

# No App For That

## Life Group Lesson - Week of February 26

Apps can be convenient and make things more accessible for us. And in our crazy, busy schedules we need to be smart in certain areas so that managing our lives is quicker, more efficient, and easier. But think about it: we cannot cut corners when it comes to our walk with Christ.

We have apps for Scripture reading and Bible study, even an app for our favorite teachers and preachers for immediate inspiration. But there is no app for spiritual mentoring and discipleship. Picking up your cross daily and following Christ is personal—it is hard, sometimes lonely, and totally up to you.

Jesus knows what it is like to travel a difficult, lonely path. Although our Lord has the power to say a word and move heaven and earth in a moment, He did not take shortcuts when He walked this earth. Jesus was patient with God's lost sheep, but often scolded the religious leaders for their indifference and demands. Have your demands for "instant God" left you angry and bitter towards the Lord?

### Read Mark 8:11-13

Asking for a sign is sometimes acceptable (see Judges 6:36-40, 2 Kings 20: 8-11, Isaiah 7:10-14). There is even a divine invitation in Malachi 3:10, regarding our tithing and trusting, when the LORD says, "Try it! Put me to the test!" But here in Mark 8:11 the religious leaders were not seeking God's glory and for their faith to be strengthened, but were being obstinate and disrespectful toward the Lord.

1. Do you humbly bring petitions before the Lord, waiting for His will in His time? Or has your pride and impatience tilted your conversations with God more towards demands?

What does demanding "instant God" (immediate answers and revelation) reveal about the condition of our heart?

Sometimes the Lord answers our prayers immediately, waiting for us to simply ask. But often His miracles are a process. Transformation of heart and mind takes time, often a long time (like a lifetime). Think about it: Joseph was on the 13-year plan (Genesis 37:2, 41:46); the Hebrew's were on the 430-year plan (Exodus 12:40); and Moses was on the 40-year plan (Acts 7:23, 30). Moses was not perfect but he didn't give up. He faithfully served the Lord until he was 120 years old! (see Deuteronomy 34:7). God is not in a hurry. Like Moses, your life is a work in process.

2. If you are a mess, feel stuck, or failing at life, confess your plight to the Lord. In the space below, tell the Lord your regrets. Without demanding, simply ask Him to begin turning your life's story into a work of beauty.

Word traveled fast when Jesus was in town. In every village Jesus visited, people would come leading the blind and infirmed, carrying sick people in their arms or on mats. Jesus healed them all—delivering many from years of hurt, shame, darkness, and demonic possession. Jesus befriended sinners and was not afraid to be associated with outcasts and rebels. But notice there were times when Jesus plainly told those he healed to stop sinning, to go a different path. For example, the man at the pools of Bethesda (John 5:14) and the woman caught in adultery (John 8:11).

3. Compare the following miracles. **Read Mark 7:31-37 and Mark 8:22-26.** What do you find interesting about these miracles? Put yourself in the scene and report at least three atypical things you would take note of as a witness.

Think about a miracle the Lord has worked in either your life or someone you know personally. Was it immediate or were there steps involved? Did the Lord first have to remove you (or your loved one) from certain people or places? What did your experience teach you about the way the Lord works?

Sometimes the Lord has to remove us from our environment in order to show us a broader picture of reality—of who we have become, but also the reality of how big His love and purpose for us is. Think about it: the Lord changed Simon's name to *Petra* (Matthew 16:18) long before Peter the "rock" we see in Acts, chapter two, when this Holy Spirit-filled fisherman stood to preach and 3,000 people were saved.

4. Read the following Scriptures. Think about Peter and spend some time in honest personal assessment/reflection. How does the Lord's patience with Peter mirror your walk with Christ?

Matthew 16:23; 17:4-5

John 18:10-11

Luke 22:54-62

John 21:15-19

It is true, we want the latest and greatest gadget, and often feel like we are somehow missing out if we do not have it. Most of us really do want to be on the cutting edge. But there is no shortcut when it comes to following Jesus. Moses made mistakes but God was merciful and Moses didn't give up. Simon Peter made mistakes but the Lord patiently restored him and Peter didn't give up. What makes you and I think we are going to get it right the first time? We are going to make mistakes, but our Lord's love is unfailing. Don't give up. Keep moving in God's direction, even if you have to crawl.

5. If you have accepted Christ into your heart but have wandered away, find your way back to the Lord. There is no app for restoration, but it is found at the nail-pierced feet of our Savior. Spend some time in prayer.

If you have never asked Christ to come into your heart, now would be a good time! He stands at the door and knocks (Revelation 3:20) but He will never knock down the door of your heart. The Lord Jesus is a gracious guest waiting to be welcomed into your life. Simply pray this prayer—

**Lord, I acknowledge that you are here patiently waiting for me to receive your love. I confess that I need you. Please forgive me of my sins and mistakes. There are so many, I don't even know where to begin. But you know. I want to be different and walk a different path. Would you come into my life and take over. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit and your love. Thank you. Amen.**

“Look, I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.”

Revelation 3:20

### **One Year Bible Readings**

Feb. 26: Leviticus 19:1-20:21, Mark 8:11-38, Psalm 42:1-11, Proverbs 10:17

Feb. 27: Leviticus 20:22-22:16, Mark 9:1-29, Psalm 43:1-5, Proverbs 10:18

Feb. 28: Leviticus 22:17-23:44, Mark 9:30-10:12, Psalm 44:1-8, Proverbs 10:19

Mar. 1: Leviticus 24:1-25:46, Mark 10:13-31, Psalm 44:9-26, Proverbs 10:20-21

Mar. 2: Leviticus 25:47-27:13, Mark 10:32-52, Psalm 45:1-17, Proverbs 10:22

Mar. 3: Leviticus 27:14-Numbers 1:54, Mark 11:1-26, Psalm 46:1-11, Proverbs 10:23

Mar. 4: Numbers 2:1-3:51, Mark 11:27-12:17, Psalm 47:1-9, Proverbs 10:24-25

# *No App For That*

**Text: Mark 7: 31-37, Mark 8:11-13 and 22-26**

## **The Plain Truth**

We want \_\_\_\_\_, but there is no \_\_\_\_\_ to following Jesus.

1. They wanted a “\_\_\_\_\_”.
2. They were content with \_\_\_\_\_ vision without \_\_\_\_\_.
3. By looking for a sign they were looking for their \_\_\_\_\_ and not the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.