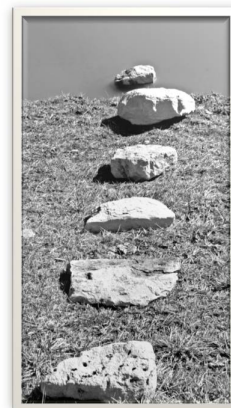


# Take The Next Step

## Mark 13-14



*"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." Mark 14:38 NIV*

*"Stay alert, be in prayer, so you don't enter the danger zone without even knowing it. Don't be naïve. Part of you is eager, ready for anything in God; but another part is lazy as an old dog sleeping by the fire." Mark 14:38 The Message*

### Truth to Stand On

The world and the body are temporary, but the Word of God and the spirit are eternal.

### Opening Prayer

Dear God, Strengthen us in body and spirit to be ever ready for your coming kingdom. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

### Getting in Step With Your Group

Introduce yourselves if there are any new group members. Share a time when your spirit was willing but your body was weak.

### Step by Step Through Mark 13-14

In Mark 13-14, Jesus' earthly life is coming near the end. Jesus teaches that this world and this body are temporary. He experiences the bodily weakness of His disciples as they fall asleep and eventually desert Him. Read through Mark 13-14 together, noting these steps along the way:

- Step 1: Heaven and earth will pass away – Mark 13:1-31
- Step 2: God's Word will never pass away – Mark 13:10 & 31
- Step 3: Jesus warns us to keep watch for the inevitable end – Mark 13:32-37
- Step 4: Jesus' death is foreshadowed...
  - ...in His anointing for burial – Mark 14:1-9
  - ...in the Passover meal – Mark 14:12-26
- Step 5: Jesus is deserted in His darkest hours – Mark 14:27-52
- Step 6: Jesus is condemned – Mark 14:53-65
- Step 7: Jesus is disowned – Mark 14:66-72

What signs of the end does Jesus give in chapter 13? How does the destruction escalate in verses 24-25? What must happen before the end comes? (13:10) What words of encouragement does Jesus give as His disciples think about the end? (13:11, 31)

In Mark 13:14, Jesus quotes Daniel 9:27. The first fulfillment of "the abomination that causes desolation" came when an altar to the pagan god Zeus was erected in the temple in 168 BC. What do you think Jesus is referring to with this phrase?

What does Jesus say to those who make predictions about the end of the world? What does He command us to do instead?

How much was the perfume worth that the woman used to anoint Jesus? (14:5) What do you think was her motivation behind this extravagance? How did the people view it? How did Jesus view it?

What did the Passover meal celebrate? How is it significant that Jesus uses a Passover meal to institute the Lord's Supper? The last cup of the Passover, the Cup of Elijah, is left full in anticipation of the coming Messiah. When will Jesus drink that cup with us? (14:25)

Three times in these two chapters, Jesus quotes the Old Testament. (13:14; 13:24-25; 14:27) What three OT books does He quote from? What is the significance of Jesus quoting the Old Testament?

How is Jesus described in Gethsemane? (14:33-34) What does He pray? How many chances does He give the disciples to stick with Him?

Until now, Jesus has warned to keep His identity secret. Why does He now identify Himself in 14:62?

### Stepping into Our World

Apply Jesus eternal Word to this passing world by answering the questions below in your group as time permits:

- What signs do you see that the earth is passing away?
- How do you see the gospel reaching all nations? How can you help reach this goal?
- When has the Holy Spirit given you the words to share Christ?
- Jesus warned that "Fake Messiahs and lying preachers are going to pop up everywhere." (13:22 The Message) Where do you see this happening? How can you discern the truth?
- Would you live your life differently if you knew Christ's return was imminent? How are you preparing yourself and others for His return?
- Have you ever been criticized for what you give to Jesus in time, talent or treasure? How does the woman in Mark 14 encourage you to break open and give what you have?
- What does it mean to you to receive Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper?
- What does Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane teach you about your own prayer life?
- In what area of spiritual weakness does Jesus want to give you another chance?

### The Earth Shall Soon Dissolve Like Snow

The last verse of John Newton's hymn "Amazing Grace" reads, "The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,/The sun forbear to shine;/But God, who call'd me here below,/Will be forever mine." The only two things we have on this earth that are eternal are God's Word and people. How can this truth change the way you live?

### Taking the Next Step

Take today's study of Mark 13-14 into the week ahead by choosing one of the following challenges:

- Ask for God's help in an area where your spirit is willing but your body is weak.
- Pray for and/or send support to a missionary who is taking the gospel to the nations.
- Re-read the gospel accounts of Jesus' suffering and death before you next attend the Lord's Supper and praise Him for what He suffered in His body to be able to offer Himself to you for forgiveness.
- Break open an extravagant gift of your time, talent, or treasure and offer it to Jesus.

### Closing Prayer

Give group members an opportunity to share prayer requests for the coming week.