. In this case, you may simply say "when you rule in your power and splendor," or "when people honor you." Use the same word that you've used for glory before. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus asks them if they can **drink from the cup** he will drink from, or be baptized with the baptism he will have. When Jesus talks about drinking from his cup, he is talking about suffering. When Jesus is talking about being "baptized" in suffering, he is not talking about being put in water. He is giving a description of being

overwhelmed or covered by suffering, like someone is covered in water when they are baptized. You could talk about "overwhelming suffering" in your translation.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: How do people in your culture talk about suffering? Do you have any special phrases for describing suffering? Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe the suffering of Jesus. Pause this audio here.

Later Jesus tells all the disciples that leadership in God's Kingdom is different than the world's leadership. He talks about the world's **rulers** and **officials** who lord it over them. **Rulers** and **officials** are the same group of people. Rulers "lord it over them," which means to exert or show their authority over them. **Authority** is the right given to someone to act.

You can give an example from the team's daily life to show what authority means. It may be useful to use an example from local government or village life. A government worker is just a person. He or she has no power, acting on his own, to enforce anything. Even if he tries to enforce laws, people may or may not follow them. However, when the government gives him authority, he may then act to enforce laws.

Pause this audio here and discuss how government workers use authority in your culture. Pay attention to what word you use for authority.

Jesus said that the people in God's Kingdom who want to be great must be a servant. A **servant** was originally someone who helps their master and executes their commands. Jesus then said that they must be like a slave. A **slave** is someone who is completely controlled by another. Use the same words for servant and slave as you have previously. For more information on servant and slave, refer to the Master Glossary

Jesus said he gave himself as a ransom. A **ransom** is when people buy with money the freedom of a slave or a prisoner of war. They usually pay a lot of money to free someone. In the Bible when people are a ransom, that means that they release or redeem a person and free them from some form of slavery.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **ransom**. For more information on ransom, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 10:32–45**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (16391499 KB)

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Mark 10:46–52*Hear and Heart**Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Mark 10:46–52 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:46–52 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

*Setting the Stage**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:46–52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples are traveling from the north towards the capital city of Jerusalem.

Stop here and look at the map of the route Jesus would have taken towards Jerusalem and through Jericho, as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the way, Jesus told his disciples that he would be betrayed and unjustly killed in Jerusalem. It seems that his disciples didn't really believe or understand the importance of what was about to happen. They are distracted. We see this because immediately after Jesus talks about his death, they ask who would be most important in God's Kingdom. The disciples were truly "spiritually" blind people—they didn't care about the same things that Jesus cared about. Right after this, this story of Bartimaeus happens.

The prophet Isaiah spoke about the coming Promised Savior, or the Messiah, as Jewish people called him. Isaiah said, "And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf." When the prophet Isaiah talks about people being blind and deaf, he's talking about physical problems, but also about spiritual problems. He is saying that some people do not see the Truth of God or hear the Truth of God. The Promised Savior will heal all of that—both physical blindness and deafness and spiritual blindness and deafness.

King David was an important king to the Jewish people. People knew that the Promised Savior would be from the ancestry of King David. Referring to someone as a "son of David," or "descendant of David" showed respect for that person and an acknowledgment that the person had similar powers to the Promised Savior who was to come.

Jesus shows that he is this Promised Savior in many ways. He fulfills the promise to heal people's eyes and ears both physically and spiritually. This story is one of those times.

Jesus and his disciples had to travel through Jericho in order to get to Jerusalem. As they were leaving the city, a blind man, named Bartimaeus, or the son of Timaeus, was sitting on the side of the road, begging as people like him usually did. Because Jericho was a trading city, it was a strategic place for beggars to sit outside of the city gate and ask people for money.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are blind, or deaf, or other people with disabilities seen and treated in your culture? How is this different from how blind people are treated in the Bible? Pause this audio here.

Bartimaeus was physically blind, but it seemed that he was not spiritually blind. Bartimaeus seemed to understand the importance of who Jesus was. We know this from several clues in the story. See if you notice them. Firstly, we know the blind man's name, which is unusual in stories of healing. We know that he called Jesus a special title, "Son of David" and the Hebrew word for "master" (Rabboni) to show that he respected Jesus and believed that Jesus could heal him. Bartimaeus continued to call out to Jesus and try to get to him even when people discouraged him.

It is possible that Jesus did not hear the first time Bartimaeus called out to Jesus. However, Jesus responds to Bartimaeus as Bartimaeus calls out more and more "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus must have been a little distance off, as Jesus tells others to call Bartimaeus to come to Jesus. When the people called Bartimaeus, they told him to take heart, or be happy because Jesus was calling him. Bartimaeus threw off his cloak, leapt up and went to Jesus. Jesus asks Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus often has conversations like this with people he is healing. Jesus wants the genuine relationship with a person, and he wants to know that they understand that it is only Jesus who can heal them. Bartimaeus shows Jesus that he believes in him. Bartimaeus calls Jesus "Rabboni" and tells Jesus that he wants to see. Jesus tells Bartimaeus that it is his faith that has healed him. Bartimaeus showed faith in Jesus by calling him "Son of David," which was a title for the coming Messiah, as well as asking Jesus for healing.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:46–52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is on his way out of Jericho. Bartimaeus is crying out for Jesus but the crowd is silencing him.

In the second scene: Jesus calls for the man to be brought to him. Bartimaeus throws his garment aside and quickly goes to Jesus. Jesus asks what Bartimaeus wants, and Bartimaeus responds that he wants to see again.

In the third scene: Jesus heals Bartimaeus and tells him to go on his way. But Bartimaeus follows Jesus.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Bartimaeus
- A crowd of people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: The first scene occurs in Jericho.

Stop and look at the map of Jesus' route from Galilee to Jerusalem via Jericho as a group. Pause this audio here.

They would have traveled down the Jordan river, stayed in Jericho, and then traveled on to Jerusalem. This route was the primary route for Jewish people living in the area of the Galilee to travel to Jerusalem. The route would have been crowded and well-traveled, especially with the Jewish Passover festival upcoming. This would have been an ideal time and an ideal place for a beggar like Bartimaeus to beg.

Jesus meets Bartimaeus as he leaves Jericho to travel to Jerusalem with his disciples. We know from other passages that Jesus spent the night in Jericho. Since the road was treacherous, Jesus would have wanted to set out early in the morning. At this time, there would have been crowds of people also traveling to Jerusalem. There would have likely been crowds of beggars on the route.

Jesus speaks to the crowds. He is likely speaking to his disciples, though they are not identified in the story. Bartimaeus would have been sitting with his outer garment, his cloak, in front of him, probably across his legs, to collect alms. This would have been particularly important for him since he was blind, as it would allow him to feel for the coins. When Jesus tells Bartimaeus to come, he throws the garment off and comes immediately.

When Jesus asks Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus' disciples and a few bystanders are likely gathered around Jesus and Bartimaeus while other travelers continue on their way. Bartimaeus responds that he wants to see. Jesus speaks and Bartimaeus is healed, and then Bartimaeus chooses to follow Jesus along the route.

In the original language, this story is full of quick action, like when it says, "Instantly the man could see." Bartimaeus understands a bit of who Jesus is and asks for help, Jesus calls him, and he comes. Bartimaeus asks for healing, and he receives it. Bartimaeus then follows Jesus. These events happen in quick succession, one after the other.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you speak about things happening quickly in your culture? How will you show the quick action in this story? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:46–52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Bartimaeus
- A crowd of people

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

As Jesus is traveling from Jericho to Jerusalem, a beggar named Bartimaeus calls out to him. The crowd rebukes Bartimaeus.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking towards Bartimaeus?" The person may answer things like, "He is a beggar and needs to be quiet," or "annoyed that Bartimaeus is taking attention away from us," or "We have seen him over and over," or "He is unworthy of speaking to Jesus," or "We are annoyed by Bartimaeus' insistence, and his use of Messianic titles for Jesus." Ask the actor playing Bartimaeus, "What are you feeling or thinking? What effect does the crowd have on you?" The person may answer things like, "I am desperate" or "I am ignoring the crowd, only focused on getting Jesus' attention." Continue the drama.

Bartimaeus continues to yell for Jesus. Jesus stops and tells the people to call Bartimaeus. The people encourage Bartimaeus to be happy because Jesus is calling him. Bartimaeus throws off his cloak. The cloak should have been in front of him, perhaps over his legs as he sits, as it is Bartimaeus' way of collecting money.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Bartimaeus, "What are you feeling or thinking when you hear that Jesus is calling you? How do you react?" The person may answer things like, "I feel excitement, joy, and hope" or "I immediately got up, without hesitation, and quickly got every obstacle out of my way to get to Jesus." Then ask the actor playing Bartimaeus, "How were you able to walk towards Jesus if you were blind?" The person may answer things like, "I knew the road," or "I walked towards his voice," or "Someone led me in the right direction." Continue the drama.

Jesus asks Bartimaeus what Jesus can do for him. Bartimaeus asks for his physical sight to be restored. Jesus heals Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus begins to follow Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Bartimaeus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "I can see! I cannot believe it!" or "I'm so excited to be able to see everything! How could I not follow Jesus?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 10:46–52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus is leaving Jericho on the way to Jerusalem. His **disciples** as well as a large crowd are following Jesus. As they leave, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus hears that Jesus of **Nazareth** is walking through. Bartimaeus calls

out to Jesus saying "Jesus, **Son of David**, have mercy on me!" Disciples are the twelve closest followers of Jesus. Nazareth is a town in the region of Galilee that Jesus came from. It was considered an unimportant town. Son of David was a title used for the Promised Savior. Use the same words for disciples and Nazareth that you have used in previous passages. For more information on disciples and Nazareth, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Son of David**. Look up Son of David in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Mercy means to show compassion to those suffering. In the Psalms, the writer usually asks God for mercy. Bartimaeus asks Jesus for something that he would normally ask God for. He must think that Jesus has that power from God to give him mercy. Use the same word for mercy that you've used in previous passages. For more information on mercy, refer to the Master Glossary.

The crowd rebuked Bartimaeus, or told him to be quiet. Bartimaeus kept shouting louder. Jesus tells the crowd to tell Bartimaeus to come to Jesus. The crowd tells Bartimaeus to "take heart." **Take heart** is a way to encourage someone to feel happier.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Find the appropriate, natural way to say this in your language. Pause this audio here.

Bartimaeus would have been sitting with his outer garment, his **cloak** or **coat**, in front of him, probably across his legs, to collect alms. This would have been particularly important for him since he was blind, as it would allow him to feel for the coins. When Jesus tells Bartimaeus to come, he throws the garment away and comes immediately. The cloak was a long robe that went over their clothing. Use the same word you've used for cloak in previous passages.

Stop here and show the picture of the cloak. Cloak is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus asks Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus' disciples and a few bystanders are likely gathered around Jesus and Bartimaeus while other travelers continue on their way. Bartimaeus calls Jesus **Rabbi** or **Rabboni** and responds that he wants to see. Rabboni is the highest title for a respected teacher. Bartimaeus is treating Jesus like Jesus is his own teacher, and he is his follower. Use the same word for Rabbi or Rabboni that you've used in previous passages. For more information on Rabbi, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells Bartimaeus to go on his way because Bartimaeus' **faith** has **healed** him. However Bartimaeus chooses to follow Jesus along the route. Jesus knows that the man really believes that Jesus can heal him, and that Jesus is the Messiah. "Your **belief** has healed you" means that the man was healed because he performed the action of believing. You may state this in a more active form if necessary (i.e. "You are healed because you believed").

Teaching tool: Ask a volunteer ahead of time to help you with this. Place a chair in the center of the room and ask the volunteer, "Do you believe that this chair exists? Do you believe that this is a chair? Do you believe this chair is strong enough to hold you?" The volunteer should say "yes" to all these questions. Then ask, "I know you are tired, so here's this chair for you to sit in." The volunteer should refuse to sit in the chair. Go over this several times, asking why the volunteer won't sit in the chair even though he/she knows it is there and says that they believe it is strong enough to hold them. Explain to the group that this is an example of what faith is about—more than just believing in your mind, but acting on that belief. After you do the activity, discuss as a group how you will say faith or belief. Faith is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word you have used in previous passages. Pause this audio here.

The word used for "healed" in Jesus' statement that "your belief has healed you" can have the double meaning of both physical healing and spiritual salvation. Mark and Luke probably intended both meanings here, as implied by the fact that the man began following Jesus.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 10:46–52

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13641638 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 11:1–11

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 11:1–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:1–11 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this story Jesus arrives just outside of Jerusalem for his last time before he is killed. This section of Mark, until Jesus' death, may have been Jesus' final week, or this section of Mark may have been a description of Jesus' last 6 months before his death. We are not sure exactly how much time the last section of Mark covers. In either case, this story begins to describe Jesus' last actions in Jerusalem, the capital city of the Jews.

Jesus and his disciples had probably walked 34 kilometers in one day from Jericho to Jerusalem. They arrived at Bethany and Bethphage. Bethany and Bethphage were two towns near Jerusalem. Bethany is about 3 kilometers from Jerusalem. Bethphage is right next to Jerusalem, about 1 1/2 kilometers away. Both Bethany and Bethphage are located on the high hill just across the valley next to Jerusalem. This hill is called the Mount of Olives.

Stop here and look at a photo from the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem.

Stop and look at a map of Jerusalem with Bethany and Bethphage on the outskirts of the city, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Normally, pilgrims going to Jerusalem to worship God walked into the city. However, the prophet Zechariah had said that the Messiah, or Savior, would ride into the city on a young donkey. The crowds and the disciples probably did not know or believe at this point that Jesus was the Messiah. It was not until later that the disciples remembered Zechariah's prophecy. In Jewish religious tradition, normal working animals could not be used for special purposes, like serving God. That is probably why Jesus sent two disciples into the nearby village to get a young donkey that had never been ridden. We do not know which village Jesus sent his disciples to, but it may have been Bethphage.

Stop here and look at a photo of a young donkey as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How do important leaders travel in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Jesus had possibly already arranged with the donkey's owner that he would borrow it, but he wanted to prepare the disciples if someone asked why they were taking the donkey. Jesus tells his two disciples to go into the village, untie the donkey and bring it, and if anyone says "What are you doing?" you say that the Lord—the master—needs it.

So his disciples did exactly that. They went into the village, untied the donkey. People asked what they were doing. They wanted to know why they were untying the donkey. The disciples told them that the Lord, or Jesus, needs the donkey.

The disciples put their outer coats on the donkey before Jesus got on it to show respect and give comfort to Jesus.

As Jesus was riding into Jerusalem, people spread their outer coats or robes and leafy branches on the road. The leafy branches were probably branches from olive trees or palm trees. This is what people did in that culture to welcome a prophet, king, or special pilgrim into the city to show him respect and honor. People would often welcome pilgrims to Jerusalem with this kind of joy.

Stop here and look at a picture of branches from olive trees and palm trees as a group. This should show the leafy portions, not the large branch part. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of outer cloaks that the disciples put on the donkey and the people put on the road. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people greet important leaders when they arrive in a village or town? Pause this audio here.

When people welcomed pilgrims to Jerusalem for religious feast days, they often sang songs from their Scriptures for them. These songs were usually a hopeful prayer that God would bring their savior to them. God had promised King David that one of David's descendants would rule over Israel forever. And one day, one of these rulers from David's family would save the Jews from their oppression and restore their kingdom to them. This person would be their Savior, or Messiah. Israel was hoping and praying for the time when that would happen, and many of their prayers were asking God for that. However, many of the people probably did not recognize at this time that Jesus was the Savior they were praying for—they just knew he was an important person. They were singing joyful songs for an important pilgrim as they usually did.

It was probably almost the time of sunset. Jesus went to the temple area—the outer courtyard areas where the non-priests were allowed—to see what was happening there. Then he left until the next day. He and his disciples went to Bethany to stay there, as they did each night they were visiting Jerusalem.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus arrives on the outskirts of Jerusalem at the Mount of Olives, near the villages of Bethany and Bethphage. He sent two disciples into a nearby village to get a young donkey for him. He gives them instructions.

In the second scene: The two disciples go into the village. They untie the young donkey. They answer the questions of the people who ask, "What are you doing?"

In the third scene: The disciples take the donkey to Jesus, spread their outer coats on it, and he rides into Jerusalem. The people spread their coats and leafy branches in front of him. They cry out "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our Father David!"

In the fourth scene: Jesus and his disciples enter the city, and the people go away. He goes to the temple area, and then leaves to go back to Bethany to spend the night.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 12 disciples, including the two who go to get the donkey
- A young donkey who has never been ridden
- The people standing around the donkey
- The people on the road on the way to Jerusalem. Some are walking behind the donkey and some are walking in front of the donkey.

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that the Mount of Olives is a high hill, but it is not a mountain. It is higher than the hills and cities around it.

Stop here look at a photo of the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

The owner of the donkey had tied the donkey next to a door of a building that was next to a street in the town. It was probably tied to a post sticking up out of the ground. One end of a rope was tied around the neck of the donkey, and the other end was tied around a post. Owners did this so the donkeys would not walk away when no one was using them.

The disciples brought back the donkey, and they put their outer robes on the animal. They did not throw them on, but placed them there so that the donkey's back would be a comfortable place for Jesus to ride.

As Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem, there were many people on the road. This was a time right before a major religious festival, so many people were coming into Jerusalem. People recognized Jesus as an important pilgrim. People put their outer robes on the ground in front of the donkey for it to step on. They also cut branches off trees in the fields and put those on the ground. These branches of olive or palm trees were the soft leaf part of the branch.

People walked in front of the donkey and behind the donkey. They were singing joyful songs of praise and welcome. They said, "Hosanna, or praise to God! Blessed is the one who represents God. Blessed is the Kingdom that will come one day—ruled by David's descendant! Praise to God!"

When Jesus arrived in the city, the people left. Jesus and his disciples walked to the temple area, looked around, and left. It was late—close to sunset—so it was time to go home. They walked back out of the city the 3 kilometers to Bethany to spend the night.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 12 disciples, including the two who go to get the donkey
- A young donkey who has never been ridden
- The people standing around the donkey
- The people on the road on the way to Jerusalem. Some are walking behind the donkey and some are walking in front.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples arrive at the Mount of Olives near Bethphage. They have walked a long way that day—34 kilometers. Jesus sends two disciples into the next village with the instructions to find a young donkey that has never been ridden. He tells them to untie it and bring it to him.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm tired but I have more to do today" or "I'm sad that my work in Jerusalem is beginning, and soon I will die." Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Confusion that Jesus needs a donkey—no one ever rides into Jerusalem!" or "Fear that someone will think we're stealing the donkey." Continue the drama.

The disciples go to the village and see the donkey tied up just as Jesus said it would be. As they untie it, people ask them why they are doing it. They answer, "The Lord needs it," and the people allow them to take the donkey. They bring the donkey back and all the disciples take off their outer robes and place them on top of the donkey to make a soft seat for Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm so glad my disciples are obeying me," or "I wish the people around me realized more about who I am," or "I love these people so much." Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am so surprised we really found the donkey and that the people let us take it" or "I want Jesus to be as comfortable as possible, even if it means I have to take off my outer robe." Continue the drama.

Jesus rides the donkey into Jerusalem. The people take palm or olive branches off the trees and lay them on the ground. They take off their outer robes and lay them on the ground. They shout joyfully, "Hosanna, praise, to the representative of God! Blessed is the kingdom coming someday from the descendants of King David! Praise to God!"

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This man must be important," or "I love festivals! Let's praise this man—maybe he will help us!" or "Hopeful." Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm so proud to be with such an important man!" or "I wonder what my role will be if Jesus becomes king." Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I wish these people understood what kind of man I am," or "I'm sad that these people don't understand." Continue the drama.

Jesus enters Jerusalem and the crowd goes away. Jesus and the twelve disciples go to the temple area and look around. Then they walk back outside the city to Bethany, where they spend the night.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Confused that we just went to see the temple," or "So tired after a long day," or "Excited about the festival coming up."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his **disciples** arrived on the outskirts of Jerusalem. They were on the **Mount of Olives**, a high hill across a valley from Jerusalem. Many olive trees grew on this hill. Disciples are Jesus' closest followers. Use the same word for disciples that you have been using throughout the book of Mark. For more information on disciples refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a photo of an olive tree and a photo of the Mount of Olives, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks two of his disciples to go to the nearby village and find the young donkey or **colt** tied near a door in the village. This animal is a young donkey that has not been ridden. Donkeys are animals that carry heavy loads and are large enough to carry a person.

Stop here and look at a photo of a young donkey, as a group. Pause this audio here.

If someone asks the disciples why they are untying the donkey, Jesus told them to say, "The **Lord** needs it." Lord is probably used here to mean master—or someone who has authority over others. Many times this word Lord referred to God Himself. However, it may have meant that the owner himself needed the animal. We are not sure, but most translations take this to mean that Jesus, the master, needs the animal. When the Lord is finished with the animal, he will bring the animal back to the owner. Use the same word for Lord that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

The disciples put their **outer coat** on top of the donkey so Jesus has a comfortable place to sit. Then the people put their outer coats on the road for the donkey to step on, as a sign of respect for Jesus. These long outer coats were worn on top of their normal robes. They kept men warm at night because they were often made of animal skin or wool. They were draped over the shoulders of the men with holes for the arms. Use the same word for cloak as you have in previous passages. For more information on cloaks or outer coat, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of the outer coats that Jewish men wore, as a group. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus starts riding into Jerusalem, the people started shouting praises. **Hosanna** can mean "save us," "welcome," or "glory" to a person. In this case Hosanna probably means "welcome" with the idea of great joy and praise. When the people shout, "Hosanna in the highest," they are probably saying welcome to and praising God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Hosanna**. Will you simply say "Hosanna," or translate the meaning of "welcome or praise with joy"? Look up Hosanna in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

"**Blessed** is he who comes in the name of the **Lord**" means that the one who comes is blessed or has favor from God because he comes as a representative of God. In this part of the story, the word "Lord" means God himself. Use the same word for blessed and Lord, referring to God, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on bless and Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jewish people really wanted God to keep his promise to them. God promised that one day a savior would come to rule the people, conquer their enemies, and save them from oppression. The savior, or Messiah, would be a descendant of King David. **Our father David** in this story means "our ancestor David." The people of Israel, the Jews, really hoped for this new Kingdom to come soon. They prayed and sang songs about it often.

Jesus went to the **temple** area to look around. The temple is the special place where the Jews worshipped God and where God lived among his people.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **temple**. Look up temple in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a photo of the temple. Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus and **the Twelve** went back to Bethany where they spent the night. "The Twelve" refers to the twelve closest disciples who went with Jesus everywhere.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 11:1–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (14344189 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 11:12–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 11:12–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:12–26 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Mark likes to tell a story within a story to explain something. This story begins and ends with a fig tree on the side of the road. Mark probably uses the fig tree story as a lesson to describe Israel's spiritual life.

In the last story Jesus entered Jerusalem and left again to spend the night in Bethany. The next morning, Jesus and his disciples walked back into Jerusalem. On their way Jesus was hungry and saw a fig tree full of leaves on the side of the road. However, there was no fruit on the tree because it was not the season for fruit. This was probably the time of year right after the first baby figs came and dropped off. Only the leaves were left on the tree. The figs that people could eat came about one or two months later. Jesus said to the tree, "May no one eat your fruit again." Jesus would have known when figs were in season in Israel. Jesus is probably using this as a lesson. The fig tree is like Israel. The fig tree is not producing fruit. Israel is not following God and is not showing evidence that it is following God. Jesus and his disciples continue to walk into the city of Jerusalem.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Jesus used a lesson from nature to show something about the spiritual health of the Israelites. How does your culture teach spiritual truths? Do you ever use lessons from nature? Give examples of using lessons from nature to teach spiritual truths in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Show your translation team a picture of a fig tree and a fig. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus arrives in the temple, there is a market in the outer courtyard area. The outer courtyard of the temple was supposed to be used for non-Jewish people to pray. These non-Jewish people were not allowed inside the inner temple areas, but this courtyard had been provided for them to pray.

Stop here and look at a map of the temple and its courtyards as a group. Show them where the outer courtyard is. Pause this audio here.

Jesus was angry that their courtyard had been taken over with a market and money changers. Now it looked like a market place. Normally the markets to buy items and animals for the temple were in other parts of the city. Recently, people had been allowed to set up a market inside the temple courtyard itself. Sellers sold "pure" animals like doves, oil, salt, and wine that the visitors could use in their different sacrifices to God. Doves were used as sacrifices when people were too poor to afford other animals. Also, people were supposed to pay a temple tax every year with old Jewish coins. This was the time of year for people to pay these taxes, so they needed a place to exchange their money. People only had Roman coins, so the money changers changed out

their modern Roman coins for the coins for temple tax. Jewish people were carrying the things they bought in containers through this courtyard, but Jewish tradition forbade that also. This courtyard was supposed to be a place of prayer for non-Jewish worshippers of God. Jesus was angry that people were keeping the Gentiles, or non-Jewish people, from being able to worship. They were using God's temple in a wrong way and dishonoring and disrespecting God. God had said through the prophet Isaiah that his temple would be a place of prayer for "all nations," meaning that he wanted non-Jewish people to know him too. God had also said through the prophet Jeremiah that the people would make the temple into a place where unjust people, or thieves, could do business. Jesus was really angry at the religious leaders who allowed this to happen. He overturned the money changers' tables and forced the people selling items for the sacrifices and people buying things for the sacrifices to leave the temple. He would not allow anyone to carry the things they bought through the courtyard.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of activities are allowed in your places of worship? Pause this audio here.

Because of what Jesus did, the leading priests and teachers of religious law were angry with Jesus. They wanted to kill him, but the crowds of people really liked Jesus' teachings. So the religious leaders were afraid of Jesus because of the power he had over the public.

Jesus left the city that night to go back to Bethany. The next morning he came back and passed by the same fig tree as he had the previous day. The tree is withered from its roots, which means it is completely dead. This is probably a symbol that God is taking away Israel's leadership and status in the world. Israel was supposed to bring in the salvation of the world.

Jesus taught his disciples. He said to them that they have faith in God, or they trust and believe in him. When they have that kind of faith, everything is possible. Mark is probably talking more about God's mission on earth being accomplished than about amazing miracles. Mountains symbolized difficulties, and Jesus wanted his disciples to know that challenges to God's mission, like persecution, could be overcome. The Mount of Olives and the mountain of Jerusalem both symbolized Jewish tradition, and Jesus also wanted his disciples to know that sometimes tradition gets in the way of God's mission. It is important to believe that God can overcome anything. Then Jesus tells his disciples that when they are about to pray, they need to check that their hearts are prepared to talk to God. It is important to forgive people before asking God to do something for you. Some versions include the last sentence that says that if you do not forgive others, then neither will God forgive you of your sins. This is only included in some versions because early manuscripts do not have this verse in them.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How does this last thought help your people understand forgiveness? How do you feel about the idea that God will forgive us if we forgive others? Discuss whether or not you will include it in your translation.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The next morning, Jesus and his disciples leave Bethany and walk towards Jerusalem. They walk past a fig tree with no fruit. Jesus curses the tree.

In the second scene: Jesus and his disciples walk into the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus forces out the people buying and selling animals and items for sacrifices. Jesus says that the Scriptures say the temple should be a house of prayer for all nations.

In the third scene: The leading priests and teachers of religious law begin to plan how to kill Jesus. They are afraid of Jesus because the people are amazed at his teaching. Jesus and his disciples leave the city that evening.

In the fourth scene: Jesus and his disciples sleep in Bethany and go back to Jerusalem the next morning. The disciples see that the fig tree Jesus cursed has withered from the roots up and they tell Jesus. Jesus talks to his disciples about having faith.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- the disciples, with Peter named
- fig tree
- people in the temple buying and selling animals for sacrifices, including those selling doves
- money changers
- leading priests
- teachers of the religious law

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that this story happens the morning after the previous story. Jesus is walking with his disciples towards Jerusalem from Bethany. He is hungry. He walks over to a fig tree on the side of the road that is full of leaves. It is important to remember that the fig tree does not have any figs on it. It is important to remember that Jesus' disciples heard him say, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again."

It is important to remember that Jesus and his disciples go directly to the temple courtyard. When they walk in they see a market place set up in the courtyard. There are people buying and selling animals, oil, salt, and wine. There are money changers at tables changing people's coins into the proper coins for the temple tax. Jesus goes up to the tables and turns them over. He forces the people buying items and selling items to leave the temple courtyard. He stops the people who are carrying their containers of things across the courtyard to go to another part of the temple. Then Jesus teaches the people in the temple courtyard. He says, "Is it not written that my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?" When Jesus asks this question, he expects a positive answer. He is saying, "It is written," or "It is in the holy Scriptures." This means that a prophet of the Jewish people wrote this teaching and that Jewish people should know and follow it. We do not know if Jesus taught the people while he was forcing them to leave, or if he said his teaching after the people who were buying and selling had left.

Stop here and look again at the map of the temple courts as a group. Note where the outer courtyard is and how big it is. Pause this audio here.

The religious leaders hear about what Jesus did in the temple. Then they begin to talk about how they might have Jesus executed. But they are afraid of Jesus. It is important to remember that they are afraid of Jesus because the public (most of the people in the area) really like the teaching of Jesus.

Jesus teaches throughout the day, and then he and his disciples leave close to sunset to go back out of the city and to Bethany for the night.

One night passes. The next morning Jesus and his disciples go back into Jerusalem the same way they went the day before. Jesus' disciples notice the fig tree. It is withered from the roots up. Peter remembers what happened the morning before. Jesus talks to his disciples about having faith. He catches their attention with the phrase "I tell you the truth..." and talks about what would happen if someone tells the mountain to get up and be thrown into the sea. Jesus is either talking about the Mount of Olives, where he is with his disciples, or the mountain where Jerusalem and the temple are, across the valley. Jesus may be talking about the Dead Sea, which they can see from the Mount of Olives on a clear day.

Jesus reminds the disciples that when they stand and pray, that they need to forgive those who have hurt them so that their Father in heaven will forgive them as well.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: "How difficult is it to forgive others in your culture? Discuss whether or not forgiveness is a high value in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage include:

- Jesus
- the disciples, with Peter named
- fig tree
- people in the temple buying and selling animals for sacrifices, including those selling doves
- money changers
- leading priests
- teachers of the religious law

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples are walking towards Jerusalem from Bethany, in the morning. Jesus is hungry, so he goes to a fig tree which is full of leaves. There are no figs, because it is not fig season. Jesus says, "May no one ever eat your fruit again."

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Confused," or "Surprised, because Jesus is usually more gentle," or "Confused because Jesus knows it is not fig season," or "Interested in what Jesus is trying to tell us." Continue the drama.

Jesus and his disciples walked into Jerusalem and walked directly to the temple courtyard. Jesus walks into the outer courtyard of the temple, and Jesus begins to overturn the tables and force people to leave the courtyard. He stops the people walking across the courtyard who are carrying containers. He says, "The Scriptures say, 'My temple will be a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it into a den of thieves.'"

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Very confused. Jesus has never been violent before," or "Embarrassed," or "Happy that Jesus is finally doing something public!" Ask the person playing Jesus how he is feeling. The person may answer things like, "Disappointed that people are dishonoring my Father like this," or "Sad for the Gentiles who cannot worship here," or "Sad that the Israelites are like this." Ask the people how they are feeling. The person may answer things like, "Surprised," or "Angry—he is ruining our business and he has no right," or "Interested in this man who seems to care about the non-Jews." Continue the drama.

The religious leaders are talking about how to kill Jesus. But most of the people in Jerusalem like Jesus' teaching. The religious leaders are afraid of Jesus.

Pause the drama. Ask the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Angry that people like Jesus so much," or "Jealous," or "Afraid of Jesus because he is so powerful." Continue the drama.

That evening Jesus and his disciples leave the temple and walk back to Bethany for the night. They sleep in Bethany, and then go back to Jerusalem the next morning. They pass the fig tree again. This time it is withered from the roots up. Peter shows Jesus the dead tree. Jesus teaches his disciples. He catches their attention by saying, "I tell you the truth." He reminds them that they can tell the mountain to get up and throw itself into the sea and it will. But they must believe and not doubt that it will really happen. He says again simply, "You can pray about anything and if you believe that you've received it, you will receive it." Then he tells them that their hearts must be pure for that to happen. Before they pray to God, they need to forgive anyone they have not forgiven. Then God will forgive them too.

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Confused," or "Afraid, because it seems difficult to have that much faith," or "Excited that so much power is possible."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his **disciples** left **Bethany** to go to **Jerusalem** the next morning. Bethany is a village about 3 kilometers from Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives. Jesus and his disciples spent the nights there when they were visiting Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the capital city of the Jews and the place where the temple is. The **temple** is the place where Jewish people worship God and make sacrifices to him. Use the same word for disciples, Jerusalem and temple that you have used throughout the book of Mark. For more information on disciples, Jerusalem, and temple refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop and look at a map of the Jerusalem area which includes Bethany on the Mount of Olives, as a group. Pause this audio here.

They passed a **fig tree** full of leaves. A fig tree is a type of fruit tree that grows in Israel. It can grow to 10 meters in height and its trunk can be 1 meter in diameter. The leaves come in April or May, and the fruit usually ripens in June, so in this story, because it probably happens around April, there should have been some small, unripe figs on the tree.

Stop here and look at the photo of the fig tree again. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **fig tree**. Do you have figs in your culture, or is there a different fruit to use that grows on a tree? Look up fig tree in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus and his disciples arrive in the outer temple courtyard. Many people are there buying and selling items to make sacrifices with. A **sacrifice** is something offered to God to thank him or ask forgiveness from him. It could be a blood sacrifice which includes killing and burning an animal, or a non-blood sacrifice that gives God incense or grain.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **sacrifice**. For more information on sacrifice, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus knocked over the tables of the **money changers** and the chairs of the people selling doves. Money changers were the people who exchanged modern Roman coins for the old coins of the Jewish temple. People used these old coins to pay their temple tax. **Doves** are common birds that are 18 to 24 centimeters long. There are different kinds of doves, but poor Jewish people often used them as sacrifices because they were less expensive than other animals. Use the same word you've used for dove in previous passages. For more information on dove, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and show your translation team a photo of a dove. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that "It is written that my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." A **House of Prayer** is a place of worship and a place where people talk to God. **All nations** means all ethnic groups.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **nation**. Look up nation in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that the people have turned the temple into a **den of thieves**, which means a cave or a place for unjust people to hide. Unjust people are people who forcefully take belongings away from others.

The **leading priests** and **teachers of religious law** get together to talk about killing Jesus. Use the same word for leading priests and teachers of religious law that you have used in previous stories in Mark. For more information on priests and teachers of the law, refer to the Master Glossary.

The next morning the disciples and Jesus pass by the fig tree and Peter says, "Look, **Rabbi**!" The tree you **cursed** the day before has died!" Rabbi is a term of respect for someone who teaches the things of God and has disciples. Curse means punishment, or means something bad may happen. Curse should not imply magical sayings. You may need to say something like, "The tree you punished with your words." Use the same word for Rabbi that you have used throughout Mark. For more information on rabbi, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cursed**. Look up curse in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells his disciples, "Have **faith** in God." Use the same word for faith that you have used in previous passages in Mark. Remember that faith means belief or trust in someone. For more information on faith, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says they can **pray** for anything. Prayer in the New Testament refers to communicating with God. Be sure that the word you use here does not refer to only ritualistic communication, but something more personal.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture talk with God? What words do you use to describe talking with God? How could you talk about talking with God in a personal way? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells his disciples that they should **forgive** anyone they have not forgiven before they pray to God. Remember that in forgiveness, the one who was wronged sets aside his rights and does not punish the other as he deserves. He does not seek revenge. If the other repents of his behavior, or tries to stop doing it, and accepts the forgiveness, the relationship between the two is restored and the guilt is removed. Use the same word for forgive that you have used in previous stories. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on forgiveness.

Jesus says that if they forgive others, their Father God in **heaven** will forgive their **sins** too. Heaven refers to the place where God and His angels live. Sin is disobedience against God. Use the same word for "heaven" and "sins" that you have used in previous passages in Mark. For more information on heaven and sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 11:12–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (17877434 KB)

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Mark 11:27–33

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 11:27–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:27–33 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?

4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:27–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage shows the Jewish religious leaders becoming more and more angry at Jesus' teaching. They felt threatened. They realized that Jesus was acting like he had authority, or permission, from God to do things that only they usually had permission to do.

After Jesus talks with his disciples about having faith to believe that God can do anything, they continue walking into Jerusalem and to the temple. Jesus was probably walking through one of the courtyards of the temple area (not in the temple sanctuary itself), and the Jewish religious leaders came up to him.

Stop here and look at the map of the temple together as a group. Note where the temple courtyards are located. This is not inside the temple sanctuary where only priests can go, but the outer courtyard area. Pause this audio here.

The group of Jewish leaders who ruled over Jewish life was called the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was made up of three types of leaders. All three of the main types of leaders were represented in the small group that came to see Jesus. The leading priests were the group of priests who were responsible for temple duties and in charge of the other priests. The teachers of religious law were the experts in religious law, especially the law that God had given the Jewish people through Moses. The elders were non-religious leaders in the community. They were usually older men who helped the community live together well.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the different kinds of religious leaders in your culture? Describe the different kinds and what they do. What do they teach differently from one another? How would you describe these different types of leaders? Pause this audio here.

This group of leaders—the Sanhedrin—had final authority in all matters of Jewish religious life. Therefore, Jesus' actions disturbed them. They asked two questions: "By what authority are you doing these things?" and "Who gave you the right to do them?" Both questions mean the same thing. The religious leaders were probably asking about the things Jesus had done the day before in overturning the tables in the temple courtyard, and probably also about all of his teachings and healings. The things that Jesus had done were things that only religious teachers or leaders with authority should be doing. They wanted to know if some human, or if God himself, had given Jesus the right to do these things. Jesus answered them with a question. Most Jewish religious leaders answered a question with a question, so this was not unusual. However, Jesus' question was unusual because he said he would not give them an answer until they answered his question. Although Jesus says "Tell me," or "Answer me," he is not being rude. This is a way to politely request an answer to a question.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do your religious leaders teach the people? What special ways do they use to teach, like asking questions or telling stories? Pause this audio here.

Jesus asked the religious leaders, "Who gave John the Baptist permission to baptize people who wanted to show that they repented of their sins and turned back to God?" John also taught that the Promised Savior was coming. Jesus asked if John's permission came from "heaven," which means, "Did John's authority come from God?" Jesus was really asking: "Do you believe that you should do what John said and repent by turning away from your sin and turning back to God?" Jesus' question immediately made the religious leaders uncomfortable. They had not believed John the Baptist's teachings. But they knew that most people believed that John the Baptist was a prophet sent from God, so they did not want to publicly say that they believed that John received permission to teach only from other humans. However, they did not want to say that they believed John had authority from God. Then Jesus would accuse them of not obeying God because they didn't follow John.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do your culture's religious leaders get their authority? What do they do or say to make people respect their authority? How do you know they have authority to do things or say certain things? Pause this audio here.

In the end the religious leaders just said, "We don't know." This was not a good answer either, but it was a better answer than the other options.

Jesus does not directly say that he is the Promised Savior, or the Messiah. However, Jesus' questions made it clear that he believes he has authority from God and has been sent by God to teach these things and do these things.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:27–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his disciples arrive at the temple. They are walking in the temple courtyards and the religious leaders come up to them. The leaders ask Jesus a question about where his authority comes from. Jesus responds with another question.

In the second scene: The religious leaders discuss among themselves, and then they come back to say "We don't know." Jesus then refuses to answer their question.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- the disciples
- chief priests
- teachers of religious law
- elders
- John

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that this story happens right after Jesus talks with his disciples in the previous passage about believing that God can do anything. They continue to walk into Jerusalem, to the temple, and walk in the temple courtyard.

A small group of chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders walk up to Jesus in the temple courtyard. The courtyard is a public area—many people were probably there.

The religious leaders asked Jesus two questions that mean the same thing. They are asking who gave him authority, or permission, to do what he is doing in the temple, like overturning the tables and forcing out the buyers and sellers.

Jesus answered with another question. He also told them that they had to answer his question before he would tell them who gave him permission to do what he did. Jesus asked from whom John got his permission to baptize people who turned away from their sins and turned back to God. Did he get his permission from God or from people?

In the next scene it is important to remember that the religious leaders had to discuss their answer among themselves. We do not know where they were as they were discussing. Maybe they walked away a few meters to discuss quietly amongst themselves. They did not know what to say. If they said that John got permission from God, Jesus would ask them why they did not believe John's teaching. If they said that John got his

permission only from people, people would be angry because they believed John's message came from God. So they answered, "We don't know."

Jesus responded, "I will not tell you who gave me authority, then."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:27–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage include:

- Jesus
- the disciples
- chief priests
- teachers of religious law
- elders
- John

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples continued to walk towards Jerusalem from Bethany, in the morning. They go into Jerusalem and then into the temple courtyard again. A group of religious leaders from the main ruling group come up to Jesus. They ask him who gave him permission to do the things he has been doing.

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Annoyed that these religious leaders don't get it," or "Afraid" or "Curious—what will Jesus say?" or "Excited because Jesus may finally explain who he is." Ask the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Happy that we will finally hurt Jesus' reputation" or "A bit afraid of him, because everyone likes him." Continue the drama.

The team should act out Jesus responding politely. He asks a question and tells them that they must answer the question before he will answer them. He asks if it was God or people that gave John permission to baptize people and to teach them about repentance, or turning away from their sins and turning to God.

Pause the drama. Ask the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Confused," or "Worried because we won't have a good answer," or "Frustrated that he is not answering the question." Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I wish they

would understand more." Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Confused," or "Happy that Jesus is answering so well," or "Frustrated that Jesus is asking a question rather than answering their question." Continue the drama.

The religious leaders talking amongst themselves. They are saying, "If we say John's authority is from heaven, then Jesus will ask why we didn't believe John. If we say John's authority is from people, the people will be angry because they think John is from God." They answer Jesus, "We don't know." Jesus responds, "Then I will not tell you who gave me permission to do these things."

Pause the drama. Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I wish they could just understand," or "Frustrated that they will not accept me." Ask the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Afraid of the people" or "Frustrated that again Jesus seems to have won the argument."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 11:27-33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his **disciples** entered **Jerusalem** and went to the **temple** courtyards. Translate disciples, Jerusalem, and temple in the same way you have in previous passages in Mark. For more information on disciples, Jerusalem, and temple refer to the Master Glossary.

As Jesus was walking, the chief priests, teachers of the religious law, and elders came up to him. The **chief priests** were the leaders of all the priests. **Teachers of the law** is sometimes translated **scribes** or people who wrote down the law: They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. The **elders** were non-religious leaders in the community. Use the same words you've used for priests, teachers of the law or elders that you've used in previous passages. For more information on priests, teachers of the law, and elders, refer to the Master Glossary.

These religious leaders asked Jesus what **authority** he had to do the things he was doing. Authority is the right given to someone to act. Translate this in the same way you have translated it in other parts of Mark. For more information on authority refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus asked the religious leaders a question. He asks if John **baptizes** with authority from **heaven**, or just with authority from humans. Use the same word for "baptism" that you have used in other parts of Mark. "Heaven" means the place where God lives. Sometimes Jewish people used the word heaven instead of the name of God. Here, Jesus is asking if John's authority came from God himself. Use the same word for heaven that you've used in previous passages. For more information on baptism and heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

The religious leaders did not know how to answer Jesus. They were afraid of the people, because everyone believed that John was a **prophet**, or someone who receives a message from God and gives it to others. Translate prophet in the same way that you have in other parts of Mark. For more information on prophet, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 11:27-33

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11785651 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 12:1-12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 12:1-12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:1-12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?

2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the religious leaders could not answer Jesus' question about where John's authority came from. The religious leaders refused to understand or accept that Jesus' authority is from God. In this passage Jesus is still in the temple courtyards with the religious leaders. He tells them a parable—which is a story using everyday things to show deeper things about God. He uses this parable to judge the religious leaders.

The passage begins with a description of a vineyard. A vineyard is a field where people grow and harvest grapes and make wine. A man planted grape vines, built a wall made of stone around them to keep out animals and other people, and dug a pit for pressing the grapes. The pit was usually dug into a rock. People put grapes in the pit and walked on them in the pit to press them. The juice would run out of a hole into a pot or long trench. Later they could make wine out of the grape juice. The owner also built a lookout tower, which was a platform on a pile of stones. People could climb onto the platform and look out over the entire vineyard. This helped them protect the vineyard from thieves or animals.

Stop here and look at a photo of a vineyard, a grape vine, grapes, a stone wall, and a winepress, together as a group. Also look at a photo of a lookout tower, as a group. Pause this audio here.

These kinds of events were normal in the Jewish lands of Galilee during Jesus' day, when tenants, or workers of the land, took care of land for a foreign owner who lived far away. During harvest time the owner sent messengers to collect part of the harvest from the tenants. This was usually 1/4 to 1/2 of the harvest, and it was payment that the tenants gave the owner for letting them use the land. The tenants sometimes refused to give part of the harvest, and there is historical evidence that violence often happened. Jesus is using a story that everyone would understand because situations like this happened often. However, Jesus uses words and ideas that reminded the religious leaders of Jewish history. Jesus says that the owner sent his "servants." This is how people usually spoke about prophets from God—as servants of God. Just like this owner sent several of his servants and the tenants beat or killed them, God sent several prophets whom people beat or killed. Most of Jesus' listeners would have remembered a similar story about a vineyard from Isaiah, where the vineyard symbolizes Israel and its rejection of God. In Jesus' parable, the story focuses on the tenants, who are the leaders of the nation of Israel. In this parable Jesus is showing that the tenants, or leaders of Israel, were not following God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss some stories like this in your culture that are used to show how a certain group of people are bad. Discuss stories that try to teach people how to act well. How do you know these stories are to teach people? How is the language in these stories different? How do you begin a story like this? How do you end a story like this? Pause this audio here.

The situation at the vineyard became serious, and the owner sent his own son to deal with it. It seems logical that the tenants would respect the owner's own son more than his servants. But instead, the tenants killed the son and threw his body on the ground outside of the vineyard. Leaving a dead body out in the open was very offensive in the Jewish culture. According to Jewish law, the tenants could assume that the owner was dead if his son came. Now, if they kill the son and claim the property for themselves, they will get it.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In what kinds of situations does violence like this happen most often in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks a question, "What do you suppose the owner of the vineyard will do?" Jesus then answers his own question, which is unusual. Jesus tells the religious leaders that the owner will come and kill the tenants and give the vineyard to other people. Through this story Jesus is trying to explain to the religious leaders that their actions against him will have serious consequences. He is also showing that because the Jewish people reject him, the non-Jews will become God's favored people.

Then Jesus quotes a passage from Psalm 118. The "stone that the builders rejected" refers to a stone that someone said was not good enough to be part of the sanctuary of the first temple. This stone became the cornerstone—the most important stone in a building to make it strong. In Jewish writing, the cornerstone in Psalms symbolized the Messiah, or Savior. Jesus was making a clear reference to himself here. Jesus is saying that people will reject him but he will become important, just like this rejected stone became the most important stone. Until this week in Jerusalem right before his death, Jesus had not said much about himself being the Messiah. But now that he was about to die, he was more open about who he was.

Stop here and look at a photo of a cornerstone together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Jesus is making a comparison between himself and a cornerstone. What kind of comparisons like this does your culture use to explain things to people? Pause this audio here.

The religious leaders realized that Jesus was telling the story against them. However, many people were probably in the temple courtyard at that time, and the religious leaders were afraid of the people because the people continued to like Jesus. Although the religious leaders had no governmental rights to have Jesus arrested, they did not want to ask the government to arrest Jesus because they were afraid the people would be angry and violent against them if they did that.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do your religious leaders respond to people who judge them?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: A man plants a vineyard and builds everything around it. He rents out the vineyard to tenant farmers and goes on a journey.

In the second scene: The owner sends several servants. The tenants beat some and send them away with nothing. They kill some of the servants.

In the third scene: The owner sends his son. The tenants kill the son and throw him out of the vineyard.

In the fourth scene: Jesus tells the religious leaders that the vineyard owner will kill the tenants and give the vineyard to others. He also says that he will be rejected but raised up to importance, like the stone the builders rejected, but then it became the cornerstone, or the most important stone of the building.

In the fifth scene: The religious leaders realized that Jesus was speaking against them. They looked for a way to have Jesus arrested, but they were afraid of the many people who liked Jesus. So they go away.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- chief priests
- teachers of religious law
- elders
- vineyard owner
- vineyard tenants
- servants
- owner's son
- crowds of people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that Jesus is still talking with the religious leaders from the previous passage. They are in the temple courtyard. Jesus then continues to speak to them, but now he uses a parable.

In Jesus' parable, a man carefully prepares his vineyard by planting vines, building a wall, digging a pit for the winepress, and building a watchtower.

The man rents this vineyard to tenant farmers and goes away on a journey. Some time later, when the grapes were ripe, the owner sends a servant to collect his payment, which is his part of the harvest. The owner sends a first servant, and the tenants beat the first servant and send him away empty-handed, or with nothing. The owner sends a second servant, and the tenants strike the second servant on the head and treat him badly. The owner sends a third servant, and the tenants kill him. The owner sends more servants, and the tenants beat or kill each one of them.

The last person the owner sends is probably his probably only son whom he loved. He thinks they will respect him.

The tenants say to each other that the son is the heir and if they kill him, maybe they can get the vineyard. So they kill him and throw his body out of the vineyard.

Jesus now asks the religious leaders a question: "What will the owner of the vineyard do?" Jesus answers his own question. Jesus tells the religious leaders that the owner will come to the vineyard, he will kill the tenants, and he will give the vineyard to other people.

Then Jesus quotes Scripture that says the stone the builders rejected has become a cornerstone, or the most important stone, in the building. Then the Scripture says, "God himself did this and we think it is wonderful."

Stop here and as a group, if there is time, talk to someone who specializes in building buildings. Ask the builder which stone, or brick, or part of the building is laid first after the foundation is built. Discuss with the builder why this stone or brick is important. Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that the religious leaders realize that Jesus is speaking against them. They are the evil tenants. They want to have Jesus arrested. They have no governmental power to do that, but they would like to convince the government to arrest Jesus. However, they are afraid of the crowd of people who like Jesus' teaching.

At the end, the religious leaders leave Jesus and go away.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage include:

- Jesus
- chief priests
- teachers of religious law
- elders
- vineyard owner
- vineyard tenants
- servants
- owner's son
- crowds of people

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus was continuing to talk with the religious leaders. Now Jesus starts to tell them a story. The team should act out the story. Jesus describes an owner planting and building the vineyard. Then the owner rents the vineyard to tenant farmers and goes away.

Pause the drama. Ask the owner, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Proud of my beautiful vineyard," or "Sad to leave my vineyard that I worked so hard on," or "Looking forward to receiving some of the harvest." Ask the tenants, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Nervous that we won't do a good job," or "Happy to work in a vineyard." Continue the drama.

The team should act out harvest time coming. The owner sends a servant to collect some of the harvest. The servant arrives and the tenants beat him and send him away with nothing.

Pause the drama. Ask the owner, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Angry at the tenants! I can't believe they did that to my servant," or "Sad that my servant was hurt," or "Disappointed." Ask the servant, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Angry," or "Discouraged," or "Ashamed or embarrassed." Continue the drama.

The second servant goes to the vineyard. The tenants beat him on the head and send him away. Then the third servant comes. The tenants kill him. The owner sends more servants. Each servant is beaten or killed.

Pause the drama. Ask the owner, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I can't believe this!" "Angry," or "Confused at what could be going wrong." Ask the tenants, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Angry that I always have to give my profits away" or "Justified in my actions." Ask the servants, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Afraid to go next" or "It's my duty to obey my master." Continue the drama.

The team should act out the owner deciding to send his son, whom he loved. The owner says, "They will respect my son." The tenants see the son and assume that the owner is dead. If they kill the son, the vineyard becomes theirs. The tenants kill the son and throw his body outside the vineyard.

Pause the drama. Ask the owner, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Surprised," or "Sad that they killed my son," or "Angry that they did not respect my son." Ask the tenants, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Happy that maybe I'll get the vineyard now," or "Regret for what I've done." Continue the drama.

Jesus asks the religious leaders a direct question and then answers it. "What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will kill the tenants and give the vineyard to other people." Then Jesus reads Scripture: "The stone the builders rejected has become the most important cornerstone. God has done this, and we think it is wonderful."

Pause the drama. Ask the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Angry—he's saying we're like the evil tenants!" or "Angry—he's saying that he is like the most important stone in a building!" or "Afraid—we need to get rid of Jesus." Continue the drama.

The religious leaders realize that Jesus is talking about them. They are thinking of how they could get the government to arrest Jesus. They are afraid of the crowd of people. They leave Jesus and walk away.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus is talking with the religious leaders and tells a **parable**. A parable was a special kind of story that used everyday things to describe deeper things about God. Parables were often hard to understand unless people really tried to listen. When Jesus tells a parable, he expects people to change their attitude or actions. Use the same word for parable that you've used in previous passages. For more information on parable, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells a story about a man who planted a vineyard, which is a field where vines give fruit called a grape. The man dug a winepress, which is a pit dug into rock. People put grapes in the pit, then walk on them to crush them. The juice runs out of a hole in the bottom into a large pot or a long trench. The man built a watchtower, which is a high platform built on top of a pile of stone. There may be a shelter on top made of grass. People can sit in the shelter and watch over the vineyard to protect it from animals and thieves.

Stop here and look at photos of a vineyard, grapes, a winepress, and a watchtower. Pause this audio here.

The man rented his vineyard to tenant farmers. **Tenants** are people who take care of the vineyard for an owner who does not live on the property. The owner in this story went to another region or another area—far enough away that he could not return easily. The people get part of the harvest as payment for taking care of the vineyard. They give half or one-fourth of the harvest to the owner.

The owner sent servants to collect his part of the harvest. A **servant** here refers to a slave who is obligated to work for his master and cannot just quit at any time. Use the same word for servant that you've used in previous passages. For more information on servants, refer to the Master Glossary.

The owner finally sent his **son that he loved**. "Son that he loved" can also be translated as only "son." Most translations say something like "His son whom he loved."

The tenants saw the son and realized that he was the heir. The **heir** is the person who will become the owner when the present owner dies. For more information on heir, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus asks the religious leaders, "Have you read the Scripture?" He would expect a positive response to this question. However, Jesus answers the question himself. **Scriptures** refer to the written holy writings of the Jewish people. Use the same word for Scripture as you have in previous passages, and for more information on Scripture, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The **cornerstone** is the most important and strongest stone in the outside corner of the house. This word could also mean a stone at the top of a door arch which holds up the door. In either case, this stone is the most important stone to hold up the house and make it strong.

Stop here and look at a photo of a cornerstone together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that the **Lord** has done this—Jesus means that God himself has made the stone the most important part of the building, just like God himself has lifted up Jesus. "It is marvelous in our eyes" means that "We think it is marvelous, or wonderful." Use the same word for Lord here that you've used in previous passages to refer to God. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

The chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders are not explicitly named in this story, but they are the ones who want to get the authorities to arrest Jesus. If your listeners will not remember who they are, you may need to refer to them again as the ones trying to get Jesus arrested.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 12:1–12

Audio Content

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Mark 12:13–17

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 12:13–17 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:13–17 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:13–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As we know from previous passages, many of the religious leaders wanted the government to arrest Jesus and execute him. They wanted Jesus to say something that would get him into trouble so that the government would have reason to arrest him.

We do not know who sent the Pharisees and supporters of Herod to Jesus. You should also remain unclear in your translation about who sent these men—all we know is that leaders of some sort sent them. Two groups of men came to Jesus, the Pharisees, whom we have seen before, and the men who followed Herod. Herod was the Jewish ruler, or governor, of the area of Israel. Israel was under control of the Roman Empire. Herod was appointed by the Roman king, called Caesar. The Herodians, or supporters of Herod, were political friends with Herod and wanted to keep him in power. They also agreed with the religious leaders called the Sadducees, who only followed Moses' laws. That means that the supporters of Herod and the Pharisees usually disagreed with each other. However, in this story, the two groups come together in order to make Jesus say something to get himself into trouble.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the different kinds of religious leaders in your culture? What do they all believe? What are their different opinions about religion? How do they work together? How do their arguments affect the people? Pause this audio here.

Jesus was probably still in the temple courtyards, where the normal people—the non-priests—were allowed to enter. There would have been many people in the area. Perhaps this group of leaders came up to Jesus while he was teaching.

Stop here and look at the diagram of the temple again. Show where the temple courtyards are in the diagram. Pause this audio here.

The Pharisees and supporters of Herod asked Jesus a very emotional question for the Jewish people. Around 15 years before this, the Roman government took full control of the Jewish homeland of Israel and made the Jewish people pay taxes to the Roman king, or Caesar. The people resented this tax, even though it was only a day's wages. The people did not like it because it reminded them that they were ruled by a foreign king. They also did not like the coins because they had an image of a king who thought and said that he was a god. Some rebels refused to pay the tax because they believed that paying the tax was an insult to God. The supporters of Herod supported paying the tax, because they wanted Herod to remain in power over the Jews. These leaders asked Jesus the question in a way that he could not refuse to answer it. They began by saying nice things about Jesus. They said that Jesus was not afraid of others, or did not care about what others thought about him. Jesus showed the same respect to everyone. They said that Jesus cared more about God's way of living than about any political agenda. Then they very directly asked Jesus if they should pay taxes to Caesar. If Jesus says that yes, they should pay the taxes, he will be in trouble with the Jewish people. If Jesus says no, they should not pay the taxes, he will be in trouble with the Roman government itself.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: What does a leader who has integrity, or is honest, do in your culture? Jesus was not afraid of others. Jesus did not do things just to try to please others. What kinds of things do your respected leaders do? Pause this audio here.

Jesus recognized that the leaders were trying to trap him into getting into trouble. He was probably frustrated when he asked them, "Why are you trying to trap me?" He asked for a Roman coin, the denarius, which was the type of coin accepted as payment of tax. These coins were stamped with the picture of the head of the Roman king, or Caesar. The coins had an inscription that said, "Son of the Divine Augustus Caesar." It made the Caesar look like he was a god.

Stop here and look at a photo of a denarius, the Roman coin, together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus asked the men, "Whose picture and title are stamped on the coin?" They correctly said, "Caesar's."

Then Jesus shows his authority. He states, or announces, something important. Jesus used this answer to remind them that the Caesar whose picture was on the coin had authority. He had the right to ask for taxes. It was possible to give to Caesar and still honor God. However, Jesus also reminded the leaders that no human ruler has the right to take the honor that belongs to God. In fact, because we bear the "image" of God, or in a sense the "stamp" of God, we belong to God and owe our allegiance to God. Jesus' answer was very good. Jesus showed he had authority.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you make an important statement, how does your language change? How does your audience know you are making an important statement? If you do something in your language to make a statement important, how will this affect your translation of Jesus' teaching here?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:13–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In the one and only scene: Pharisees and supporters of Herod come to Jesus to try to trap him into saying something that would get him into trouble. They ask him, "Should we pay taxes to the Roman king?" Jesus answers them in a way they do not expect.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- The disciples are implied because they have been with him. They must have heard the conversation, but they did not act in this story.
- Pharisees
- Supporters of Herod
- Other people in the temple courtyard. They also may have heard the conversation, but they did not act in this story.

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that this story happens sometime during the week Jesus is in Jerusalem teaching in the temple courtyards. Jesus is probably in the courtyard when the Pharisees and supporters of Herod come to him. Jesus is probably teaching around the same time the leaders come to him.

The leaders begin by saying that Jesus is a good man. They say, "Jesus, you are not afraid of what people think about you. You respect everyone in the same way. You teach God's way." Then the leaders ask Jesus the hard question. They are trying to trap Jesus. They want Jesus to get into trouble.

The leaders ask two questions. In each question they give Jesus both possible answers so that he must say which answer is correct. The first question is: "Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar, the king? Or not?" The second question is: "Should we pay the taxes? Or should we not?"

Jesus knew the leaders were trying to trap him. He says, "Bring me a denarius, or Roman coin." The leaders bring a coin. Jesus looks at it and asks a question: "Whose face is stamped on the coin? What does the coin say?" The leaders answer correctly that Caesar—the king's—face is on the coin.

Jesus answers, "Give to Caesar what he has a right to have. Give to God what God has a right to have." This is an important statement.

Stop here and discuss together as a group: Talk again about how you will show this is an important statement in your translation. Pause this audio here.

The leaders are surprised and impressed with Jesus' answer. They were not able to trick him into getting into trouble.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:13–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage include:

- Jesus
- The disciples are implied because they have been with him. They must have heard the conversation, but they did not act in this story.
- Pharisees
- Supporters of Herod
- Other people in the temple courtyard. They also may have heard the conversation, but they did not act in this story

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus may be teaching people in the temple courtyard. His disciples are also there. A group of leaders come to Jesus. They say nice things to Jesus, but then they ask him a question. They want him to get into trouble. They ask the question in two ways: "Is it right or lawful to give a tax to Caesar? Or should we not? Is it right to pay it? Or is it not?"

Pause the drama. Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Sad that they continue to try to trap me," or "Sad that they do not understand me," or "Frustrated that they interrupt my teaching." Ask the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "Hoping that we will finally trap him," or "Frustrated that so many people listen to him." Continue the drama.

Jesus asks, "Why are you trying to trap me, or why are you trying to get me in trouble?" Then he says, "Bring me a Roman coin." The leaders bring him a coin. Jesus asks them, "Whose image or picture is on the coin? What is written on the coin?" They answer, "Caesar's picture and name is on the coin." Jesus answers, "Give to Caesar what he has the right to have. Give to God what God has the right to have." The leaders are amazed.

Pause the drama. Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "I want to glorify God my father" or "It's important to follow the laws of the land I live in." Ask the leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like, "How did he learn to answer questions so well?" or "Oh no! We never seem to be able to get him into trouble," or "I'm jealous of his teaching skill."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:13–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Someone sent **Pharisees** and **supporters of Herod**, called **Herodians**, to Jesus. We do not know who sent them, but if you need to say who sent these men, you could say, "Some leaders sent the Pharisees and supporters of Herod." Use the same word for Pharisee that you have in previous passages. For more information on Pharisees, refer to the Master Glossary.

The supporters of Herod, called **Herodians**, were political friends with Herod and wanted to keep him in power. For more information on Herodians, refer to the Master Glossary.

These Pharisees and supporters of Herod came to Jesus to **trap** or **catch him in his words**. This means they want to get him into trouble because of something he says. Ways to translate this could include, "to cause him to fall because of his words."

The leaders call Jesus **Teacher**. Use the same word for Teacher that you have in previous passages. For more information on teacher, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders try to say nice things about Jesus to trick him. They say, "You teach the way of God truthfully." They are trying to say, "You teach the truth about how to follow God."

The leaders ask Jesus, "Is it right to give taxes to **Caesar** or not?" This is the name of the Roman king or emperor—the Caesar.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Caesar**. Look up Caesar in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus knew that the men were not sincere. He recognized their hypocrisy. **Hypocrisy** is when someone does not believe what they say they believe. A hypocrite means someone who looks good on the outside, but inside they do not truly love God. Hypocrites want other people to see them doing good works so people can praise them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **hypocrisy**. Look up hypocrisy in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus asked the men to bring him a denarius, which is a Roman coin made of silver. A **denarius** was usually about a day's pay for hard work. It had a picture of the head of the Caesar, or Roman king, stamped or cut into the coin. There was also writing, or an inscription, on the coin that said the name of the emperor and usually included something like "son of the divine." This coin made it look like the Roman king was a god.

Stop here and look at a photo of a denarius as a group. Discuss what word or phrase you will use for **denarius**. Look up denarius in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus answered the men very well. They were **amazed**, which means that they were surprised or astounded at the clever answer.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 12:13–17**Audio Content**

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Mark 12:18–27*Hear and Heart**Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Mark 12:18–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:18–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

*Setting the Stage**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Sometime after the Pharisees and supporters of Herod came to Jesus, a group of Sadducees came to him. Jesus was probably still in the temple courtyard. It may have been later in the same day as the previous passage. The Sadducees were a group of religious leaders who believed that the Old Testament laws that Moses wrote were the only necessary laws. They did not believe in the oral traditions that the Pharisees had developed. They did not believe that God will raise all people from the dead someday. Instead, they believed that when people died, they remained dead.

Religious leaders interpreted Scripture, or Jewish holy writings, for the people. Every group of religious leaders had a different interpretation of God's laws. They liked to discuss whose interpretation was the right one. They wanted to persuade each other that their way was the right way. It was normal to remind each other of specific Scriptures. In this passage, the Sadducees gave an example from Moses' law about marriage. In Deuteronomy 25, Moses wrote that if a man dies without a male child, his younger brother should marry the man's wife and have children with her. The children would be considered the children of the first brother. These children would still belong to the brother who died. The children would inherit the property of the dead first brother and would have his name.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When someone dies in your culture, who inherits his or her property? If a woman's husband dies and she has no children, who takes care of her? In Jesus' culture, only the sons could inherit property. If a woman's husband died and she had no children, her husband's brother must marry her. How is this different from your culture? Pause this audio here.

The Sadducees wanted to prove that their interpretation of Scripture, that people do not rise from the dead, was the right interpretation. They then give an example of a possible situation to try to prove this. The story they tell is not a true story—just a possibility.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do your religious leaders use example stories to teach? If so, give an example of a story they might tell. Pause this audio here.

In the Sadducees' example, there are seven brothers. Seven is a favorite number of the Jews. They probably used this number to make the story more interesting and to emphasize their point. After the first brother dies, the widow has to marry each of his younger brothers one after the other after each one of them dies until she has had seven husbands. Then the widow dies. They ask Jesus whose wife the woman will be in the resurrection. They want to make it look foolish for someone to believe in resurrection. The Sadducees think that if God brought all people back to life, that it was impossible for the woman to be married to all seven husbands at the same time. They were implying that God's law, which said that a man should marry his brother's widow, showed that God would not cause people to live again.

Just like in the previous passage, Jesus then gives a clear and direct teaching with authority, or the right to act. As usual, Jesus responds with more questions. Then he answers his own questions with examples from Scripture itself. Jesus asks, "Are you not wrong because you do not know the Scriptures and you do not know the power of God?" This means, "You do not understand the Scriptures and you do not know that God has a lot of power. That is why you are wrong." Then Jesus tells them how they are wrong. First, he affirms that there will be a resurrection of the dead. Then he explains that people will not be married after they rise from the dead. Instead, their lives will be like the lives of the angels. Angels are spirit beings that serve as God's messengers and live in heaven, or the place where God lives. The angels' main purpose and focus is to worship God and be in communion with God. The angels are not married.

Then Jesus asks, "Haven't you ever read about the resurrection of the dead in the writings of Moses and in the story about Moses at the burning bush?" Jesus asks this question to rebuke the Sadducees, not because he wanted them to answer. The Sadducees would have known the books of Moses very well. Jesus reminds them of the story of Moses in Exodus. Moses is at a bush that is on fire but is not burning up. God speaks to Moses from the bush. God says, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Abraham, his son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob were the three first ancestors of the Jewish people group. God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he will never leave them—that he will be with them always. But when God speaks to Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are already dead! That means that if God is still their God, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must still exist. Therefore, people that we think are dead are really alive! Jesus uses this story from the Scriptures that the Sadducees respect the most to show them that they must be wrong.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What does your culture usually believe about people rising from the dead? If people rise from the dead, when will they do that? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is with his disciples in the temple courtyard. The Sadducees come to Jesus. They remind Jesus of Moses' law about marriage.

In the second scene: The Sadducees tell a story about a man who died after marrying his wife and having no children. The man's 7 brothers also married the widow and each of them died without having children. Then the woman dies. The Sadducees ask Jesus who the woman will be married to in the resurrection as a way to mock those who believe in the resurrection of the dead.

In the third scene: Jesus rebukes the Sadducees using a question about what they know about God. Then Jesus explains that there is no marriage in heaven. Jesus reminds the Sadducees of what God said when He introduced himself to Moses. God said he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus says that God is the God of the living not of the dead.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Sadducees
- The disciples
- A man
- A man's brother
- The man's wife
- The man's 7 brothers
- The angels
- Moses
- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- God

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that this story happens sometime after the Pharisees and supporters of Herod come to Jesus, possibly on the same day. The story probably happens in the temple courtyard. Some Sadducees come to Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In the passage itself we hear that the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. How does your language show that you are telling background information in a translation? Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that three little stories are told within this conversation: the story of the woman with seven husbands, the description of people and angels in heaven, and the story of God speaking to Moses through the bush.

It is important to pay attention to the first story. The Sadducees are describing Moses' law about marriage. Then the Sadducees introduce a made up story by using a word like "now" or "well." Pay careful attention to the way you describe the oldest brother and his other brothers. Every one of the seven brothers marries the woman, but none of them have children.

Stop here and discuss with your group: How does your language talk about this kind of repeating action? You may need to specify that the woman married one brother after another, and none of the brothers had children with the woman. Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that Jesus responds with a question to rebuke the Sadducees. He asks, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?" Jesus uses the question to emphasize that the Sadducees did not understand the Scriptures nor the power of God.

In the second little story it is important to remember that people will be like angels, but they will not "be" angels.

Jesus uses another question that starts with a word like "now" or "but." This word marks the second part of his response to the Sadducees. When he asks, "Now about the dead rising, have you not read in the book of Moses...?" Jesus knew they had read the book of Moses. He uses the question as a rebuke because they should have understood that God raises people from the dead.

In the third little story it is important to remember that Jesus is talking about a story from the books of the laws that Moses wrote down for the Jewish people. Jesus is referring to Jewish ancestors that everyone has heard about when he talks about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Jesus ends this teaching by directly saying to the Sadducees, "You have made a serious mistake."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Sadducees
- The disciples
- A man
- A man's brother
- The man's wife
- The man's other brothers
- The angels
- Moses
- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- God

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus teaching people in the temple courtyard. His disciples are also there. A group of Sadducees come to Jesus. They want to convince Jesus that what they believe about the resurrection is right. They tell Jesus a story.

Act out the story as the Sadducees tell it to Jesus. A man who marries a woman. They do not have children. The man dies. His younger brother marries the woman. They do not have children. That man dies. This happens for all seven brothers, then the woman dies. Act out the Sadducees asking Jesus, "In the resurrection, whose wife is the woman? She was married to all seven brothers."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm sad that they do not understand Scripture," or "Angry. The Sadducees are more worried about being right than accurately interpreting scripture for the people," or "I will make them understand that resurrection from the dead is real by quoting from the law of Moses." Ask the person playing the Sadducees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Maybe we will finally convince Jesus that we are right!" or "Proud that we can prove we are right!" or "I want to make Jesus look foolish in front of the people." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus' response to the Sadducees. First Jesus says, "This is why you are wrong: You do not understand the Scriptures, and you do not understand that God is powerful. When they rise from the dead, they will not be married. They will be like the angels in heaven."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the Sadducees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "How is this possible?" or "I don't believe any of this. I don't believe they will rise from the dead, and I definitely don't believe in angels," or "Shocked. I can't believe he said we are wrong with such authority." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus' next response. Jesus says, "Now I will tell you about the resurrection from the dead. Haven't you read the books of Moses? Don't you know the passage about Moses at the burning bush? God said to Moses, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' God is the God of the living, not the dead. You are seriously wrong."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the Sadducees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am surprised. I have read the law of Moses. I know it well. I have never thought about it like this," or "I am so confused. Jesus makes sense. But I don't understand!" or "How can Abraham, Isaac and Jacob still be alive? But God did promise that he would always be with them. How can he be with them if they are dead?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Some **Sadducees** came to Jesus. We do not know very much about the Sadducees. The Sadducees were religious leaders who believed that the Old Testament laws of Moses were the only necessary laws. They did not believe in the later oral teachings of the Pharisees. Therefore, they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. They

also did not believe in angels or spirits. They usually supported the political powers in authority, including King Herod during the time of Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Sadducee**. Look up Sadducee in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The Sadducees called Jesus "Teacher." **Teacher** is a polite title that the Jews used for a man who taught the things of God. Use the same term as you have used in previous passages. For more information on Teacher, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Sadducees said that **Moses** gave them a **law**. The first five books of the Bible are often called the law of Moses because he wrote them for the Jewish people. These are laws that God gave Moses to give to his people many years before Jesus. The Jewish people followed these laws.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **the law of Moses**. Look up law of Moses in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The Sadducees ask Jesus whose wife the woman will be in the resurrection. **Resurrection** means that people will rise from the dead as themselves again. This resurrection refers to the time when God will make all people who have died live again.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **resurrection**. Look up resurrection in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the Sadducees that they do not understand the Scriptures. Use the same term for **Scriptures** that you have used in previous passages. For more information on scriptures, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that people will not "be married or be given in marriage," which means that they will not marry each other after they rise from the dead. They will be like the **angels** in **heaven**. Here, heaven refers to the place where God lives. Use the same term for angels and heaven that you have used before. For more information on angels and heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then Jesus says to the Sadducees, "He is the God of the living, not the dead." Jesus wants to say that "God is the God of these dead persons: they are not really dead, they are living."

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 12:18–27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11366098 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 12:28–34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 12:28–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:28–34 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

*Setting the Stage**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:28–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

One teacher of the religious law was listening to all the debates and arguments happening between Jesus and the other religious leaders in the temple courtyard. We do not know if this teacher of the law was a Sadducee or a Pharisee. He liked the things Jesus said. He asked Jesus, "Which commandment or law is the first, or most important, commandment?" Commandments refer to all of the laws God gave to his people. In those days religious leaders talked about each law. They liked to know which were the most important and least important laws.

Teacher of the law is sometimes translated as scribe or people who wrote down the law: They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These interpretations were not written down, but memorized and taught orally by the teachers. Jesus understood that the teacher's question was really about the foundation of the law itself. Jesus summarizes all of the law in one statement, in the same way other religious leaders of the time did.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Do you have religious laws in your culture? Are some laws considered more important than others? Give examples. Pause this audio here.

Again, as in the previous passages, Jesus states a teaching clearly and with authority, or the right to act. Jesus begins his answer by stating the Shema. The Shema was a call to the Jewish people to follow God with their entire lives. Jesus was in the temple talking with religious leaders, and any statement of religious laws would have started with this statement. "Listen oh Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord." Israel refers to the Jewish people. By calling God the Lord, Jesus is referring to God himself and to his personal name Yahweh. The Shema was the foundation of the Jewish prayers and was prayed every morning and every evening. The Shema reminded the people that God promised them that he would always be with them and love them. Therefore, the Jewish people followed God's laws because they loved God.

Then Jesus explained this love for God. He said, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength." This means to love God with your entire being—to love him with everything you have and everything you are.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you give examples of what people do when they love God in this way? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus immediately gives the second most important commandment or law, because one cannot separate these two commandments. If one loves God with his whole heart, the love will overflow onto those around him. Then he will love his neighbor in the same way he loves himself. Jewish people believed that their "neighbor" meant other Jewish people. However, Jesus said that a neighbor was anyone they met. This is a new teaching—not many other religious leaders at this time would teach to love others in this way.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you give examples of what people do when they love their neighbors as themselves? Pause this audio here.

The teacher of the law gave a surprising response. The teacher of the law repeats what Jesus said in shorter form. He says, God is one and there is no other but him. This means the same thing as what Jesus said. It means that God is the only one like himself. No one else is worthy to be worshipped as God. Normally, teachers of the law believed that making sacrifices, following the law, and loving people were all equally important. However, this teacher agreed with Jesus. Then he said that this law was more important than sacrificing animals or giving other things to God. This teacher seemed to believe that love for others is more important than sacrifices.

Jesus noticed that the teacher of the law answered wisely. He said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." Remember that the kingdom of God is not a place. The kingdom of God is a relationship with God. We allow God to be our king and to rule over us. We follow him. God rules over us with love and protection. Jesus said that this teacher of the law was almost ready to accept God's rule over his life.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do your people understand the phrase kingdom of God? What do people do in God's Kingdom? Why do you think Jesus said that this teacher of the law is close to the kingdom of God? Pause this audio here.

Jesus gave wise and very clever answers to all the religious leaders that asked him questions. Because of this, everyone was afraid to ask more questions.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:28-34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In the first scene: A teacher of the law, or scribe, comes up to Jesus in the temple courtyard. He asks Jesus, "Which commandment, or rule, is the most important rule?" Jesus answers him by saying, "We should love God, and then love our neighbor, or all those we meet, as we would love ourselves." The teacher of the law agrees with Jesus and Jesus says he is close to the kingdom of God. No one else asks Jesus questions because he answered so wisely.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Disciples (The disciples do not do anything in this scene, but they are probably there in the temple courtyards.)
- The teacher of the law, or scribe
- Israel
- God
- Neighbor

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Jesus continues to answer the religious leaders very wisely. Jesus is probably in the temple courtyards. When Jesus answers, he begins with the Shema. This is a special Jewish prayer. Reciting this shows that Jesus is a good Jew and respects God. Jews recited this twice a day. "Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is the one and only Lord." Then Jesus sums up the law in two statements about loving God and loving your neighbor.

It is important to remember that the teacher of the law liked what Jesus said. The teacher of the law says that these laws about loving God and loving your neighbor are more important than even burnt offerings and sacrifices.

It is important to remember that Jesus was impressed with the man's response. Jesus told the man that he understood how to be a part of God's Kingdom. He was ready for God to rule over his life.

It is important to remember that people understood that Jesus' responses were wise. Jesus' answers showed that he spoke with authority and wisdom. The religious leaders were afraid to ask him more questions, because every time they did Jesus showed that he understood more than they did about how God's Kingdom works.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:28-34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Disciples
- The teacher of the law, or scribe
- Israel
- God
- Neighbor

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus talking with the religious leaders in the temple courtyard. His disciples are also there. While Jesus is talking with the religious leaders, one teacher of the religious law is listening closely and likes what he hears. Now he speaks to Jesus and asks, "Which commandment is the most important?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Happy, because I can see that his heart is good and he wants true wisdom." Or, "Good. Another chance to teach everyone the truth about my Father's heart." Or, "I'm glad he asked that." Ask the person playing the teacher of the law, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I like this teacher, Jesus. I want to really understand what he is teaching." Or, "I'm curious to see how Jesus will answer." Or, "Hopeful. Maybe Jesus will agree with me." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus saying, "The most important commandment is this: Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is the one and only Lord. You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. The second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. These are the two most important commandments."

Act out the teacher's response: "That's good, Teacher! You are speaking the Truth." Then the teacher repeats what Jesus says, "There is only one God and no other. And I know it is important to love him with all my heart and all my understanding, or mind, and all my strength, and to love my neighbor as myself." Then the man goes on to say, "This is more important than to offer all of the burnt offerings and sacrifices that the law requires."

Act out Jesus realizing that the teacher understood a lot about God's Kingdom. He said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am so happy that this man understands how to love God and people," or "People like this man make me happy," or "I'm sure God will use him to make truthful interpretations of the scripture for people." Ask the person playing the teacher of the law, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This man is really from God," or "My heart is full of love," or "I want to serve a God of love." Continue the drama.

Act out no one else asking Jesus questions because of how wisely he answered.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:28-34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus was still talking to the religious leaders in the temple courtyard. A **teacher of religious law** was listening and liked what he heard. He asked Jesus, "Which commandment is most important?" Teachers of the law, or scribes, were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These interpretations were not written down, but memorized and taught orally by the teachers. Translate teacher of religious law in the same way as you have translated it in previous passages. For more information on teacher of the law, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus began by stating an important Jewish prayer and belief. He said, "Hear, Oh, **Israel**. The Lord our God, the Lord is one." Many versions of the Bible state instead, "The Lord our God is the only God." It may be stating that there is only one God also. But this statement probably focuses on the fact that the Jewish God—the creator, eternal God—is the only God who deserves our praise. Israel refers to the Jewish people, or all of the descendants of Jacob. **Lord** refers to God himself and is a reference to his personal name Yahweh. Translate Israel and Lord, meaning God himself, in the same way as you have translated it in previous passages. For more information on Israel and the Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then Jesus says, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. The **heart** is a person's feelings and decisions. The **soul** is a person's inner life and thinking. The **heart** and **soul** together refer to someone's inner life. The mind refers to someone's thinking, understanding, and intelligence. Strength refers to someone's ability to do something, or their physical strength. These words all function together to describe all of a person's personality and abilities. Translate heart and soul in the same way you have in previous passages. For more information on heart and soul, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate each word **heart**, **soul**, **mind**, and **strength**? You may not be able to translate word for word, but with equivalent meanings like above. Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus says, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Although "you" is singular here, Jesus means this to be a command for everyone, not just for this teacher of the law.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate the word neighbor? You might have to describe the word. In this context it could mean someone who lives nearby, someone in the same social group, or someone in the same language group. But remember, Jesus always means a wider group of people—he means anyone you meet. Pause this audio here.

The teacher of the law says, "Well said," or "You are right." The man is impressed. He calls Jesus **Teacher**. Translate teacher in the same way you have translated it in previous passages. For more information on teacher, refer to the Master Glossary.

The teacher of the law says that these commands are more important than burnt offerings and sacrifices. **Burnt offerings** were when people sacrificed animals to God by burning them completely. **Sacrifices** are anything that people give to God to say thank you, to praise him or to ask God to forgive them. These sacrifices could be wheat, oil, or wine. God required these sacrifices and offerings in his law. Translate sacrifice in the same way you have in previous passages. For more information on sacrifice, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells the man that he is not far from the kingdom of God. **The kingdom of God** is a condition or a relationship, not a place or a location. It refers to God ruling in the hearts of his people. Translate kingdom of God in the same way as you have in previous passages. For more information on the kingdom of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 12:28-34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10515623 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 12:35-37

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 12:35-37 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:35-37 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:35-37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus continued to teach a crowd of people in the temple courtyards. He asked two difficult questions which seemed to contradict each other. He wanted to show that both statements are true, even though they seem like they cannot be true. This was a normal teaching tool for Jewish religious teachers.

The Jewish prophets, or messengers of God, said that the Messiah, or Promised Savior, would be a descendant of King David. All of the Jews knew about their ancestor David because he was a famous and important king. Jesus asks, "Why do teachers of the religious law say that the Messiah is just the son, or descendant, of King David?" Teachers of the religious law interpreted God's law for the people. Jesus asks this question not because he wants an answer, but because he wants the people to think carefully about who the Messiah is. Then Jesus says that the Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit, caused King David to say this Psalm:

"The Lord said to my Lord,

Sit in the place of honor at my right hand

until I humble your enemies beneath your feet."

In this Psalm, David says that the Lord, or God, tells David's Lord—the Messiah—to sit at God's right hand, or in a place of honor. In Jewish culture, the person at the right hand had the right to rule with the king. God was

telling the Messiah that the Messiah would rule together with God. God would humble the Messiah's enemies at his feet. This is a picture of a victor placing their feet upon the necks of their defeated enemies.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: How does God or an important leader show honor to someone? Here, God puts the Messiah at his right hand so they can rule the Kingdom together. How do you show honor and authority to someone in your culture? God gives victory over the Messiah's enemies by putting them beneath his feet. How do you show that a conqueror has conquered his enemies in your culture? Pause this audio here.

In Jewish culture, kings and fathers never called their descendants their lords or masters. So in this context, it seems impossible that David would call one of his descendants his Lord, or master.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture view your ancestors? How does your culture express respect or give authority to ancestors? Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks, "How can the Messiah be the descendant, or son, of King David, since David called the Messiah 'my Lord'?" Some people believed that the Messiah would restore David's kingdom on earth. However, Jesus is trying to show that his role, the role of the Messiah, is to establish a greater kingdom of God. In Jesus' view, the kingdom of God was about people following Jesus as their king in their hearts and having a good relationship with God. Jesus was not trying to deny that the Messiah was descended from King David. However, Jesus wanted people to have a higher view of the Messiah than they were expecting. If Jesus had denied that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David, the crowds would have been angry with him because they were always taught that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David. Instead, Jesus shows how even King David recognized that the Messiah would be far greater than himself by calling him Lord.

The people listened with delight. They probably liked that the teachers of the law were uncomfortable with Jesus' teachings. The people's response showed that Jesus was popular with the crowds.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:35-37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In the first scene: Jesus is teaching the people in the temple courtyards. He asks them questions about scripture to help them think deeply about the real role of the Messiah, or Promised Savior. The crowd is delighted by Jesus' teaching.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (the disciples do not do anything in this scene, but they are probably there in the temple courtyards with Jesus)
- The people in the temple courtyards, including the teachers of the religious law
- King David
- The LORD God
- And The Lord Master, or the Messiah

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Jesus was still teaching in the temple courtyards. He was probably teaching to the large crowd in the courtyards. There are most likely teachers of the religious law listening as well as Jesus' disciples.

It is important to remember that Jesus taught like many religious teachers. He asked many questions in his teachings not because he wanted an answer, but because he wanted people to think carefully about scripture.

It is important to remember that Jesus quoted scripture from Psalms.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will your language use different types of language or words when quoting Scripture or when introducing a quote from Scripture? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the people what David wrote about the Messiah in the Psalms. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit told David to say, "The Lord (God) said to my Lord (or, my master): Sit in the place of honor at my right hand, until I humble your enemies beneath your feet." David says that God speaks to his (to David's) Master. God says that David's master will sit at God's right hand in a place of honor. God will give him victory over his enemies. He will show this by putting the enemies under David's master's feet.

It is important to remember that the crowd was happy to hear this teaching.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:35-37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The people in the temple courtyards, including the teachers of the religious law
- King David
- The LORD God
- And The Lord Master, or the Messiah

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus teaching in the temple courtyard. He has probably been there a while teaching. His disciples are also there. There are probably teachers of the law in the crowd. Jesus asks a question, "Why do the teachers of religious law say that the Messiah is the son of David?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the teachers of the law, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Upset. Is he questioning our teaching?" "Surprised. Jesus is a wise teacher," or "Curious. What will Jesus say next?" Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus saying, "The Holy Spirit told David to say, 'God (or the Lord) said to my Lord (or my master), sit in the place of honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies beneath your feet.'"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Surprised. I've never noticed that before," "That is confusing. Why would he call his descendent Lord?" or "Curious. I'm sure Jesus will explain." Continue the drama.

Act out Jesus summarizing his teaching by saying, "David himself called the Messiah 'my Lord,' so how can the Messiah be his descendant?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Happy because Jesus has a new and exciting teaching," "A bit confused," or "Happy because it seems like Jesus speaks with authority." Continue the drama.

The crowd is delighted by Jesus' teaching.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:35–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus was teaching people in the **temple**, or the place in Jerusalem where God lived among his people. Be sure to use the same word for temple as you used in previous passages. For more information on temple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus asked why the **teachers of religious law** or **scribes** claimed that the **Messiah**, or **Christ**, is the descendant or son of David. Teachers of the law interpreted God's law. Messiah, or Christ, is the title of God's chosen one who God sent as king and savior. Use the same words for teachers of religious law, Messiah, and Christ that you used in previous passages. For more information on teachers of the law, Messiah, and Christ, refer to the Master Glossary.

A **son of David** means a descendant of David. In the New Testament the term "son of David" usually refers to the Messiah because the prophets prophesied that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David. Be sure to use the same word for Son of David as you used in previous passages. For more information on Son of David, refer to the Master Glossary.

King David was the great and important king of the Jewish people. God had promised David that someone from his descendants would rule over Israel forever. Be sure to use the same word for David as you used in previous passages. For more information on David, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said that the **Holy Spirit** told David what to say when he wrote his Psalm. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew "ruach" (spirit) can have the physical meanings "wind" or "breath." It also can mean "power" or "authority" that God gives to someone to do extraordinary things. God gave kings his Spirit when he anointed them to be king and gave them special wisdom and power from God. The person who is filled with God's Spirit carries a message from God to the people or to an individual. The person who has God's Spirit has divine wisdom and authority (especially kings and prophets). Use the same term for "the Holy Spirit" that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

When David says, "the **Lord** said to my **Lord**," he is talking about when God speaks to the Messiah. The first LORD refers to God. The second Lord refers to David's master (who is also understood to be the Messiah). You may need to specify in your translation that it was the "Lord God" who spoke to "my Lord Master." Translate "Lord," meaning God, and "Lord," meaning Master, in the same way you have in previous passages. For more information on the different uses of Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 12:35-37

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (8651955 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 12:38-44

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 12:38-44 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:38-44 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:38-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is with his disciples, or closest followers, in the temple courtyards. He has been teaching the people and the teachers of the law. We do not know when he spoke about these things. This teaching is the last teaching that Mark talks about during Jesus' public ministry.

Jesus said, "Beware of these teachers of religious law!" The words "beware" or "watch out" mean that Jesus is trying to warn the people about potential harm. In this case, harm could come through the actions of the teachers of the law. The teachers of the law, also called scribes, studied, interpreted, and taught God's law. They often wore long white linen robes. The robes reached their feet and had a long fringe or edge. The color white showed that the men were important and had authority, or the right to act. In contrast, common people wore bright colors. The teachers liked to wear these clothes to show how important they were.

Stop here and look at a picture of a long white linen robe that the teachers of religious law would have worn as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that the teachers of the law like to walk in the marketplaces and receive respectful greetings. Marketplaces were a social center of Jewish culture where people sold and bought items. As teachers walked around, people showed them respect by rising to greet them. Only the tradesmen who were working in the marketplace did not have to do this. People called these religious teachers, "Rabbi," "Father," or "Master."

At feasts, the teachers sat in the best seats of honor to the right and left of the host. In the synagogues, or local places of Jewish prayer, the teachers also had the best seats of honor. They sat at the front facing the congregation so that everyone could see them. They sat in front of a special chest or box that held the written copy of their Scriptures.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. What kind of people do others praise in your culture? What kind of clothing do people use to show that they have a high social status? Pause this audio here.

No one could pay the teachers of the law for teaching God's law. Instead, the community gave them gifts. These teachers were poor, but they usually did not have to beg for money or food. Many wealthy people took care of these teachers. The teachers of the law wanted people to think that they were more righteous or closer to God than others, so they prayed for long periods of time in public. Jesus implies they only wanted to make themselves look good. He says God will punish them greater or more severely than other people.

Sometimes the teachers of the religious law took advantage of poor people. Jesus says "they devour widow's homes" to show that the teachers of the law took as much money as they could from widows. We do not know how they did this, but it is possible that they persuaded widows to give them generous gifts. Unlike the teachers of the law, widows had a low social status and were especially vulnerable because they had no husband to care for them. Many times, widows did not have enough money to live on.

In the next scene Jesus is sitting with his disciples next to the collection box at the temple. This means he could see the place where people came to give offerings to God. The temple treasury is the place where people gave gifts to God for the temple. The collection boxes were trumpet-shaped and placed against the wall of the Court of Women in the temple. People could put money in the boxes as an offering to God. Mark may have included this scene here to describe the contrast between the fake righteousness of the teachers of the law and the widow's full devotion to God.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the temple courtyards and a photo of a collection box as a group. Pause this audio here.

Many rich people placed gifts that had a high value into the collection boxes. In contrast, a poor widow—a woman whose husband has died—dropped in two of the smallest copper coins possible. It is significant that she dropped in two coins since she could have kept one for herself.

Stop here and look at a photo of a copper coin as a group. Discuss this question as a group: How do people treat widows in your culture? What is a widow's life like in your culture? Do they usually have enough money and food? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says "I tell you the truth" to emphasize what he is about to say to his disciples. Jesus says the rich gave from their wealth, meaning they had plenty of money left after giving some of it to God. The widow, however, gave out of her poverty. Even though the widow did not have enough money to buy what she needed to survive, she gave all she had to God. Jesus explains that God values the woman's offering because she gave everything she had. By using this example, Jesus is calling his disciples to surrender, or give, every part of their lives to Jesus. Like the widow, Jesus wants his disciples to show that they totally trusted God.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:38-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is teaching the people, probably in the temple courtyards. Jesus warns them about the hypocrisy of the teachers of the law.

In the second scene: Jesus is sitting next to the collection boxes in the temple courtyard. He sees a widow putting in two small coins. Jesus points this out to the disciples, who are probably sitting with him. Jesus says her gift is more valuable to God than all the rest of the gifts because she gave all she had.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The people in the temple courtyards, including the teachers of the law
- Rich people putting a lot of money into the collection boxes
- The widow who puts the coins in the collection box

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Jesus was still teaching in the temple, although we do not know exactly when this teaching takes place.

It is important to remember that for the first part of his teaching, there is a crowd gathered around him listening, including teachers of the law.

It is important to remember that later, Jesus is sitting next to the collection box in the temple. He is watching the people come past and put in money as an offering to God.

Mark describes people giving offerings, then uses a word like "but" to contrast the widow from the rich people who gave extravagant offerings.

Jesus sees the widow drop in two small copper coins. Jesus gets the attention of his disciples. He wants them to understand the importance of what the woman did. He says, "I tell you the truth" to show that he is telling his disciples something important.

Jesus tells his disciples that this woman has given everything she had to God. Therefore, Jesus says she has actually given more than everyone else. This does not mean she literally gave more money than everyone else, but rather that her gift had more value to God because she gave everything she had.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:38-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The people in the temple courtyards, including the teachers of the law
- Rich people putting a lot of money into the collection boxes
- The widow who puts the 2 small coins in the collection box

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus teaching in the temple courtyards. While he is teaching, he says, "Beware of the teachers of the religious law. They like to walk around in long robes. They like it when people greet them respectfully in the marketplaces. They love the seats of honor in the synagogues, or places of prayer. They love to sit at the most important table at banquets. They cheat widows out of their property and they have no shame about it. They

pretend to be pious good people by praying for a long time in public. But God will punish them more severely than he will punish others."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the people listening to Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Happy that someone is finally speaking the truth about the religious leaders," "Confused because I thought the religious leaders were good men," or "I'm surprised Jesus would speak so boldly right in front of the religious leaders!" Ask the person playing the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am angry that Jesus would say these things about me and my friends!" "I think we should try harder to kill Jesus," or "Embarrassed. I am guilty of doing those things." Continue the drama.

Act out a change of scene. Jesus and his disciples are sitting next to the collection boxes in the temple courtyards. Jesus is watching people drop their money inside. He watches rich people put in a lot of money. He watches one poor widow drop in two small coins. He calls his disciples to pay attention and says, "Look! This poor widow has given more than everyone else has given to God. They gave money from their extra money, but she is very poor. Yet she gave everything she had to live on."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I don't understand," "Confused. She gave almost nothing," or "I want to give everything to Jesus like this woman gave everything to God." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm proud of this woman," "I love this woman because she is so devoted," or "I'm confident my Father will take care of her."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 12:38-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus taught the people to beware of the **teachers of religious law**. The teachers of the law, also called scribes, studied, interpreted, and taught God's law. Use the same words for teachers of religious law as you have used in previous passages. For more information on teachers of the law, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said that the teachers of religious law walked around proudly in flowing **robes**. These robes were long white linen with tassels at the bottom. The robes the teachers wore were very fancy and expensive. For more information about robes, see the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a long white robe with tassels at the bottom as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that these teachers of the law loved the seats of honor in the **synagogues**. Synagogues were Jewish places of worship where people in villages could meet instead of in the main temple in Jerusalem. Use the same word for synagogues as you have in previous passages. For more information on synagogue, refer to the Master Glossary.

These teachers liked to pray long prayers in public. **Prayer** in the New Testament refers to communicating with God. Be sure the word you use here does not refer to only ritualistic communication, but something more personal. Use the same word for prayer as you used in previous passages. For more information on prayer, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus watched people putting their money offerings to God in the temple's treasury, or **collection boxes**. These boxes were in one of the outer courtyards of the temple. They were trumpet or horn shaped. People could easily place their money in the form of coins inside the box through the horn shaped opening.

Stop here and look at a picture of a collection box as a group. Pause this audio here.

During both of Jesus' teachings, he is at the **temple**, or the place where God lived among his people in Jerusalem. Use the same word for temple that you used in previous passages. For more information on the temple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus watched a woman put in two **copper coins**. These coins were very small, made of copper, and the smallest amount of money possible.

Stop here and look at a picture of a copper coin as a group. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 12:38-44

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9453289 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 13:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 13:1–8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:1–8 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage Jesus begins teaching the people about the future. Jesus uses narrative sentences to explain to the people.

This story happens after Jesus sees the widow put two small coins into the collection box. Jesus and his disciples leave the temple courtyards. According to the previous passage all of the disciples were with Jesus at the temple. As they leave, one of his disciples expresses his amazement at the size and magnificence of the temple. This disciple may have been talking about the walls built of huge, hard white stones. Each stone in the walls may have been about 12 meters long, 4 meters high, and 6 meters deep. Even though they were still building the temple, people in other countries had heard about the size and beauty of the temple.

Stop here and show a photo of the temple in Jesus' day. Look at a picture of some stones that are about the same size to get an idea of how big the stones in the temple were. Pause the recording here.

The disciple calls Jesus, "Teacher." To call Jesus "teacher" was a way of showing respect. The disciple was acknowledging that Jesus had the authority to teach things about God. Jesus responds in a surprising way. Jesus starts by asking a question that doesn't require an answer. Some translators translate this as a positive statement and say, "Look at these great buildings." Jesus says, "These buildings will be completely destroyed. No stone will be left on top of each other." Jesus uses emphasis in his language to show that the temple building

will be completely destroyed. Consider the size and weight of these stones. To say that not one stone will be left on top of another indicates complete and violent destruction.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: Tell a story in which some important building or structure is destroyed. This can be by disaster or by war. Notice how the storyteller describes the coming destruction. What words does the storyteller use to show that the destruction is complete? Pause the recording here.

Earlier in Mark, Jesus taught about the judgment of Israel. Jesus talked about the fig tree that withered. Jesus talked about the vineyard owner killing the wicked tenants and giving the vineyard to others. These are all references to the judgement of Israel. Jesus wants his disciples to understand that the destruction of the temple will be a result of the rebellion of the people of Israel.

Jesus and his disciples walk from the temple down to the valley. Jesus and the disciples walk across the valley to the next mountain, the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives is named this because of the olive trees growing there.

Stop here and show the translation team a photo of the temple and valley between the temple in Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. Show a photo of the temple taken from the side of the Mount of Olives so that the translators can see that Jesus and the disciples would have been able to see the temple. Show a picture of olive trees with olives growing on the trees. Pause the recording here.

The place where Jesus and the disciples are sitting is close to where Jesus and his disciples stay every night. Jesus and the disciples sit on the side of the mountain overlooking the valley across from the temple. The temple would have been visible to them the entire time they were walking from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives. Jesus talks with some of his disciples alone. Four of the first disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—came to Jesus privately or out of the hearing of the others and asked Jesus two questions about what Jesus said. Both questions have the same meaning: "Tell us, when will this happen?" and "What sign will show us that these things will soon happen?" The disciples recognize that the temple destruction will not be the only bad thing that happens. There will be other problems happening in the world at the same time.

The disciples asked what sign would show them that this will happen soon. A sign would be a special act of God or something extraordinary that occurs. This sign or special event would indicate that something is about to happen or will happen soon. The sign would be a warning to get ready or be prepared for this event which is coming. For example, when you see lightning, you know that the sound of thunder will follow. The disciples were wanting to know what sign to look for that would indicate that the things Jesus is describing are about to occur.

Jesus prepares his disciples for not just the temple destruction, but for when the end of everything will happen. Jesus begins his long teaching by repeating a phrase he will repeat often in this passage: "Watch out!" or "Take heed!" or "Be on guard!" Jesus does not want his disciples to be deceived or tricked into believing something that is not true.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: Tell a story in which the main character is warning some people about a coming danger. This danger would be a storm or a conflict like war. What are the special words or phrases that the storyteller uses that cause people to pay attention to what you are going to say next? Pause the recording here.

Jesus warns them that many will come in *his* name," which means they will try to take the title and authority that belongs to Jesus. They will try to say that they are "him," or "the Messiah." In this context, to say, "I am he" is declaring, "I am the Messiah." The word "Messiah" is not in the text, but you may need to include it here so that it can be clear that people will come saying that they are Israel's savior, or Messiah.

Jesus also reminds his disciples that wars between people groups and kingdoms will happen, but that does not mean that the end is coming right away. There will also be natural disasters such as earthquakes and famines, where people will not have enough food to eat. Jesus says these problems will be the beginning of birth pains. This is Jesus' way of saying that these kinds of events are just the beginning of a long period of war and devastation. This period of war and hardship in the world is just like the beginning of birth pains for a woman, which does not mean the baby will be born right away. The end of the world will not come right away.

Jesus uses the term "birth pains" as a word picture. When a woman is ready to give birth, the pains usually start slowly and are of low intensity. Then over several hours the pains increase in frequency and intensity until the baby is born. Because most people know about the birth pains, Jesus uses this word picture as an example of how the disasters Jesus mentions will start slowly and increase in frequency and intensity. Jesus is saying that the first disasters and wars will be like the low intensity birth pains at the beginning of the birth process.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: Does your culture have any special comparisons of events with childbirth? How and when do you talk about childbirth? Pause the recording here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: In the first scene Jesus and his disciples are leaving the temple. The disciples are amazed at the size and beauty of the temple buildings. Jesus tells them it will all be destroyed.

In the second scene: Jesus is speaking alone with four of his disciples. They are sitting on the Mount of Olives looking across the valley to the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus explains to his disciples what will happen in the world before the end of everything.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with him)
- Many coming claiming to be the Messiah

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Before beginning to visualize the whole story, spend some time visualizing the temple buildings.

Stop here and show a photo of the temple in Jesus' day. Look at a picture of some stones that are about the same size to get an idea of how big the stones in the temple were. Pause the recording here.

Discuss as a group: How does your culture construct important buildings? What materials do you use for the construction? How will you describe the temple and the stones, if you don't use stone in your construction? Pause the recording here.

In scene one, Jesus and his disciples were leaving the temple to go back to their friends' house in Bethany, outside of Jerusalem. They would have left Jerusalem, walked down to the valley, walked across the valley, and walked up the Mount of Olives. As they left the temple, while they were walking, one of the disciples spoke to Jesus. The disciple said, "Teacher" and then talked about the beautiful temple buildings. As they continued walking, Jesus said, "Yes, look at the buildings. Everything is going to be completely destroyed."

In scene two, Jesus and the disciples have arrived on the Mount of Olives and sat down. From their seated position they could have seen the temple. Four of Jesus' disciples spoke to him privately which means that the others couldn't hear what they said. The others were probably there but sitting a little ways away.

Stop here and show the team a photo of the Mount of Olives overlooking the valley and the temple. Pause the recording here.

The four disciples asked two questions with a similar meaning. These questions are referring back to the statement that Jesus has just made about the coming destruction of the temple buildings. The disciples asked, "When will this happen?" and "What sign will show us these things are about to happen?" The disciples are asking for a signal or warning that the destruction is about to come.

Jesus begins to explain. Jesus warns them with emphasis. Jesus says a warning that means, "Watch out!" "Take heed!" or "Be on guard!" Jesus then lists some things that will happen. Jesus talks about wars and rumors of war. Jesus talks about earthquakes and famines. Jesus says that these events will start slowly and gradually become more frequent and more severe. Jesus says that these events don't mean that the end is coming quickly. These events mean that much more will come.

Jesus then compares these disasters to the pains of childbirth. Jesus uses this as a word picture. When a woman begins to have these pains, there is still a long time before the baby comes. The pains usually start slowly and have low intensity. But as the birth process continues, the birth pains increase in frequency and intensity until the baby is born. Just like that, there will be many problems before the end of everything will come.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with him)
- Many coming claiming to be the Messiah

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus and the disciples are leaving the temple in Jerusalem. They have just seen the widow put two coins in the collection box. One of the disciples says, "Teacher, look at these great buildings! Look at the huge stones in the walls!" Jesus replies, "Yes, see these great buildings? There will not be one stone left on top of each other. Every stone will be thrown down."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling when you hear Jesus say these things?" You might hear things like, "I'm confused. How can such stones be moved?" Or, "I'm sad to think about losing the temple," "What is Jesus talking about? Everyone admires this beautiful temple. We are not at war with anyone." Or, "I'm afraid when I hear Jesus talking like this." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear, "It makes me feel sad when I think about what I know is coming. This is going to happen and the people still don't understand." Continue the drama.

In scene two, Jesus and his disciples walk out of Jerusalem, through the valley, and up to the side of the Mount of Olives. They sit down on the side of the mountain where they can see the temple. Four disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—take Jesus aside and ask, "Tell us, when will this happen? What sign will show us that these things will happen soon?"

Stop the action: Ask these four men, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear, "I'm anxious. I feel great anxiety. I want to know when this will happen so I can prepare for it." Or, "Hearing things like this makes me afraid. How can an army move those stones like that? Those stones are so big and heavy." Or, "I know God sends signs sometimes. I want to understand the sign when I see it." Continue the drama.

Jesus responds, "Watch out! Many people will come and say that 'I am the Messiah.' Those people will trick many people into believing a lie. You will hear of wars and threats of war, but do not panic. The end will not come right away. Nation will fight nation. Kingdom will fight kingdom. There will be earthquakes. There will be famines where people will not have enough to eat. This is just the beginning of destruction that is like the beginning of birth pains. More will come."

Stop the action: Ask the four disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I am afraid," or "I'm sad," or "I'm impatient for the end to come." Or, "This sounds terrible. I'm not sure I like to think about all this." Or, "I'm glad Jesus is telling us so we won't be caught by false people. I want to stay true to God." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear, "I know they don't understand. Everything is peaceful right now and they still don't understand what the Messiah is coming to do. I'll keep teaching them so that they will have this teaching to remember when they do understand in the future." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his **disciples** leave the **temple courtyards**. Use the same words for temple and disciples that you have been using, and remember that these words are in the Master Glossary.

The disciples call Jesus **Teacher**. Use the same word for Teacher that you have used in previous Mark passages, and remember that the word can be found in the glossary.

Jesus answers the disciple by asking a question that doesn't require an answer. You may turn this question into a positive statement if needed by your language. Jesus says, "Look at these buildings."

Jesus and his disciples walked through the valley between the mountain that the temple was on and the **Mount of Olives**. The Mount of Olives was east of Jerusalem and overlooked the city of Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives has its name from the olive trees that grow on this mountain.

Jesus' disciples asked him for a **sign** that the destruction of the temple was coming soon. A sign is a signal or indication that something is true or will happen. A sign could be a warning. Use the same word for sign that you have used before, and remember that sign is discussed in the Master Glossary.

One of the signs is that Jesus said that people will come "in my name, claiming 'I am he.'" Jesus does not say the word Messiah. But when a person says, "I am he" that person is saying "I am the Messiah." The person is telling all around him listening, "I am the Messiah, the one sent by God." If you choose to fill in the missing information and you use the word Messiah, use the same word for **Messiah** that you have been using, and remember that Messiah is in the Master Glossary. When someone comes **in my name** it means that they come with the dignity, power or authority of the person.

Jesus says that nation will go to war against nation and kingdom against kingdom. A **nation** is a tribe or ethnic group, or a people of a country. A **kingdom** is the territory that a king rules. One way to say this is that people under one king or ruler will fight against people living under another king or ruler. Nation and kingdom are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 13:1–8

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (17697209 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (12547546 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 13:9–23

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 13:9–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:9–23 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:9–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and the disciples are sitting on the Mount of Olives where they can see the buildings of the temple. Jesus has been teaching Peter, James, John, and Andrew about what will happen in the future. In this passage, Jesus continues the teaching from the previous passage. This passage is narrative.

After Jesus talks about what it will be like in the last days, Jesus warns his disciples to be aware of the dangers the disciples will face. Jesus says again, "Watch out!" or "Beware!"

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: Tell a story about someone who is trying to warn people in a village about some disaster that is coming. Listen to the words or sentences the storyteller uses for specific warning statements. Jesus says, "Watch out!" at the beginning and at the end of this passage. Will you choose to use the same phrase both times he says it? Pause the recording here.

Jesus uses the words "handed over" or "delivered" several times to emphasize that the disciples will face arrest and trial. Authorities will arrest the disciples *because* they follow Jesus and are telling people the good news about Jesus. Jesus says that some of these authorities are from local councils. A local council or local authorities would be a political governing group in a village or town. Then Jesus said that the disciples would be beaten inside the synagogue. The synagogue was the local Jewish place of prayer and teaching in each village or town. Jesus says that governors and kings will also judge the disciples. Governors could refer to Roman regional leaders. Kings could refer to people like King Herod who ruled over an entire nation. Notice that these problems for the disciples will potentially come from four different groups: local authorities, local religious leaders, governors or regional leaders, and kings or rulers over the nation.

Jesus continues the teaching by saying that sometimes governors and kings will have the disciples arrested and judged in trials in court. But Jesus says these trials in front of government authorities will also be opportunities to tell people about the good news that Jesus came to save the world. This is a way for the good news, or gospel, to be preached to everyone everywhere in the world. Jesus says that the good news must spread first to all nations *before* the end of the world can come. A nation is a group of people that has its own territory and government. But then Jesus says not to worry—don't be anxious! The Holy Spirit will tell the disciples what to say when they are arrested and judged. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit who lives in the hearts of those who follow Jesus. Jesus says the Holy Spirit will help these followers with what to say when being attacked verbally by government leaders.

Stop and discuss: Have various translation team members give testimony of when the Holy Spirit has helped them know what to say and how to say it. Recall the term you have used for Holy Spirit in other passages. Pause the recording here.

Jesus says that even family members like brothers, fathers, and children will rebel against each other and betray family members to the authorities to be killed. By using family terms like brother and father, Jesus is saying that the people who you love and want to protect the most will betray you. People will hate the disciples

because they follow Jesus. But the disciples who keep following Jesus faithfully until their death will be saved. They will go to heaven to be with God at the end of their earthly life.

Stop and discuss: Have the translation team tell stories of people they know or have heard of who have been persecuted or killed for their faith in Jesus. Pause the recording here.

Now Jesus shifts to warning about other hard things that will happen. Jesus says that it will get so bad that people will run away. Jesus describes something called an "abomination of desolation." Jesus uses the same term as the angel does to the prophet Daniel when he is explaining what will happen in the future. Daniel also talks about something that will make God's temple unclean and unfit for use. We do not know much about this thing. All we know is that some hated, insulting and evil thing will happen that will cause God's presence to leave God's temple. God will judge the nation of Israel because of it. The early readers of this passage believed that this thing would happen soon. Most people believe that this bad thing will be a person doing something bad to or in the temple. Mark adds an author's note "Reader, pay attention!" to make people understand that the warning to flee is important to remember.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: Tell a story in which a person is giving warnings about something bad that will come. In the middle of the story, the storyteller stops and says directly to the listeners, "Pay attention!" The storyteller continues the story. Now reflect on the story. How was the "Pay attention!" said or how was it different from the rest of the story? Pause the recording here.

A few years later different people did insult God's temple in Jerusalem. And then God allowed Jerusalem to be completely destroyed in 70 AD. People believed that was one fulfillment of this prophecy. There may be more similar things that happen in the future as well. Prophecies are usually fulfilled soon after they are told, and then again many years later. The important thing to remember is that Jesus is reminding his disciples here that when God judges Jerusalem and Israel it does not mean that the end of the world will come immediately after that.

Jerusalem is in the mountains in the region of Judea. Jesus says that those in Judea should go to another group of mountains outside of Judea. Then Jesus gives specific examples of how quickly the people should leave when the hated and insulting thing happens in the temple.

Jesus says someone on the rooftop must come down and leave without packing their things. The roofs of the houses were flat, and often people prayed on the rooftops. There was an outside staircase where people could go up and down easily.

Stop here and show a photo of a house with a flat roof and outside staircase. Pause the recording here.

Jesus says that if someone is working in the fields, they should leave immediately. They should not stop to get their cloak, or coat. This outer cloak was an important piece of clothing—it acted as a blanket at night. During the day, when the sun made the day warm, they placed this coat at the edge of the field where they were working.

Stop here and show a photo of a cloak, or coat. Pause the recording here.

Jesus used these two examples to show that people will need to flee, or run away, immediately.

Jesus describes the hardship that many people will face. Pregnant women will be uncomfortable. Nursing mothers will have difficulty also. It would be hard for a pregnant woman to run quickly or for a nursing mother to carry her baby with her as she runs. Winter weather in Israel is harsh—it rains a lot. It often snows in the mountains. Rivers are dry in the summer, but overflow with water in the winter, so it would be hard to run away and cross rivers in the winter. When it rains, these rivers fill quickly with water. Sometimes, the people don't know that it has rained in the desert and the water coming down the river catches them unaware even as they are crossing the river.

Stop and share some stories as a translation team. Tell about a time when you had to flee from a storm or fire or war or earthquake or some other disaster. Talk about how it felt to leave quickly carrying nothing and potentially losing everything you have. Talk about the people who had the most difficulty going quickly. Pause the recording here.

Jesus says that these hard days will be a great trouble, or tribulation. Many people will die. But God will make the time period of these troubles shorter so that some people will survive. The people who survive are the elect or God's chosen ones. God is merciful. Some of this description from Jesus is similar to the descriptions of the end of the world in the prophet Daniel's book. Jesus uses two titles for God. Jesus says God and then Lord. Both words refer to God. This would be the same words you have been using for God and for Lord when the word Lord means God.

Jesus then warns his followers: "Don't believe people who say that the Messiah is here, or there." Jesus says that false prophets and messiahs will come and perform miracles to trick even God's people to believe in them instead of in the true God and the true Messiah. These false prophets and false messiahs will perform signs and wonders to deceive the people. A sign tells us that something is coming. Wonders would be something extraordinary like a miracle or something amazing that ordinary people could not do.

Jesus finally gives an answer to the disciples' original question in the previous passage: "When will all these things take place? What will be the sign that they will take place?" Jesus has described what will happen. Now Jesus says, "Watch out! I've warned you ahead of time!"

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: Does your culture have any stories about the end of the world? Share examples of these stories with each other. How do people feel about these stories?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:9–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus continues to teach his disciples. Jesus tells them to be aware that bad things are coming. Jesus warns them that they will be arrested and unjustly tried. Jesus warns them that everyone will hate them.

In the second scene: The scene shifts to a second phase of teaching where Jesus begins to describe the hated thing that will cause God's presence to leave the temple. Believers will run away and life will be very difficult. False messiahs and false prophets will try to deceive people.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with Jesus)
- Authorities who take, beat and kill Jesus' followers
- Families who betray their family members
- Those who run away from Judea to the mountains
- Many people coming claiming to be the Messiah

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, Jesus and four of his disciples are sitting on the Mount of Olives talking. The other disciples are sitting nearby but not close enough to hear what Jesus is saying. The disciples asked Jesus in the previous passage, "When will this destruction happen? What sign will come to warn us that this will happen?" Jesus is in the process of answering this question.

Jesus starts this passage by saying, "When these things happen, watch out!" Jesus tells the disciples that different groups of people will treat the followers badly. They will be handed over to local councils. Local religious leaders will beat the disciples in the synagogue. Governors and kings will hold unjust trials. Then

brothers, fathers, and children will betray their believing family members and give them to authorities to execute them.

Jesus says that the trials give the believers an opportunity to preach the good news about Jesus to the authorities. Believers must preach the good news to all nations of people before the end of the world can come. It is important to remember that Jesus says to not be anxious or worried about what to say. The Holy Spirit is the one who will speak through the disciples.

Jesus says everyone will hate believers because they follow Jesus. In the end, the believers will be saved—that means they will live with God forever in heaven, because they will remain faithful to following Jesus to the end of their lives.

In the second scene, Jesus describes the unholy, hated object that causes destruction. God's presence leaves the temple. This hated thing is probably in the form of a person standing in the temple and doing things he should not do. Mark points this out to the reader in a special phrase, "Reader, pay attention!" Jesus then says that those in Judea, the area around Jerusalem, must run away to the mountains. A person on the rooftop must leave without going back into the house and packing. A person in the field must leave without even getting their coat which is probably at the end of the field. This will be a very difficult time for pregnant women and nursing mothers. Jesus says to pray—or talk to God—and ask that this not happen in winter, the harsh season with bad weather. Jesus says these days will have more difficulty and trouble than any other days since creation. However, God is going to make the time of suffering shorter so that not everyone will die. Jesus says that God does this for the sake of his chosen people—those who follow him.

Jesus says, "Don't believe it if someone says the Messiah is there." Jesus says false prophets and messiahs will come. They will do miracles to trick God's people.

Jesus ends this time by saying, "Watch out! I have warned you about this ahead of time!" Jesus is answering the earlier question the disciples asked. "What will happen in the end times? What is the sign that these things will happen?"

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:9–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with Jesus)
- Authorities who take, beat, and kill Jesus' followers
- Families who betray their family members
- Those who run away from Judea to the mountains
- Many coming claiming to be the Messiah

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus is continuing to teach his four close disciples on the side of the Mount of Olives. Jesus starts by saying, "Watch out!" or "Take heed! People will hand you to the local authorities and they will beat you in the synagogues. You will have trials before governors and kings. But you will have an opportunity to share the good news about me because the good news must be shared first with all nations. When you are arrested or in the trial, don't worry about what you will say. Just say what God tells you to say, because it is really the Holy Spirit who will tell you what to say."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I am afraid. This sounds really bad," or "I'm worried that I will say the wrong thing when I am arrested but this sounds like the Holy Spirit will help me so that makes me feel better," or "I'm happy that every nation will hear the good news." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling as you teach these disciples?" You may hear, "They are listening and trying to understand. I know they don't really understand now but when this time comes, I hope they will remember this teaching and find comfort." Continue the drama.

Jesus continues to teach. Jesus tells his disciples, "A brother will betray his brother so that he is executed, a father will betray his own child, and children will rebel against their parents and cause their parents to be killed. Everyone will hate you because you are my followers. But you who endure to the end of everything will be saved."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "This makes me sad to think about families doing this to each other," or "I'm worried about my own family," or "Some of this makes me confused. I can't imagine people actually behaving like this." Continue the drama.

In scene two, Mark puts in a special comment. Mark, who is writing this down, says to the readers, "Pay attention to this part! It's important!" Then Jesus continues to speak. Jesus tells his disciples, "One day you will see the hated thing standing in a place he should not be standing. When that happens, the people in Judea should run away to the hills. The person on his rooftop should leave and not pack their things. The person in the field should leave and not stop to pick up his coat. It will be terrible for pregnant women and women nursing their children. The anguish—the trouble—in those days will be greater than any since creation or after. Everyone will die unless God makes the time shorter. But God will make the time shorter for the sake of those he has chosen, those who have chosen to obey him."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I feel deep sadness when I hear this. It sounds like a time of terrible suffering." Or, "It makes me feel afraid for my family, all my loved ones. But it also sounds hopeful because we will be with God in the end." Continue the drama.

Jesus continues to teach. Jesus tells his disciples, "If someone says, 'Look, here's the Messiah,' or 'There he is,' don't believe it. False messiahs will come. False prophets will come. They will do miraculous things. They will do these things because they want to deceive and trick God's people who have chosen to follow God. Watch out! I've warned you about all these things!"

Stop the action: Ask Jesus' disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "This makes me angry at the false prophets. How dare they come and try to deceive the people like that!" or "It makes me afraid that I'll be deceived. I will try to be on guard like Jesus is telling us to do." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "They are listening well. I think they are beginning to understand. I'm hopeful." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

Jesus is still sitting on the side of the Mount of Olives teaching Peter, James, John, and Andrew.

Jesus tells his disciples that they will be handed over to local **councils**. These are Jewish leaders in each town or village who judge disputes in their towns.

People will **beat** or **flog** the followers repeatedly with a whip in the **synagogues**. These whips are leather thongs with sharp pieces of metal. They beat people both on their backs and on their chests. Translate **synagogue** in the same way that you translated it in earlier passages in Mark, and remember that synagogue is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus said that followers will stand trial before governors and kings. **Governors** are appointed by a king or president of a country to rule over a certain area. Kings are rulers of a country or area.

The gospel, or good news, will be first preached to all the **nations** before the end comes. The good news is that Jesus was on this earth, died for our sins, and was raised from the dead. This is also called the good news. Nations is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus said not to worry about what they will say when they are arrested. The **Holy Spirit** will speak for them. Translate "Holy Spirit" in the same way you have translated it before, and remember that Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary.

Things will continue to go badly. A **brother will betray a brother**. If your language only has words for older or younger brothers, you may need to use a general word for brother or sister here.

Jesus says that in the hatred and betrayal, the followers who endure and are faithful to him will be **saved**, or in other words, they will live forever with God. Saved is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus goes on to say that one day an **abomination of desolation**, or a **sacrilege that causes destruction** will come and cause destruction and pain in the world. This horrible thing will cause God's presence to leave and God to judge the land. In Greek, this phrase literally means "a detested thing that causes horror." Your team could translate this as "the hated thing which destroys or causes fear."

Jesus says that the people who are in Judea should run away to other mountains. **Judea** is the region around Jerusalem and is one of the areas God gave to one of the twelve tribes of Israel—Judah—when he brought them back from Egypt. Jesus is saying that the people will have to flee their own country to go to another place.

Jesus then says that the person in the fields should leave right away and not even pick up his cloak or **coat**.

Stop here and show your translation team a photo of a coat, and remember that coat is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that people should **pray** that they do not have to run away during the **winter**. Prayer in the New Testament refers to communicating with God. Be sure that the word you use here does not refer to only ritualistic communication, but something more personal. **Winter** may be different in different cultures. You may need to say rainy season, bad months, or hard weather.

Jesus then says that the **Lord** (or **God**, in this case) will make the time of the difficulties shorter. He will not make the hours in the day shorter, but he will make the number of days or months shorter. God and Lord are discussed in the Master Glossary.

God will make the number of days shorter so that not everyone will die. Some of his **elect** will be saved. The elect are those whom God has chosen—or those who follow Jesus.

Some people will come and say that they are the Messiah, or Christ. Remember to translate this title for Jesus in the same way that you have in previous passages. See the Master Glossary for more information.

False **prophets** will come and do signs and wonders to trick people into thinking they are from God. Use the same word for prophets that you have in previous passages and remember that prophets is in the Master Glossary.

Signs and wonders: A sign is a signal or indication that something is true or will happen. A sign could be a warning. A wonder, or miracle, is simply something supernatural or amazing that happens that only God can do. Remember that signs and miracles are in the Master Glossary.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 13:9-23**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (22214223 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (15911098 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 13:24–31

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 13:24–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:24–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous scripture, Jesus has been telling his disciples about the difficult times that his followers will have. Jesus is still sitting with his four disciples, and the others a little distance away, on the side of the Mount of Olives. Jesus starts the teaching with some poetry, then finishes with talking to the disciples about what will happen.

Stop here and show your translation team a photo of the side of the Mount of Olives.

Stop here and review the way you have decided to discuss the anguish of the people or the suffering that will occur. Here Jesus refers to that suffering already described. Pause the recording here.

In the previous passage or earlier part of this teaching, Jesus described the hated thing that will cause destruction and cause God's glory to leave his temple. Jesus talks about the tribulation, or the hard days of suffering. We do not know how long these days of suffering will last. Then, in this passage of Scripture, Jesus says that sometime after those difficult days or days of suffering, there will be a lot of chaos in the heavens, or in the sky. Jesus lists the three main things in the sky: the sun, moon, and stars. Jesus explains how each will become dark or how its light will fall from the sky. Then Jesus sums it up by saying, "The powers in the heavens—or the sun, moon, and stars in the sky—will be shaken." Prophets like Joel from the Old Testament said that the sun, moon, and stars would lose their light. In prophecies in the Old Testament these things happening in the sky showed that God was acting in human history.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: How do you talk about prophecies or past predictions in religious or spiritual teachings in your culture? Tell a story about someone giving a prediction of things to come. Listen carefully to the language of the storyteller. Does your language change when you talk about prophecies? Pause the recording here.

Then Jesus describes the Son of Man. Jesus often refers to himself as the Son of Man in the book of Mark. The Son of Man reminds Mark's audience about the Daniel 7 passage where someone like a Son of Man was taken to God's throne where the Son of Man was given authority, honor and sovereignty over all the nations of the world. However, here Jesus says that the Son of Man himself will come with power and glory. This difference is that in this passage the Son of Man is not taken to God but is coming like God to the earth. This Son of Man will send out angels to gather his own people from all over the world and from the farthest end of the earth. In other words, no one will be able to hide from the Son of Man. Angels are supernatural beings that serve God in many ways. Glory means the amazing wonder of God. Only God "comes in glory." Jesus' audience would have

understood these chosen ones, or the elect, to be the scattered Jewish people from the four winds, or all over the world, who would be brought back together. Jesus' audience would have also understood that Jesus was describing the Son of Man as someone who was God himself.

Stop and show the team a map of the world with Jerusalem or Israel in the middle of the map. Ask the team to point out the places that would be the farthest places or the ends of the earth. Pause the recording here.

Remember that Jesus is sitting on the Mount of Olives with his disciples. Now Jesus more fully responds to the original question that his four disciples asked him when they first sat down: When will these things—the destruction of the temple and all the other horrible things—happen? Jesus tells his disciples to learn a lesson from how the fig tree grows. The fig tree is a very common tree found all over Israel. Jesus chose a common fruit bearing tree for this example.

Stop here and show your translation team a photo of a fig tree before it has leaves, and after it has leaves and figs. Pause the recording here.

The fig tree is a tree that loses its leaves when the weather gets cold. The fig tree shows that it is about to have fruit when its branches get soft and small leaves start to sprout. When the fig leaves do return it is certain that the winter—or cold weather—has finished. The fig tree is a comparison to the signs that the end times are coming.

Stop and discuss: Talk about weather changing in your country. What signs do you have that the season is about to change? How do you know when it is time to prepare the soil and plant? How do you know when fruit will soon appear on the trees or vines? Pause the recording here.

Jesus says, "In the same way, when *these things* (or the difficult things Jesus has been talking about) start to happen," Jesus' return or the end times is near. Just like the fig tree when it starts to bloom, when the difficult things happen like the hated thing that will cause destruction, and the arrest of Jesus' followers—that is a sign that the end times are coming. Jesus' return is "right at the door," or about to happen. Right at the door is a word picture. When someone is coming and right at the door, we know that this person's arrival is happening right now.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who is coming. Include in the story different places this person is as he travels. When he gets to the door and is ready to enter, you may stop the story. Now discuss the word pictures the storyteller used to describe where the person was at different stages on this journey. Pause the recording here.

This passage of Scripture is very difficult to translate, because we do not know what exactly Jesus is talking about when he talks about *these things* happening. He could be referring to the hated thing that causes destruction, or to the sun, moon, and stars becoming dark. We know that the hated thing that causes destruction and the arrest of Jesus' followers happens some time before the very end of the world. Then after that difficult time, the sun, moon, and stars lose their light just before Jesus comes back to gather his people and rescue them from the destruction.

Jesus wants people to listen carefully: "I tell you the truth. This generation will not pass away before all these things happen." Again, we do not know exactly what *these things* refer to. However, most scholars think that Jesus is saying that the hated thing that causes destruction will happen during the lifetimes of some of his disciples. A horrible thing did happen in 70 AD during the lifetime of some of his disciples. The temple was completely destroyed. However, the world did not end and Jesus did not come back at that time. We know that the end of the world is still coming later, and that another hated thing that causes destruction will probably come again. Prophecies usually come true almost immediately, and then come true again later in history.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: How do you talk about prophecies in your religious or spiritual teachings in your culture? Tell a story with an example of prophecies that everyone knows, whether from the Christian faith or another faith. What kind of language do you use? How do people understand these prophecies? Do they think they will come true right away? Pause the recording here.

Prophets in the Old Testament said that heaven and the earth will disappear but that God's Word will never disappear. This means that everything on the earth will disappear, but Jesus' words, or the things Jesus spoke and taught, will never disappear. Jesus is proving yet again that Jesus is the Promised Savior, or Messiah.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:24–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus continues to teach his four disciples on the side of the Mount of Olives. Jesus describes to his disciples how the sun, moon, and stars will no longer give their light. When that happens, the Son of Man—or Jesus—will come with power and glory. The Son of Man will gather his chosen people from all parts of the earth.

In the second scene: Jesus gives his disciples a lesson from a fig tree. We know that the cold weather has finished when the fig tree starts to blossom. Just like that, we know that the end times are near when certain things happen.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with him)
- The chosen elect
- Angels

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: As you begin scene one and the prediction that Jesus gave about the sun, moon, and stars, decide if you will use poetry or poetic expressions for this part. Most translations put this in a poetic form while some use regular sentences but the translations all find some way to emphasize the statements so that people understand that this is a prophecy. Jesus makes two statements that are cause and effect, or the second part of the statement happens because of the first one. The moon receives light from the sun. Therefore, if the sun is dark, the moon will be dark. If stars fall out of the sky, then everything in the sky will be shaken.

Stop and practice saying these two cause and effect statements to see how they might work as poetry in your language, or if they work better as narrative statements. Pause the recording here.

Jesus talks about the Son of Man coming on the clouds. The Son of Man will send out His angels to gather those who belong to the Son of Man from the ends of the earth.

Pause here and decide how you will act out this scene. How will you describe this scene? Pause the recording here.

Remember that Jesus and four of his disciples are still sitting on the side of the Mount of Olives. This is a continuation of the previous teachings on the side of the mountain. Jesus started this teaching by referring to the horrible trouble or anguish that will happen when the hated thing will cause destruction for God's people. Now, in this passage, Jesus uses phrases from Old Testament prophets to describe what will happen to the lights in the sky. Three things will happen in the sky. The sun will be darkened. Then the moon will give no light. Then the stars will fall from the sky. All the powers in the heavens, or all the things in the sky, will shake. Remember that this is information from a prophecy given in the Old Testament.

Jesus says that after this prophecy about the things in the sky happens, the Son of Man will come with great power and glory. The Son of Man will send angels to gather the Son of Man's chosen people from all over the world—every place where there are people.

In scene two, Jesus switches the topic to talk about the fig tree. Jesus uses the fig tree as an example to show the disciples how they will know that these prophecies are about to happen. Jesus then gives an example from how a fig tree grows. When the fig tree branches become soft and leaves begin to grow, you know that the cold

weather has finished and a season of growth has begun. Just like the fig tree, when you see the sun, moon, and stars in the sky become dark, you know that the events Jesus is talking about will happen soon.

Jesus says, "I tell you the truth." Jesus wants his disciples to pay attention: Jesus says that many of those people who are living now will not die before these things Jesus has been talking about happen.

Jesus ends this teaching by saying that the world and everything God made is temporary, but the teachings of Jesus last forever.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:24–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with him)
- The chosen or the elect
- Angels

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus and four of his disciples are sitting on the side of the Mount of Olives. Jesus is continuing to teach. Jesus starts by referring back to the hated thing that will cause destruction and anguish and trouble for Jesus' followers. Jesus says that after that time of anguish for Jesus' followers, the sun will become dark, the moon will stop shining, and the stars will fall from the sky and stop shining. In fact, everything in the sky will shake. Then, everyone will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. The Son of Man will send angels to gather all his chosen people—those who follow the Son of Man—from every part of the world.

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "This makes me afraid. How can the sun stop shining or the stars fall out of the sky? Jesus is talking about an incredible event!" Or, "I'm awestruck! This sounds incredible. I can't imagine what kind of power the Son of Man will have." Or, "I'm shocked. I wonder what will happen to all the people—those who aren't chosen." Continue the drama.

In scene two, Jesus shifts his teaching now to talking about a fig tree. When the fig tree branches become soft again after the cold weather and the leaves start to grow again, you know that the cold weather is finished and the time of new growth has come. Just like this, when you see all these things happening on the earth, you know that the Son of Man will return very soon. It is true! Many people who are living now will still be alive when

these things I have been describing happen. Everything on the earth will someday go away, but my teaching will never go away.

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "This makes sense. Now I see that these dreadful things are signs so I won't be so afraid when they happen. I'm glad Jesus has explained this." Or, "I'm anxious. It all sounds amazing but will I really be able to recognize that Jesus is coming?" Or, "I'm confused. For Jesus to come back in power and glory means that Jesus will go away first. I don't know where Jesus will go. Does this mean that Jesus won't take us with him? Will we be left here to wait?" Or, "This all sounds so exciting. I'm happy to see what will happen." Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear, "I have done my best to explain this to my disciples. I hope they understand. I know that right now it's confusing, but later they should be able to remember this teaching and understand what is happening." Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:24-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus starts this part of the teaching by referring back to the **anguish** or hard times that he talked about in the previous passage. Jesus has been describing how the hated thing that causes destruction will cause so much hardship and pain for people.

Three things will happen in the sky. The sun will be darkened. Then the moon will give no light. Then the stars will fall from the sky. All the powers in the heavens, or all the things in the sky, will shake. **Heavens** here refers to the sky, not to the place where God lives.

Jesus starts this part of the teaching by using a prophecy about the sun, moon and stars from the Old Testament. Jesus quotes this as poetry. You may choose to use poetry or make it as regular sentences.

Jesus says that the **Son of Man** will come in the clouds with power and glory. Use the same term for Son of Man that you have used throughout Mark. Remember that Jesus is referring to himself, and that Son of Man is in the Master Glossary. **Glory** refers to God's power and presence. **Glory** is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus will send his **angels** to gather his **elect**, or chosen people, from all over the earth. Use the same word for angels that you have used in previous passages and remember that angels is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus will gather his people **from the four winds and from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens**. In other words, Jesus will gather his people from all over the world. This does not mean that some of his people are with God in heaven. It simply means everyone who is in the world who belongs to him.

Jesus then talks about the **fig trees**. Fig trees on the Mount of Olives could grow up to 8-10 meters in height. If Jesus taught these things the week before his death, it would have been the time of year where the fig tree was as he described it—with small new leaves about to bud out. The cold weather had just finished, and it was becoming warmer. In the early spring the sap goes through the branches and makes them tender because it is warm. The leaves sprout out of that.

Stop here and show your translation team a picture of a fig tree without leaves and one with leaves and figs. Pause the recording here.

Summer is coming when the fig tree begins to bud. Summer could be translated as the rainy season when there is not a summer in your culture, simply because it is the time of budding and growth.

When **all these things** take place you know that Jesus' return is near, or **right at the door**. "Right at the door" is a word picture that means the thing is soon going to happen.

Jesus emphasizes with "I tell you the truth!" This generation, or those people living now, will not pass away, or die, before the things Jesus described will happen.

Jesus says that **heaven and earth may pass away**, which means that the whole created universe might be destroyed or die. But Jesus' **words**, or teaching, will remain true forever.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 13:24-31**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (18317782 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (12749410 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Mark 13:32–37

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 13:32–37 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:32–37 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This is the end, or last part, of Jesus' teaching to his four disciples on the side of the Mount of Olives. Jesus and these 4 disciples have been sitting on the side of the Mount of Olives where they can see the buildings of the temple. The other disciples are on the side of the Mount of Olives but a short distance away where they cannot hear what Jesus has been saying. Jesus has been telling Peter, Andrew, James, and John what will happen before the Son of Man comes in glory. Now Jesus tells these four disciples what they are to do as they wait for this event. Jesus stresses to his disciples that they must remain alert—or watch carefully for when Jesus comes back before God judges the world. This is not new information. Earlier in his ministry Jesus told the disciples that the Son of Man, or himself, will come back one day. This passage is narrative.

Stop here and show your translation team the photo of the Mount of Olives. Pause the recording here.

As Jesus has been teaching, Jesus has told the disciples the signs that show that the time of Jesus' return is near. Jesus was telling the disciples what would happen and what they should do as these events start happening. Jesus was trying to prepare the disciples for the suffering that will occur. Now at this point in the teaching, Jesus changes the subject. These instructions change the tone of the teaching. Jesus marks this change by using the word "however" to begin this part of the teaching.

Jesus then tells the disciples that no one, including angels or even the Son (Jesus) himself, knows the exact time or day that Jesus will return. When Jesus says "the Son," Jesus is referring to the Son of God or Jesus, himself.

Stop and tell a story about someone who is a son. Use the title son often. This person is the son of his parents. He is a son of the village. He is a son of the soil, if he is a farmer. Try to think of all the different ways that this man is a son. If you have more than one word for Son, notice which word is used for son of his mother and son of the soil. Pause the recording here.

Only God knows when the Son (Jesus) will return. Now, because we don't know the day or hour that Jesus will return, Jesus says that the most important thing is to stay alert, or to do the work he has asked us to do. "That day or hour" uses the same words as the Old Testament when God says he will return to judge the world. Jesus said in the earlier part of this teaching that Jesus will also come back in glory when God comes back to judge the world. It is very important to watch carefully and do the things God has asked us to do without getting distracted by unimportant things.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: Do you have stories in your culture about the end of the world? Share examples of stories or phrases that you use to talk about the end of time. Notice if there is certain language or certain ways of talking about the end of time. Pause the recording here.

As Jesus continues to teach, Jesus wants to stress the importance of keeping watch, so Jesus shares a parable, or a story with a teaching. Jesus starts this story by saying, "It's like a man..." This parable is set in everyday life of the time period. Jesus talks about a man who goes on a long trip and leaves his slaves in charge of the household. His slaves still have to work to keep the house clean and running. The gatekeeper or guard at the door or the gate of the house still has to keep out thieves and enemies.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story in which the person is talking or teaching and tells a story to illustrate what he is saying. When Jesus tells a story, Jesus says, "It's like a man..." and Jesus then tells the story. Now listen to your storyteller. How does this person introduce the story that is being used to illustrate the teaching? Pause the recording here.

Jesus then talking to the disciples says you should stay awake because Jesus could come back at any time—even at night! Jesus refers to the Roman way to show time at night. Romans divided the night into 4 "watches." Jesus talks about the evening watch (6 to 9 p.m.), midnight (12 to 3 a.m.), before dawn (3 to 6 a.m.) when the rooster crows, and daybreak (6 to 9 a.m.). Mark's audience would have understood that this story is important for them, because it is set in their own cultural context.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: How does your culture divide the sections of the day? Pause the recording here.

Don't go to sleep! Or don't let Jesus find you sleeping! Jesus was not telling people that they cannot sleep. Jesus was saying that we have to be alert and work at the jobs he gives us until he returns. To be caught sleeping means that you are caught unprepared. We shouldn't be doing nothing or passively waiting for him to come back.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: Share stories of times when you or someone you know has left work for someone to do when you are away. How do you talk with them to tell them to guard your house or to do their jobs? Pause the recording here.

Jesus ends this teaching by reminding his disciples that the command to stay alert and not fall asleep is for everyone, not just the disciples. Jesus was saying, "You must be prepared." Don't be unprepared for Jesus' coming.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:32–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has only one scene, but Jesus tells a short parable inside the scene.

In the introduction to the **one scene**, Jesus emphasizes that no one knows the time when Jesus is coming back. Jesus tells people to be alert and watch for that time. Then Jesus tells a short story. Then Jesus again warns his disciples to keep watch and do what he has asked them to do.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with him with the others a little ways away)
- Angels
- The Father God
- Man who is going away
- The man's slaves
- The man's gatekeeper

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus starts this teaching with the word "however" which marks a change in subject or change in the direction of the teaching.

Stop and tell a story. Tell a story about a teacher who has been giving important instructions about an assignment. Then the teacher begins to tell the students what they should be doing. As the storyteller talks, listen for the word or words that show that the teacher has changed the focus of the teaching. Pause the recording here.

The use of the word "however" or "but" shows that Jesus is making a contrast between the previous events, which are difficult events in the world, and then this new event of Jesus coming back one day. Jesus tells the disciples that no one, including the angels and the Son (or Jesus himself) knows when Jesus will return. Only God the Father knows the time. Jesus tells the disciples that since no one knows the hour, then they must remain alert and prepared at all times. Jesus says, "Be on guard!" This is another way of saying that the disciples should remain alert. A soldier or a policeman is on guard—always watching for any sign of something that needs their attention. Jesus is telling the disciples to be like the soldiers or policemen.

It is important to remember that Jesus emphasizes "*That day or hour*," a reference to the day of judgment that every Jewish person was expecting.

After telling the disciples to be on guard, Jesus tells them a short story. Jesus begins the short parable by saying, "It is like..." Jesus is saying that waiting for his return is like a man who goes away and leaves his servants to continue taking care of and guarding his house.

It is important to remember that Jesus is talking about remaining vigilant—or staying alert—and continuing to do the jobs Jesus asked them to do. Notice that each person in the story has a specific task—his task, not other people's tasks. Jesus used the common Roman way of telling time to illustrate that Jesus could return at any time. Jesus mentioned 4 different time periods during the night.

Stop here and discuss: Talk about how your culture tells time. Decide on the general term you will use for each of these time periods. Pause the recording here.

After telling this short story, Jesus says that he is telling everyone, not just his disciples, to stay alert and watch for his return. We do not passively wait and watch for Jesus' return. We need to actively wait by continuing to work at the jobs he has given us to do while we wait.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:32–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples (but Peter, James, John, and Andrew talking alone with him with the others a little ways away)
- Angels
- The Father God
- The owner of the house who is going away
- The man's slaves
- The man's gatekeeper

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and four of his disciples still sitting on the side of the mountain. The other disciples are sitting a short distance away where they can't hear Jesus as Jesus speaks. Jesus is continuing to teach. Jesus shifts the subject and says, "*But* no one knows that day or hour." Jesus lists those who do not know when he will come back—not the angels in heaven, not the son himself, but only God the Father. "So be on guard! Be alert! You don't know when the time will come!"

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I'm confused. Jesus himself should know when he is coming back! I still don't understand where Jesus is going or why." Or, "How can Jesus not know this time but know so much about it?" Or, "I'm afraid—how will I know that I am staying alert? What happens if I'm not alert?" Continue the drama.

Jesus continues by telling a short story called a parable. Jesus says, "It's like a man going away. He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each one with an assigned task to do. He tells the one guarding the house at the door or gateway to watch and protect the house."

Stop the action: Ask the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "Are we the slaves that he will keep in charge of his house while he's gone? I think this means that we will each have a different task to do. I wonder what my task will be." Or, "I'm overwhelmed." Or, "I wonder what Jesus means exactly by 'be on guard.'" Continue the drama.

Jesus summarizes his short parable: "Therefore keep watch! You don't know when the owner is coming back. Maybe it will be the evening, or midnight, or early in the morning when the rooster crows, or at dawn when the sun rises. But don't be asleep! Don't be avoiding your work! I'm saying this to you strongly: Watch for my return! Expect it!"

Stop the action: Ask Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I hope they don't go to sleep and stop watching for me," or, "I've warned them and taught them what they need to know. I hope they remember it after I'm gone. I think they are understanding that this is serious."

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 13:32–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus has been telling the disciples about the suffering or difficult times that will be signs that Jesus is about to return. Now, Jesus shifts the teaching to talk about **that day** or **that hour** when Jesus will return. That day or hour is how the Day of the Lord, or the final day of judgement, is described in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, this day of judgement includes Jesus coming back in glory and power. "That hour" refers to the exact time of day he would come back.

The **angels** in **heaven**, where God lives, do not know when Jesus will return. Translate angels and heaven in the same way you have before, and remember that angels and heaven are in the Master Glossary. Heaven in this verse refers to where God lives.

Jesus says that the **Son** does not know when he will return. The Son here refers most likely to the Son of God, although a few scholars think it could mean Son of Man. It definitely refers to Jesus himself. Some languages require you to specify if this is the Son of God or the Son of Man. If your language requires you to specify which title, choose Son of God.

Son of God means that Jesus has the same nature as God and comes from God. Son of God is in the Master Glossary. Use the same term for Son of God that you have been using.

Only the **Father** knows when the Son will return. The Father refers to God himself. Use the same word for father that you would use for any father in your language. You may need to specify God, the Father.

Jesus tells his disciples to **watch out**, or **beware**, or **keep awake**, or **be alert**. This does not mean to physically not sleep. This means to continue doing the things God and Jesus have told you to do. It means be prepared at all times.

The owner of the house leaves and puts his **servants** or **slaves** in charge. Slaves are people who were owned and had no rights, and didn't receive pay for their work. Slaves and servants are in the Master Glossary.

The **gatekeeper** was someone who guards the door of the house, or the gate of the house, and does not allow enemies to enter.

Jesus reminded them that Jesus could return at any time: evening, midnight, before dawn, or at daybreak. Use the normal ways of dividing the night or time in your language.

*Speaking the Word**Speaking the Word*

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 13:32–37

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (15923226 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 14:1–11

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 14:1–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:1–11 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story begins the account of Jesus' Passion, or his final days on Earth. Mark begins to be more specific about time references as we get closer to Jesus' death. Mark tells us that it is two days before Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The Passover was a Jewish religious festival. It lasted for seven days because in Jesus' time the festival was a combination of Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. Passover celebrated the time when God rescued the Jewish ancestors from slavery in Egypt, and it was celebrated for one day. Immediately afterwards the Festival of Unleavened Bread was celebrated, making the seven-day holiday. In the Festival of Unleavened Bread, people ate unleavened bread—or thin flat bread without yeast—to remind themselves of how the Jewish people ate unleavened bread to remember their rescue from Egypt. The exact first day of this 7-day holiday is unclear. Some people believed it was celebrated over the course of 8 days.

The story of the woman anointing Jesus with perfume is put in the middle of the plot between the teachers of the law and Judas, Jesus' disciple, plotting to betray Jesus to the government authorities. Mark puts the woman's story here to show a contrast between the woman's act of love and the betrayal of men who should have loved Jesus.

As this story starts, the teachers of religious law — the chief priests and scribes — were still looking for a way to capture and kill Jesus. The Jewish leaders did not plan to kill Jesus themselves. They wanted the Romans to put Jesus to death in the way that Romans killed criminals. The teachers of religious law were still afraid of the people. They had been working on this for several days or weeks. However, during the Passover festival, the population of the city grew from 50,000 people to 250,000 people. Riots were common during this time because the large crowds of people helped rebels against the Roman government rebel more easily. People behaved in a disorderly or violent way when they rioted. Many of the people at the festival would have been from Galilee and may have strongly supported Jesus. People from Galilee were considered rebellious already. The religious leaders did not want to arrest Jesus in this type of environment because they were afraid the people would riot.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Are your religious leaders ever afraid of the people? Do they make decisions based on what people want? Give examples. Pause this audio here.

While Jesus had been in Jerusalem, he had walked from Jerusalem to Bethany every night to stay at the home of his friends, Lazarus, Mary and Martha. Bethany was about 4 kilometres outside of Jerusalem. On this day Simon invited Jesus and his disciples for a meal at his house in Bethany. Simon used to have leprosy, a serious skin disease in the time of Jesus. People probably continued to call Simon "the Leper," even though he was cured of the disease.

In Jesus' culture, people laid next to the table where they ate their formal meals, on a cushion with their feet out behind them. Jesus was laying next to the table where he was eating, probably with his head propped up on one elbow.

Stop here and look at a picture of people laying next to a table as a group.

Discuss these question as a group: What are the customs when you go to each other's houses to eat a meal? What kinds of things do you do to greet each other? How do you sit? Who comes to these meals? Pause this audio here.

A woman came into the house with a small alabaster jar of expensive, or well-made, pure perfume made of nard. This was unusual—women did not usually enter into a meal with other men. This woman may have been Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. She was carrying an alabaster jar. Alabaster jars were the highest quality and made of a certain kind of white or yellow stone. Only the most expensive perfumes were stored in them. The jars had long necks and no handles. The jars were sealed so no perfume could leak out. The jars were just big enough to hold one application of perfume. People broke the neck of the jars in order to get out the perfume. Perfume was often made from nard. Nard was oil made from the root of the nard plant from India. The woman broke the neck of the Jar and poured the perfume over Jesus's head to honour him.

Stop here and look at a photo of an alabaster jar and a photo of a nard plant from India as a group. The alabaster jar in this picture is a little different than the one the woman probably had. Pause this audio here.

Alabaster jars like this were family treasures and used only at very special events to anoint people to honour them and thank them. The woman poured all of the expensive perfume, not just ordinary oil, on Jesus. By doing this the woman honoured Jesus in a greater way than people normally honoured their guests.

During the Passover week it was culturally appropriate to give gifts to the poor. The disciples at the table with Jesus probably saw this woman's gift as unnecessarily extravagant during the time when they were supposed to be thinking about giving to the poor. It was extravagant—300 denarii was about 300 days' wages. The disciples were angry and complained that she should not have done this. The disciples 'scolded' the woman which means they showed their anger by rebuking her harshly.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of things do people do for others in your culture to show honour or thankfulness? Pause this audio here.

Jesus saw a different meaning in the woman's gift, and Mark indicates that by saying, "But Jesus replied, 'Leave her alone.'" He saw how much she loved him. Jesus was poor in one sense, because he was about to die. He was also very alone in that none of his disciples or close friends understood what he was about to suffer. When Jesus says 'Leave her alone' he does not mean to leave her by herself, but instead means — stop rebuking her.

Jesus calls the woman's actions "beautiful," or "good." Jesus reminds the disciples that they will always have the poor among them, just as Moses' law in Deuteronomy said. However, Jesus would not always be with them. Jesus implied that he was also "poor," so it was a good thing for them to show him this kindness. Dead bodies were anointed with perfume for burial, but Jesus would not be anointed when he died because he would die a criminal's death.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: What do you do with dead bodies? Do you put anything on them? How do you treat them? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says 'I tell you the truth' to show that what he is saying is important and people should pay attention. Jesus says that the Good News of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection will be preached throughout the world. As the Good News is preached this woman's act of love and devotion will also be shared.

Mark highlights the contrast between the love of the woman and Judas' betrayal. He shows Judas going to the leading priests to offer to help the religious leaders arrest Jesus out of the sight of large crowds, since they were afraid of riots during the festival. We do not know exactly which information Judas agreed to give the religious leaders. We know from the Gospel of John that the leading priests had sent out a notice for people to inform them when they knew where Jesus was so that they could capture him.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The leading priests and teachers of religious law want to capture Jesus. They decide that they cannot capture him during the Passover festival because the crowds of people will be angry and riot.

In the second scene: Jesus and his disciples have a meal at Simon's house. A woman comes in with an alabaster jar of expensive perfume. She pours it over Jesus' head and the disciples are angry with her for wasting the money. Jesus scolds his disciples. He tells them that she has done a good thing. She has anointed his body for burial.

In the third scene: Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' 12 disciples, goes to the leading priests to offer to help them find a time to arrest Jesus. They promise him money, and Judas begins to look for a time to betray Jesus to them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Teachers of religious law and leading priests
- The disciples, with Judas Iscariot
- Simon, a man who had previously had leprosy
- A woman with an alabaster jar
- Others at the meal

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Mark starts with a time reference. He says either "Two days later," or "Two days before the Passover." We do not know if the events in this passage took place directly after the events of the previous passage, because Jesus had been in Jerusalem for a number of weeks. We only know that the passage takes place two days before Passover in the village of Bethany on the Mount of Olives, 4 kilometers from Jerusalem. It is important to remember that the teachers of religious law were still looking for a way to capture and kill Jesus. They were still afraid of the people. They wanted Jesus to be killed quietly to avoid riots. This was an on-going action.

It is important to remember that Simon does not currently have leprosy—he has been healed. We know Simon was healed, as Jewish law did not allow people with leprosy to be near healthy people or eat with them. Although Simon is healed, it is likely he would still have been known as "Simon the leper." Jesus was eating as people normally do in that culture at a formal meal—while reclining on a cushion at a table with his feet out behind him. Although the disciples are not actually mentioned here, other than Judas, the disciples are probably with Jesus at the meal, as well as other people.

It is important to remember that people would have noticed the woman's entrance because it was unusual for a woman to come into a room full of men. It is important to remember that she also did an extravagant act. She did not pour normal oil on Jesus' head like a normal anointing. Instead, she poured perfume that was worth a year's wages. The woman is showing great honour to Jesus by this action. The woman is preparing Jesus for his burial, although she would not have been aware of this. She is devoted to Jesus and showing her love for him. When Jesus says "She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial," it indicates that Jesus knew that he would be killed the same way that criminals were killed. Criminals were not anointed with oil when they were buried.

The people at the table, probably Jesus' disciples, scolded her harshly, with anger.

It is important to remember that Jesus strongly defended this woman. He said to his disciples, "Leave her alone. Why are you criticizing her? She did a very good thing. You will always have the financially poor with you, but I will not always be here. She has done all she can. She has anointed my body for my death. Pay attention to this! Wherever the good news about me is preached throughout the world, people will remember what this woman has done."

It is important to remember that Judas then goes to the leading priests, or the leading men who make sacrifices for the Jewish people, and offered to give them information to find Jesus when he was away from the crowds of people. These priests were very happy, and they promised to give him money. Judas begins looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus to the religious leaders. It is important to remember that we do not know the reasons why Judas offered to betray Jesus to the religious leaders.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Teachers of religious law and leading priests
- The disciples, with Judas Iscariot
- Simon, a man who had previously had leprosy
- A woman with an alabaster jar
- Others at the meal

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The team should act out the leading priests and teachers of religious law discussing trying to capture Jesus to kill him. They decide, "We will not capture him during the Passover celebration, because the people may riot."

Pause the drama. Ask the teachers of religious law, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Frustrated that we can't capture Jesus," "Afraid of the crowds of people who love Jesus." Continue the drama.

The team should act out Jesus and his disciples in Bethany, a town about 4 kilometers away from Jerusalem. They go into the home of Simon. Simon used to have leprosy. They all sit around a table on cushions on the floor. They lay down with their feet behind them. Their heads are propped up on their elbows. Suddenly, as they are eating, a woman walks in! She has a beautiful jar in her hands. She breaks the neck of the jar. The room fills with the beautiful smell. The woman pours the perfume over Jesus' head.

Pause the drama. Ask the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Shocked," "Angry—I wish she would help the poor instead!" "Confused because Jesus seems happy." Ask Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Happy," "Full of God's love for this woman," "Proud of her courage." Ask the woman, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Afraid, but really determined to tell Jesus thank you!" or "I'm just focusing on Jesus." Continue the drama.

The team should act out the disciples being angry. "Why is she wasting such expensive perfume? It could have been sold! It was worth a year's wages! The money could have been given to the poor!" Act out Jesus saying, "Leave her alone. Why are you saying these things to her? You will always have poor people around, but I will not always be around. She has done everything she can do. She is preparing my body for burial. Pay attention! Wherever people tell the good news about me around the world, they will talk about what this woman has done."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Proud of this woman," "Angry and sad that my disciples still don't understand." Ask the person playing the woman, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Happy that Jesus is defending me," "Surprised that he mentioned his death. Is he going to die soon?" Ask the person playing Judas, "What are you

feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I'm angry that Jesus let this woman waste the money!" "I'm frustrated that Jesus still is not leading a rebellion against Rome." Continue the drama.

The team should act out Judas Iscariot going away alone to the leading priests. He should offer to tell them when Jesus is alone. The leading priests are very happy. They tell Judas they will give him money. Judas begins to watch Jesus very closely.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

It was two days before the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread.

The **Passover** was a Jewish religious festival. In Jesus' time, the celebration lasted for seven days because it was a combination of Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. Passover celebrated the time when God rescued the Jewish ancestors from slavery in Egypt. God did this by sending an angel to cause the Egyptian king to allow the Jewish ancestors to leave. The angel from God came one night and killed all of the firstborn sons of the Egyptians. However, the angel "passed over" the Jewish firstborn sons and spared their lives. The Passover is like a celebration of independence for the Jews.

The Festival of Unleavened Bread celebrated harvest and the time when the Israelites ate unleavened bread while fleeing Egypt. Unleavened bread was thin, flat bread made without yeast.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **Passover** and the **Festival of Unleavened Bread**. Look up Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread in the Master Glossary for more information.

Show your translation team a photo of unleavened bread. Pause this audio here.

The **leading priests** and **teachers of religious law** were looking for opportunities to capture Jesus secretly and kill him. Use the same terms for leading priests and teachers of religious law that you have been using in the book of Mark and remember that the terms priests and teachers of religious law are in the Master Glossary.

This passage takes place in Simon the Leper's house in Bethany. **Bethany** is a small town 4 kilometers outside of Jerusalem. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived there. They were sisters and brother, and good friends of Jesus. Jesus and his disciples were staying there every night and traveling every day into Jerusalem to teach in the temple.

Simon used to have **leprosy**. This term "leprosy" in the Bible could refer to any of several types of skin disease. These diseases made a person "unclean," or not able to live in the community. These people could only worship in the synagogue behind a screen, and if anyone touched them that person would become unclean also. The Old Testament law said that they had to wear torn clothes, not brush their hair, and shout out "unclean" in public as they went places. Simon in this story no longer had leprosy. Use the same word or phrase for leprosy that you have previously been using in the book of Mark and remember that the word leprosy is in the Master Glossary.

The woman came in carrying an **alabaster** jar filled with **perfume made from pure nard**. This perfume was made from the nard plant of India. The nard was pure because it was not diluted or mixed with anything else. This made the nard more expensive. The jar was made from a white or yellow stone called alabaster. Be sure you do not substitute alabaster for another material when translating this term.

Stop here and look at a picture of an alabaster jar and a photo of a nard plant as a group. Pause this audio here.

The perfume was worth 300 denarii, which was about 300 days' worth of wages.

The woman anointed Jesus' head with the perfume. **Anointed** is to pour oil on someone to show that they had been appointed for a special task. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed when they took on their tasks for God. The word for Messiah, or Christ, means "anointed one." In this case, the woman did

not use the typical oil to anoint Jesus—she used expensive perfume instead. Jesus also referred to the special anointing that people did for dead bodies. They put special perfume on dead bodies to show honour. Use the same word or phrase for anoint that you have used in other Mark passages and remember that anoint is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus said that everywhere the **good news** or **gospel** was preached, people would also talk about this woman. Use the same word or phrase for good news or gospel that you have used in previous passages of Mark and remember that good news or gospel are in the Master Glossary.

Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve **disciples**. Use the same word or phrase for disciples that you have used in previous passages in Mark and remember that disciples is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 14:1–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12622958 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 14:12–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 14:12–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:12–26 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Mark again tells us exactly when these events happen. It is the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when the lambs that families ate at the Passover feast were sacrificed. Each family brought a lamb to the priest at the temple. The priest killed it and the family ate the lamb at the Passover feast that night. Jewish law stated that the Passover meal needed to be eaten within the Jerusalem city walls. Because of the details Mark gives us about Jesus' meal with his twelve disciples, it seems that this is the special Jewish Passover celebration meal. Bible scholars are not sure about which day this is, but it is either the traditional day of the Passover meal celebration or the day before.

Jesus and his disciples are outside of Jerusalem, possibly in Bethany where they stay when they are not in Jerusalem. Jesus' disciples prepare to go into the city of Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover celebration meal. Since Jesus and his disciples did not live in Jerusalem, they would need to arrange for a place to go for the celebration meal. The disciples ask Jesus where to go to prepare the Passover meal, but Jesus has already made arrangements. Jesus sends two of his disciples into Jerusalem. Jesus gives the two disciples instructions about what to do when they arrive. Jesus tells them to watch for a man carrying a pitcher, or jar, of water. Usually only women carried jars of water, and men carried wine in wineskins. This man was probably carrying the jar of water on his shoulder. Jesus did not tell his disciples to talk with the man carrying the water, but to follow him, or go with him, to the house. Jesus may not have told them to talk with the man because he knew the religious leaders were trying to find him, and he wanted to stay hidden.

Stop here and look at photos of a water jar and photos or illustrations of a man carrying a water jar on his shoulder as a group. Pause this audio here.

When the disciples enter Jerusalem and see the man carrying water enter a house, the disciples will find and tell the owner of that house, "The Teacher asks, 'Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?'" The owner of the house will take the disciples upstairs to a room up above. The owner of the house had already put the table and carpets in the room. He may have even arranged for the lamb to be sacrificed for their meal.

The two disciples go into Jerusalem and find and do everything Jesus tells them to do. They prepare the Passover meal. When the disciples went into the room to prepare the meal, they would have probably set out the unleavened bread (or bread without yeast), the wine, the bitter herbs and sauces with dried fruit, and roast the special lamb that had been sacrificed for the Passover meal.

Stop here and look at photos of unleavened bread and a bowl of bitter herbs and sauces with dried fruit. Look at a photo of a roasted lamb as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the evening Jesus comes with the "Twelve," which means Jesus' twelve closest disciples. The Passover meal was always celebrated by families in the evening after sundown. Jesus and his disciples were laying down next to the table to eat, as was the custom for important meals. In those days, people laid next to the table with their elbows propped up on cushions and their feet behind them.

Stop here and look at a photo of people laying down next to the table to eat a meal as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Passover meal is a special celebration meal. During this meal Jewish families re-tell the story of when God rescued their ancestors from slavery in Egypt many years ago. The things that Jewish people eat, drink, and do during the meal remind them of their slavery in Egypt, their rescue from that slavery, and God's special covenant with them to always be with them and to make them his special people.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Describe some of your religious meals or celebrations. What activities do you do? What do you eat? How do you pass down the story of the celebration to your children? Pause this audio here.

Jesus and his disciples are eating this meal and probably re-telling the story of the rescue from slavery in Egypt together. During the meal, it is custom for the head of the household to break the unleavened bread into pieces and pass it to those at the table. They eat the bread by dipping part of it into a bowl with bitter herbs, stewed fruit and wine or vinegar. Probably around this point in the meal, Jesus tells his disciples, "Pay attention! One of you eating with me will help my enemies capture me. Each disciple is very worried and asks, "Am I the one who will betray you?" They ask the question as if they expect Jesus to answer "no" to them. Jesus says it is "one of you who is eating from this bowl with me." In Jewish culture, only people who trusted each other ate together. It is the worst betrayal to eat with someone, leave the meal, and then betray that person. Jesus is showing just how deep his betrayer's crime was. Jesus goes on to say, "The Son of Man must die just as the Scriptures said about him long ago." Jesus reminds the disciples that the prophets have said that the Messiah, or Son of Man, will die. Jesus calls himself the Son of Man again. Although it is necessary and God's will that Jesus will die, Jesus warns that the person who betrays him will have terrible consequences. Jesus is sad for that person.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: When people trust each other, what kinds of things do they do? What are some things that trusted friends will never do to each other? Pause this audio here.

In this text Jesus does not mention Judas' name, and we have no indication that Judas left the supper early.

Later in the meal, Jesus breaks pieces off the bread and gives it to the disciples. Jesus says, "This—my body." Different churches and different Bible scholars interpret this part of the story differently. Some believe that Jesus is not talking about his material body. They believe that Jesus means "This represents my living body." Any way you interpret this part of the story, Jesus was most importantly trying to tell his disciples that his presence remains with them all the time.

Probably after the main meal, Jesus picks up a cup which was most likely filled with red wine. He thanked God for the cup of wine. This cup of wine in the Passover meal often symbolized God's peace between his people and himself, or his covenant with his people. Jesus said, "This—my blood of the covenant, which is poured out

for many people." The disciples passed the cup of wine around to each and drank some of the wine. Again, we do not know if Jesus says that this wine is literally his blood, or if this wine represents this blood. "Poured out" refers to blood flowing freely from a person or an animal and also associates Jesus' blood with wine that people pour from a container or jar.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of symbolic rituals do you have in your culture? Give examples of things you do or eat that symbolize important religious or moral truths in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Jesus' disciples are very familiar with the covenant between God's people and God. God promises to be with his people as they follow his commands. God's people broke the covenant with God, but God, through his prophet Jeremiah, promised his people a "new covenant" where he said he would make his people understand his laws at a deep level. He will fully be their God and they will fully be his people. The old covenant, like most covenants, was made by rituals that involved sprinkling blood. Jesus shows that the new covenant will also be put in place as he bleeds on the cross. When Jesus says his blood will be poured out, it is like the red wine that he pours out of the cup for his disciples. He will have a violent death. He does this for "many." "Many" can mean either everyone who trusts in him, or everyone who has ever lived.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of covenants, or promises, does your culture have with their gods? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus says that he will not drink wine, or the fruit of the vine, again until he is able to drink it in a new way when God fully rules over his people, in his Kingdom. This is the last meal Jesus will have with his disciples before he is killed. The bread and the wine that Jesus shared with his disciples serves as a symbol that although Jesus' physical body will no longer be with them and us, his spirit will be.

At the end of the Passover meal, the Jewish people usually sang or recited verses from Psalms 115–118. Psalm 118 is about how God is with his people and how his love lasts forever. Jesus and his disciples probably sing this song, and then they leave Jerusalem, walk through the valley, and climb back up to the Mount of Olives.

Stop here and look at a photo of the Mount of Olives, including the valley between the mountain and Jerusalem as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus arranges with the owner of the house to use his guest room to eat the Passover meal with his twelve disciples.

In the second scene: Jesus' disciples ask him where they should prepare the Passover meal in Jerusalem. Jesus sends two disciples into Jerusalem. Jesus gives his two disciples instructions. He tells them to follow the man carrying a water jug, and then to ask the owner of the house to show them the room he had asked for.

In the third scene: Jesus' two disciples go into Jerusalem, find everything as Jesus said, and prepare the room for the Passover meal.

In the fourth scene: Jesus arrives at the room with the rest of the twelve disciples. They begin to eat the Passover meal. As they are dipping bread into the bitter herbs, Jesus tells his disciples that one of them will betray him. They each ask, "Am I the one?"

In the fifth scene: Jesus takes bread and says "This—my body." He takes a cup of wine and says "This—my blood, that seals the covenant because my blood will pour out of my body like this wine pours out of the cup."

In the sixth scene: Jesus and his disciples sing a song of thanksgiving, leave Jerusalem, and walk up to the Mount of Olives.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The two disciples who go into Jerusalem to prepare the room for the meal
- The man who carries the pitcher of water
- The owner of the house

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Mark tells us when this happens exactly. It happens on the first day of the festival when the Jewish people ate unleavened bread. It is the same day that Jewish families take their Passover lamb to the temple and ask the priest to sacrifice it for them.

It is important to remember that Jesus probably arranged ahead of time with a friend in Jerusalem to use the room on the top of his house for the Passover meal. We do not know who the man is that Jesus made arrangements with, but we can assume the man would have been aware that people were looking for Jesus in order to arrest him. To provide a room for Jesus and his disciples would likely have been an act of bravery by the man. He may also have been the person who arranged for the lamb to be sacrificed.

It is important to remember that the disciples asked Jesus where they should go in Jerusalem to prepare the Passover meal, and that's why Jesus sends two of his disciples into the town. Before they go, Jesus gives them specific instructions. Jesus tells them to find the man carrying the pitcher of water. When they get to the house, Jesus says that the disciples should ask the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks, 'Where is my guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?'" This is a polite request to show them the room that Jesus had already asked to use. Jesus said the owner will take them to the room. The room will be large and will be on the upper floor of the house.

After Jesus tells the two disciples what to do, they go into Jerusalem to do exactly what he told them to. As they enter the city, they see the man carrying the pitcher of water. This man goes to a house, and the disciples follow him closely, probably without talking with him. The man carrying the water is probably not the owner of the house. When he gets to the house, the disciples find the owner. They tell him, "The Teacher asks, 'Where is the room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?'" The owner takes them to the room on top of his house, and they begin to set out the bread, bitter herbs, and wine.

Jesus and the rest of his twelve disciples come into Jerusalem. They all go to the room in the house. They lay down next to the table as was the custom at an important meal. They begin by drinking a cup of wine. They begin eating.

As they are eating, Jesus says, "Listen! One of you will betray me." The disciples are worried and ask, "Am I the one who will betray you?" Jesus says, "It is one of you who are eating this bread from this bowl with me." Jesus goes on to say, "The Son of Man must die, because the Scriptures said he would. However, the man who betrays me will be very sorry he did. He would have been better if he was never born." Jesus does not specifically mention Judas here, he just says "one of you." We are not told that Judas's reaction was different to any of the other disciples, however he may have been feeling shocked and confused. Although Jesus had to be betrayed and killed to fulfil God's promises, it is important to note that Judas's act of betrayal was an act of free will. It was his decision. God does not force us to do anything.

The disciples and Jesus continue to eat. Then, Jesus takes some bread. He breaks the bread into pieces, gives it to the disciples, and he says, "This—my body."

Then Jesus takes a cup of red wine. Jesus says thank you to God for the wine. Jesus passes around the cup, and each disciple takes a sip from it. Jesus says, "This—my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his

people. My blood is poured out like this red wine as a sacrifice for many people. Pay attention! I will not drink wine again until I drink it when God comes to rule and be with his people."

At the end of the meal Jesus and his disciples leave Jerusalem, cross the valley, and go back up the Mount of Olives.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The two disciples who go into Jerusalem to prepare the room for the meal
- The man who carries the pitcher of water
- The owner of the house

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

If you would like, act out that Jesus arranges beforehand for a room in Jerusalem to eat the Passover meal.

The disciples asked Jesus where they should go in Jerusalem to prepare the Passover meal, and that's why Jesus sends two of his disciples into the town. Before they go, Jesus gives them specific instructions. Jesus tells them to find a man carrying the pitcher of water. When they get to the house, Jesus says that the disciples should ask the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks, 'Where is my guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?'" This is a polite request to show them the room that Jesus had already asked to use. Jesus said the owner will take them to the room. The room will be large and will be on the upper floor of the house.

After Jesus tells the two disciples what to do, they go into Jerusalem to do exactly what he told them to. As they enter the city, they see the man carrying the pitcher of water. This man goes to a house, and the disciples follow him closely, probably without talking with him. The man carrying the water is probably not the owner of the house. When he gets to the house, the disciples find the owner. They tell him, "The Teacher asks, 'Where is the room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?'" The owner takes them to the room on top of his house, and they begin to set out the bread, bitter herbs, and wine.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the two disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Trying to be quiet so the religious leaders do not find out where we will be," "Afraid," or "Caught up in the excitement of the religious festival." Continue the drama.

Jesus and the rest of his twelve disciples come into Jerusalem. They all go to the room in the house. They lay down next to the table as was the custom at an important meal. They begin by drinking a cup of wine. They begin eating.

Remember that as they are eating, they are dipping their bread together in the same bowls. They are sometimes drinking wine from the same cup. They are re-telling the story of when God saved his people from slavery in Egypt. This is a happy time of remembering and celebrating together.

As they are eating, Jesus says, "Listen! One of you will betray me." The disciples are worried and ask, "Am I the one who will betray you?" Jesus says, "It is one of you who are eating this bread from this bowl with me." Jesus goes on to say, "The Son of Man must die, because the Scriptures said he would. However, the man who betrays me will be very sorry he did. He would have been better if he was never born."

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Shocked!" "Afraid," "Angry that the wonderful meal has been interrupted with such sad news." Ask the person playing the disciple that will betray Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Shocked! How does Jesus know?" "Angry," or "Confused." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Sad," "Deeply disappointed," "Alone," "Deeply hurt that one of my closest friends would eat with me, and then betray me." Continue the drama.

The disciples and Jesus continue to eat. Then, Jesus takes some bread. He breaks the bread into pieces, gives it to his disciples, and he says, "This—my body."

Then Jesus takes a cup of red wine. Jesus says thank you to God for the wine. Jesus passes around the cup, and each disciple takes a sip from it. Jesus says, "This—my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people. My blood is poured out like this red wine as a sacrifice for many people. Pay attention! I will not drink wine again until I drink it when God comes to rule and be with his people."

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "what are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Confused," "Beginning to understand that Jesus is someone important to God's plan for the world and for Israel," or "Afraid—will Jesus have to die?" Continue the drama.

At the end of the meal Jesus and his disciples sing a hymn of thanksgiving and praise together, leave Jerusalem, cross the valley, and go back up the Mount of Olives.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:12–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This story begins on the first day of the **Festival of Unleavened Bread** when the **Passover** lamb is **sacrificed**. Use the same word or phrase for Festival of Unleavened Bread, Passover and sacrifice as you have in previous passages, and remember that Festival of Unleavened Bread, Passover, and sacrifice are in the Master Glossary.

Jesus' **disciples** asked him where they should prepare the Passover meal. Use the same word or phrase for disciples as you have in previous passages and remember that disciples is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells his disciples to say to the owner of the house, "The **Teacher** asks 'Where is the **guest room** where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?'" Use the same word or phrase for teacher as you have in previous passages and remember that teacher is in the Master Glossary.

The **guest room** would be an extra room that someone would have in their home for a guest. In the countryside, most homes were just one level, but in Jerusalem you might find some homes with a second level. This room was already furnished, or had carpets, couches, and vessels.

Jesus arrived with **the Twelve** to the guest room. "The Twelve" refers to Jesus' twelve closest followers, usually called disciples in the New Testament.

Jesus tells his disciples that one of them will betray him. He says that he, the **Son of Man**, must die as the **Scriptures** said. Use the same word or phrase for Son of Man and Scriptures as you have in previous passages and remember that Son of Man and Scriptures is in the Master Glossary.

In Aramaic, the language that Jesus and his disciples spoke, there is no verb for "is." Jesus literally said, "**This—my body**," and "**This—my blood**." Because we are not sure what Jesus meant in this statement, different churches and different Bible scholars interpret this part of the story differently. Some believe that Jesus is not talking about his material body and blood. They believe that Jesus means "This represents my living body," and "This represents my blood." Any way you interpret this part of the story, Jesus was most importantly trying to tell his disciples that his presence remains with them all the time.

Body means living body, not a corpse or a dead body.

Jesus took a **cup**. This would have been a cup full of wine, usually diluted with water.

Jesus said that his blood that he will bleed during his death seals the covenant between God and his people. This **covenant** was a promise that God would save those who trust in Jesus as the sacrifice for their sins. Some versions of the Bible say "covenant," and some say "new covenant." The most likely text just says covenant.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **covenant**. Look up covenant in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said **his blood will be poured out as a sacrifice for many** just as you can pour out a cup of wine. Jesus will be the sacrifice that saves "many." "Many" is usually a figure of speech that can mean "all people." It could refer to all people who trust in Jesus as the sacrifice, or all people who ever lived.

Then Jesus says that he will not drink the fruit of the vine again until he drinks it in a new way when God comes to rule fully in his Kingdom. Use the same word or phrase for **kingdom of God** as you used in previous passages and remember kingdom of God is in the Master Glossary. The **fruit of the vine** refers to wine, which is made from fermented grapes.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **fruit of the vine**. Grapes grow on a vine, so you should use a word for vine that implies that fruit grows on it. Pause this audio here.

When they were finished eating Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn. A **hymn** is a song of praise to God, probably from Psalm 118. This song praises God for his faithful love that lasts forever.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **hymn**. Look up hymn in the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 14:12–26

Audio Content

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Mark 14:27–31

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 14:27–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:27–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:27-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples have finished eating the Passover meal inside the walls of the city of Jerusalem. It is late evening, after dark. They leave the city of Jerusalem, walk through the valley, and climb the Mount of Olives. This story begins as they are walking to the Mount of Olives. This is like an interruption story—Mark has interrupted his story of Jesus' last night before his death to give us this conversation between Jesus and his disciples.

Jesus tells his disciples, "All of you will fall away," which means that the disciples will abandon Jesus and run away. The disciples will stop being loyal to Jesus. Then Jesus quotes a passage of Scripture from the prophet Zechariah. Zechariah prophesies that one day God will bring cleansing, or salvation from sins, for his people, just like a fountain of water cleans dirt. In order for God to bring salvation, God will strike down, or kill, the Shepherd. Jesus calls himself the Shepherd. Usually when a shepherd leaves his sheep alone, the sheep scatter everywhere. This is what happens when the religious leaders arrest Jesus later that night. God's people run away like sheep run away when their shepherd is killed. All the disciples run away or deny that they know Jesus.

Stop here and look at a photo of a group of sheep and a shepherd as a group.

Discuss these questions as a group: Do your religious leaders ever compare themselves to something from everyday life, like Jesus compared himself to a shepherd? If so, what do they compare themselves to? How is it the same or different than a shepherd? Pause this audio here.

Jesus balances the bad news that his disciples will run away with the good news that he will see his disciples again in Galilee, the region around the Sea of Galilee. First Jesus says that he will be raised from the dead. This means that God will cause him to live again. Then Jesus says that he will "go before" the disciples to Galilee, like a shepherd leading his sheep. Jesus wants to give them assurance that even though they will deny him and run away, he will restore them to relationship with himself and meet with them again.

Stop here and look at a map of Israel that includes Jerusalem and the Galilee region as a group. Pause this audio here.

Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, focuses only on the bad news, that the disciples will all scatter and run. He very strongly denies that he will leave Jesus. Peter says, "Even if all fall away, I will not." Use the same expression for "fall away" as you have at the beginning of this passage. Jesus also responds strongly: "I tell you the truth." He wants Peter to pay attention to what he will say.

Stop here and discuss how you have been translating this phrase "I tell you the truth" throughout the book of Mark. How do you draw attention to a statement that someone is about to say? How do you emphasize an important statement? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that even that night Peter will deny Jesus, or say that he does not know Jesus, three times. Peter will deny Jesus three times before the rooster crows two times. A rooster is a male chicken, which is a type of bird. Usually we hear the rooster crow or call about twice a morning, because one rooster answers the other when he crows. This happens before the sun rises. Jesus is saying that Peter will deny that he knows or follows Jesus before sunrise the next morning. Jesus says that Peter will deny him three times. This symbolizes Peter's complete denial of Jesus.

Stop here and look at a photo of a rooster as a group. Pause this audio here.

Both Peter and the other disciples say very strongly that they will never deny Jesus. Peter even says that he will die with Jesus. Peter knows it will be a violent death. This makes Peter's and the disciples' denial later even worse.

*Defining the Scenes**Defining the Scenes*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:27-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

Scene one: Jesus and his disciples are walking to the Mount of Olives. Jesus tells his disciples that they will abandon him. He quotes from the prophet Zechariah. Jesus tells them that he will meet them again in Galilee. Peter says he will never abandon Jesus. Jesus tells Peter that Peter will deny that he knows Jesus three times before the sunrise the next morning. Peter and the other disciples promise Jesus that they will never abandon Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples, including Peter
- A shepherd
- Sheep

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that Jesus and his disciples have finished eating the Passover meal. It is late evening, after dark. They leave the main town of Jerusalem. They begin climbing the Mount of Olives. As they walk, Jesus talks with them.

It is important to remember that Jesus quotes from Scripture. Jesus says, "You will all abandon me, because it is written in Scripture."

Jesus quotes from Scripture, and then he says "but" to show that he is not quoting anymore. He gives them the good news that he will be raised from the dead and go before his disciples to meet them in Galilee.

It is important to remember that Peter spoke out from among the large group of disciples. Peter's tone when he responds to Jesus here indicates that he was offended by this statement. It would have been a shock to hear these words. He has no intention of running away or denying Jesus. He loves him. Peter's attitude though is prideful; he thinks he can do better—even if all the other disciples fall away, he never would. It is important to remember that Jesus speaks strongly when he speaks to Peter. He says, "I tell you the truth...*Even you will abandon me.*"

It is important to remember that Peter spoke back just as emphatically. He says "No!" very clearly. Peter says he is willing to die, even a violent death. All the other disciples said the same thing. They will never abandon Jesus. They will die a violent death with him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:27-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples, including Peter
- A shepherd
- Sheep

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The team should act out Jesus and his disciples walking up the Mount of Olives. Jesus begins talking to them. He says, "All of you will abandon me. The Scriptures say that you will. They say, 'God will kill the shepherd and the sheep will scatter or run away.' But God will raise me from the dead. And I'll go before you to meet you in Galilee." Peter says, "Even if everyone abandons you, I never will!"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Very sad that my friends will abandon me," "Disappointed in Peter," "I understand the work I must do to bring salvation, but it's not easy." Ask the person playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Confused, we would never leave Jesus!" "Proud to follow Jesus," "Courageous." Continue the drama.

The team should act out Jesus saying, "Peter, pay attention! Tonight, before the sun rises and the rooster crows twice, you will deny three times that you know me." Peter responds very strongly, "No! I would die with you! I will never deny that I know you." The other disciples say the same thing.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I wish Peter would stay by my side." Ask the people playing the disciples and Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "What is Jesus talking about?" "I want to be very brave for Jesus," "I am proud to follow Jesus!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:27-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus says to his disciples, "You will all fall away because it is written in Scripture." **Fall away** means to abandon something. Jesus only says, "because it is written," but the disciples knew that he was talking about the prophecy being written in **Scripture**, their holy writings. Some Bible translations include that it was written in Scripture in order to make that clear. If you use the word Scripture, translate it in the same way you have before, and remember that it is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **fall away**. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that God will strike the shepherd. In this case **strike** means to kill. A **shepherd** is someone who cares for sheep or goats. Jesus often refers to himself as a shepherd who cares for his people who follow him. Jesus compares the people who follow him to sheep.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **strike**. Use the same word or phrase for shepherd that you have used in previous passages and remember that shepherd is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that he will go ahead of his disciples to **Galilee** after God raises him from the dead. Galilee is the area around the **Sea of Galilee**. Many of Jesus' disciples are from that area, and much of their work was done in the area around the Sea of Galilee. For more information about the Sea of Galilee refer the Master Glossary.

When Jesus answers Peter he says, "**I tell you the truth.**" Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize his statements and to tell people that they should listen carefully to what he says and believe that what he says is true. Use the same words or phrase for "I tell you the truth" as you have in previous passages of Mark.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 14:27-31

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 14:32–42

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 14:32–42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:32–42 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:32–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples continued to walk up the Mount of Olives from the valley. They went to an olive grove on the side of the Mount of Olives called Gethsemane. An olive grove is a place where people planted olive trees and made olive oil. Gethsemane in Hebrew means oil press, so people probably also pressed olives here to make olive oil.

Stop here and look at a photo of the Garden of Gethsemane and a photo of olive trees as a group. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus and the disciples arrive, Jesus tells his disciples to sit and wait there while he prays. This was probably a normal thing for Jesus to go and pray. As Jesus has done before, he separates Peter, James, and John and takes these three disciples with him into the olive grove. Why these three? These three disciples had all said before that they would willingly suffer with Jesus.

Jesus experiences great emotional pain. He is deeply troubled and distressed emotionally. He says, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death." Jesus is saying that he feels so sad that he feels like a great weight is pressing on him. The soul is the centre of someone's personality. This is one of the most important points in Jesus' life—he is truly about to experience the pain and death that he has been preparing for. Jesus knows the fullness of what this suffering will cost him.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: The horror and anguish of Jesus' emotional pain is described in the strongest possible terms. Tell stories to each other of times when people faced great emotional pain. As you listen to each other's stories, listen for the kinds of words you use to describe the emotional agony you felt. Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks the three disciples to keep watch, or to stay spiritually alert and strong to fight the temptations that they will have soon. He goes a few meters further away and begins praying. He prays while kneeling or lying on the ground, which means that the prayer is urgent or very important. Jewish people normally prayed standing up with uplifted hands. Jesus prays that the "hour," or the time of suffering, would go away. He calls God his father with the affectionate Jewish term for father, "Abba." Jewish people did not use the term "Abba" for God himself, so Jesus shows his special relationship with God here. He asks that God would take the "cup" away. In the Old Testament, the cup was a symbol of God's wrath and of suffering. Although Jesus knows that God is about to allow all of his wrath and judgement to come on him, Jesus is obedient and trusts his father. We know this because of Jesus' family language and his polite requests to God—he asks, "if it is possible," and "not what I will, but rather what you will." Jesus is asking God to "do not do what I want but do what you want."

Jesus goes back to his three disciples because he is concerned that they might give in to temptation. He sees that they are sleeping! Jesus talks with Peter first, because Peter had just vowed that he would die with Jesus. Jesus calls Peter by his old name, "Simon," maybe to indicate that Peter is acting like he did before he was fully following Jesus! Jesus asks Simon Peter a question, "Are you asleep? Couldn't you watch with me even one hour?" Jesus is surprised and disappointed that the disciples are asleep. In his question, he is scolding them. Then Jesus says, "Watch and pray," to all three disciples. "Watch" means to be spiritually awake so that they can remain loyal to Jesus even when they are tempted to disown him. Jesus says, "Your spirit is willing, but your flesh is weak." This means that your heart, or your emotions, want to follow God. But you yourselves are not strong. Jesus knows that God's Spirit in them, or maybe their own intentions, helps them to have good intentions to be loyal to him. However, humans are weak. We are unable by ourselves to stand against evil.

Jesus goes a few meters away again to pray the same prayer again. He comes back to his disciples a second time. Their eyes are heavy, which means their eyes keep closing. The disciples do not have a good excuse for falling asleep, so they do not know what to say. Jesus goes to pray a third time and comes back to his three disciples again a third time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you are guilty of something in your culture, do you try to defend yourself, or do you stay quiet? How do you know when someone is guilty? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus returns the third time, he asks the question, "Are you still sleeping and resting?" He rebukes them for sleeping instead of praying. Then he says, "Enough," or "It is settled." He might mean that the thing he has prayed about has been decided. Or he might mean that the disciples need to stop sleeping now. The "hour has come," or the time that God planned for everything to happen has come. Jesus says, "The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." This means that the sinners who do not understand who Jesus is will arrest Jesus and he will suffer and die. Jesus calls himself the Son of Man again, and this emphasizes the fact that those who kill him are guilty of killing the one God has sent to save them.

Jesus then says, "Let's go," meaning, "Let's go meet Judas and those with him." "My betrayer is at hand" means that Judas is here at the olive grove of Gethsemane.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:32–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has eight scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his disciples arrive at the olive grove called Gethsemane.

In the second scene: Jesus takes Peter, James, and John with him into the olive grove. He is distressed and asks them to keep watch with him.

In the third scene: Jesus goes farther into the olive grove and falls onto the ground to pray. He asks God his father to take away his suffering.

In the fourth scene: Jesus goes back to his three disciples and sees them asleep. Jesus talks to Simon Peter and tells all three disciples to watch and pray.

In the fifth scene: Jesus goes back to pray to God a second time the same prayer as before.

In the sixth scene: Jesus goes back to his disciples a second time and sees them asleep again.

In the seventh scene: Jesus apparently goes a third time to pray to God.

In the eighth scene: Jesus comes back to his disciples a third time. This time he tells them, "Let's go, my betrayer is here."

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- Among his disciples he takes Peter, James, and John further into the garden with him
- God the Father

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that this story starts when Jesus and his disciples arrive at an olive grove called Gethsemane, which means "olive press." This is a small area where someone has planted many olive trees. They grow the trees, pick the olives, and make olive oil from the olives.

It is important to remember that Jesus takes Peter, James, and John with him into the garden, but the rest of the disciples stay at the entrance and wait for him. Jesus becomes very distressed. Jesus says that he is **deeply distressed and troubled**. These are very vivid and intense emotional terms. The emotions can include confusion, deep fear, anxiety, uncertainty. Jesus felt this way for some time, not just for a moment in time.

Stop here and remember how you talked about deep emotional words in step 2, Setting the Stage. How would you translate this phrase "distressed and troubled"? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells his three disciples to keep watch with him, or to stay spiritually alert so they can be strong against temptation to be disloyal to him. Jesus leaves the three disciples and goes further into the garden. He probably goes about as far as you can throw a stone.

Jesus "fell to the ground," or knelt or laid on the ground to talk with his father. The story says that he prayed that the awful situation might not happen. Then he says again, in a direct quote this time, "Abba, Father, you can do anything. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want you to do what you want, not what I want." Jesus is polite as he is talking with God.

Jesus gets up and goes back to his three disciples. They are asleep. Jesus says to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Couldn't you watch with me even one hour?" Then Jesus talks to all three disciples, "Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. The spirit is willing—your intentions are good—but your body is weak. It's hard to do the right thing."

Jesus leaves again and goes back to pray the same thing as before. You can remember this, "Abba, Father, you can do anything. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want you to do what you want, not what I want." Remember that Jesus is emotionally suffering, but he is always polite to his Father God. He has a close relationship with his father, like a child trusts his own father and uses affectionate terms for him.

Jesus comes back to the disciples a second time. They are still sleeping. Their eyes will not stay open. The disciples don't know what to say anymore. They cannot stay awake.

Jesus goes to pray a third time, we think the same prayer again. "Abba, Father, you can do anything. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want you to do what you want, not what I want."

Jesus comes back to his three disciples a third time. Peter, James, and John are still sleeping. This time he says, "Are you still sleeping," or "Go ahead and keep sleeping." He is probably showing surprise that they are sleeping again. Then he says, "It is enough! The time has come! People will betray me, the Son of Man, to sinners. Let's go meet them—my betrayer is here."

It is important to remember this back and forth motion between Jesus and his three disciples. Jesus goes three times to pray. Jesus comes back and sees his disciples sleeping three times.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:32–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 8 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- Among his disciples he takes Peter, James, and John further into the garden with him
- God the Father

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

For this story, it might be helpful to have someone acting as God the Father, listening to Jesus as he prays.

Jesus takes Peter, James, and John with him into the garden, but the rest of the disciples stay at the entrance and wait for him. Jesus becomes very distressed—he says that his sorrow is overwhelming him. Jesus tells his three disciples to keep watch with him, or to stay spiritually alert so they can be strong against temptation to be disloyal to him. Jesus leaves the three disciples and goes further into the garden. He probably goes about as far away as you can throw a stone.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Confused at Jesus' strong emotions—we've never seen him this way," "Really tired and unable to understand what is happening." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "So overwhelmed it's hard for me to even walk or talk," or "Alone." Continue the drama.

Jesus "fell to the ground," or knelt or laid on the ground to talk with his father. The story says that he prayed that the awful situation might not happen. Then he says again, in a direct quote this time, "Abba, Father, you

can do anything. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want you to do what you want, not what I want." Jesus is polite as he is talking with God.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Desperation," "Resolution to do whatever God my father asks me to do," "Trust in my father." Ask the person playing God, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I wish I could change this," "Sadness to see my son go through this," "Desire to show him love." Continue the drama.

Jesus gets up and goes back to his three disciples. They are asleep. Jesus says to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Couldn't you watch with me even one hour?" Then Jesus talks to all three disciples, "Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. The spirit is willing—your intentions are good—but your body is weak. It's hard to do the right thing."

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Ashamed that I fell asleep," "Frustrated," "So tired I'm not able to think correctly." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I'm worried about my disciples," "I'm so alone." Continue the drama.

Jesus leaves again and goes back to pray the same thing as before. You can remember this, "Abba, Father, you can do anything. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want you to do what you want, not what I want." Remember that Jesus is emotionally suffering, but he is always polite to his Father God. He has a close relationship with his father, like a child trusts his own father and uses affectionate terms for him.

Jesus comes back to his disciples a second time. They are still sleeping. Their eyes will not stay open. The disciples don't know what to say anymore. They cannot stay awake.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I don't understand why I'm so weak," "Embarrassed." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I'm so alone," "I wish I had people to stand beside me." Continue the drama.

Jesus goes to pray a third time, we think the same prayer again. "Abba, Father, you can do anything. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want you to do what you want, not what I want."

Jesus comes back to his three disciples a third time. This time he says, "Are you still sleeping," or "Go ahead and keep sleeping." Then he says, "It is enough! The time has come! People will betray me, the Son of Man, to sinners. Let's go meet them—my betrayer is here."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I am going to do this for my people," "I am disappointed in my disciples and my people, but I love them very much," "Desperation—please God, continue to help me stay strong."

It is important to remember this back and forth motion between Jesus and his three disciples. Jesus goes three times to pray. Jesus comes back and sees his disciples sleeping three times.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:32–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus tells his disciples to "Sit here while I go and pray." **Pray** means to speak to God. This particular kind of prayer is to ask God to do something for you. Use the same word or phrase for pray, in this context, as you have in previous passages. For more information about prayer, refer to the Master Glossary.

My soul is crushed with grief, or my soul is very sorrowful to the point of death means that Jesus' whole self, or soul, is overwhelmed with sorrow. He even feels as if the grief could kill him. The soul is the centre of someone's personality. Use the same word or phrase for **soul** as you have in previous passages and remember that soul is in the Master Glossary.

When Jesus asks God that **the hour might pass from him**, Jesus is asking that the time of God's wrath or suffering would not come.

When Jesus asks God to **take this cup from me**, he is asking that God would take away his suffering and wrath. **This cup** and **this hour** refer to the same thing.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "take this cup from me." Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks Simon Peter, "You could not watch one hour?" An **hour** is 60 minutes, but you could say "for a short time" if your language does not have a time reference for one hour.

Jesus has a special relationship with God, so he uses the informal term, **Abba**, that children in a family use for their father. There is no record of Jewish people using this term for God. You can use the same foreign term "Abba" with the same sounds in your translation, or you can use an informal word for Father in your language, if you have one. For more information about Abba refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus goes back and finds his **disciples** asleep. Use the same term for disciples that you have been using and remember that disciples is in the Master Glossary.

Then Jesus says, "**Enough**." Jesus could be saying that the disciples need to stop sleeping now. Or Jesus could be saying, "It has all been settled. Judas has been paid his money to betray me." Or, "It has all been settled. I *will* go through this suffering." This could be translated something like "It has happened."

"The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." Use the same word or phrase for **Son of Man** as you have previously and remember that Son of Man and sin are in the Master Glossary. "Into the hands of sinners" means that the sinners have taken control of Jesus and now have the power.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 14:32-42

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11357619 KB)

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Mark 14:43–52

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 14:43–52 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:43–52 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:43–52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story begins immediately where the previous story ends. The story begins with "Immediately, as he, Jesus, was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a group of men." Mark introduces Judas again here as "one of the twelve disciples." We do not know when Judas left the group earlier that evening, but at some point, probably during the meal in Jerusalem, Judas left the group to tell the Jewish authorities where Jesus would be that night.

The leading priests, teachers of religious law, and elders sent these men to arrest Jesus. The leading priests, teachers of religious law, and elders make up the Sanhedrin, which is the governing body and court for the Jewish people. The Sanhedrin had servants who carried weapons and were authorized to make arrests and guard prisoners. Some of those men were probably part of the group that came to arrest Jesus—the members of the Sanhedrin themselves did not come, but they sent these men. A group of men—a crowd—arrive with swords and clubs. The swords were probably more like long sharp metal knives. The clubs were heavy pieces of wood that people used for fighting. The word crowd usually refers to a chaotic group of people who are doing harmful things. Mark uses this word crowd to symbolize that the group of men were doing something wrong. We do not know how many men were in the crowd of men, but we know that they still wanted to hide from the large groups of people who liked Jesus—so it was probably not a very large number in this crowd.

Stop here and look at photos of swords and clubs as a group. Pause this audio here.

Judas' role was to tell the Jewish authorities where Jesus would be so that they could arrest him in private. Many of the arresting authorities did not know what Jesus looked like, so Judas arranged with them to show who Jesus was by giving him a kiss. Disciples often greeted their masters with a kiss to show respect. Judas also called Jesus "Rabbi," which means "my master."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you greet someone whom you respect? Pause this audio here.

Judas tells the crowd that he will kiss Jesus to show them who he is. Then they can lead him away "under guard"—or guard Jesus to make sure that Jesus does not try to escape. Judas kisses Jesus and some of the men in the crowd take hold of Jesus and arrest him.

One of Jesus' disciples makes a small attempt to resist the arrest. This disciple pulls out his sword, or knife, and cuts off the ear, or the earlobe, of one of the men who came with the crowd. The man was the slave of the high, or leading, priest. Mark does not tell us which disciple cut off his ear. The crowd of men are not able to arrest this disciple. Perhaps this disciple ran away or hid quickly.

Jesus protests the arrest by asking a question, "Am I a dangerous revolutionary that you need to arrest me with sword and clubs? Why didn't you arrest me in the temple courtyards?" Jesus does not expect the men to answer his question. Jesus is trying to show a contrast. The men are treating Jesus like he is a dangerous rebel—someone who wants to overthrow the government. But Jesus has been teaching openly in the temple courtyards for at least two weeks. People who are trying to overthrow the government do not usually teach peacefully in the temple courtyards.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you show contrast and surprise in your conversations? Do you use questions like this? If not, how could you translate these questions in your language? "Am I a dangerous revolutionary that wants to overthrow the government? Is that why you come with swords and clubs? Why didn't you arrest me in the temple?" Pause this audio here.

Jesus said these things are happening to fulfill the Scriptures. Several Jewish prophets had said that the Messiah, or Promised Saviour, would be treated like a criminal, and that then the Messiah's disciples or followers would scatter.

Everyone with Jesus runs away. Mark uses the word "everyone" instead of disciples. Maybe there were more than just Jesus' twelve disciples with him. The idea here is that Jesus' friends left Jesus completely alone—no one stays with him. Mark now tells a short story that no other Bible author tells: He tells about a specific young man, a follower of Jesus, who runs away. The word Mark uses for "young man" means a strong, brave, and wise man. The prophet Amos said many years ago that even the brave will run away naked on the day of judgment. Mark may be thinking of that prophecy when he describes this young man. The young man is wearing a long linen shirt. Usually, the long outer shirt is made of wool, so this young man is probably wealthy. He is not wearing anything under this shirt, which means that he may have dressed in a hurry to follow Jesus out that night. This young man may be Mark himself. However, Mark's main purpose in sharing this incident is to show that *everyone* leaves Jesus that night.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:43-52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Judas arranges with the religious leaders that he will show them who Jesus is by greeting him with a kiss. The religious authorities send the crowd with Judas to arrest Jesus.

The second scene: Begins with Jesus still talking with his three disciples after he wakes them up. As Jesus talks with his three disciples, Judas arrives in the garden with a crowd of men. Judas walks up to Jesus, calls him Rabbi, and greets him with a kiss on the cheek.

In the third scene: The men grab Jesus. One of the followers with Jesus in the garden takes out his long knife and cuts off the ear of one of men, who is the high priest's slave.

In the fourth scene: Jesus asks the crowd why they are arresting him in secret. Jesus says the Scriptures are being fulfilled.

In the fifth scene: All of Jesus' disciples and followers run away. One of the men in the crowd grab one young man and pulls off his outer shirt. The man runs away naked.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples in the olive grove of Gethsemane
- Judas
- The crowd, with swords and clubs
- The chief priests, teachers of religious law, and elders who sent the crowd
- The young man who runs away naked

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that this story takes place immediately after Jesus wakes up his three disciples for the third time. He tells them, "Let's go, my betrayer is here," meaning that Jesus knows that Judas is at the entrance to the olive grove. This story takes place in the olive grove of Gethsemane.

However, before this story takes place, Judas leaves Jesus and the other disciples sometime during the evening meal or right after it. Judas goes to the Sanhedrin and tells them where Jesus will be that evening. The Sanhedrin is made up of the teachers of religious law, the priests, and the elders. The Sanhedrin sends a group of men with Judas to arrest Jesus. Judas agrees to greet Jesus with a kiss so that the group will know which man is Jesus.

As this story starts, a crowd of men carrying swords and clubs arrive at the olive grove with Judas, one of Jesus' disciples. We do not know how many men are in this crowd. It is probably enough men to take Jesus by force, if necessary, but not enough men to cause a lot of attention.

Judas goes up to Jesus, calls him "Rabbi!" and kisses him on the cheek. The men in the crowd know that the man Judas kisses is Jesus, so they grab Jesus and arrest him, which means to hold on to him so that he cannot escape. Then one of the men with Jesus pulls out his sword, or long knife, and cuts off the ear of the high priest's, or leading priest's, slave. Your language may have to say which ear the man cut off. If you need to say which ear, you can say the right ear, because we know from this story in other gospel accounts that it was the right ear.

Jesus asks the men who arrested him a question. "Why are you coming with swords and clubs to arrest me? Am I a dangerous revolutionary, trying to overthrow the government? Why didn't you arrest me in the temple

courtyards? I was teaching there every day." Jesus meant to say that they do not need to come with weapons to arrest him. He is not dangerous. Then Jesus says, "These things are happening because the prophets from Scripture said they would."

All of Jesus' disciples, and any other men who had been with Jesus, run away. One young man was the last one running away, and someone in the crowd grabbed his shirt. As the young man continued to run, the person in the crowd pulled off his long linen shirt. The young man continued to run away naked.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:43-52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples in the olive grove of Gethsemane
- Judas
- The crowd, with swords and clubs
- The chief priests, teachers of religious law, and elders who sent the crowd
- The young man who runs away naked

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Judas goes to the religious leaders and tells them where Jesus is going to be that night. The religious leaders send a crowd of men with swords and clubs to arrest Jesus. Judas agrees to show them where Jesus is by kissing Jesus. This happens before the story starts. If you would like, you can act out this scene first.

As this story starts, a crowd of men carrying swords and clubs arrive at the olive grove with Judas, one of Jesus' disciples. Judas goes up to Jesus, calls him "Rabbi!" and kisses him on the cheek. The men in the crowd grab Jesus and arrest him. Then one of the men with Jesus pulled out his sword, or long knife, and cut off the ear of the high priest's, or leading priest's, slave.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Everything is falling apart quickly," "Deeply hurt by Judas' betrayal," "Frustrated that my followers still want to use violence." Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Really frightened," "Angry," "Frozen, I can't move!" Continue the drama.

Jesus asks the men who arrested him a question. "Why are you coming with swords and clubs to arrest me? Am I a dangerous revolutionary, trying to overthrow the government? Why didn't you arrest me in the temple courtyards? I was teaching there every day." Then Jesus says, "These things are happening because the prophets from Scripture said they would."

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the men in the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "A bit surprised, he doesn't look dangerous," "I regret that I'm doing this, but I have my orders to follow." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I am not surprised because Scriptures say I will be treated badly," "I'm so sad that this is happening, and these people do not understand." Continue the drama.

All of Jesus' disciples, and any other men who had been with Jesus, run away. One young man was the last one running away, and someone in the crowd grabbed his shirt. As the young man continued to run, the person in the crowd pulled off his long linen shirt. The young man continued to run away naked.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Lonely," "Disappointed." Ask the people playing the young man and the others running away, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Very afraid," "I'm not even thinking—I'm just running as fast as I can."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:43-52 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

While Jesus was talking with his sleeping disciples, Judas, one of his twelve **disciples**, enters the garden with a **crowd** of people. Use the same term for disciples that you have been using and remember that disciples is in the Master Glossary. The crowd of people would be large enough to arrest Jesus by force if necessary. The crowd's intentions are to cause trouble.

The men in the crowd are carrying **swords** and **clubs**. Swords were really probably long knives. Men would carry them in a covered place. When the man pulled out his sword to cut off the man's ear in this story, he just pulled it out of the place he had put it. He could have had a special place to hold his knife. Clubs were heavy pieces of wood that people used for fighting.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **swords** and **clubs**. Pause this audio here.

The crowd was sent by the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was the group of men who governed the Jewish people. They helped the people follow the religious laws and sometimes the conquering Roman government laws. The Sanhedrin was composed of three groups of men. Use the same word or phrase for chief priests, teachers of religious law, and elders as you have used in previous passages in Mark and remember that they are in the Master Glossary.

Judas is a **traitor**, or **betray**—the person who will give Jesus over to his enemies. Use the same word or phrase for betray as you have in previous passages.

Judas gave Jesus a kiss. A **kiss** was a form of greeting between trusted friends. In Jesus' time, a kiss of greeting between friends was on the cheek. In this kind of kiss, one man's lips touch the cheek of another man. This was simply a greeting that showed respect.

Judas called Jesus "Rabbi." **Rabbi** is a Jewish title that means "my great one" or "my great teacher." It does not mean a school teacher. It is a different word from "Lord." Lord means a master or maybe even a divine being. Use the same word or phrase for Rabbi as you have used in previous passages of Mark. For more information about Rabbi refer to the Master Glossary.

One of Jesus' followers cut off the ear of the high priests, or leading priest's **slave**. Use the same word or phrase for slave as you have in previous passages. For more information about slaves, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus asks why they are arresting him as if he is a **thief**, or a **revolutionary**. In Greek this word is "thief," but here it probably means a revolutionary, or someone trying to overthrow the government.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **thief** or **revolutionary**. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says he was teaching in the **temple**, but he means that he was teaching in the temple courtyards. Use the same word or phrase for temple as you have in previous passages. For more information about temples refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that these things are happening to fulfil **scriptures**. Use the same word or phrase for scripture as you have in previous passages. For more information about scripture refer to the Master Glossary.

A "young man" ran away. **Young man** usually refers to an unmarried man and was used to show that a young man was brave and strong. The man in this story may have been about 20 years old.

The young man was wearing a linen garment, or linen shirt. **Linen** was an expensive, good quality cloth. Because most men wore a long wool outer shirt, this young man was probably rich. He was not wearing anything underneath this shirt. The young man probably dressed quickly in order to follow Jesus, so he was not fully clothed.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 14:43-52

Audio Content

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Mark 14:53–65

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 14:53–65 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:53–65 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark:14:53–65 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage the crowd takes away Jesus. They walk back through the valley into Jerusalem. Peter is following at a distance. They take Jesus to the high priest's home. The high priest at that time was named Caiaphas. The high priest was the highest priest who ruled over the Jewish religious leaders. When the crowd and Jesus arrive, they take Jesus up to a large room, but Peter goes into the house courtyard and sits next to the fire with the guards. The leading priests, elders, and teachers of religious law were already in the large room waiting for Jesus. These three groups of men make up the Sanhedrin, which is the governing body—the

supreme court of law—of the Jewish people. In this story Mark again tells two stories at the same time. He describes the beginning of Peter's denial which starts at the same time as the story of Jesus' trial.

If this trial was similar to others in that time, the members of the Sanhedrin sat in a semi-circle on high chairs so they could all see each other. The accused person and the witnesses sat in chairs in the centre of the semi-circle. In Jewish law two or more people were required to give the exact same evidence against someone in order to decide to execute someone. The religious leaders must have been prepared for Jesus' arrest because they had many people already in the room to testify against Jesus. However, the religious leaders could not find two people to agree on exact evidence against Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of things happen in your trials for criminals? How many people need to bring evidence against someone? Who leads the trials? Pause this audio here.

Finally, some people stood up and gave a false testimony, or a lie, about Jesus. They said, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that people made and in three days I will build another temple.'" This is a serious statement against Jesus. In this area of the world, it was a crime to destroy a place of worship—the authorities would kill a person who destroyed or wanted to destroy a place of worship. Also, Jewish people believed that the only person who could re-build something like the temple that quickly must be the Messiah. It is true that in previous teachings, Jesus said that *someone* will destroy the temple. Jesus also said that he will raise it up again. However, Jesus did not say that *he* will destroy the temple. And Jesus means that his very own body is the temple, and God will raise his *body* from the dead after three days. But even in this evidence the witnesses could not agree.

Perhaps because the witnesses could not agree, the high priest himself stood up to question Jesus. The high priest stood up and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony the men are bringing against you?" Jesus remained silent, even though the law required him to answer them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Jesus remained silent even though he was innocent, because he knew that the council would not believe anything he said. When someone remains silent when accused in your culture, do you see that as evidence of their guilt or their innocence? How do innocent people in your culture usually behave in a court of law? Pause this audio here.

Jesus' silence frustrated the high priest even more, and he asked, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Maybe the high priest asks Jesus this because he thinks Jesus said he will build the temple again. The "Son of the Blessed One" means the "Son of God," and the title "Son of the Blessed One" can be a title for the Messiah. This question from the high priest is the climax of the story. It is the moment that all the other stories have been leading towards. It is also the moment that the religious leaders are able to accuse Jesus of a serious crime if Jesus answers yes.

The high priest asks the direct question, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus also answers very directly. He simply says, "I am," or "I am the Messiah." In Jewish law Jesus is then required to prove that he is who he says he is. To prove who he is, Jesus quotes prophecy from the Psalms and from the prophet Daniel. The prophet Daniel talks about someone like a Son of Man coming in the clouds. In Psalms, God says that his Messiah will sit at the place of honour next to God—at God's right hand. Jesus wants to show that he will give proof of who he is when he comes back with power someday.

The high priest believed that Jesus said blasphemy. Blasphemy in Jewish culture means to dishonour God and try to make God less majestic. Jesus claims he is the Messiah and will sit in the place of honour next to God. Therefore, if Jesus is not the Messiah, then what he says is absolute blasphemy. Blasphemy is shocking, and the high priest tears his clothes to show his shock and sorrow that someone would say these things. The high priest probably tore part of his robe, but he did not tear his clothes completely off. The law of Moses said that someone who blasphemed should be killed by throwing rocks at them until they die. When the high priest asked the rest of the religious leaders for the verdict, they all said, "Guilty! He should die!" The Jewish high council, the Sanhedrin, could sentence Jesus to death, but they could not actually execute him. Only Roman officials could carry out the sentence of death.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what are the punishments for blaspheming—or dishonouring—God? Can anyone be killed for breaking a law or for breaking a religious law? If so, how are people killed for breaking a law? Pause this audio here.

The members of the Sanhedrin then spat on Jesus and beat him in order to show him that they rejected him. They blindfolded Jesus and asked him to prophecy, or tell them who hit him, probably because they wanted him to try to prove again that he was the Messiah.

Many Christians in Mark's time were persecuted. This story gives persecuted Christians a role model to follow in Jesus' reaction to persecution. It also sets up the contrast between Jesus and Peter, who will deny Jesus in the next story.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:53-65 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: The crowd leads Jesus to the home of the high priest. Peter is following behind.

In the second scene: The crowd takes Jesus into a large room where the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high council, is waiting for him. False witnesses bring false testimony about him. The high priest questions Jesus and Jesus claims he is the Messiah.

In the third scene: The Sanhedrin says that Jesus is guilty. They spit on him, blindfold him, and beat him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd who has arrested him and leads him to the high priest's house
- Peter
- Guards warming themselves in the courtyard of the high priest's house
- The Sanhedrin, made up of teachers of religious law, leading priests, and elders
- False witnesses
- The high priest
- The guards who beat Jesus

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that the crowd walks directly from the olive grove called Gethsemane, back through the valley, and into Jerusalem where the high, or leading, priest's house is. At the same time Peter is walking behind the crowd. He follows the crowd into the high priest's house. The crowd takes Jesus into a large room with several men from the Sanhedrin, or Jewish court of law. Peter stays in the courtyard outside and warms himself at the fire with the guards.

It is important to remember that Jesus goes into a room where the leading priests, the elders, and teachers of the law came together as the Jewish Sanhedrin, or high court. In this room the members of the Sanhedrin are probably sitting in a semi-circle, or half circle. The witnesses and Jesus are sitting in chairs in the middle of the circle. Many other witnesses are there also. These witnesses tell lies about what Jesus did.

Some witnesses stand up and say this lie, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with human hands.'" However, every witness says a slightly different story. The high priest stands up and says, "Are you going to answer these charges? What do you want to say to defend yourself?" Jesus says nothing. The chief or high priest is frustrated. He asks Jesus, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus answers, "I am. You will see the Son of Man sitting next to God at his right hand. He will come in the clouds of heaven." This means that Jesus will come with God's glory and power.

The high priest is shocked and very sad because Jesus blasphemed. He says, "Why do we need other eyewitnesses?" or "We don't need other eyewitnesses. You have all heard him dishonour God. What is your verdict? Is he guilty?" The members of the Sanhedrin say that Jesus is guilty and deserves to die. They spit on Jesus. They blindfold Jesus, which means to put a cloth around Jesus' eyes so he could not see. Then they hit him and tell him to prophesy and tell them who hit him. The guards hit him with closed hands so that he would feel pain. Then they take Jesus away.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:53–65 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd who has arrested him and leads him to the high priest's house
- Peter
- Guards warming themselves in the courtyard of the high priest's house
- The Sanhedrin, made up of teachers of religious law, leading priests, and elders
- False witnesses
- The high priest
- The guards who beat Jesus

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The crowd walks directly from the olive grove called Gethsemane, back through the valley, and into Jerusalem where the high, or leading, priest's house is. At the same time Peter is walking behind the crowd. He follows the crowd into the high priest's house. The crowd takes Jesus into a large room with several men from the Sanhedrin, or Jewish court of law. Peter stays in the courtyard and warms himself at the fire with the guards.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Looking for ways to rescue Jesus," "Guilty that I ran away," "Afraid but trying to be brave." Continue the drama.

Jesus goes into a room where the leading priests, the elders, and teachers of the law came together as the Jewish Sanhedrin, or high court. The Sanhedrin members were trying to find evidence that would allow them to

sentence Jesus to death. Many other witnesses are there also. These witnesses tell lies about what Jesus did. But none of the witnesses could agree in their testimony.

Some people stand up and say this lie, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with human hands.'" However, every witness says a slightly different story. The chief priest says, "Aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you want to say to defend yourself?" Jesus says nothing.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the teachers of religious law, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Frustrated that we can't prove Jesus to be guilty," "Frustrated that Jesus will not answer the question." Continue the drama.

The chief or high priest is frustrated and wants to find a way to prove Jesus is guilty. He asks Jesus, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" The high priest uses two titles that mean the same thing to the Jewish people—both titles refer to the Promised Savior. Jesus answers, "I am. You will see the Son of Man sitting next to God at his right hand. He will come in the clouds of heaven."

The title "Son of Man" also means Jesus is the Messiah or Promised Savior. The high priest is shocked and very sad. He says, "Why do we need other eyewitnesses?" which means, "We don't need other eyewitnesses. You have all heard him dishonour God. What is your verdict? Is he guilty?" The members of the Sanhedrin say that Jesus is guilty and deserves to die. They spit on Jesus. They blindfold Jesus, hit him, and tell him to prophesy, or tell them who hit him. The guards hit him with closed hands so that it would cause harm and pain. Then they take Jesus away.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the members of the Sanhedrin, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Shocked that someone would say they are the Messiah," "Happy that Jesus finally said something that makes him guilty." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Happy that I can finally just say directly who I am," "Sad that no one believes in me," "Trusting that my father will give me strength to go through this."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:53–65 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The crowd led Jesus to the home of the **high priest**. Priests in the Jewish religion connected the people with God by doing sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, and taking care of God's temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and His people's representative to God. The high priest was the religious head of Israel. He made special sacrifices for the Jewish people. The high priest led the entire Jewish religious court of law. Use the same word or phrase for priest as you have in previous passages, and for "high priest" include a word that means "leading." For more information about priest refer to the Master Glossary.

The leading priests, elders, and teachers of religious law were gathered in the home of the high priest. Use the same words or phrases for these groups of men as you have in previous passages and remember that each term is in the Master Glossary.

Peter followed at a distance and went into the high priest's courtyard. A **courtyard** is an area enclosed on all sides by buildings, but open to the sky above. A larger house might have several rooms built around an open space.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **courtyard**. Pause this audio here.

The guards were warming themselves around a fire. Peter joined them. The **guards** were servants of the high priest and helped guard the temple. Use the same word or phrase for guards as you have in previous passages.

Inside the house, the **high council** was trying to find evidence to sentence Jesus to death. The high council is called the **Sanhedrin** and is made up of the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law. This

group listened to court cases and passed judgment based on religious law. For more information about Sanhedrin refer to the Master Glossary.

Some people stood up to say that Jesus said, "I will destroy this **temple** and rebuild it in three days." Use the same word or phrase for temple that you have used in previous passages and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

The high priest asked, "Are you the **Messiah**, the **Son of the Blessed one**?" Use the same word for Messiah that you have used in previous passages and remember that Messiah is in the Master Glossary. The "Son of the Blessed One" refers to the Son of God. "Blessed one" or "Blessed" can also be translated as "the honoured one" or "the one to be praised."

Jesus says, "I am," or "I am the Messiah." Then he goes on to say, "You will see the **Son of Man** sitting in the place of honour at **God's right hand**." Use the same word or phrase for Son of Man as you have before and remember that Son of Man is in the Master Glossary. People who sit at "God's right hand" are people that sit in a place of honour.

Jesus says that he will come in the clouds of **heaven**. This means that Jesus will come with God's glory and power. Use the same word for heaven that you have used in previous passages and remember that heaven is in the Master Glossary.

The high priest said that Jesus spoke blasphemy. **Blasphemy** is when someone says or does something that dishonours God and makes God less majestic. Use the same word or phrase for blasphemy as you have used in previous passages. For more information about blasphemy, refer to the Master Glossary.

After the religious leaders say that Jesus is guilty, they spit on him, blindfold him, hit him, and ask him to prophesy. To **prophesy** means to bring a message from God. In this case the religious leaders are asking Jesus to tell them who hit him. Use the same word or phrase for prophesy as you have used in previous passages and remember that prophet, the name for the person who prophesies, is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 14:53–65**Audio Content**

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Mark 14:66–72*Hear and Heart**Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Mark 14:66–72 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:66–72 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

*Setting the Stage**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:66–72 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Mark comes back to the story that is happening at the same time as Jesus' trial in the previous passage. The Sanhedrin, the Jewish religious court, is asking Jesus questions. At the same time, Peter is outside in the courtyard "below." This suggests that Jesus may be in a room on the second floor of the house.

Earlier that evening, Peter told Jesus that he would never deny that he knows Jesus. In this story, Jesus' prophecy that Peter would deny him comes true.

The nights in Jerusalem at this time of year are cold. There is a fire burning to keep people warm. Peter is standing next to the fire in the courtyard along with other servants of the high priest. One of the high priest's servant women comes into the courtyard. She looks at Peter closely. She says, "You were with Jesus from Nazareth." People did not respect or honour people from Nazareth because Nazareth was a small town that was not important, so the woman is probably trying to insult Jesus and Peter. We do not know where she has seen Peter before, but somehow, she recognizes him. Peter says a formal statement that is often used in legal trials—"I neither know nor understand what you mean." Peter is saying that he does not know Jesus. At this point, Peter does not mention Jesus' name or directly deny what the woman says—he just answers with a general "I do not know."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture deny that they have done something? What kinds of words and phrases do they use when people are asking them questions about what they have done when they want to say that they have not done it? Pause this audio here.

Then Peter goes to the outer entrance of the courtyard to move away from the servant woman. This is the entrance from the street or outside into the courtyard of the house. This is not the entrance to the house. Normally, as a man, Peter would not be afraid of a woman, but on this night, Peter seems very afraid. When Peter moves to the entrance of the courtyard a rooster crows or makes a loud noise as roosters do at dawn. Some Bible texts do not include this first rooster crow. You can decide if you want to include it based on what the Bibles in your area say.

Stop here and look at a photo of a rooster as a group. Look at a map of Israel that includes Jerusalem and the region of Galilee with Nazareth in it. Pause this audio here.

However, the servant woman continues to tell people, "This man is definitely one of them," meaning that this man is one of Jesus' disciples or followers. Peter answers again and says again that he does not know Jesus.

Sometime later, some people standing near Peter say, "You must be one of Jesus' friends, because you are from Galilee." People from the region of Galilee had a different accent than people from Jerusalem. When Peter speaks, the other people in the courtyard know he is from Galilee. They assume, because Jesus is from the region of Galilee also, that Peter must be with Jesus. Peter swears, or says very strongly, "A curse on me," or, "May God punish me!" He then says that he does not know "this man that you are talking about." Peter does not even say the name of Jesus—he just calls Jesus "this man."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you promise very strongly in your culture? What words or phrases do you use to strongly deny that you have done something? Pause this audio here.

Immediately after Peter says this, the rooster crows a second time. In Jerusalem, the roosters seem to crow three times between midnight and 3 a.m. The first rooster often crows about 12:30 a.m. This second rooster may have crowed about 1:30 a.m. Within one hour, Peter denies Jesus three times, just as Jesus said he would.

Immediately, or right away, Peter remembers Jesus' words "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny three times that you even know me."

Peter "broke down and wept," meaning that Peter was overwhelmed with grief at what he had done and began crying very strongly. Peter could not control his tears. Sometimes Mark does not tell us exactly how a story ends, and here we again in this story do not know how Peter escaped from the high priest's house.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do people show grief or regret? Tell a story about a time someone showed how sad they were. What did they do and say?

How would you say in your culture that someone is emotionally overwhelmed, sad, and cries strongly? Pause this audio here.

We see throughout the story line of the book of Mark that Mark gets us ready for Peter's denial. He makes us wonder what Peter will do in this situation. First, we see that Peter tells Jesus that he will never deny him. But then Peter falls asleep in the olive grove. But then it is probably Peter who cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant in the olive grove. Peter follows far behind the crowd as they take Jesus to the high priest's house. He wants to be near Jesus but does not want to be recognized. Then, in a very difficult situation, Peter denies Jesus three times just as Jesus said before that he would.

Mark wants his audience to see the contrast between Peter's denial of Jesus and Jesus' determination to fulfil the task God gave him.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:66–72 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Peter is in the courtyard below the room where Jesus is with the Sanhedrin. One of the women servants asks if Peter is with Jesus from Nazareth. Peter denies it. Peter walks to the entrance of the courtyard. A rooster crows.

In the second scene: The servant woman continues to tell the people, "This man is one of those people with Jesus." Peter again denies it.

In the third scene: Sometime later, other people say to Peter that he must be a friend of Jesus, because he is also from the region of Galilee. Peter denies it strongly. A second rooster crows, and Peter remembers that Jesus prophesied that he would deny Jesus three times. Peter cries with deep grief.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- The servant woman
- Other people in the courtyard, including the high priest's servants
- Two roosters

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that this story starts with "meanwhile" to show that this story happens at the same time that the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin, is talking with Jesus.

The high priest's house is probably two floors, with at least one large room on the upper level. This is where the Sanhedrin and Jesus are. The house has an open space in the middle of the buildings of the house. The servants built a fire in the open space to keep people warm. Peter is next to the fire in the open space with the servants.

A servant woman comes up to the fire. She sees Peter. Then she looks at Peter closely and says, "You were one of the people with Jesus from Nazareth."

Peter says, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." Peter says he does not know, and then Peter says he does not understand. He says two things that mean the same thing in order to repeat the same idea twice, very strongly. Peter is afraid to admit that he is one of Jesus' disciples, because he does not want to be arrested. Then Peter goes to the entrance of the courtyard, where the courtyard opens to the outside or to the street. A rooster crows.

The servant woman continues to tell people in the courtyard that she thinks Peter was with Jesus. Peter denies it again.

A little later, maybe around an hour later, some other people say to Peter, "You must be one of those people with Jesus, because you are from Galilee." Peter swears, or promises very strongly, "May God punish me if I lie. I do not know this man you are talking about!"

Immediately, the rooster crows a second time. Peter hears the rooster. Immediately, Peter remembers Jesus' words. Jesus is not there with Peter, but Peter remembers what Jesus told him a few hours earlier that night: "Before the rooster crows twice you will deny three times that you know me." Peter begins to weep, or cry strongly. He is overwhelmed with grief at what he has done.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:66–72 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- The servant woman
- Other people in the courtyard, including the high priest's servants
- Two roosters

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Because this story happens at the same time as the story right before this of Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin, consider also acting out the two stories silently at the same time but in different parts of the room. One group of people can act out Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin while the second group acts out Peter's denial in the courtyard.

Peter is in the courtyard below the room where Jesus is with the Sanhedrin. Peter is standing next to the fire with the high priest's servants because it is a cold night. A servant woman comes up to the fire. She sees Peter. Then she looks at Peter closely and says, "You were one of the people with Jesus from Nazareth."

Peter says, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." Then Peter goes to the entrance of the courtyard—where the courtyard opens to the outside or to the street. A rooster crows.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Mixed emotions—I'm afraid, but I want to be near Jesus," "Panicking because someone recognized me." Ask the person playing the servant woman, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I'm just curious because he looks familiar—why is he so afraid?" Continue the drama.

The servant woman continues to tell people in the courtyard that she thinks Peter was with Jesus. Peter denies it again.

A little later, maybe around an hour later, some other people say to Peter, "You must be one of those people with Jesus, because you are from Galilee." Peter should swear, or promise very strongly, "May God punish me if I lie. I do not know this man you are talking about!"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Now I'm really panicking. I don't understand what I'm doing, I'm so scared." Ask the people playing the people in the courtyard, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "He is really afraid—why is he afraid?" or "He must be guilty!" Continue the drama.

Immediately, the rooster crows a second time. Peter hears the rooster. Immediately, Peter remembers Jesus' words. "Before the rooster crows twice you will deny three times that you know me." Peter should begin to weep, which means to cry strongly. He is overwhelmed with grief at what he has done.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "So ashamed at what I've done," "Really sad."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 14:66–72 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Peter is in the high priest's courtyard. A **courtyard** is an area enclosed on all sides by buildings, but open to the sky above. A larger house might have several rooms built around an open space. Use the same word or phrase for courtyard as you have in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a team: In your culture, how are your houses built? Do you have open spaces in and around your houses? How would you describe this space in your language? Pause this audio here.

A servant woman came to the fire. A **servant woman** is a woman slave who probably works in the house. We do not know how old she was. The high priest probably had several women who worked in his house to help clean, cook, and take care of the house.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **servant women**: Do you have a word for women who work in a house as a servant, cooking, cleaning, and doing household chores? Pause this audio here.

The servant woman called Jesus "the Nazarene." **Nazarene** means someone from the town of Nazareth, in Galilee. People often did not respect people from Nazareth, so she showed disrespect when she called Jesus a Nazarene, or said, "Jesus, that man from Nazareth." For more information about Nazareth, see the Master Glossary.

Peter **denied** that he knew Jesus, which means that Peter said he does not know Jesus. To **deny** something means to say that what someone says is not true. Use the same word or phrase for deny or denied as you have used in previous passages.

Peter moved to the **outer entrance to the courtyard**, or to the **entryway** to the courtyard. This is the entrance from the street or outside into the courtyard of the house. This is not the entrance to the house.

Just then, as Peter moved to the outer entrance of the courtyard, a rooster crowed. A **rooster** is a male fowl that makes a loud noise sometime before dawn. In Jerusalem at this time, roosters normally crowed about three times between midnight and 3 a.m. Use the same word or phrase for rooster as you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and show your translation team a photo of the rooster. Pause this audio here.

Some of the other people said to Peter, "You must be a companion of Jesus, because you are a Galilean." **Galilean** refers to someone from the region or area of Galilee. Nazareth is one of the towns in Galilee. Use the same word or phrase for Galilee as you have used in previous passages. For more information about Galilee refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and again show the map of Israel which includes Jerusalem and the region of Galilee with Nazareth in it. Pause this audio here.

Peter responded strongly. Peter **swears**, which means he solemnly and seriously promised that he was telling the truth. Peter said, "A curse on me," or he "called down curses on himself." This means that he asked God to punish him if he lies. Use the same word or phrase for curse as you have used in previous passages. For more information about curse, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 14:66-72

Audio Content

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Mark 15:1–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 15:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:1–15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this story Mark shows his audience, the persecuted Christians, how to behave in their trials. He shows us that Jesus behaved with honour. Mark also shows us that Jesus was executed as the Messiah, or king of the Jews. The title of Messiah implies that the Messiah is a king, but Jesus' kingdom was different than a political kingdom. This story begins very early the next morning, before sunrise, after Jesus' trial with the Sanhedrin, or the Jewish high council. The Sanhedrin are all gathered to make a plan about what to do next with Jesus.

The Jewish high council, or Sanhedrin, condemned Jesus to die because they said he blasphemed by claiming to be the Messiah. Blasphemy means to dishonour God. The Sanhedrin had to decide what to do next, because the Jewish authorities were not allowed to execute Jesus, which means to kill him for a crime. Only Roman officials could execute someone. At that time, Israel, the Jewish homeland, was governed by the Roman Empire or kingdom. The Roman emperor, or king, appointed governors to govern smaller areas of land within his empire. Pilate governed the area where the Jews lived. A Jewish ruler also helped Pilate, but as the Roman representative, only Pilate had the authority to condemn Jesus to death.

The Sanhedrin's guards tied up Jesus' hands and led Jesus away to the governor's palace, which was probably on the other side of the city of Jerusalem. Pilate, the Roman governor, was in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. He stayed at the governor's palace in Jerusalem. The official Roman court began at dawn, so the Sanhedrin needed to take Jesus to Pilate as early as possible.

The Sanhedrin gave Jesus to Pilate, so that Pilate could judge Jesus and put him to death. The Roman government would not execute Jesus for blasphemy in the Jewish religion. So, the Sanhedrin told the Roman governor that Jesus was a revolutionary, which is someone who wants to overthrow the Roman government and become king himself.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: How does your court system work? Who is able to condemn people to death in your culture? What kinds of crime are considered very bad in your culture? Describe what usually happens when someone is being judged for a crime in your culture. Pause this audio here.

In a Roman court of law, the people who are accusing someone of a crime bring their accusation to the Roman judge, and the Roman judge may ask any questions he wants to the person who is accused. The Sanhedrin probably told Pilate that Jesus wanted to overthrow the Roman government and become king. So, Pilate asked Jesus the question, "Are you the king of the Jews?" In a sense, the Sanhedrin was correct—Jesus was king—but he was not a revolutionary who wanted to overthrow the Roman government.

The Jewish people were a group of people who were descended from their ancestor Abraham. Most of them lived in an area of land called Israel, in a similar area to the present-day country of Israel. Because the Roman government ruled much of the world, including Israel, it was not a good thing to claim to be a king instead of the Roman king. However, the Jewish people were waiting for a Messiah that they hoped would become a king who would save them from oppression by foreign governments. God's plan for the Messiah was that he would rule in the hearts of God's people and cause God's people to follow God. Jesus says he is a king—he is the Messiah—but he is not the kind of king Pilate is asking about.

Jesus knew that Pilate did not understand what kind of king Jesus was. Jesus answered, "You have said it," which means that he is saying he is the king, but perhaps different than Pilate expected. The leading priests accused Jesus of many more crimes, and Pilate asked Jesus to defend himself. Jesus said nothing, which was unusual in a Roman court of law. Pilate was surprised. Pilate did not believe Jesus was guilty. But because Jesus did not defend himself, it was more difficult for Pilate to say that Jesus was innocent.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: When someone is innocent how do they behave? When someone is guilty how do they behave? Jesus was silent, but we know he was innocent. In your culture, would people believe Jesus was innocent or guilty because he was silent? Pause this audio here.

The Roman governor had the authority to release one prisoner during the week of the Passover celebration as a gift to the Jewish population. The prisoner would be released and then receive no further punishment for their crimes. The crowd of people asked Pilate to release a prisoner to them. Because Pilate believed that Jesus was innocent, he asked the crowd if they wanted him to release Jesus. He called Jesus the king of the Jews, perhaps thinking that this would make the crowd want Jesus to be released. Pilate did not like the Jewish leaders. He knew that the Jewish leaders only arrested Jesus because they hated Jesus because everyone else liked him, not because he was really a revolutionary. Pilate did not want to give in to the Sanhedrin's demands.

However, the leading priests probably told the crowds to ask for Pilate to release Barabbas, a prisoner who wanted to overthrow the government. During one attempt at overthrowing the government, Barabbas had killed someone. The leading priests probably told the crowds that they had condemned Jesus to die for blasphemy in their court. The crowd persistently demanded that Jesus be crucified. Pilate asked the crowds what Jesus had done wrong. The crowd did not answer, but continued to say, "Crucify him!" Instead of creating a situation where he could release Jesus, Pilate had created a situation where it would be dangerous to not execute Jesus. Pilate had no choice but to release Barabbas instead to the crowd. Pilate ordered the soldiers to flog Jesus. The soldiers probably took Jesus inside the governor's palace to flog him in the courtyard, away from the people. The Roman soldiers flogged people by stripping them naked, tying them to a pole, and hitting them many times with a whip made of leather. They tied pieces of bone, glass, or lead to the leather in order to make the whip more harmful. Many people died from flogging. After the soldiers flogged Jesus, Pilate ordered the soldiers to crucify Jesus. Romans crucified people by nailing their hands and feet to two pieces of wood laid out in the shape of a cross. They placed the cross upright and allowed the person to die a slow and painful death.

Stop here and look at a photo of a whip with lead, glass, and bones tied in it.

Discuss this question as a group: Do you have methods of execution in your culture? How are they the same or different than this method? Pause this audio here.

In this way, Pilate fulfilled the prophecies that Jesus would be executed as the Messiah, or king. The Roman government thought Jesus was executed because he claimed to be king and to overthrow the Roman government. However, Jesus was claiming to be the king of God's Kingdom.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: The Sanhedrin meet together at daybreak, before the sun comes up, to make plans.

The second scene: Starts at sunrise. The Sanhedrin take Jesus to Pilate the governor and accuses Jesus of trying to overthrow the Roman government. Pilate asks Jesus if he is the King of the Jews.

In the third scene: Mark gives us background information. He says that the governor usually releases one prisoner during the Passover celebration. Mark describes Barabbas, a revolutionary in prison.

In the fourth scene: The crowd of people at the Passover celebration ask Pilate to release one prisoner to them. Pilate asks if he can release Jesus, the king of the Jews, because he does not believe that Jesus is guilty. The crowd calls out for Barabbas and tells Pilate to crucify Jesus.

In the fifth scene: Pilate give Jesus to the soldiers to flog Jesus. Then Pilate tells the soldiers to crucify Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Sanhedrin, which is the teachers of religious law, leading priests, and elders
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- The Roman soldiers
- The crowd of people at the Passover celebration
- Barabbas, a Jewish revolutionary who wants to overthrow the Roman government

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that this story starts at daybreak, as the sun is coming up. The leading priests, elders, and teachers of religious law make plans to take Jesus to the governor. They tie Jesus' hands and lead him away to the governor's palace, where Pilate is staying. The text just says that the religious leaders take Jesus to Pilate, but your audience may not know who Pilate is. Some Bible translations describe Pilate as "the Roman governor."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you introduce new characters in your true stories? Pause this audio here.

Pilate starts the trial like any Roman trial. Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus says, "You say that I am." This may mean that Jesus is saying, "Yes, I am!" or that Jesus wants to state who he is in a gentle way. The leading priests accuse Jesus of many things. We do not know specific things they accuse him of. Pilate asks Jesus, "Aren't you going to answer? They are accusing you of many things." Pilate expects Jesus to answer. Jesus does not answer, and Pilate is surprised. Pilate does not understand why Jesus does not answer, because most accused people want to convince the court that they are innocent.

Mark stops the storyline to tell us some background information. Mark says that there is a custom that the governor releases one prisoner to the people during the time of the Passover celebration. Then Mark tells us that one prisoner was Barabbas. Barabbas was a prisoner in a Roman prison because he was a revolutionary,

or a rebel. Barabbas was a member of a group of men who tried to overthrow the Roman government. During one attempt at overthrowing the government, Barabbas had killed someone.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you tell background information for a story? How does your audience know that this information is not part of the action of the story? Pause this audio here.

Now Mark goes back to the story. The crowd of people ask Pilate to release a prisoner to them.

Pilate sees his chance. Pilate believes that Jesus is innocent. Pilate believes that the leading priests brought Jesus to him because they hated Jesus. Pilate asks the people, "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" The leading priests tell the people to ask Pilate to release Barabbas instead.

Pilate asks the people, "What should I do with the one you call king of the Jews?" The people shout, "Crucify him!" which means to kill Jesus by nailing him to a cross. The crowd is becoming chaotic. Pilate wants to satisfy the crowd and make them happy so that they do not become dangerous. Pilate releases Barabbas to the crowd.

At this point, Pilate tells the soldiers to flog Jesus. The soldiers probably take Jesus into the palace itself, away from the public, for the flogging. We do not know exactly where the soldiers flogged Jesus. Probably after the soldiers flog Jesus, Pilate tells them to crucify Jesus on a cross.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Sanhedrin, which is the teachers of the religious law, leading priests, and elders
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- The Roman soldiers
- The crowd of people at the Passover celebration
- Barabbas, a Jewish revolutionary who wants to overthrow the Roman government.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The sun is coming up early in the morning. The leading priests, elders, and teachers of religious law make plans to take Jesus to the governor. They tie Jesus' hands and lead him away to the governor's palace, where Pilate is staying.

The religious leaders bring Jesus in front of Pilate. Pilate begins a formal trial. Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus says, "You say that I am."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Determined," "Calm," "Sad." Ask the person playing Pilate, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Curious about this man," "Confused about why the religious leaders brought this man." Continue the drama.

The leading priests accuse Jesus of many things. We do not know specific things they accuse him of. Pilate asks Jesus, "Aren't you going to answer? They are accusing you of many things." Jesus does not answer, and Pilate is surprised.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Determined," "Peaceful." Ask the person playing Pilate, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Confused," "Impressed that Jesus is so calm." Continue the drama.

There is a custom that the governor releases one prisoner to the people during the time of the Passover celebration. The crowd of people ask Pilate to release a prisoner to them.

Pilate believes that the leading priests brought Jesus to him because they hated Jesus. Pilate asks the people, "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" Barabbas was a prisoner because he was a revolutionary who had killed people when he tried to overthrow the government. The leading priests tell the people to ask Pilate to release Barabbas instead. "Give us Barabbas!" the people shout. Pilate asks the people, "What should I do with the one you call king of the Jews?" The people shout, "Crucify him!" which means to kill Jesus by nailing him to a cross. The crowd is becoming chaotic. Pilate wants to satisfy the crowd and make them happy so that they do not become dangerous. Pilate releases Barabbas to the crowd.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing teachers of religious law, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Satisfied that we finally succeeded in condemning Jesus to death!" Ask the people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We do not know what we are doing, we are just doing what everyone around us is doing." Ask the person playing Pilate, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Disappointed." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Sad that the crowds no longer listen to me," "Asking my Father God for strength." Continue the drama.

At this point, Pilate tells the soldiers to flog Jesus. The soldiers probably take Jesus into the palace itself, away from the public, for the flogging. We do not know exactly where the soldiers flogged Jesus. Probably after the soldiers flog Jesus, Pilate tells them to crucify Jesus on a cross.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Very early in the morning the leading priests, elders, and teachers of religious law met to discuss what to do next. This group of men make up the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high council. Use the same words for these groups of men as you have in previous passages and remember that all of these words are in the Master Glossary.

The members of the Sanhedrin take Jesus to Pilate, the **Roman governor**. At that time, Israel, the Jewish homeland, was governed by the Roman Empire or kingdom. The Roman emperor, or king, appointed governors to govern smaller areas of land within his empire. Pilate governed the area where the Jews lived.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Roman governor**. Pause this audio here.

Mark tells us that it was the custom at the Passover feast or festival to release a prisoner to the Jewish people. The **Passover** celebration was a 7 or 8 day celebration. Some Bibles use the specific name of the celebration—Passover—and some just say celebration or feast. You may use whichever term you would like but choose the

term that will help your audience understand the story clearly. If you say Passover, use the same term that you have in previous passages, and remember that Passover is in the Master Glossary.

Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the **King of the Jews**?" The Jewish people were a group of people who were descended from their ancestor Abraham. Most of them lived in an area of land called Israel, in a similar area to the present-day country of Israel. Because the Roman government ruled much of the world, including Israel, it was not a good thing to claim to be a king instead of the Roman king. However, the Jewish people were waiting for a Messiah that they hoped would become a king who would save them from oppression by foreign governments. God's plan for the Messiah was that he would rule in the hearts of God's people and cause God's people to follow God. Jesus says he is a king—he is the Messiah—but he is not the kind of king Pilate is asking about.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **King of the Jews**. Pause this audio here.

The crowd demands that Pilate **crucify** Jesus. Crucifixion was the worst form of execution in Jesus' time. Usually the soldiers flogged the victim, then nailed their hands and feet to two pieces of wood in the shape of a **cross**. The soldiers stood the cross upright, and the victim hung in pain for hours until they died. Use the same word or phrase for cross as you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **crucify**. For more information about crucify and cross refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers **flogged** Jesus. That means that they tied the victim to a pole, stripped him naked, and hit him many times with a leather whip that had glass, lead, and bones tied to it. Sometimes people could see the inside parts of a person after flogging. Sometimes people died from the flogging. Use the same word or phrase for flogged as you have in previous passages.

Pilate **handed Jesus over to be crucified**, which means that Pilate gave Jesus to soldiers who would nail him to the cross.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 15:1–15**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (12511538 KB)

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Mark 15:16–32*Hear and Heart**Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Mark 15:16–32 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:16–32 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

*Setting the Stage**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:16–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story begins right after the soldiers flogged Jesus. We do not know where the soldiers flogged Jesus, but they probably took him to a courtyard inside the governor's palace near where the soldiers were living. Extra, non-Jewish soldiers usually came with the governor Pilate for the Passover celebration to help protect Jerusalem. Many Jewish people were in Jerusalem for the Passover, and sometimes the Jewish people started riots against the government. Therefore, a regiment of soldiers—about 200 to 600 men—were in the Praetorium the governors headquarters. The soldiers were probably very stressed because of the danger in Jerusalem during big celebrations like Passover.

Jesus was probably bleeding and very weak from the flogging. These soldiers knew that Jesus said he was King of the Jews. The soldiers mocked him by pretending to respect him as king. Soldiers from the regiment dressed Jesus in a purple robe—the colour of royalty—which was probably just an old purple-coloured cloth or rug. They wove together thorn branches into a circle and pushed it down on Jesus' head. They called the circle of thorn branches a king's crown. Then the soldiers mocked Jesus. They cried out, "Hail, or honour to you, King of the Jews!" in a similar way to how they addressed the Roman king. The soldiers struck Jesus on the head with a stick, spat on him, and knelt on their knees to pretend to worship Jesus. Spitting was one of the worst ways to insult a person in Jesus' culture. Then the soldiers took off the purple robe and put Jesus' clothes back on him.

Stop here and look at a photo of a purple or deep red robe, and a photo of a stick that would be used for beating someone as a group.

Discuss these questions as a group. How do people insult other people in your culture? In this story, they hit Jesus and spit on him. They also made fun of him by pretending he was a king. What do people do in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Usually, a commanding soldier and 4 execution soldiers led the prisoner to the place of execution through the city. The prisoner carried the shorter crossbeam of the cross on his way to the execution site. The place of crucifixion was just outside the Jerusalem city wall, probably alongside a road.

Stop here and look at a photo of a cross and point out the crossbeam of the cross as a group. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers either carried a sign or put a sign on the prisoner with the name of their crime written on it. Jesus had a sign that said, "King of the Jews" to show that he was being executed for saying that he was a king.

Jesus was very weak after the flogging, and he could not carry his cross the entire way. At the same time as Jesus was walking to the execution site, a man was coming into Jerusalem from the countryside. His name was Simon. Simon was a Jew who lived in or came to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration, but he was from Cyrene, a city in northern Africa. The people in Mark's audience must have known Simon and his sons, because Mark tells us that Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.

It was custom in Jewish tradition for Jewish women to offer wine mixed with myrrh, a special sap from a tree, to help the prisoner dull the pain of the crucifixion. Mark does not tell us who offered Jesus this wine. Jesus refused the wine mixed with myrrh so that he could endure the full pain of the cross.

Mark does not give full details of how Romans crucified their prisoners, probably because his audience already understood the process very well. Normally the Romans stripped their prisoner naked. Jewish people did not like prisoners to be executed completely naked, so sometimes Roman soldiers allowed their prisoners to wear a loin-cloth around their legs. We do not know if Jesus wore one or not. The soldiers outstretched his arms, and nailed or tied his arms to the cross-plank. The nail was probably driven through the forearm of the victim. The cross piece was lifted up and attached to an upright stake or post that was already sunk into the earth. The feet were then nailed to the upright stake. The feet were probably nailed together with one long nail. There may have been a block of wood fixed about midway up the post to support the body. Prisoners usually died from the exhaustion of trying to hold up their body to breathe. They were weakened by the flogging and loss of blood, so this process normally took a few hours.

The height of the crosses raised up could have been just about the height of a man, but in Jesus' case it was probably a little higher so that more people could see him. The religious leaders mocked Jesus and told him to "come down from the cross," implying that his cross may have been a bit higher than normal.

Romans allowed the executioners to claim the possessions of the executed man. Jesus' only possessions were his clothing. He probably had an outer garment and an inner garment, and possibly a head covering. The soldiers cast lots, or threw sticks on the ground, to determine who would get which piece of clothing.

Stop here and look at a photo of lots that would be cast.

Discuss these questions as a group: In your culture, how do people shame or humiliate other people? What kinds of things do people do in order to be treated in such a shameful way? Pause this audio here.

Mark then tells us that the soldiers crucified Jesus at 9 a.m. in the morning, or in Jewish time, "the third hour." This does not fit with the timing in the other gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion, or even with Mark's own account. This time reference may have been an afterthought from an early reviser of the book of Mark, or simply just an approximate time that Jesus was executed.

The soldiers placed the sign that Jesus wore—"King of the Jews"—on the wood above his head. The soldiers also crucified two men on crosses on either side of Jesus. These men are described as "robbers" or "thieves." Romans did not execute people for being thieves, so the more likely meaning of this description is that these men were also revolutionaries and had tried to overthrow the government.

Some people passed by and shook their heads, or moved their heads in such a way to show that they were insulting Jesus. They said, "You said you will destroy the temple and rebuild it after three days." These people may have been in the room the night before with the Sanhedrin or heard what the false witnesses said about Jesus. The people also said, "Come down from the cross and save yourself."

The members of the Sanhedrin, the leading priests and teachers of the law talked among themselves in a sarcastic way. "He saved others, but he can't save himself. Let this 'Messiah,' this 'King of Israel,' come down from the cross so we can believe him." They probably meant that Jesus saved other people by healing them. Ironically, Jesus is able to save people spiritually because he didn't "save himself" by coming down from the cross. The religious leaders called Jesus the "King of Israel" rather than the "King of the Jews" as Pilate had done. The Romans called the people group living in Israel the "Jews." The Jewish people themselves liked to use the name of their land, Israel.

The revolutionaries who were on crosses on either side of Jesus ridiculed him, which means that they said bad things about Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:16–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The soldiers in the Praetorium, the governor's headquarters, mock Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus begins to carry his crossbeam to the place of execution. He cannot carry it all the way, and Simon of Cyrene carries it the rest of the way to Golgotha, the Place of the Skull.

In the third scene: Someone offers Jesus wine and myrrh, and the soldiers nail Jesus to the cross. There are two revolutionaries crucified on two crosses on either side of Jesus.

In the fourth scene: People, leading priests, and teachers of religious law mock Jesus. The two revolutionaries on either side of Jesus mock Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Soldiers in the Praetorium (the governor's headquarters)
- Simon of Cyrene
- Someone who offers Jesus wine and myrrh
- Soldiers who crucify Jesus
- Two revolutionaries crucified on either side of Jesus
- People watching the crucifixion
- Leading priests and teachers of religious law

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

We have told this story giving details at the time that they happened. This may be helpful for you to understand when things happened in this story.

It is important to remember that this story starts as or right after the soldiers flog Jesus. At some point, either before or right after they flog Jesus, they take Jesus into the courtyard of the governor's headquarters. The regiment of about 200 to 600 soldiers come out to see Jesus and mock him. The soldiers pretend to treat Jesus like they would treat a king. They put a purple, or dark red, robe on him. They put a crown made of thorn branches on his head. They salute him, or call out to him like a king: "Hail king of the Jews!" Then they hit him on the head with a stick and spit on him to insult him. They kneel down in front of him like they are bowing to him. Then they take off the purple robe and put his clothes on him. It is important to remember that this is very humiliating for Jesus.

Then probably about 4 soldiers and one leading soldier put the crossbeam of the cross, which is a long piece of wood, on his shoulders and start to lead Jesus to the place of execution. The soldiers either carry a sign or put it on Jesus that says, "King of the Jews." Jesus begins to carry the long piece of wood through the city of Jerusalem. There are many people in the city all around him. Jesus is very weak after he has been flogged. He cannot carry the wood anymore. The soldiers force a man named Simon, from Cyrene, to carry the cross. Mark stops the storyline here to give us the information that Simon is the father of Alexander and Rufus, and that Simon is from the north African city of Cyrene.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Remember how you introduced background information in the previous passage. Where would you put it in this chronology? Pause this audio here.

Simon, the soldiers, and Jesus walk through the city and exit the city through a gate in the wall. There is a place of execution outside the Jerusalem city wall called Golgotha, the Place of the Skull.

Some people, possibly Jewish women, offer Jesus wine mixed with myrrh to help with the pain. Jesus refuses the wine. Mark tells us that it is 9 o'clock in the morning, or about three hours after sunrise, when the soldiers crucify Jesus. The soldiers spread Jesus' arms out on the crossbeam that Simon has carried. They nail his arms, probably in the forearm area, to each end of the cross beam. Then they raise up the cross beam onto a vertical wooden pole. They probably nail Jesus' feet together through the heels onto the vertical piece of wood near the bottom. They place the sign that says "King of the Jews" above Jesus' head.

The soldiers crucify two men who were revolutionaries in a similar way and place their crosses, one on either side of Jesus. Jesus' cross was in the middle. The soldiers cast lots, probably by throwing small, marked stones on the ground. The way the stones landed determined who would get which pieces of Jesus' clothing.

People passed by and insulted Jesus. They shook their heads to show their disgust and say, "You want to destroy the temple and build it in three days. Come down from the cross and save yourself!" The leading priests and teachers of the law spoke to each other and mocked Jesus: "He saved others, but he can't save himself! This Messiah, king of Israel, should come down from the cross so we can see it and believe in him." The two revolutionaries who were on the crosses next to Jesus also insulted him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:16–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Soldiers in the Praetorium (the governor's headquarters)
- Simon of Cyrene
- Someone who offers Jesus wine and myrrh
- Soldiers who crucify Jesus
- Two revolutionaries crucified on either side of Jesus
- People watching the crucifixion
- Leading priests and teachers of religious law

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

This story starts as or right after the soldiers flog Jesus. At some point, either before or right after they flog Jesus, they take Jesus into the courtyard of the governor's headquarters. The regiment of about 200 to 600 soldiers come out to see Jesus and mock him. The soldiers pretend to treat Jesus like they would treat a king. They put a purple, or dark red, robe on him. They put a crown made of thorn branches on his head. They salute him, or call out to him like a king: "Hail king of the Jews!" Then they hit him on the head with a stick and spit on him to insult him. They kneel down in front of him like they are bowing to him. Then they take off the purple robe and put his clothes on him.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "This is a good way to relieve the stress of trying to protect Jerusalem during Passover," "Surprised that Jesus does not say angry things to us." Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Sad, because they do not know that I am really a king." Continue the drama.

About 4 soldiers and one leading soldier put the crossbeam of the cross, which is a long piece of wood, on Jesus' shoulders and start to lead Jesus to the place of execution. The soldiers either carry a sign or put it on Jesus that says, "King of the Jews." Jesus begins to carry the long piece of wood through the city of Jerusalem. There are many people in the city all around him. Jesus is very weak after he has been flogged. He cannot carry the wood anymore. The soldiers force a man named Simon, from Cyrene, to carry the cross. Remember that Simon is the father of Alexander and Rufus, and that Simon is from the north African city of Cyrene. Simon, the soldiers, and

Jesus walk through the city and exit the city through a gate in the wall. There is a place of execution outside the city wall called Golgotha, the Place of the Skull.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Simon, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I wonder who this man is," "I would like to know more about him, he seems different," "I am sad for this man." Ask the people along the streets of Jerusalem, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I am so sad," "I wonder what horrible things this man did—he must be a bad man!" "I cannot watch, this is too sad," "I am curious, I want to follow to see what happens." Continue the drama.

They arrive at Golgotha. Some people, possibly Jewish women, offer Jesus wine mixed with myrrh to help with the pain. Jesus refuses the wine. The soldiers spread Jesus' arms out on the cross beam that Simon has carried. They nail his arms, probably in the forearm area, to each end of the cross beam. Then they raise up the cross beam onto a vertical wooden pole. They probably nail Jesus' feet together through the heels onto the vertical piece of wood near the bottom. They place the sign that says "King of the Jews" above Jesus' head.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I try not to think—this is cruel." Ask the person playing the women who offered the wine and the other people watching, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We don't like to watch this," "Sad," "Disappointed that Jesus has not miraculously stopped this," "Disappointed that Jesus has not come to overthrow the government." Continue the drama.

The soldiers crucify two men who were revolutionaries in a similar way and place their crosses, one on either side of Jesus. Jesus' cross was in the middle. The soldiers cast lots, probably by throwing small marked stones on the ground. The way the stones landed determined who would get which pieces of Jesus' clothing.

People passed by and insulted Jesus. They shook their heads to show their disgust and say, "You want to destroy the temple and build it in three days! Come down from the cross and save yourself!" The leading priests and teachers of the law spoke to each other and mocked Jesus. "He saved others, but he can't save himself! This Messiah, king of Israel, should come down from the cross so we can see it and believe in him." The two revolutionaries who were on the crosses next to Jesus also insulted him.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the two revolutionaries on the other crosses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I am suffering, I wish everyone else would suffer too," "I wish Jesus really were someone who could save us all—I'm disappointed again." Ask the people playing the religious leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Happy that Jesus is finally out of our way!" Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Rejected," "Alone," "Sad that these people don't understand that I have to die in order to save them spiritually."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:16–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The soldiers take Jesus to the **Praetorium**, which is the specific name for the governor's official residence and offices. Most likely, this story took place in the courtyards, the outside area surrounded by buildings.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Praetorium**. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers called the entire **company** or **regiment** of soldiers out to see Jesus. A regiment of soldiers was usually about 600 soldiers, but this regiment could have been anywhere from 200 to 600 soldiers.

The soldiers put a **purple robe or outer garment** on Jesus. **Purple** is a colour that is between blue and red. It could be considered a deep, dark red or a deep, dark blue. Purple cloth was expensive and used for royalty.

Stop here look at a photo of a purple robe again. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **purple**. You could use a term that describes the colour of something known in your culture that is dark red or dark blue. For example, a flower, berry, or bird. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers put a **crown of thorns** on Jesus' head. The soldiers twisted together branches with thorns on them into a circle. This circle was like a special crown, or headpiece, that kings wore in Jesus' time. Kings wore a special circular ring on their heads to show that they were kings.

Then the soldiers led Jesus to be **crucified**. Use the same word for crucifixion and crucify that you have in previous passages and remember that crucifixion is in the Master Glossary. Crucifixion is the act of crucifying someone.

Use the same word for **cross** that you used in the previous story and remember that cross is in the Master Glossary. Remember that Jesus was only given the crossbeam of the cross to carry.

Stop here and look at a photo of a cross and point out the crossbeam as a group. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers led Jesus to a place called Golgotha. **Golgotha** is the specific name of the place where the soldiers crucified Jesus. The name means "Place of the Skull." Mark tells us both the specific name of the place and the meaning of the name. You will want to do the same thing in your translation.

Someone, probably some Jewish women, offered Jesus wine (a fermented drink made from a fruit called grapes) mixed with **myrrh**, a sap of a kind of tree. Myrrh is like a medicine that helps people not feel pain.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **myrrh**. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers threw **dice** or **cast lots** to see who would get Jesus' clothes. To "cast lots" means to throw little stones that were marked in some way. The way the stones fell determined who got which pieces of Jesus' clothes.

Stop here and look at a photo of the lots again as a group. Pause this audio here.

Mark said that Jesus was crucified in the **third hour**, which is 9 a.m., or three hours after sunrise.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for this time of day. Pause this audio here.

Two "robbers," "thieves," or "revolutionaries" were crucified on either side of Jesus. Use the same word for revolutionary that you have in previous passages. Remember that a **revolutionary** is someone who wants to overthrow the government.

The people insult Jesus and tell him that he said he would destroy the **temple** and rebuild it. Use the same word for temple that you have in previous passages in the book of Mark and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

The **leading priests** and **teachers of religious law** mocked Jesus and said, "Let this **Messiah**, this **King of Israel** come down from the cross so that we can see it and believe him." Use the same words for leading priests, teachers of religious law, and Messiah that you have in previous passages, and remember that these words are in the Master Glossary.

The religious leaders used the title "King of Israel" instead of "King of the Jews" because the Jewish people preferred to call themselves the nation of Israel, God's name for them since the time of their ancestor Jacob.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 15:16–32

Audio Content

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Mark 15:33–39

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 15:33–39 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:33–39 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?

4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:33–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Mark says that the soldiers crucified Jesus at 9 o'clock in the morning. Jesus was suffering on the cross for hours. At noon the sun became dark, even though the sun never becomes dark at this time of year. However, the people in Jesus' time would have believed that the darkness was a symbol for something bad. The Jewish prophet Amos said that the sun would become dark when God comes to judge the world. Other people believed that darkness was a symbol for the death of kings or cities. Before the very first Passover, when God rescued the Israelites from Egypt, there was a plague of darkness that symbolized God's curse over Egypt. The law of Moses says that God has punished or cursed those people that hang on a tree. Perhaps that is why the sun became dark.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, three hours after the darkness started, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" Jesus feels like he is completely cut off from God, so Jesus said the first part of a Psalm, or song, of lament. In this song of lament, the singer begs God to help the person who suffers unjustly or wrongly. Psalms of lament usually end with the promise that God will be with them and help them in their trouble.

Jesus probably spoke the name of God—Eloi, Eloi—in Hebrew and the rest of the question in Aramaic. Hebrew was the language of the Jewish Scripture, but Aramaic was the language that Jewish people spoke during Roman times. Some of the people around him may not have understood his first words. Jesus cried out for God, but the word he used for God sounded like the Hebrew name of the great Jewish prophet Elijah. Jewish people believed that the spirit of Elijah would come to rescue righteous people when they were in danger. It is understandable that the people believed Jesus was calling for Elijah instead of for God.

Jewish people thought that wine vinegar, which was cheap sour wine, refreshed and helped thirsty people. Someone heard Jesus' call and wanted to help him. The person soaked the wine vinegar in a sponge, put the sponge on the end of a long stick, and held it up to Jesus.

Jesus remained strong enough to speak loudly until the end of his life. This was unusual—most men became weaker and unconscious near the end of their crucifixion and were not able to breath well.

Mark tells about an event that happens in a different place but at the same time as the crucifixion. The temple in Jerusalem has two big curtains hanging in it to cover doorways. The inner curtain is the curtain that hangs between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies is the place in the temple where only the high priest can go on the special Day of Atonement to make a sacrifice for all of the people of Israel to forgive their sins. The outer curtain is the curtain that separated these very special areas for the priests from the courtyards for the non-priests. The public could see the outer curtain, but only a few priests could see the inner curtain.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the temple, including the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place, and the courtyards. Pause this audio here.

We are not certain which curtain divided in two from top to bottom. Some scholars believe that it was the outer curtain that divided in two from top to bottom, because the general public could see it from the courtyards and tell others that it had happened. Many people believe that this event is a prophecy that someday the temple would be destroyed. The temple truly was destroyed in 70 AD, only about 40 years after this happened. In any case, the curtain ripping in two pieces symbolizes that Jesus is changing the original Jewish traditions of needing a temple and priests to make sacrifices in the Holy of Holies for the sins of the people. Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice.

A centurion, or a Roman officer, had been with Jesus from the beginning of the crucifixion until his death. He was aware that Jesus was somehow different than the other victims. Jesus did not die a normal death or act like normal criminals who were executed. The Roman officer exclaims, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" This Roman officer probably understood that Jesus is divine or a divine hero who accepted his fate from God. However, the Roman officer would not have understood the complete meaning of his statement.

This officer's statement is the climax of the entire book of Mark. Mark wants to show his audience "Who is Jesus?" Mark wants to show his audience that Jesus is the Promised Messiah, king, and the Son of God. Mark starts his book by saying that this is an account of the life of Jesus "the Messiah, the Son of God." Then Jesus asks his disciples who he is, and Peter states, "You are the Messiah." Then the chief priest asks Jesus at his trial if he is the Messiah, the Son of God. Now even the Roman officer responsible for Jesus' death seems to understand who Jesus is. The Romans that Mark is writing for would be happy to know that even a Roman official understood who Jesus was.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:33–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The first scene: Begins at noon. The sun becomes dark for three hours.

In the second scene: Jesus calls out in a loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" Someone tries to give Jesus sour wine.

In the third scene: Jesus cries out loudly and dies. At the same time, in the temple, on the other side of Jerusalem, a curtain rips in two from top to bottom.

In the fourth scene: The Roman centurion, or officer, says, "This man must have been the Son of God!"

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- People standing next to the cross
- Someone who brings sour wine on a sponge
- The Roman officer, called a centurion

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This story starts at noon with darkness covering the whole area, covering probably just the area of Israel or even just the area around Jerusalem. Three hours pass. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Jesus cries out in a loud voice. It is important to remember that Mark gives us Jesus' words in the original language: "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you show that you are speaking in another language in your stories? Pause this audio here.

The Prophet Elijah's name sounded similar to "Eloi" and so some people nearby thought Jesus was calling for the Prophet Elijah. Someone—we do not know who—runs and soaks a sponge in sour wine. He puts the sponge on a stick and holds it up to Jesus. The man said, "Wait, Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down off the cross!" Jesus cries out in a loud voice and breathes his last breath. Jesus dies.

At the same time as Jesus dies, the temple curtain divides in two, starting from the top and going to the bottom. The temple is on the other side of Jerusalem from where Jesus dies. The people next to the cross where Jesus dies do not know that the curtain in the temple has split in two.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you tell information in a story that is happening at the same time, but in a different place? Pause this audio here.

A Roman officer, or centurion, is standing near the cross because he is responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. He sees everything that happens at the cross. He sees that Jesus dies in a different way than the other men. Jesus dies while he is still strong. The centurion says, "Surely, or I am sure, that this man was the Son of God!" This is the second climax, or most important part in the book of Mark.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you tell stories, how do you show with your voice and your words that you are saying an important part of the story? Practice telling each other a true, special story in your culture, and note where the most important part of the story is. How do you talk about it? What happens to your voice and your words as you talk about the important part in the story? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:33–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- People standing next to the cross
- Someone who brings sour wine on a sponge
- The Roman officer, called a centurion

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

This story starts at noon with darkness covering the whole area, covering probably just the area of Israel or even just the area around Jerusalem. Three hours pass. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Jesus cries out in a loud voice. "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I've never been so alone," "Totally abandoned." Ask the people playing the people standing nearby, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Wondering who he is talking to," "Sad for him." Continue the drama.

Someone—we do not know who—runs and soaks a sponge in sour wine. He puts the sponge on a stick and holds it up to Jesus. The man said, "Wait, Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down off the cross!" Jesus cries out in a loud voice and breathed his last breath. Jesus dies. At the same time as Jesus dies, the temple curtain

divides in two, starting from the top and going to the bottom. The temple is on the other side of Jerusalem from where Jesus dies.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the man, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Disappointed." Ask the people playing the people standing nearby, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Sad," "Relieved that it is over," "Sad that Jesus died for no good reason." Continue the drama.

A Roman officer, or centurion, is standing near the cross because he is responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. The centurion says, "I am sure that this man was the Son of God!"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the centurion, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Jesus had more dignity than others who died," "Jesus was not angry like others," "Jesus died differently than others," "I can feel that God is with this man."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:33-39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

At noon **darkness fell** across the **whole land** until **3 o'clock**. The "whole land" may refer to only the area around Jerusalem, or the nation of Israel. It probably did not refer to the whole world. "Darkness fell" means that the sun stopped being light. This happened at **noon**, and Jesus cried out at **3 o'clock in the afternoon**. Some languages may not have the words to give an exact hour of time. If that is the case, you may say something like, "midday," and "the middle of the afternoon," or however you talk about the times of day in your culture.

Jesus cried out, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" This is Hebrew and Aramaic for "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" or "Why have you abandoned or deserted me?" Jesus probably says the name of God, **Eloi**, in Hebrew, and then the rest of the question in Aramaic. Hebrew was the language of the Jewish Scripture, but Aramaic was the language that Jewish people spoke during Roman times. Mark gives us both the Hebrew and Aramaic, and its translation into our language. You may need to do this as well. If so, try to say the Hebrew sentence in a similar way to the original Hebrew and Aramaic, and then translate it into your language just as Mark does for his audience.

Some of the people thought that Jesus was calling out for the prophet **Elijah**. Translate Elijah's name in the same way you have been in previous passages and remember that Elijah is in the Master Glossary.

Someone gave Jesus **sour wine**, or **wine vinegar** to drink to try to help him not be thirsty. Wine vinegar is a cheap fermented drink. Because the wine is on a sponge, you may say that they offered it to Jesus to suck.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for sour wine or wine vinegar. Pause this audio here.

Jesus **breathed his last**, which means that he died.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Will your audience understand that Jesus died at this point, or do you need to make that explicit? Do you need to say "Jesus died"? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus died, the **curtain** in the **temple** was torn from top to bottom. There were two curtains in the temple, and we are not sure which one was torn. However, the main curtain on the inside of the temple was 20 meters long, 10 meters wide, and as thick as the palm of a man's hand. The curtain was made of cloth and was used to cover a doorway. You could say "the curtain divided into two parts." Use the same word for temple as you have in previous passages, and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

When Jesus died, the centurion who was responsible for his execution said, "Surely he was the **Son of God**!" A **centurion** is a Roman officer in the army who commands one hundred soldiers. Translate Son of God in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that Son of God is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **centurion**. For more information about centurion, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 15:33-39

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 15:40–47*Hear and Heart**Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Mark 15:40–47 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:40–47 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

*Setting the Stage**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:40–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus has just died. The Roman soldiers executed Jesus on a cross by crucifixion, a form of execution used by the Romans. This passage begins by stating that there were some women who were watching from a distance. They were women, most likely from Galilee, who followed Jesus to Jerusalem. Only three of these women's names are mentioned, although there were many other women there as well. One is Mary Magdalene. Mary is a common woman's name in Israel. By calling her Magdalene, Mark is saying that she is from the town of Magdala, a fishing village on the coast of the Sea of Galilee. Another woman, also called Mary, is the mother of James the younger and Joses or Joseph. Mark calls James "the younger" probably because there were at least two people named James who were known by Mark's listeners. The third woman's name was Salome.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture talk about people who share the same name? Discuss the ways you might talk about them to help others understand exactly who you are talking about.

Show a map of Galilee that includes the town of Magdala indicated if the team is not familiar with this town. Pause this audio here.

These women learned from Jesus and also cared for, or some English versions say "ministered to him." This means that they helped him possibly with finances or with cooking and caring for the clothing of Jesus and the group of Jesus' closest followers. These women did not serve Jesus as wives or in any sexual way.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How you would describe how these women helped Jesus? In your culture and language, how do you describe women who are not wives but help care for others in ways like providing food and caring for clothing? Pause this audio here.

Jesus' death happened on the Day of Preparation, that is the day before a Sabbath, the Jewish day of rest and worshipping God. It was now close to evening and once the sun set it would be unlawful to do any work, including moving a dead body.

Roman authorities would often just leave a crucified body to rot and decay while hanging on the cross. They would later remove the decayed body and throw it into a mass grave, showing no honour to the dead person. However, a proper burial is important in Jewish culture. A proper burial needed to happen before sundown.

Joseph of Arimathea was determined that Jesus would be buried properly.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: How important is burial in your culture? What are the common burial practices among your people? How are the burial practices different when a person is respected as opposed to not being respected? Are there different practices for men and women? Old people and young people? Pause this audio here.

Many details are given in this passage about the man called Joseph. He was from the town of Arimathea, which was located about 32 kilometers (or 20 miles) to the northwest of Jerusalem. Joseph was a prominent or highly respected member of the Jewish religious council, called the Sanhedrin. This passage says that Joseph was looking for or waiting for the kingdom of God. This means that Joseph wanted the time to come when God would rule His people as King. In addition, this could also suggest that Joseph was a follower of Jesus.

Joseph wanted to honour Jesus by giving his body a proper burial. Joseph was courageous or brave and asked Pilate for Jesus' body. This means that Joseph asked Pilate for permission to bury Jesus. You will remember that Pilate was the Roman governor who gave the order for Jesus' crucifixion. Pilate was surprised that Jesus had died so quickly, so he checked with the centurion, a Roman military officer, to check to make sure that Jesus was actually dead. Crucifixion, death on a cross, was usually a slow death. In some cases, men would not die until two or three days after having been nailed to a cross. Jesus died less than eight hours after being nailed to the cross. Pilate was willing to allow Joseph to take the body.

Stop here and look at pictures of a cross and crucifixion if your group has not seen them already. Pause this audio here.

The passage tells us that Joseph prepared Jesus' body for burial. There was just a short time to accomplish this task and the task was not simple. Though Mark does not tell us that Joseph had help, many people believe Joseph had assistance, possibly from his servants. Joseph wrapped Jesus' dead body in a long, linen cloth. Linen is a type of high-quality cloth made from flax. According to Jewish custom, people wrapped dead bodies in such a cloth before they buried the body. Mark does not mention that Joseph washed the body before wrapping it, but scholars believe that Joseph washed the body. Washing a dead body is such an important part of Jewish burial custom that Jewish law permitted people to wash a dead body on the Sabbath. After wrapping Jesus' body, Joseph placed the body in a tomb, a burial cave that had been carved from rock. A large stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb.

Stop here and look at a photo of linen cloth as a group. Look at a photo of a tomb carved from rock with a large stone at the entrance.

Discuss the burial customs among your people. How is a dead body prepared? Where is the body placed after preparation for burial? Pause this audio here.

Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Joses, saw where Joseph of Arimathea placed the body of Jesus. In Jewish culture, women were not valid eyewitnesses. However, the women were the only ones of Jesus' disciples who watched what happened to Jesus' body. Mark shows that this account is a true story by giving us true details about what happened.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: In your culture, what role do women have as witnesses of events? Who has authority to witness an event and tell what happened?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:40–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus has just died on the cross. Women who followed Jesus are watching from a distance. They include Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome.

In the second scene: It is early evening the day before the Sabbath. Joseph of Arimathea goes to Pilate to get permission to bury Jesus' body. Pilate asks a centurion, or Roman officer, to confirm that Jesus is dead. Pilate gives Joseph permission to bury Jesus' body.

In the third scene: Joseph prepares Jesus' body for burial. He wraps Jesus' body in a long linen cloth. Joseph puts Jesus' body in a tomb that has been carved from rock. A large stone is placed over the entrance. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, see where Jesus' body is put.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Mary Magdalene
- Mary the mother of James the younger and Joseph
- Salome
- Other women who followed Jesus
- Joseph of Arimathea
- Pilate
- A centurion

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: As the first scene begins, Jesus has just died on the cross. Many women who were followers of Jesus are watching from a distance—they were watching from far away; they were not standing near the cross. It is important to remember that these women helped Jesus during his time in Galilee. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joseph, and Salome were among the women.

It is now early evening the day before the Sabbath. It is important to remember that when Sabbath begins, Jewish people have to follow certain rules about what they can or cannot do on the Sabbath. This included not being allowed to move or bury a dead body on the Sabbath.

Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for permission to bury Jesus' body. It is important to remember that Joseph was a respected member of the Council or Sanhedrin and was waiting for the coming of God's Kingdom. Remember that the Sanhedrin had condemned Jesus to death and taken him to Pilate to judge and execute Jesus. However, we know from other gospel accounts that Joseph had secretly been a follower of Jesus up until the time of Jesus' death. To ask Pilate for Jesus' body was a brave and courageous act.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Mark gives us background information about Joseph from Arimathea. Discuss how, just like in the previous passages, you will translate and tell background information. Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that in an earlier passage, Pilate had put Jesus on trial and ordered that Jesus be killed on a cross. Pilate asks the centurion, or Roman officer, if it was true that Jesus had already died. Pilate was surprised at how quickly Jesus had died. Sometimes it took people two or three days to die from this kind of execution. The centurion informs Pilate that Jesus is dead.

Pilate gives Joseph permission to bury Jesus' body. It is important to remember how Joseph prepared the body and where the body was placed. Joseph probably washed Jesus' body before wrapping the body in a long linen cloth. Joseph placed the body in a tomb, a burial cave that had been carved from rock. A large stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb. It is important to remember that the two women called Mary saw where Jesus' body was placed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:40-47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Mary Magdalene
- Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses
- Salome
- Other women who followed Jesus
- Joseph of Arimathea
- Pilate
- A centurion

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus has just died on the cross. Women who followed Jesus are watching from a distance. They include Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome. These women had assisted Jesus when he was in Galilee.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the women "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like "I am filled with grief! I served food to him and the disciples," "My heart is broken. I washed his clothes" and "I am so sad. How could they kill him? He was the Promised Savior." Continue the drama.

It is early evening the day before the Sabbath. Joseph of Arimathea goes to Pilate to get permission to bury Jesus' body.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Joseph, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "I want to honour Jesus. He deserves a proper burial," "Brave. I know Pilate ordered Jesus to be killed but I am going to ask for permission," or "In a hurry. We need to get Jesus properly buried before the beginning of the Sabbath." Continue the drama.

Pilate asks a centurion to confirm that Jesus is dead. The centurion tells Pilate that it is true. Jesus is dead.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Pilate, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like "I'm surprised. How can Jesus be dead already? It has just been a few hours," or "I feel guilty. Jesus was innocent. I should have let him go. I will honour this request." Continue the drama.

Pilate gives Joseph permission to bury Jesus' body. Joseph prepares Jesus' body by wrapping it on a long linen cloth. He then places Jesus' body in a tomb. A stone is moved over the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James the younger, see where Jesus' body is placed.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Joseph, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like "I am relieved. We were able to do this before the Sabbath," or "I am glad that I was able to honour Jesus in this way."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 15:40-47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus has just died on a **cross** by **crucifixion**. Use the same word or phrase for cross and crucifixion that you have used in previous passages and remember that cross and crucifixion can be found in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a photo of a cross or crucifixion if your team has not already seen them. Pause this audio here.

It is evening on the day before the **Sabbath**, the Jewish religious day of rest. Use the same word or phrase for Sabbath that you have used previously. For more information about Sabbath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joseph of Arimathea was a respected member of the **Council**. The high Jewish council is called the **Sanhedrin** and is made up of the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law. Use the same word for council or Sanhedrin that you have previously used. A complete definition of the Council can be found in the Master Glossary listing for Sanhedrin.

Joseph asked Pilate for permission to bury the body of Jesus. Pilate asked the **centurion**, a Roman military officer, if it was true that Jesus had died. The centurion verified that Jesus was dead. Use the same word for centurion that you have used previously and remember that centurion can be found in the Master Glossary.

Joseph wrapped Jesus' body in a linen cloth and placed it in a tomb that had been carved from a rock. A **tomb** is a burial place. It was Jewish custom to bury the dead in natural caves or in caves that had been carved from rock. A large stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb. Use the same word for tomb that you have used in previous passages and remember that tomb can be found in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a photo of burial caves and of a tomb carved from a rock.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 15:40-47

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Mark 16:1-8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 16:1-8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:1-8 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus had been killed by the ruling authorities. After his death, he was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Joses, followed so they would know the place where Jesus was buried. They wanted to prepare Jesus' body for burial with oils and spices, according to their custom. They could not do this because the Sabbath, the religious day of rest, had come. The day of rest is now over and these women along with Salome purchased the needed oils and spice to anoint Jesus' body.

The burial custom was to prepare a dead body for burial by anointing it with oils, ointments, and various fragrant spices. This was a way of honouring the person who had died. The purpose of these oils and spices was to cover up the bad odours that come when a body decomposes. They were not preserving the body, as is the custom in some other cultures. We do not exactly know how the women intended to anoint Jesus' body, but remember Jesus was wrapped in long linen cloth, so the women would probably have wanted to rub the oils and spices on the cloth.

Stop here and look at a photo of spices and oils as a group. Discuss the ways that people in your culture honour a person who has died. How is a body in your culture prepared for burial? Pause this audio here.

The women traveled to the tomb where Jesus was buried very early in the morning, just as the sun was coming up. You will remember that the tomb where Jesus was buried was closed with a large stone covering the entrance. The stones covering the entrance to tombs might be flat or round. Usually people, even one very strong man, could roll the stone in front of the entrance to cover it. However, moving the stone away from the entrance would have been too difficult for women to do. As the women traveled to the burial place, they began to ask one another who might be able to move the stone for them so they could get inside to anoint Jesus' body. When they arrive at the tomb, they are surprised that the stone has already moved.

Stop here and look at a photo of a tomb as a group. Pause this audio here.

The women enter the tomb and see a young man dressed in a white robe. Matthew and Luke, in their gospels, describe this young man as an angel, a messenger of God. Mark chooses to describe him only by his appearance, as a young man dressed in a white robe. A robe is a long, outer garment. The young man was sitting on the right side of the women, inside the tomb. The term "young man" in this case is probably referring to a young man who is old enough to marry.

Stop here and look at the photo of a robe as a group. Discuss why you think Mark only describes the angel but doesn't call him an angel. Discuss ways that people in your culture talk about people or things without using their name. Pause this audio here.

When the women saw the young man, they were amazed and afraid. The man told them not to be afraid. He tells them that the person they are looking for, Jesus from Nazareth who was killed on the cross, is now alive. God has caused him to live again. He told them to look at where Jesus' body used to be, which was probably a stone shelf inside the tomb. Mark wants to clearly state that this real person in history, Jesus from Nazareth, was dead but is now alive. He then tells the women to tell the disciples, including Peter. Perhaps he includes Peter because Peter denied Jesus and needed the knowledge that Jesus remembers and loves him. The young man said that Jesus will go ahead to the region of Galilee and that they will see him there, just like he told them before he died. The women were trembling and afraid when they left. They did not tell anyone because they were afraid.

Stop here and look at a map of Israel that includes Jerusalem and the region of Galilee as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The first scene: Begins on the day following the Sabbath, the religious day of rest. The women go to buy oils and spices so that they can anoint Jesus' body.

In the second scene: The women walk to the tomb. They discuss how they are going to move the large stone blocking the entrance to the tomb. As they near the tomb, they see that the large stone has been moved away.

In the third scene: The women enter the empty tomb and see the young man in white. The man tells the women to not be afraid. He says that the Jesus they seek is not here. He tells them to look where he was laying. He is alive. He tells them to tell Peter and the other disciples that Jesus will go ahead of them to Galilee.

In the fourth scene: The women leave the tomb. They are confused and frightened. They do not tell anyone what happened.

The characters in this passage are:

- Mary Magdalene
- Mary, the mother of James and Joses
- Salome
- The young man in a white robe

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: As the first scene begins, remember that the women had been waiting for the Sabbath day of rest to be over so they could buy the oils and spices needed to anoint Jesus' body, according to their burial customs. On Saturday evening, after the sun sets, the Sabbath day is officially finished. This is when the women buy the sweet-smelling spices and oil for the body.

The next morning, it is the first day of the week, right at or right before sunrise. The women walk to the tomb where Jesus had been buried. As they walk to the tomb, the women discuss the difficulty of moving the stone at the entrance to the tomb. Remember that the stone was very large and very heavy, maybe close to a meter across in length. As they near the tomb, they look at the entrance and see that someone had already rolled the stone away from the entrance.

They enter the tomb and see a young man dressed in a white robe. The man is sitting inside the tomb on the right side of the women. They are alarmed to find him there. Remember that the young man says, "Don't be alarmed, or afraid. You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who was crucified. He is not here. He has risen, or God has raised him from the dead!"

Remember to make sure he shows the women the place where Jesus' body had been laid. The place where Jesus' body was laid was probably a stone shelf inside the tomb carved out of stone. Then the young man tells the women to tell the disciples and Peter, "He is going ahead of you into the region of Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you before."

The women leave the tomb. They are physically trembling and frightened and tell no one what happened.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Mary Magdalene
- Mary the mother of James and Joses
- Salome
- The young man in a white robe

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Have the team act out the women going to buy the oil and spices for anointing the body of Jesus. After making their purchases, they make their way to the tomb and discuss the task before them.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the women, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like "I am sad and grieving," "I wish we were able to prepare Jesus' body sooner. It has been three days!" or "Helpless. How are we going to move that large stone?" Continue the drama.

The women look up and see the open tomb. They enter and see the young man in white robes, sitting in the right side of the tomb. He says, "Don't be afraid. You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has risen from the dead. Look! Here is where they laid his body. Now go and tell his disciples and Peter that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee and you will see him there, just like he told you before he died."

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the young man, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "Honoured to be able to tell the women this good news," or "Why are the women surprised? Jesus said he would live again." Continue the drama.

The women leave the tomb frightened and do not tell anyone what happened.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the women, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "Confused. Where is Jesus? Is he really alive?" or "Afraid. Will anyone believe me?" "Excited. Jesus is alive!" "Confused, who was that young man?"

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **Sabbath**, the religious day of rest, is over. According to Jewish religious law, also called the Law of Moses, people were not allowed to work on this day. This included going to the market to purchase items needed. Remember to use the same word for Sabbath that you have used in other passages. For more information about Sabbath refer to the the Master Glossary.

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome purchased spices that were mixed with oil so they could anoint the body of Jesus according to their burial customs. In this situation, **anoint** means to put oil or ointment on a person's corpse to prepare it for burial. These spices mixed with oil would help the decomposing body smell better. Jesus' body had already been wrapped in cloth, so the women were probably intending to pour or rub the ointment onto the cloth.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **anoint** in your translation. For more information about anoint refer to the Master Glossary.

The women went to the **tomb**, or burial place of Jesus. Remember to use the same word for tomb that you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a more information about tombs.

The women entered the tomb and saw a **young man** dressed in a white **robe**. This is a young man who is old enough to marry. We know from other gospel accounts that this young man was really an angel. Use the same word for robe as you have used in previous passages and remember that robe is in the Master Glossary.

The young man says "You are looking for **Jesus of Nazareth**, or **Jesus the Nazarene**, who was **crucified**." Use the same words for "Nazareth" or "Nazarene" that you have in previous passages. For more information about Nazareth, see the Master Glossary. Use the same word for crucified that you have in previous passages and remember that crucifixion is in the Master Glossary.

The young man tells the women, "Go and tell his **disciples** including Peter that Jesus is going ahead of you to the region of **Galilee**." Use the same words for disciples and Galilee that you have in previous passages and remember that these words are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Mark 16:1–8**Audio Content**

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Mark 16:9–20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Mark 16:9–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:9–20 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Most scholars believe that Mark finished his story of Jesus' life when he said, "The women ran away from the tomb, trembling and confused, and they said nothing to anyone because they were too afraid." The most respected written texts of the book of Mark end the book here. It might seem odd that Mark would end his story saying that people were afraid, but Mark often ends stories about Jesus saying that people were amazed or afraid. However, Mark does not finish some of the story lines that he started earlier in his book: For example, Mark does not tell us if Jesus met his disciples in Galilee as Jesus and the young man or angel in the tomb told them he would. Perhaps Mark intended to continue with his story and his ending has been lost. However, it is possible that Mark says, "They told no one anything about what happened" in order to challenge his audience to share the good news with everyone. Most scholars believe that someone else wrote an ending based on stories from other gospels because they did not like the ending of the book of Mark. The longer versions of the ending use completely different types of words and descriptions than Mark uses throughout the book.

Many translations include Mark 16:9–20, so you can do what the major translations in your area do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If you decide to include this last part of the book of Mark, how will you show your audience that this section may or may not really be a part of the book of Mark? Pause this audio here.

This part of Mark begins right after Jesus rose from the dead early on Sunday morning, which was the first day of the Jewish week. The writer describes Mary Magdalene, one of the women who had gone to put spices on Jesus' body. Earlier in Jesus' ministry, Jesus had cast out seven demons from her, and Mary had become a follower of Jesus. Sometime after Mary fled from the tomb, Mary sees Jesus alive, and she goes to the ones who had been with Jesus, or the disciples, who had been very sad and crying about Jesus' death. She tells them that she saw Jesus alive. The disciples did not believe that Jesus was alive and that she had really seen Jesus.

Then Jesus appeared to two others of his followers. They were walking on the road from Jerusalem out into the countryside. Jesus looked different when he appeared to the two followers on the road than he looked before his resurrection and when he appeared to Mary. The two followers did not recognise Jesus. When they realised it was Jesus, they went and told the eleven disciples that they had seen Jesus and he was alive, but the disciples again did not believe them.

Later that day, Jesus appeared to the eleven remaining disciples. Remember that Judas had already left them because he had betrayed Jesus. The eleven disciples were eating together, lying around the table as was the custom. Jesus rebuked the disciples and said that the disciples' hearts were "hard," or "stubborn."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about people who are so stubborn that they refuse to believe things? What kinds of words do you use to describe them? Pause this audio here.

Jesus was harsh with them because they did not believe the people who had seen him alive. Then Jesus gave his disciples a command. He told them to go into all the world and preach or tell people the gospel. The gospel is the good news about Jesus and God's Kingdom. Jesus said to tell this news to all of creation, which means to "all people."

Jesus goes on to say that whoever hears this good news and believes in Jesus and is baptized will be saved from the punishment for their sins, but whoever does not believe will be condemned, or found guilty for their sins.

In this story, Jesus says signs, or special miraculous events, will show others that the followers of Jesus are really telling the truth. Followers of Jesus will cast out demons in the name, or power, of Jesus. Jesus' followers will speak in other languages that they have not known how to speak before. They will pick up poisonous snakes with their hands and drink deadly poison. Picking up snakes and drinking deadly poison will usually harm or kill a person, but people who believe in Jesus will be able to do these things without being hurt. If a believer puts their hands on sick people, the sick people will get well again.

Stop here and look at a photo of a poisonous snake. Pause this audio here.

After Jesus had spoken with his disciples, God raised Jesus up through the sky to heaven—the place where God lives—and Jesus sat at the special place of honour and authority at the right hand of God.

The disciples did just as Jesus told them to do, and they went out and preached everywhere. Jesus helped them and gave them miraculous signs so that people would know that the message, or the word, the disciples said

was true. Although Jesus was not physically still with the disciples, we will see in the book of Acts that Jesus helped them by sending his Holy Spirit to be with them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When someone in your culture preaches or teaches an important thing, how do people know and believe that it is true? Do they want to see signs like these, or are there other things that make someone believe a special message? Pause this audio here.

Some versions of Mark end this passage, and the book, with the word "Amen," which means "It will truly be this way."

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus rises from the dead. He appears to Mary Magdalene.

In the second scene: Mary Magdalene goes to tell the disciples that Jesus is alive. They do not believe her.

In the third scene: Jesus appears to two other followers on a road. They tell the larger group of disciples that they have seen Jesus, but no one believes them.

In the fourth scene: Jesus appears to the eleven disciples as they are eating. Jesus rebukes the disciples for not believing. Jesus tells them to tell the good news everywhere. Jesus tells them that he will do miracles to show everyone that what they are saying about him is true.

In the fifth scene: Jesus goes up to heaven and sits at the right hand of God. The disciples preach everywhere, and Jesus works with them to prove that their message is true.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Mary Magdalene
- The eleven disciples
- Two other disciples on the road
- The whole of creation, or all mankind

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: It is important to remember that this story is probably not written by Mark. Someone else probably took information they had about Jesus' life and added it to the end of Mark. This information starts right after Jesus rises from the dead on the first day of the week, or Sunday. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene after she had fled from the tomb. The author gives us some background information that Jesus had cast out seven demons from Mary earlier in his ministry, before this story happens.

Stop here and remember how you have decided to include background information in your translation. Pause this audio here.

The disciples who had been with Jesus are mourning for him and weeping. Mary tells them that she saw Jesus! They do not believe her.

Later, Jesus appears to two other followers or disciples of Jesus, as they are walking into the country. Although these were followers of Jesus, they were not two of his eleven closest disciples. We do not know exactly where the two followers were. It may be that they had been in the city of Jerusalem and were now walking into the countryside, out of the city. Jesus looks different when he appears to them than when he appears to Mary. They

do not recognise Jesus. The two followers eventually do recognise Jesus and they go back to the eleven disciples and tell them that they have seen Jesus, but the eleven do not believe the two disciples.

Then, later, that same day, Jesus appears to the eleven disciples as they are eating at a table together. They are lying at the table as people usually did while eating meals. Jesus speaks harshly to them because they did not believe that he was alive—their hearts were hard or stubborn so that they would not believe. Jesus says to his disciples, "Go into all the world and preach or tell the good news about me to all people. If someone believes in me and is baptized, they will be saved from the punishment for their sins, which means that God will say they are innocent of sin. If someone does not believe in me, they will be condemned, or God will say they are guilty for their sins and will be punished."

Then Jesus goes on to say "If someone believes in me, these signs, or miraculous things, will happen. They will cast out demons with my power and authority. They will speak in languages they did not know before. They will pick up snakes with their hands. They will drink deadly poison and it will not hurt them. They will lay their hands on sick people and the sick people will become well. These signs will show that what the believers say about Jesus is true."

After Jesus says these things, the disciples see that Jesus begins to rise up into heaven. The disciples know, from things Jesus said before, that now Jesus sits at the right hand of God in a place of honour and authority. They do not necessarily see Jesus sitting at the right hand of God with their physical eyes.

Then the disciples go out into the community and the world, and they preach or tell the good news. Jesus, the Lord, works with them and shows that their message is true by giving the people they are talking to these miracles, or signs. Jesus is not physically present with the disciples, but we will see that he helps them and works with them through his Holy Spirit.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Mary Magdalene
- The eleven disciples
- Two other disciples on the road
- The whole of creation, or all of mankind

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

It is the first day of the week, or Sunday. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene. The disciples who had been with Jesus are mourning for him and weeping. Mary goes to them and tells them that she saw Jesus! They do not believe her.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Mary, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Frustrated that no one believes me," "Afraid I am going crazy again." Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I don't know what to believe—Mary used to have demons so maybe she has been possessed again," "I wish that Jesus would be alive!" Continue the drama.

Later, Jesus appears to two other disciples. The two disciples go back to the eleven disciples and tell them that they have seen Jesus, but they do not believe the two disciples.

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I'm really confused! Surely Jesus is not really alive?" Continue the drama.

Then, later, Jesus appears to the eleven disciples as they are eating at a table together. They are laying at the table as people usually did while eating meals. Jesus speaks harshly to them because they did not believe that he was alive—their hearts were hard or stubborn so that they would not believe.

Jesus says to his disciples, "Go into all the world and preach or tell the good news about me to all people. If someone believes in me and is baptized, they will be saved from the punishment for their sins, which means that God will say they are innocent of their sin. If someone does not believe in me, they will be condemned, or God will say they are guilty for their sins."

Then Jesus goes on to say "If someone believes in me, these signs, or miraculous things, will happen. They will cast out demons with my power and authority. They will speak in languages they did not know before. They will pick up snakes with their hands. They will drink deadly poison and it will not hurt them. They will lay their hands on sick people and the sick people will become well."

Pause the drama. Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Excited to be a part of this," "Confused and a little overwhelmed," "I believe everything right now—I've just seen Jesus alive!" Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I love these disciples—I will take care of them," "Happy for the adventure and joy they are about to experience," "I hope that many people choose to follow me when they see the miraculous signs." Continue the drama.

After Jesus says these things, the disciples see that Jesus begins to rise up into heaven. The disciples know, from things Jesus said before, that now Jesus sits at the right hand of God in a place of honour and authority.

Then the disciples go out into the community and the world, and they preach or tell the good news. Jesus, the Lord, works with them and shows that their message is true by giving the people they are talking to miracles, or signs.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Mark 16:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus appeared first to Mary from Magdala. Before, Jesus had driven out seven **demons** from Mary. Jesus told the demons that they had to leave Mary. This happened long before Jesus' death. Use the same word for demons or unclean or evil spirits that you have used before and remember that demon is in the Master Glossary.

Mary told **those who had been with him**, the disciples, what she had seen. You may use the word you've been using for disciples, or words that mean close friends or companions. If you use the word for **disciples**, use the same word you have used in other passages, and remember that disciples is in the Master Glossary. Later Jesus appeared to **two others** while they were walking in the country—these would be two other friends or followers, but not two of the eleven closest disciples.

Later, Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples. Remember that only eleven disciples remained—Judas had betrayed Jesus. Jesus rebuked or scolded them for their lack of faith, or unbelief, and hardness of heart. **Unbelief** and **hardness of heart** mean almost the same thing. "Hardness of heart" means that the disciples were very stubborn and did not want to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **hardness of heart**. Pause this audio here.

The eleven refers to eleven of the twelve original disciples. By this time, Judas was no longer with the twelve disciples because he had betrayed Jesus. At this time, there were only eleven close disciples.

Jesus told his disciples, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel, or good news, to everyone." When someone **preaches**, they tell or proclaim something. The **gospel**, or **good news**, is the good news that Jesus was on this earth, died for our sins, and was raised from the dead. Use the same word or phrase for good news or gospel as you have in previous passages and remember that gospel is in the Master Glossary.

Then Jesus said, "Anyone who believes and is **baptized** will be **saved**." Use the same word or phrase for baptism as you have before and remember that baptism is in the Master Glossary. When Jesus says that someone will be saved, he means that he will rescue a person in the fullest sense—he will rescue them from the punishment for their sins and make them whole or complete.

When Jesus says that someone will be **condemned**, he means that God will say that he is guilty for his sins and he will have to pay the punishment.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **condemned**. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that miraculous **signs** will also happen to show that the things his disciples say are true. In this case, a sign is a signal or indication that something is true or will happen. Use the same word or phrase for sign, in this context, as you have in previous passages and remember that sign is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that one of the signs will be that "In my name they will **cast out demons**." This means that people will have the power and authority of Jesus to tell demons to come out of other people.

Jesus says that believers will speak in new languages, or tongues. **Tongues** refers to a strange or other language. We do not know what kinds of languages these are. Use the same word or phrase for tongues as you have previously. For more information about tongues, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **Lord** Jesus was taken up into **heaven** and sat at the right hand of God. Use the same word for Lord and heaven as you have used previously and remember that Lord and heaven are in the Master Glossary. **The right hand of God** is a place of honour and authority.

Some Bibles include the word "amen" at the end of the book of Mark. **Amen** is a way to say and agree with God that "it will truly be this way." For more information about Amen, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

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First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

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Mark 16:9–20

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