

## **Northwest Community Evangelical Free Church**

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Sermon manuscript

### **Sermon Series: Following Where Jesus Leads**

(Studies in the Gospel of Mark)

#### **Following Jesus Into Dependent Prayer**

(Mark 1:1-39)

Study #1

#### **Introduction: Jesus-themed apprenticeships...**

In 2020, it's common for someone who wants to become more effective in a skill or even in life, generally, to seek out a trainer, coach, or mentor to help them grow. Another way to say it is that they apprentice themselves to a more seasoned practitioner.

Athletes and actors apprentice under trainers. Attorneys and physicians apprentice as clerks and residents. Two thousand years ago, Jews apprenticed under *rabbis*.

Rabbis (the word means "teacher") would teach their *talmidim* (translate *pupils* or *apprentices* or *disciples*) their own particular way of reading the Jewish Scriptures and how to handle life.

The rabbi's teaching was called his "yoke." His *talmidim* were placed under his yoke and were trained to shoulder loads his way.

The Jesus that the New Testament is all about was a rabbi. Yes, He was much more than a rabbi, of course; but He was a rabbi.

And, like all rabbis, He had a yoke under which His *talmidim* / apprentices / disciples would be placed. (See Matthew 11)

In the first century, to be a *talmid* (a disciple or apprentice) of a rabbi was to spend time with him and to become like him.

For us, today, to be apprentices of Jesus is to learn about Him and to become like Jesus in the way we approach life.<sup>1</sup>

It's to obey Him. It's to allow Him to be Mentor, Coach, Guide over all of life. During the calm days and in the storms. When life is sweet and when life hurts. He wants to train us in His ways to turn from whatever we are trusting to trusting in God.

Very early in His ministry, we watch as Jesus approached a few men and invited them into this apprenticeship relationship.

*Jesus invited apprentices to follow Him...*

In Mark's Gospel (1:16) we read that Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee,<sup>2</sup> a "sea" in Israel that's only slightly larger than Canyon Lake.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus was walking - not aimlessly, but purposefully - on the northwest side of the Sea. This was the Master Fisherman trolling, but not for fish. Jesus was trolling for fishermen.

He came upon two brothers, Simon (who will soon be renamed *Peter*) and Andrew, who were hard at work, casting a heavy fishing net into the lake, over and over and over again.<sup>4</sup>

Jesus spoke - **[17]... "Follow Me, and I will make you become *fishers of men.*"**

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<sup>1</sup> Thanks to John Mark Comer for these insights in his excellent book, [The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry](#).

<sup>2</sup> Also known as the Lake of Gennesaret and the Sea of Tiberias. Mark always refers to it as the Sea of Galilee.

<sup>3</sup> It is thirteen miles in length and eight miles across at its widest point and is fed by both underground springs and the Jordan River, which flows into it from the north and out of it down to the lowest inland lake in the world, the saltwater Dead Sea.

<sup>4</sup> It was 10-15 feet in diameter and was weighted at the sides to sink and trap fish.

No doubt, these brothers knew that Jesus as a rabbi living in the area where they lived, by the Sea of Galilee. I suspect that they even knew Jesus well enough to know something of His mission.<sup>5</sup>

Being Jews, they also would have expected Rabbi Yeshua ben Joseph to have disciples.

But Jesus' approach would have thrown them both for a loop because first-century rabbis *never* approached potential disciples and invited them to follow. It was *always* the other way around.

Disciples would choose which rabbi they wanted to follow and would request the privilege of being apprenticed by that rabbi.

Jesus' approach to Simon and Andrew broke the mold of what was accepted practice for a rabbi. He invited them to follow Him.

His invitation was also unusual because it came with a promise. The promise linked to His mission. He was all about lovingly bringing lots and lots of people into God's "net."

And He shrewdly couched the invitation to Simon and Andrew in fishermen's terms. *"Guys, up until now you've been fishing for fish for your bellies. Follow Me and you'll be catching men for God."*<sup>6</sup>

Then we read, **[18] Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.**

Did they know what they were getting themselves into? Nope. Did they know much about Jesus? Probably not.

But there was something so tantalizing about His invitation and the promise that came with it that they couldn't pass it up.

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<sup>5</sup> Mark doesn't indicate that Jesus knew them prior to calling them to follow. John's Gospel, though, makes it clear that they did know something about Jesus prior to this event by the sea.

<sup>6</sup> In the Old Testament, it is God who is the fisher of men, normally related to judgment. For **"fishers of men"** see Jeremiah 16:16 where the Lord is going to send "fishers" (i.e. - the Babylonians) to judge His people, Israel. The image here is of rescuing people *from* judgment rather than catching them *for* judgment.

Jesus kept on walking down the beach and saw another set of brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were fishermen, too. They were mending their nets to prepare for the hard night of fishing ahead.<sup>7</sup>

He called to them to also become fishers of men. Their response was just like the response of Simon Peter and Andrew.

**[20b]...and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him.**<sup>8</sup>

In the space of a morning's walk on the beach, Jesus has caught four fishermen for God.

Over the course of the next three years, as they **"follow"**, He will transform them and others into something they were not. He will coach, sponsor, guide, mentor, lead, teach, train, and apprentice them to become what He was: A Fisher of men.

That's the journey I've been on since I was a teenager. It's been an up and down journey. God has showered me with a lot of grace and forgiveness for the times I've fallen off the rails.

I've failed frequently to follow Him faithfully. But I have never once regretted following Jesus. Never.

I have apprenticed myself to Jesus and He has been at work deepening my dependence on Him. He's used every challenge and hardship, failure and success to prompt me to turn to Him. He's been training me.

In the Gospel of Mark, we find lots of material that shows Jesus at work, training His followers in how to follow better. It's great stuff.

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<sup>7</sup> For professional fishermen, fishing was a full-time gig. If they weren't fishing, they were fixing nets. If they weren't fixing nets, they were taking fish to market. Their lives revolved around the world of fish.

<sup>8</sup> The words here give us a sense for the size of the boat. It was a working man's boat, with enough room for Zebedee, his two sons plus servants.

And, as it is applicable for all who want to follow Jesus, for the next few weeks, Jeff and I are going to cherry-pick from passages in this book for the purpose of apprenticing (or *discipling*) all of us in the ways of Jesus.<sup>9</sup>

This morning, I'm going to be highlighting one pointed lesson Jesus taught to His first followers about dependent prayer. And we'll get to that shortly.

But we'll start with Mark's opening. He starts without fanfare. No, "On your mark, get set, GO!" He just says, "Go!" and calls his writing "gospel."

### **Welcome to Mark's Gospel (v. 1)**

**[1] *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.***

#### **Gospel**

*Gospel* was a common word in both the Jewish and the Roman cultures. Romans associated "gospel" with emperor worship and great celebration; Jews saw "gospel" as the announcement of God's salvation.

Mark combined the two meanings to shout the good news that in Jesus, everything has changed between us and God.

Mark's theme is Jesus.

#### **Jesus**

*Jesus* was His given name, linked to the Old Testament name "Joshua" (which means Savior/Deliverer); *Christ* was a title referring to the long-awaited Jewish Messiah, the king, the anointed one.

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<sup>9</sup> We believe that Mark wrote his account of Jesus' life within twenty to thirty years of Jesus' death. (roughly AD 50-60) And, while Mark didn't likely know Jesus well, he was a close confidant of Simon Peter, one of those who knew Him from the beginning, which is why what we read in Mark has all the marks of an eyewitness report.

Talk of the coming of the Messiah whetted the appetites of the Jews for a return to the good old days of Kings David and Solomon.<sup>10</sup>

Mark claims in the very first line that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah, the Son of God. After verse one, who wouldn't want to meet Jesus, the star of the show? We're all eager to get to know more about Him.

But Mark first introduces us to the guy who will introduce us to the Star: John the Baptist.

### **Preliminaries to Jesus-Themed Apprenticeships (vv. 2-20)**

#### **The Baptizing Forerunner (vv. 2-8)**

John was the "*messenger*" sent from God to both announce the arrival of Messiah and to prepare the people's hearts for His arrival.

John stationed himself near the Jordan River, in a largely uninhabited region. Picture wilderness. Rough terrain. Scrub trees. This wilderness is where John lived - looking and acting like a wild man.<sup>11</sup>

And what was John doing to prepare for the Messiah's arrival?

He was preaching about Messiah and he was offering baptism to any Jew who was willing to prepare for the coming of Messiah by turning to God from his or her sinful ways.<sup>12</sup>

The Jewish people, desperate to be ready when Messiah showed up, were streaming to the Jordan to be baptized.

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<sup>10</sup> It is interesting that in the years leading up to the birth of Jesus, Jewish hopes for the coming of the Messiah were running at a fever pitch. Whole communities moved to the deserts (like the Qumran sect, the Essenes, and those who gathered at Masada) to await Messiah's arrival.

<sup>11</sup> Significantly, he dressed and appeared similar to what we know of the prophet Elijah. (2 Kings 1:8)

<sup>12</sup> In Judaism, washings were required for certain ritual acts. And baptism was required of Gentiles who wanted to become Jews, symbolically washing away the old pagan ways.

Then, Mark tells us of the day when Jesus Himself showed up at the river to be baptized by John.

### **Wilderness Training FOR Jesus (vv. 9-13)**

*Baptized in the wilderness (vv. 9-11)*

***[9] In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. [10] Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; [11] and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."***

Jesus' baptism was like no other. At no one else's baptism did the heavens open. No one else received the Spirit like a descending dove. No one else got a voice message from God.

These signs at the baptism showed Jesus to be who Mark has already said He was: Messiah. Son of God.

Then, just like that, Jesus left the wilderness of the Jordan River valley for a deeper wilderness.

*Tempted in the Wilderness (vv. 12-13)*

***[12] Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness. [13] And He was in the wilderness (Greek - eremon) forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.***

The word used to describe the Spirit's action ("*impelled*") is very often associated with violence.<sup>13</sup>

Mark is almost saying that the Spirit of God threw Jesus to the wolves, which, while a surprising way to treat the Messiah, was excellent training for the remaining three years of His life...

Following those forty days in the wilderness, Jesus returned to Galilee, where He set up His home base in the city of Capernaum.

Capernaum was a large city on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee. It boasted a Roman garrison and tax office,<sup>14</sup> the home of a high-ranking government official,<sup>15</sup> and a population of some ten thousand people.

While settling into life in Capernaum, Jesus got word that John the Baptist had been arrested and thrown into prison by Herod (Mark 1:14-15). The Lord knew from this that His "time" had come.

He began preaching, just like John had preached. But, unlike John, Jesus wasn't in the wilderness. He was in Capernaum and the surrounding area - where the people were.

### **Calling Apprentices / Disciples (vv. 16-20)**

It was near Capernaum that Jesus had called the two sets of brothers - Simon Peter and Andrew, James and John - to follow Him. A few minutes ago we watched as they dropped their nets to follow Jesus. We watch now as they get a close-up of Jesus' life of absolute dependence on God over the course of one very full day.

On a Sabbath morning in Capernaum, He and his followers did what all God-fearing Jews did.

### **One Day of Following Jesus Into Dependent Prayer (vv. 21-39)**

#### **In the Synagogue (vv. 21-28)**

*Authoritative teaching (vv. 21-22)*

The synagogue setting (v. 21)

***[21] They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and He began to teach.***

<sup>14</sup> Where Matthew sat as the tax collector for Rome.

<sup>15</sup> John 4:46.

<sup>13</sup> It is the word that is frequently used to describe the casting out of a demon.

Archaeologists tell us that this synagogue - a mega-synagogue - may have seated hundreds of people.

We'll assume that Jesus had been invited to speak on this Sabbath,<sup>16</sup> and the effect of His teaching was exactly what we would expect.

Jesus, teaching (v. 22)

***[22] They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.***

Notice that it wasn't the content of His teaching that prompted amazement (although I'm sure the content was amazing). It was His style. He taught with authority.

The synagogue leaders didn't teach with authority. They didn't HAVE authority. All they could do was affirm the authority of God's Word, which, for them, was the Law and the prophets.

I don't teach with authority, either. I can only proclaim the truth of what the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures say.

But when Jesus taught, He wasn't just affirming the authority of the Bible. He was speaking with the intrinsic authority of being the living Word of God.

While teaching, right in the middle of what I'm sure was a messianically brilliant point, Jesus was interrupted.

*Demonic drama (vv. 23-26)*

***[23a] Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit;<sup>17</sup> and he cried out...***

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<sup>16</sup> That Jesus was teaching on this Sabbath indicates that He was already well known and had been active long enough to be respected and invited to teach.

<sup>17</sup> Mark uses the term "demon" and "unclean spirit" interchangeably.

This is an interruption we didn't expect, but the unclean spirit within this man has supernatural insight into who/what Jesus is.<sup>18</sup>

Using the vocal cords of the possessed man, the demon cried out, ***[24]... "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us?"<sup>19</sup> I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"***

The demon wanted nothing to do with Jesus.

***[25] And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!"<sup>20</sup>***

There was no magic formula or incantation or technique. He simply cast the demon out.

I've heard some people refer to this event as a "power encounter", like it was a pitched battle between good and evil. It was no such thing. Jesus simply told the demon to pack its bags and leave, leaving the unclean spirit no choice.

***[26] Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.***

Now the crowd in the synagogue was already amazed at Jesus' teaching. Add this to that.

*Contagious amazement (vv. 27-28)*

***[27] They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."***

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<sup>18</sup> The New Testament typically envisions the demon in control of its human "host" - physically, emotionally, mentally.

<sup>19</sup> There was more than one unclean spirit in this man? There was more than one man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue? There were more unclean spirits in Galilee/Israel than this one? It is not clear to what "us" refers.

<sup>20</sup> Did He not want to be identified at this point in His ministry? OR did He not want to be identified by demons?

The people had never seen anything like that before and they were amazed - maybe even alarmed.

Their question, "*What is this?*" comes from people who thought that they knew very well who (or what) Jesus was. "*He's the carpenter's son from Nazareth. Nice young man. A young rabbi with a small and unimpressive group of disciples.*"

They now see that whoever they had thought He was, He is way more than that. And the news of what happened in that synagogue spread like wildfire.

***[28] Immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.***

You can't keep news like what happened in that synagogue quiet. People were telling Jesus stories as they left the synagogue.

After the service was over - paparazzi snapping pictures, autograph seekers lining up - Jesus and His apprentices made their way from the synagogue to the home of Simon Peter.

**At Simon's Home (vv. 29-34)**

*A singular healing (vv. 29-31)*

***[29] And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.***

Inside, Peter's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever. They did what you would have done had you been there, ***[30]...immediately they spoke to Jesus about her.***

He dealt with the fever as decisively as He had dealt with the demon.

***[31] And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them.***

The story is told with no drama and no words. He simply walked over to her, gently took her hand and raised her up - and she is, just like that, all better. Jesus' healing was a complete healing.

Wow. This has been a full day. Preaching in the synagogue followed by casting out a demon followed by growing popularity and the crush of followers followed by the healing of Simon's mother-in-law.

After supper, the long Sabbath having ended (with sunset), everybody's relaxing, watching TV and eating popcorn when they heard sounds outside the door.

*Multitudes healed (vv. 32-34)*

Capernaum seeks Him (vv. 32-33)

***[32] When evening came, after the sun had set,<sup>21</sup> they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. [33] And the whole city had gathered at the door.***

There's no question as to why the crowd showed up at Peter's door. People in need had heard about the exorcism during the worship service at the synagogue and about the healing of Simon's mother-in-law in the afternoon. They needed some of the same.

And get this. Jesus didn't scold them for being self-centered or for not begging to hear another great sermon. He graciously, kindly, lovingly met them at their point of need.

He blessed Capernaum (v. 34)

***[34] And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.***

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<sup>21</sup> It makes sense that the people delayed their coming to the house until the conclusion of the Sabbath, lest the Sabbath be infringed upon by the carrying of the sick or by acts of healing when there was no immediate risk of loss of life.

We don't know how long He stayed with the crowds on that evening. It probably took a long time to deal with so many people. It may be that Jesus and His followers got to bed quite late.

But finally, the people all left and everybody in Peter's house went to bed, including Jesus. The end of a good and a long day. But that's not where we're ending this morning.

When Jesus' disciples woke up, their rabbi was nowhere to be found. Mark tells us where He was and what He was up to.

### **Back to the Wilderness (vv. 35-39)**

*Jesus, at prayer, depending on His Father (v. 35)*

***[35] In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.***

To which we say *Selah*, which is Hebrew for "stop and let that sink in for a minute."

There is so much here. For one thing, Mark highlights Jesus' commitment to prayer.

That He would make the effort to spend time with God after a day like He just had shows the level of His dependence on God.

That one verse is Jesus living out what Paul tells us to do in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 - pray without ceasing. Pray all the time. Pray in any and every circumstance.

I will avoid the temptation to point out that he prayed early in the morning. I'm a morning person and I get that we "morning people" are obnoxious to the rest of you.

Not everybody is wired to work well in the morning. Not everybody's home or work life works well for early morning times in prayer.

But for all of us apprentices / disciples, following our Leader means that we're going to grow in prayer, generally.

We'll learn to pray for people "in the moment", develop a prayer partnership with a friend, join the church Prayer Chain or contact me about receiving my weekly prayer requests.

Growing in Jesus will always involve growing in dependent prayer.

But there is something more specific here and we need to hear the conversation between Jesus and His apprentices to catch it.

*Impatient companions (vv. 36-37)*

***[36] Simon and his companions searched for Him; [37] they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You."***

The disciples ("companions"?) had been frantic to find Jesus that morning because everyone was looking for Him. And they (disciples) believed that Jesus needed to be found by everyone.

Peter and Andrew and James and John - and maybe others by now - thought that Jesus' mission was to make an impression, grow popular, speak to ever larger crowds, take the throne, reign as king.

And there was a crowd back in the city, waiting for Him to perform more miracles and healings and exorcisms. The disciples' thoughts are transparent: "OK, Lord, You've had your quiet time. It's back to Capernaum with You!"

I suspect that it was this thinking that prompted Jesus' prayer retreat to the wilderness in the first place.

His brand-new disciples didn't really understand His mission. They wanted Him to do what would have made sense to any of us.

Had I been Jesus (a dangerous thought) it would have been my instinct to go back to Capernaum with the disciples and mix it up with the crowd.

If I had been one of the disciples (a less dangerous thought), I would have wanted Jesus to take advantage of the popular moment. Build today's success on top of yesterday's success.

I think it's fair to assume that Jesus felt the pressure of the growing crowd back in Capernaum and the pressure of the expectations of His apprentices.

So, He went to the wilderness.

He's been pouring His heart out to God since before it was light. He's been remembering in His Father's presence what His mission was all about.

Now, He's fixed and focused - and gives His followers a dose of Messianic reality.

*Jesus' post-prayer, counter-intuitive response (vv. 38-39)*

**[38] He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for."  
[39] And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.**

Jesus' mission was not to heal as many people as possible in the least amount of time. It was not to build a base of support sufficient to allow Him to take the throne.

It was to spread the message of the Gospel, by word and deed, throughout the land, exposing more and more people to the love and the power of God.

That's why He didn't go back into Capernaum. That's why He went to other, nearby towns.

And the towns Jesus visited weren't large cities like Sepphoris, the so-called "*jewel of Galilee*". The places to which we know He went were the smaller towns of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Gennesaret.

He didn't move from Capernaum to Tiberius to Jerusalem. No offense intended, but He moved from San Antonio to Helotes to Pipe Creek.

Fresh off an extended time in the wilderness with God, He acted contrary to everyone's expectations, refusing to take advantage of the growing crowds back in Capernaum.

He left for other towns, with at least four bewildered apprentices in tow, shaking their heads, utterly confused by their rabbi's ways.

### **Conclusion:**

Apprenticing under Jesus involves growing in dependence on God and learning to pray.

Broadly, that means all the time and in every situation.

More pointedly, it means turning to God in dependent prayer when:

- *distractions* tempt us to abandon God's calling on our lives.
- *success or failure* lures us away from whole-hearted commitment to God.
- *avoidable sacrifices* raise the cost of discipleship.

The crisis that Jesus faced early in His ministry was brought about by great success. It brought with it the tempting distraction of the road to popularity which would have eased the need for sacrifice.

He stayed true to His calling by going to the wilderness to pray.

Whatever crisis you may be facing - distractions, successes, failures, the pain of avoidable sacrifices - you will follow your Leader best when you follow Him into prayer.



## APPENDIX:

### *Historical context of Mark's Gospel*

We believe that Mark wrote when Nero was emperor, and that he probably wrote from Rome. During Nero's reign, a great fire spread through Rome, doing terrible damage (some suspected that Nero was responsible for it).

Nero had to find a scapegoat for the fire, and accused believers in Jesus, calling them "those notoriously depraved Christians."

Nero tortured and killed Christians in gruesome ways. It is possible that one of Mark's overriding purposes was to encourage faith in an historical context of suffering and martyrdom.

When Mark was read to a Christian congregation in Rome, there could be no missing the parallels between their own experience and that of Jesus. He was with wild beasts. He was sent into the wilderness. He was betrayed, as many of them were being betrayed.

### *Who is Mark?*

Mark (or John Mark) was a Jewish Christian, whose mother, Mary, owned a home in Jerusalem where the core of the first Christian community met. It was to this house that Peter came after his miraculous release from prison (Acts 12:12).

Perhaps because of his mother's influential position in the church and perhaps in part, too, because he was related to Barnabas, Barnabas and Saul/Paul took John Mark on the church's first ever missionary journey (Acts 13-14).

However, John Mark, a younger man, deserted them as soon as they reached the Asia Minor mainland and returned to Palestine, prompting Paul to refuse to allow John Mark to join them on the Second Missionary Journey.

We also know that following his infamous collapse on that first journey, John Mark became a courageous disciple and was very helpful to Paul in his later life and ministry. (See Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24; 2 Timothy 4.)

We believe that we meet Mark in the Gospels only once, and that is in an odd way near the end of his Gospel account. In Mark 14, we read of the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

After telling us that the disciples **[50] all left Him and fled** Mark goes on to say that **[51] a young man was following Him, wearing nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body; and they (the soldiers) seized him. [52] But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked.**

Many (including me) believe that the young man in that story was Mark, and that he inserted this detail into the narrative to let us know that he was an eyewitness to Jesus' life.

### *Jesus at prayer*

Here is a listing of the places where we see Jesus either urging dependence on God or actively at prayer in Mark.

4:35-41 - Jesus urges His disciples to trust God after a storm on the Sea of Galilee.

5:21-43 - Jairus and an older woman trust God (Jesus) for healing.

6:7-13 - Jesus urged His disciples to trust God as He sent them out on a preaching and healing ministry in Israel.

9:1-29 - Transfiguration; casting out a demon from a young boy the disciples could not - except by prayer.

10:13-16 - Jesus says that the only way to enter the kingdom of God is as a child would. (i.e. - in dependence)

11:20-26 - Jesus urged His disciples to pray, believingly, that God will do great things.

14:32-52 - Jesus took three disciples to Gethsemane to watch and pray for Him before He is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane