



# EXPRESSING TRUST

*Highlights from the Gospel of Mark*

5 Bible Studies  
March, 2026

# Teaching Series:

## Expressing Trust:

### Highlights from the Gospel of Mark

#### PRIMARY AIM

To grow in our knowledge and practice of prayer and generosity.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During first term we are focusing on the core practices of prayer and generosity (along with solitude!). To help us do this, we are exploring several key passages from the Gospel of Mark.

#### OUTLINE OF SERIES

	Date	Title	Reading
1	22 Feb	Practice of Solitude	Mk 1:29-39
2	01 Mar	Power of God through Prayer	Mk 9:14-29
3	08 Mar	Prayer with Faith and Forgiveness	Mk 11:12-25
	15 Mar	<i>Focus on Mission at 10am Kew</i>	
4	22 Mar	Noticed Generosity	Mk 12:38-44
5	29 Mar	Extravagant Generosity	Mk 14:1-11

# Practice of Solitude

# 1

## Mark 1:29-39

1. Solitude is being somewhere out of sight or sound of other people somewhere where you cannot observe or interact with other people. Can we ever go somewhere away from God's presence? What is the difference between isolation, loneliness and solitude?

2. Do you ever seek solitude in your life? How does being in solitude make you feel?

3. Read Mark 1:29-39.

4. Imagine you were one of the people who had been watching all that Jesus did that day.

a) How would you describe that day, and your feelings, and expectations for tomorrow?

b) Now, imagine you are Jesus. How would you describe that day?

5. Why did Jesus get up very early the next day and go to a lonely place to pray? What do you think he prayed about?

**6. What decision did Jesus make the next day when the people found him? Does that tell you anything about his prayers that morning?**

**7. What do we learn about the priority of Jesus' ministry in verses 38-39?**

**8. Did Jesus have a habit of praying in solitude? Can you find any verses or examples in scripture that confirm or refute your answer?**

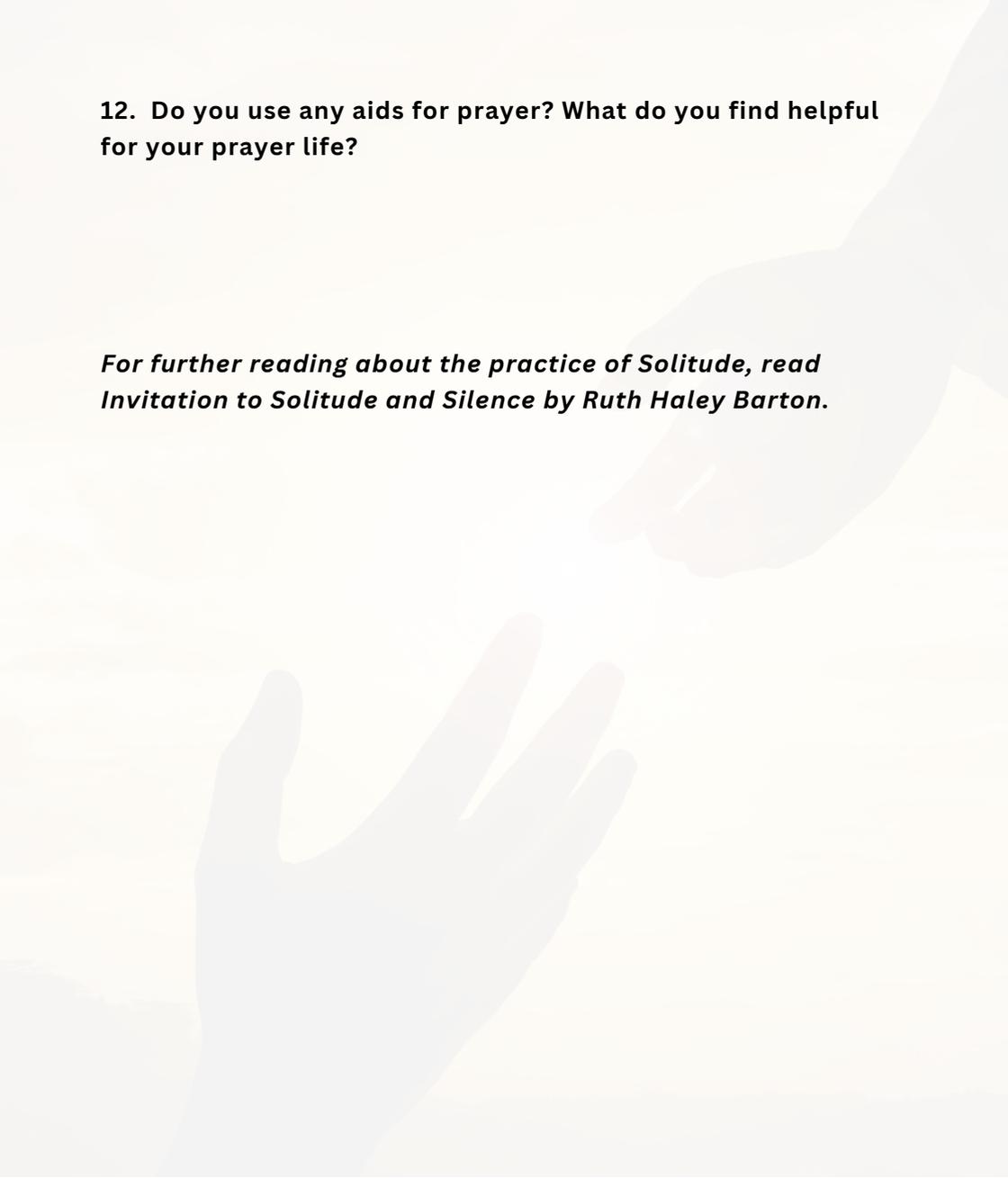
**9. Do you ever have people placing expectations on your life? How do you decide the right thing, or what takes priority?**

**10. Describe to the group the different times and places where you pray. Do you ever pray in solitude?**

**11. Which setting for prayer to you prefer? In a church service, small group of people, one on one, in solitude? Why?**

**12. Do you use any aids for prayer? What do you find helpful for your prayer life?**

***For further reading about the practice of Solitude, read [Invitation to Solitude and Silence](#) by Ruth Haley Barton.***



# Power of God through Prayer

## 2

### Mark 9:14-29

**1. Can one verse or passage from the bible provide you all that God wants you to know about a doctrine/topic? Why or why not?**

**2. Read Mark 9:14-29.**

**3. Why do you think the man asked the disciples of Jesus to drive the impure spirit out of his son (18)? (see Mk 3:15; 6:7, 13)**

**4. The disciples had cast out impure spirits in the past. One such time was in Luke 10:1-20.**

**a) How did the disciples feel after their work (Lk 10:17)?**

**b) What are the potential pitfalls from having success in a ministry?**

**c) After their success, did Jesus affirm them, rebuke them, caution them (Lk 10:18-20)?**

**5. In Mark 9: 28-29, what did Jesus attribute the failure of the disciples to? What does this suggest the disciples didn't do in their efforts to heal the boy?**

**6. What ministries are you involved in? What might Jesus teaching mean for your ministry? Have you ever forgotten to pray for your ministry?**

**7. How much confidence (faith/belief) did the father of the boy have in Jesus (22)?**

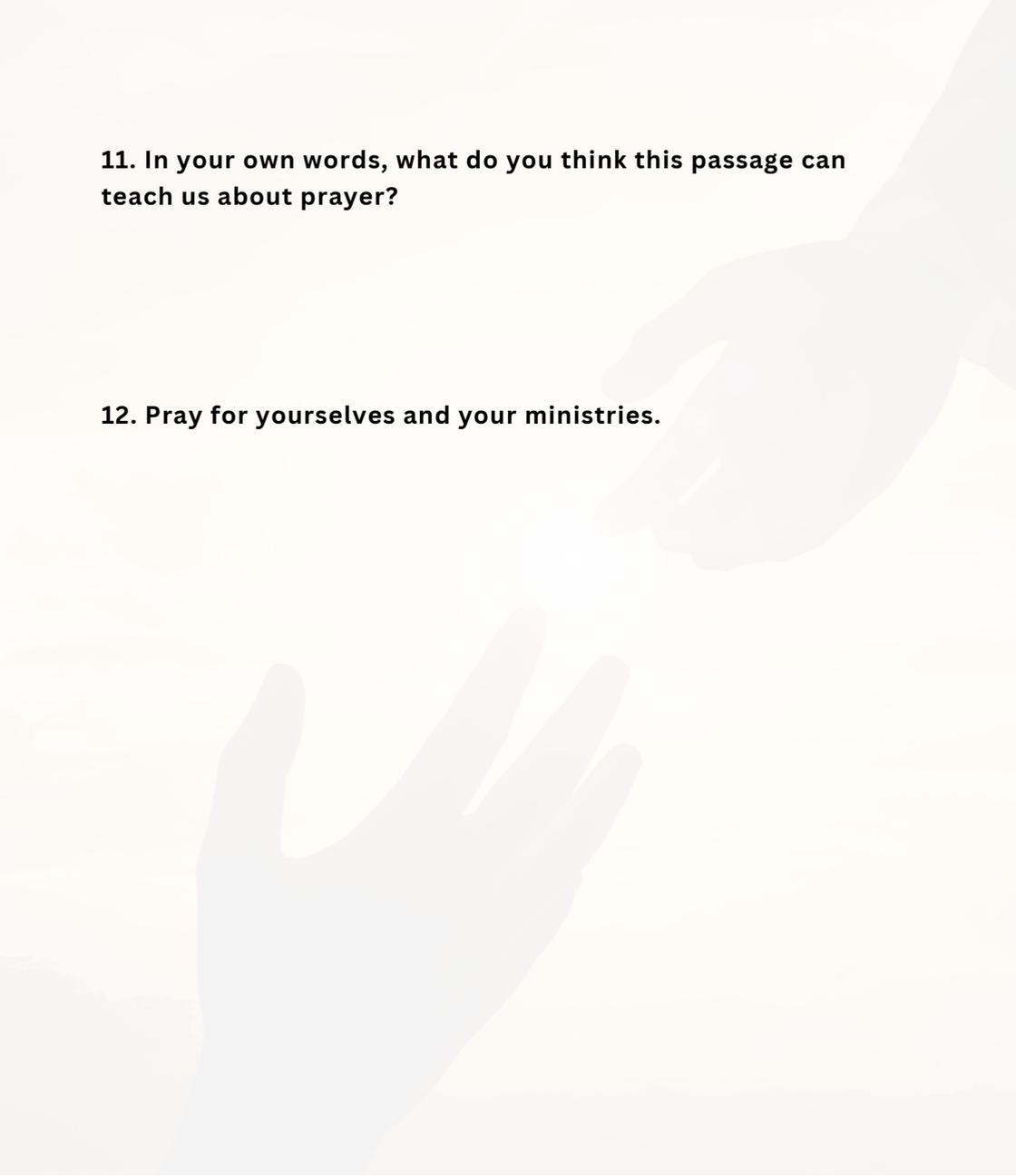
**8. How would you describe the response of Jesus to the father (23)?**

**9. How did the father react to the challenge (24)? Do you consider this to be a prayer for healing?**

**10. Think about your life and ministry for the kingdom. Have you ever found yourself slipping into the approach of the disciples or of the father? How can we grow in this area of our spiritual life?**

**11. In your own words, what do you think this passage can teach us about prayer?**

**12. Pray for yourselves and your ministries.**



# Prayer with Faith and Forgiveness

## 3

Mark 11:12-25

**1. What do you first think of when you hear the word 'fruitfulness'?**

**2. Read Mark 11:12-25.**

**3. What was Jesus' response to the state of the fig tree as he passed it (13-14)? Why might he give such a surprising response?**

**4. What was one of the key purposes of the temple? See 1 Kings 8:27-30, 41-43. What was Jesus' charge against those who ran the temple (15-17)?**

**5. How did the chief priests and teachers of the law respond, and what were they concerned about (18)?**

## **6. Biblical scholar Ben Witherington writes:**

*One needs to bear in mind how very important the fig tree was in everyday life in Israel, being the most fruitful of all trees, and as such it was often the tree used to produce the firstfruits to be brought into the temple. Later, at v. 20, we learn that the fig tree is withered all the way from the roots (cf. 4:6), indicating total destruction, presumably a foreshadowing of what would happen to the temple and Jerusalem in a.d. 70. This conclusion is likely supported by 13:28–32, where the fig tree is again a symbol of the end times. (Witherington, The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary)*

**What might be the meaning of the withering of the fig tree in this passage?**

**7. If the temple is to be destroyed, what do verses 22-25 imply about where prayer may take place post-temple?**

**8. When Jesus said “Have faith in God”, did he mean “Have faith that God is capable of doing anything for you.” Or “Have faith that God will do anything for you.”?**

**9. In verses 23 & 24 Jesus suggests that there can be hindrances to God answering our prayers in the affirmative. (See also Psalm 66:16-20 and James 4:1-3).**

**In practice, how might we discern carefully why God does not do something for us when we ask?**

**10. What are the dangers of telling another person that God hasn't answered their prayer because of their sin or lack of faith? Is it ever okay to do this? Discuss.**

**11. What challenges you the most about prayer?**

**12. Pray for each other, calling on God's help to overcome these challenges**

# Noticed Generosity

# 4

## Mark 12:38-44

**1. What things in this world does God notice? Do you think God assesses what He notices?**

**2. Read Mark 12:38-44.**

**3. In biblical times, what was the job of a ‘teacher of the law’ or ‘scribe’? Read the following:**

*Scribes were experts in the study of the law of Moses (Torah)... The function of the scribes was threefold. 1. They preserved the law... professional students of the law and defenders... They transmitted unwritten legal decisions which had come into existence in their efforts to apply the Mosaic law to daily life... 2. They gathered around them many pupils to instruct them in the law... 3. They were referred to as ‘lawyers’ and ‘teachers of the law’ because they were entrusted with the administration of the law as judges in the Sanhedrin.*

*(C. L. Feinberg, “Scribes,” in New Bible Dictionary)*

**a) What do you think should bring satisfaction from being a teacher of the law?**

**b) According to Jesus’ warning in verses 38-39, what were some of the teachers of the law seeking from their job?**

**4. Consider your ministry or your involvement at church. What things should bring you satisfaction? What does bring you satisfaction?**

**5. How were the teachers of the law treating widows in verse 40? What did the law require regarding widows? (see Ex 22:22; Dt 10:18).**

**6. What words are used to describe the actions of individuals of giving offerings to the temple treasury in verse and what do we learn about the motives of the givers?**

**7. Could the temple maintenance crew do more with the widows' offering than with the rich persons offering?**

**8. How might Jesus' teaching Matthew 6:1-4 apply to both the actions of the teachers of the law (Mk 12:38-40) and the givers (41-42)?**

**9. What was Jesus assessing when he said the widow gave more than the others, because it certainly wasn't monetary value (43-44)?**

**10. How might the example of the poor widow be an example for how you give? Discuss.**

**11. What does the giving of the widow point to about Jesus' ministry to us?**

**12. What new insight have you gained or action might you try from this study?**

**13. Spend a few minutes in quiet reflection and prayer individually. Consider your giving, of time, money other resources for Gods kingdom and your motivation for this and spend some time praying about it.**

**14. Pray for each other.**

# Extravagant Generosity 5 for Jesus

## Mark 14:1-11

- 1. Can you think of and describe a movie / TV episode where everyone had different motivations and plans for what should happen?**
- 2. Read Mark 14:1-11.**
- 3. What is driving the religious leaders? What outcome do they want and what will they do to get it? What do you think was Judas' motivation to betray Jesus?**
- 4. In verse 3, what did the woman do for Jesus? What was her motivation and attitude to Jesus?**
- 5. Some objected strongly to what the woman did and rebuked her (4-5). Were they right to be concerned about the welfare of the poor? Is it right to criticise how others use their money/resources?**

**6. Each person in this passage is responding in different ways to Jesus – his teaching, miracles and ministry in their life. Share with the group how you have responded to Jesus in your life.**

**7. What was so significant about the woman's anointing of Jesus in verses 6-8? Why was it a 'beautiful thing'?**

**8. What is the difference between generous and extravagantly generous?**

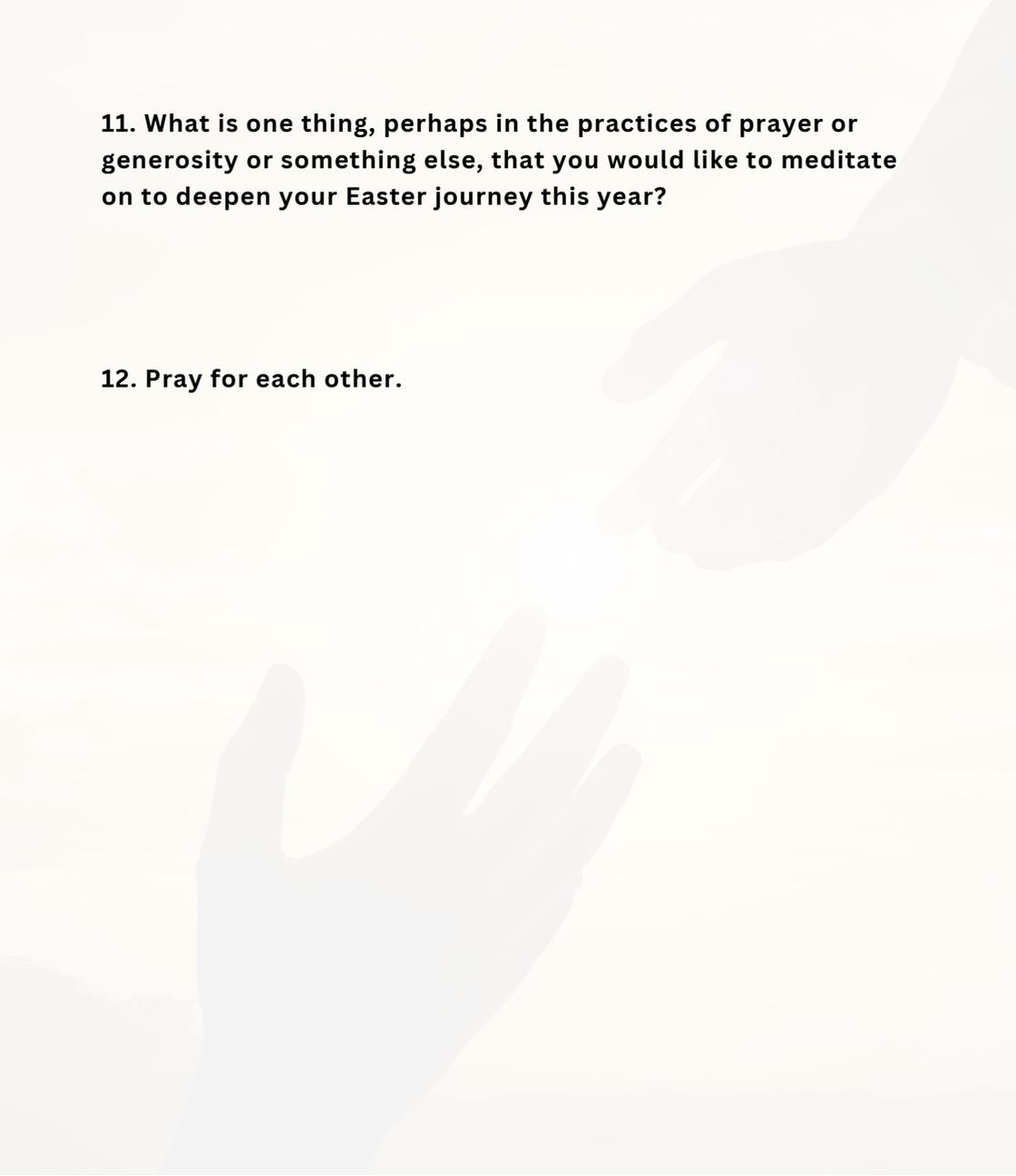
**Thinking again of the actions of Jesus in the lives of those in the passage, would you describe Jesus' actions before and after this dinner as extravagantly generous or generous?**

**9. What does this passage reveal to us about Jesus' kingdom priorities?**

**10. What ideas do you have to help us grow individually and as a community in our practice of generosity towards God and others in life?**

**11. What is one thing, perhaps in the practices of prayer or generosity or something else, that you would like to meditate on to deepen your Easter journey this year?**

**12. Pray for each other.**





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