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Open It Again

*A Free 7-Day Bible Starter Plan, for Women
Starting Out*

READ · NOTICE · RESPOND · PRAY

Ten minutes a day · lilydevotional.com

7-Day Bible Starter Plan

A free 7-day Bible reading plan for women just starting out, one short passage a day.

Seven days. One short passage a day. All from the same story, so you will follow Mark 1 from beginning to end instead of reading seven unrelated passages.

Welcome

Maybe it has been years since you opened a Bible. Maybe you never really have, and you have been quietly hoping nobody would ask. Either way, you have not missed anything you need to catch up on.

This week you will read the opening of the Gospel of Mark, one of the four accounts of Jesus' life, a little at a time. Mark moves fast and stays close to what Jesus said and did, which makes it a kind place for a first week with a Bible.

Each day takes about ten minutes: a Bible or a free Bible app, something to write with, and one small passage. That is everything on the list.

There are no streaks here. A missed day is not a failed week. Open it on the day you open it.

How this week works

- Every day names a short passage. Open your Bible or your phone and read it before you read our note under it.
- One verse from the passage is printed here to slow you down. The rest you read yourself.
- Each day ends with one question you can only answer with the passage open, and one line to start a prayer. Finish it in your own words.
- Seven days, one story: Mark chapter 1, start to end, in seven short pieces.

Day 1: The Beginning of the Story

Read Mark 1:1-8.

This is the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Mark 1:1 (BSB)

Every book has a first sentence, and Mark picks a strong one. Read the passage twice: once straight through for what happens, once slowly, pen in hand, for what stands out. Much of today's passage focuses on John, who appeared in the wilderness and preached that people should turn from their sins and be baptized. Verse 6 tells you exactly what he wore and ate, so watch for it as you read the passage yourself. Notice how often baptism comes up in these eight short verses. Notice too what John does and what he says about the One who is coming: he baptizes, and he says plainly he is not worthy to untie a sandal. That is the shape of this whole week.

This plan points you toward Jesus and steps back. When you are ready, respond with one small true thing: write down why you picked up a Bible this week, in one honest sentence.

Notice: In verse 6, what two things does the passage say John ate, and what did he wear?

Pray: Lord, I am opening this book today, and the thing I most want

You to know is...

Day 2: The Voice From Heaven

Read Mark 1:9-13.

And a voice came from heaven: "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

Mark 1:11 (BSB)

Read the five verses twice. The first time, just find out what happens: Jesus is baptized, a voice speaks from heaven, and then He is driven straight into the wilderness for forty days. The second time, slow down and notice the order. The voice in verse 11 speaks before Jesus preaches one sermon or heals one person. Notice, too, who is doing what: the Spirit descends, the voice speaks, and then that same Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness. Comfort and hardship sit right next to each other in four short verses, and neither one cancels the other out. Respond with one small true thing: read verse 11 again, slowly, and notice whose voice it is. Then pray it back to Him in your own plain words, the way you would say something back to a friend who just told you something true.

Notice: According to verse 13, who was with Jesus in the wilderness, besides the wild animals?

Pray: Father, I read what You said about Jesus. What stands out to me

is...

Day 3: Come, Follow Me

Read Mark 1:14-20.

“Come, follow Me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”

Mark 1:17 (BSB)

Read the seven verses twice. The first time, just watch what happens: Jesus starts preaching, then walks up to two sets of brothers at work and asks them to follow Him. The second time, notice two phrases that show how quickly things happen: "at once" and "immediately." Whatever else is true here, the response is fast. Notice who is doing the calling and who is doing the following. First Jesus calls Simon and Andrew; verse 16 says exactly what they were doing when He found them. Then He calls James and John, who are in a boat mending their nets with their father Zebedee.

Jesus calls these men to follow Him, and they respond at once.

Respond with one small true thing:

write down what you notice about their response, then tell Jesus honestly what following Him sounds like to you right now.

Notice: In verse 16, what were Simon and Andrew doing when Jesus first saw them?

Pray: Jesus, Simon and Andrew left their nets when You called them.

What I notice about their response is...

Day 4: Someone With Authority

Read Mark 1:21-28.

The people were astonished at His teaching, because He taught as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

Mark 1:22 (BSB)

Read the eight verses twice. The first time, follow the story: Jesus teaches in a synagogue, the building where people gathered to hear the Scriptures read, and something happens there that startles everyone in the room. The second time, notice a word that repeats: authority, in verse 22 and again near the end. The people hear a difference between the way Jesus teaches and the way the scribes, the trained teachers of the law, teach. Notice, too, who is doing what. A man with an unclean spirit cries out, and Jesus commands the spirit, and the room reacts, three very different verbs a few verses apart. This passage is honestly a little unsettling read slowly, and that is fine. You do not have to resolve every hard passage in your first week. Respond with one small true thing: write down what surprised you, even if you cannot explain it yet, and pray about the part that unsettled you instead of skipping past it.

Notice: According to verse 26, what happened to the man's body as the

spirit came out of him?

Pray: Lord, this passage is stranger than I expected, and the part
that caught me off guard was...

Day 5: One Evening, One Home

Read Mark 1:29-34.

So He went to her, took her by the hand, and helped her up. The fever left her, and she began to serve them.

Mark 1:31 (BSB)

Read the six verses twice, and notice how ordinary the first half is. Jesus leaves the synagogue and goes to Simon and Andrew's home. Someone there is sick: Simon's mother-in-law, in bed with a fever. They promptly tell Jesus about her, and He simply goes to her, takes her hand, and helps her up. Notice what she does next: the fever leaves her, and she begins to serve them. Notice, too, who is doing what once the sun goes down: the whole town gathers at the door, and many sick and demon-possessed people are brought to Jesus, and He heals many. Respond with one small true thing: write down the name of one person you want to pray for today, and pray one simple line for her.

Notice: According to verse 34, what would Jesus not allow the demons to do, and why not?

Pray: Father, the person on my mind today who needs Your hand the way this woman did is...

Day 6: Before Sunrise

Read Mark 1:35-39.

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up and slipped out to a solitary place to pray.

Mark 1:35 (BSB)

Read the five verses twice. The first time, just notice the timing: after the busy evening you read about yesterday, Jesus gets up while it is still dark and goes somewhere alone to pray. The second time, notice who is doing what. Simon and the others go looking for Him, and when they find Him, they say, *Everyone is looking for You!*

Notice how Jesus answers: He does not go back to the crowd waiting for Him. Instead He tells them exactly where He intends to go next, and He gives a reason for it in verse 38. Then He travels through Galilee preaching in the synagogues there. Respond with one small true thing: read His reason for yourself, then write down what it tells you about His purpose.

Notice: According to verse 38, what reason does Jesus give for wanting to move on to the neighboring towns?

Pray: Jesus, I read what You said Your purpose was. What I want to

Day 7: I Am Willing

Read Mark 1:40-45.

Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out His hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” He said. “Be clean!”

Mark 1:41 (BSB)

Read the six verses twice, slowly on the second pass. A man with leprosy kneels before Jesus and says something both humble and bold: if You are willing, You can make me clean. Notice what Jesus does before He even speaks: He reaches out and touches him. Notice, too, who is doing what across the six verses: the man asks, Jesus touches, Jesus speaks, and the disease leaves, in that order. Jesus then sends him away at once, with a strong warning and an instruction for what to do next, both spelled out in verse 44. This is the last day of this short plan. Respond with one small true thing: write down one thing you want to say honestly to Jesus after reading this passage. Then pray that one line, in your own words, and let this week close there.

Notice: According to verse 44, what does Jesus tell the man to do right after warning him not to tell anyone?

Pray: Jesus, if You are willing, the thing I want to ask You honestly

is...

What to open next

If seven days in Mark left you wanting more of the method behind it, the full guide, *Open It Again*, walks you through Read, Notice, Respond and Pray one piece at a time and gives you two more weeks to practice it.