

## The Unexpected King: The Gospel of Mark

*A study for Community Groups to use the week of February 1<sup>st</sup>*

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Series Guide** to complete foundational questions in the book for week 5 using the scripture below.

### Week One: Mark 1:1-8

#### Overview

Mark doesn't just tell us what Jesus did; he shows us who Jesus is in a way that forces us to rethink the world we're living in and the stories we're being sold every day.

*"John baptized people when they gave evidence of repentance. 'A baptism of repentance' means a baptism characterized by repentance. The Jews John baptized not only changed their minds, the basic meaning of metanoia, but they also changed their behavior. This is the only occurrence of metanoia in Mark. The changes were for and resulted in the forgiveness of sins. Change of behavior does not earn forgiveness, but change of behavior demonstrates genuine contrition that results in forgiveness. The unusual thing about John's baptism was that in his day Gentiles baptized themselves when they converted to Judaism, and the Jews baptized themselves for ritual cleansing." -Constable's Note*

#### Questions

\*In the Series Guide you will find basic questions we want all to use as they begin to look at the passage. Questions such as; *Who have you had the opportunity to BLESS this week? What does this passage reveal about God? About people? About the life He has planned for us?* These additional questions relate to the passage specifically for your benefit.

- John appears in the wilderness, not the center of culture or comfort. Why do you think the message of preparation starts in a quiet, uncomfortable place? Where might you need more space or simplicity in your life to hear what really matters?
- John's message centers on repentance, or changing direction. When you hear the idea of changing direction, what feelings or resistance come up for you? Where in your life might a small course correction be needed right now?
- In Mark 1:7-8, John is clear that he is not the focus and points people toward someone greater who is coming. What voices, habits, or influences most shape your decisions right now, and what is one practical step you could take this week to create more space for Jesus to lead your life?
- Take a few moments to look back over last week and the final challenge for Kingdom Come week 4. Were there any daily or weekly habits you are trying to implement? How's that going?