



Huddles

Book of Mark, Week #6

Learning to love and follow Jesus—together—by His strength, in every day life.

What are huddles at Foundations?

- Groups of 3-8 people (or 3-4 couples) that meet for one hour per week at a time and location of your choosing. Larger groups should plan for 75 minutes.
- Huddles last for 8 weeks. At the end of each 8-week session, you can keep your group, add to your group or even change groups & topics.
- While gathering on Sunday is vital to spiritual growth, so is connecting with others to encourage one another, discussing what it means to follow Jesus and praying for one another. These practices are detailed in our RHYTHMS course (which is not necessary to take part in huddles, but highly recommended).

Our Mission is to bring the extraordinary life-changing message of Jesus Christ to a lost and broken world.

- Huddles are one way we prepare to do this very thing, and we can't do that unless our lives are being transformed by Him.
- Hence, the goal of every session is that you will grow more like Jesus in some small way.
- In order to do this, we will focus on God's Word, encourage one another and commit to praying for one another.
- Each week, there are individual rhythms we encourage that will help you "love and follow Jesus."
- Similarly, there are corporate rhythms that help us in our spiritual formation.
- Consistent practice of these rhythms is part of the holistic development of disciples, and this booklet is designed to touch on that development.
- This holistic framework will give structure to your meeting time.

The individual rhythms overview (for those that haven't taken the Rhythms course):

Prayer: Talking to God and listening to Him via His Word, His Spirit-Filled people and His creation. If you don't know how to pray, a good start is the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 5.

Abide in the Word: Reading the Bible, prayerfully, asking God to show you what He wants for you. A good practice is to read with a pen & journal to write your thoughts as He leads them.

Silence: choosing to avoid speaking in order to listen to what He might want to say to us. Another **Solitude:** avoidance of interaction with others in order to be alone with Him. Silence enhances this.

Reflection (especially effective at the end of the day, maybe before sleep): Take some time in stillness to experience His presence, tell God things you're thankful for, make note of where you experienced Him today--or where you didn't—and note instances of loving your “neighbor” well—or failure to do so. Ask God for what He may want for you in the day tomorrow.

Other rhythms that will likely be practiced less frequently: Fasting (food; if there's an area you are seeking specific guidance); giving joyfully (financially as an act of worship) and rest (setting aside time to enjoy your life and choosing to refrain from work)

The corporate rhythms overview (for those that haven't taken the Rhythms course):

Worship gathering: A time for our family to be together to participate corporately in the rhythms of worship together.

Participation in community: A time to engage in huddle, as well as other forms of being together as a church family (such as concerts, conferences/classes, events, etc.)

Lord's Supper: A chance for our family to reflect on the person and work of Jesus and look forward in hope to His coming again in a symbol of eternal unity.

Baptism: A one-time action of a declaration of faith in Christ. It is our hope that everyone be baptized, as well as choosing to enjoy the celebration of others who choose to do so.

Using your gift to serve the Body: We have been given a gift to help the body of Christ come to maturity in faith, and we benefit by your presence.

Having a ministry of love for neighbor: We choose to exemplify the abundant life in order to fulfill our mission of bringing the extraordinary life of Jesus Christ to a lost and broken world.

Weekly Rhythms: Book of Mark

Day 1

Prayer--see prayer slide for day one

Time in the Word—see the time in the word slide for day one.

Silence: What might God be trying to tell you today?

Solitude: Have you intentionally gotten away to be alone (including technology/social media)?

Reflection: Be still to experience His presence; What were you thankful for today? Where did you experience His presence today (or not)? How did you love your “neighbor” today? What do you want His perspective on for tomorrow?

Day 2

Prayer--see prayer slide for day two

Time in the Word—see the time in the word slide for day two

Silence: What might God be trying to tell you today?

Solitude: Have you intentionally gotten away to be alone (including technology/social media)?

Reflection: Be still to experience His presence; What were you thankful for today? Where did you experience His presence today (or not)? How did you love your “neighbor” today? What do you want His perspective on for tomorrow?

Day 3

Prayer--see prayer slide for day three

Time in the Word—see the time in the word slide for day three

Silence: What might God be trying to tell you today?

Solitude: Have you intentionally gotten away to be alone (including technology/social media)?

Reflection: Be still to experience His presence; What were you thankful for today? Where did you experience His presence today (or not)? How did you love your “neighbor” today? What do you want His perspective on for tomorrow?

Weekly Rhythms: Book of Mark

Day 4

Prayer--see prayer slide for day four

Time in the Word—see the time in the word slide for day four

Silence: What might God be trying to tell you today?

Solitude: Have you intentionally gotten away to be alone (including technology/social media)?

Reflection: Be still to experience His presence; What were you thankful for today? Where did you experience His presence today (or not)? How did you love your “neighbor” today? What do you want His perspective on for tomorrow?

Day 5

Prayer--see prayer slide for day five

Time in the Word—see the time in the word slide for day five

Silence: What might God be trying to tell you today?

Solitude: Have you intentionally gotten away to be alone (including technology/social media)?

Reflection: Be still to experience His presence; What were you thankful for today? Where did you experience His presence today (or not)? How did you love your “neighbor” today? What do you want His perspective on for tomorrow?

Day 6

Prayer--see prayer slide for day six

Time in the Word—see the time in the word slide for day six

Silence: What might God be trying to tell you today?

Solitude: Have you intentionally gotten away to be alone (including technology/social media)?

Reflection: Be still to experience His presence; What were you thankful for today? Where did you experience His presence today (or not)? How did you love your “neighbor” today? What do you want His perspective on for tomorrow?

Prayer, Day 1

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
 - Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
 - You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray aloud the following prayer from Paul's letter to the Ephesians
 - If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using Paul's prayer of thanksgiving for others as an example (from Ephesians 1: 15-22): You can use this to pray for yourself and for others.
 - Tell God you love him.
 - Ask God for spiritual wisdom & that He would reveal Himself in ways you can know him more.
 - Pray that you know the hope of His calling you.
 - Pray that you would know the riches of glory of the inheritance of the saints.
 - Ask God that you would know the power He gives to those who believe.
 - Praise Him for being the God who is above all rule and authority and has the name above all other names.
 - Thank Him for being head of the Church.

Time in the Word, Day 1, Mark 11: 1-11

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - Chapters 11-13 are all about Jesus ministry during the week before He was crucified.
 - This week we'll be looking at His formal presentation to the nation of Israel as the Messiah & His teaching in the area of the Temple (which, in effect, set up His arrest, trial and punishment).
 - The events in Mark 11 took place from Monday to Wednesday of that week.
 - Note the attention to detail here. It's an eyewitness account.
 - Jesus entered Jerusalem in the posture of a servant ruler rather than a military leader. This would've been a paradox to the crowd and wasn't 100% clear to them that this was the Messiah as their expectation would likely have been like a military conqueror.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - What do you think your reaction would've been if you'd been at the procession where Jesus came into Jerusalem on the donkey? Do you think you'd have realized His Messiahship or do you think you'd have been more skeptical? Why did you answer the way you did?
 - The nation of Israel did not accept Jesus as Messiah on any significant scale despite the parade. Are there ways in which you are not fully embracing His grace at the moment? If so, what might you do to draw nearer to Him?

Prayer, Day 2

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.

- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using the Lord's Prayer as an outline for your own words to express...

Tell God how thankful you are for the privilege of calling the King of Kings "our Father," & that He listens and hears.

God is worthy of honor and worship

We should acknowledge that things on earth are not what they are supposed to be, and that we should ask God to be aware of His presence and strive to see what He wants this world to be. We should let others see His Kingdom by how we live.

We should be thankful that He provides our basic needs.

We should pray for forgiveness and forgive others

We should name our weaknesses and our temptations, and for the Spirit to strengthen us. We should close with praise.

Time in the Word, Day 2, Mark 11: 12-26

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- Pay attention to the structure here: Jesus curses a fig tree, then He clears the Temple, then He explained the cursing of the tree. This ties the chapter together.
- The Israelites were not bearing fruit, hence Jesus "cleansed" the Temple. This public act put Him square in the crosshairs of the religious leadership, as he not only created a spectacle during the holy week but also wrecked havoc on the economic system...further illustrating Jesus' point.
- Jesus illustrated the importance of prayer as it relates to trusting God to do the work of even "moving mountains."
- Questions for Reflection:
- How is the "fruit bearing" in your own life these days? Why did you answer that way?
- What might the comparisons be to Israel's focus on outward actions rather than truly following God and the behavior in the American church these days?
- How's your prayer life at the moment?

Prayer, Day 3

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using the ACTS method as an outline for your own words to express...
- Adoration (a time of worship): don't be afraid of "artistic expressions" here, or to use Psalms or hymns or other forms of praise.
- Confession: We all fall short and miss the mark. Confession of sin helps us our relationship to God.
- Thanksgiving: Simply tell God what you're thankful for.
- Supplication: Asking God for needs of the world, our country & leaders, our church, and anything and everything else. God wants to hear from you.

Time in the Word, Day 3, Mark 11: 27-33

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- Jesus is now back in the Temple area. It's likely the crowds were wondering what Jesus might do this time.
- Jesus puts the religious leaders, likely from the Sanhedrin (the Jewish "supreme court"), chief priests and other leaders of the Jewish "establishment," on the defensive. They have no response that doesn't paint them in a bad light in front of the crowds. They tried to entrap Jesus, and he responded by putting them in a no-win situation.
- Question for Reflection:
- The real problem for the religious leadership wasn't ignorance of teaching but rather unbelief in Jesus' claim. Is there something you need to be trusting Jesus with in this moment that you aren't because you don't believe He will handle? If so, when will you do that?
- Are there areas of your life where you don't trust Jesus' as leading your life? What might they be? Why do you think you don't want to allow Him to lead?

Prayer, Day 4

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using the breath method to pray:
- Simply take a Psalm and breathe in as you read the first line, and then exhale on the second.
- Take deep, long, slow breaths.

You can also do this with just one verse of Scripture, and almost every Psalm can be done this way. Try to focus on the ones that focus on God and/or resonate with where you are at the moment.

Time in the Word, Day 4, Mark 12: 1-12

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - Jesus is in the Temple courtyard teaching again. This was a common practice of the times—a visiting rabbi publicly teaching.
 - He is following up His teaching on His authority with a parable.
 - The vineyard is the nation of Israel and the growers are the religious leaders. The rejection of the son is also a rejection of the owner.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - Here, Jesus is very clearly stating that He is the Son of God. Since this is true, how does this reality affect you in your day-to-day life?
 - Jesus also clearly taught that the son would be killed. Now we know that the son's death was for our sin. How does being free from the bonds of sin encourage you as you live your life?

Prayer, Day 5

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to simply pray using a Psalm...they are really great prayers! Find one that you resonate with, and pray it aloud:
- Simply choose a Psalm, Pray aloud, even if in a whisper, slowly and with concentration on the words.
- Try to be attentive to the thoughts that come to mind and discern if those may be something God is trying to tell you.

Time in the Word, Day 5, Mark 12: 13-27

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - As the week has gone on, Jesus is the center of controversy over whether or not He has authority, which also calls into question the validity of His teaching.
 - The religious leaders try to trap Him here with questions about the poll tax as well as the resurrection.
 - In this case, the three groups all differ politically but they are unified to try & trap Jesus. For Him to answer either way would put Him in a precarious position—either He couldn't be the Messiah if He opposed Israel on taxes, but if he favors Rome He is in trouble with the Israelites.
 - Sadducees were urban, wealthy, & educated. While a small sect within Judaism, they had influence. They did not believe in resurrection.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - Regarding the poll tax, rather than choose an “either/or” proposition, He provided a “both/and” response. In these polarizing times people are tempted to choose sides and exclude “the other.” What are some ways that you can be more “both/and” in order to preserve the bond of unity.
 - Regarding the resurrection, Jesus chose NOT to appeal to some Old Testament passages that support it. Instead, He referred to the character of God Himself in that since God is a God of the living and if that's the case, if all God's people are dead, in what sense can He be God? Since God is alive, how does that allow you to live the abundant life (be as specific as possible) now?

Prayer, Day 6: A Time for Reflection

Traditional time of Examen	A Few Thoughts on This Method
<p>This is a version of the five-step Daily Examen that St. Ignatius practiced.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Become aware of God's presence.2. Review the day with gratitude.3. Pay attention to your emotions.4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.5. Look toward tomorrow.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Breathe & slow down. Ask God to make you aware of His presence and to bring to mind moments of your day to focus on.2. Walk through your day and give thanks for areas where you saw God "show up" and for His blessings.3. The things you feel when you review often highlight areas where God wants you to focus and what he wants to teach you. Often this results in confession when you see your emotions out of line with walking in the Spirit.4. Ask God to show you moments where you loved others well (or, conversely, He may bring to mind an area you didn't). Give thanks or ask forgiveness as warranted.5. Think through your day tomorrow and ask God what He may be calling you to do or be in the upcoming day.

Time in the Word, Day 6, Mark 12: 28-44

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- This is the third topic Jesus undertakes on Wednesday at the Temple. This time He's discussing the greatest commandment. Jesus highlights that love for God translates naturally to love for neighbor.
- This answer silenced the critics.
- Jesus now begins asking questions.
- Questions for Reflection:
- How is your love for God growing at the moment? In what specific ways are you choosing to love your neighbor?
- Are you intentional about living on mission? What does that mean to you?

Huddle Meeting: (suggested time = 30 mins)

General Check-In (10 minutes)

Describe your sleep habits this week.

Describe your dietary habits this week.

Describe your exercise habits this week.

Describe your development in intellectual curiosity this week (keeping up with current events, artistic endeavors, learning new skills, hobbies, etc)

Emotional Check-In (10 minutes)

Using the SACHET wheel, describe how you're doing emotionally right now. You may want to write down some of these to pray for your huddle during the week.



Rhythms Check-In (10 minutes)

Describe your experience with the individual rhythms this week.

Describe your experience with the corporate rhythms this week.

How can the huddle encourage you this week in these areas? Or...

...How can you encourage the huddle this week in these areas?

Huddle Meeting: Discussion for Growth

10 Minutes:

What is something you feel God truly taught you this week?

20 Minutes (based on Mark 11 & 12):

What are some areas of your life that are difficult to give over to God as the true Authority in your life? Do you have trouble submitting to His authority? If so, in what ways?

Where are you connecting with those that don't know Jesus? Is this an area where you should grow? If so, how might you go about a lifestyle of intentionally engaging people and show His love?

Regardless of your faith level, if you were to make any changes in your life based on what we read this week, what would that look like?

Additional Helps & Resources:

<https://www.planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/html/nt/mark/mark.htm>

This is an excellent resource from a Dallas Seminary professor who taught all the books of the Bible in his career. They are Dr. Tom Constable's class notes. Very academic, but free & very insightful.

https://www.amazon.com/Mark-Study-Guide-Company-Through-ebook/dp/B08NHWL445/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=jeff+manion+mark&qid=1632338173&sr=8-1

This is a short six-session study guide on the book of Mark by Jeff Manion. It's a 40-day glance that this study we're undertaking is patterned after. Jeff is pastor of Ada Bible Church in Michigan.