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Disciples and discipleship in Mark

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Two key words

- ‘the way’ ὁδός *hodos*

  As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight!’” 1:2–3

Two key words

- 'the way' ὁδός *hodos*

  Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. 9:33-34

  As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 10:17

Two key words

- 'the way' ὁδός *hodos*
- 'follow' ἀκολουθέω *akoloutheō*

  And as he sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him. 2:15

Two key words

- 'the way' ὁδός
- 'follow' ἀκολουθέω

  And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 1:17-18

Two key words

- ‘the way’ ὁδός
- ‘follow’ ἀκολουθέω

  He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.’ 8:34

Two key words

- ‘the way’ ὁδός
- ‘follow’ ἀκολουθέω

  They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him 10:32

What marks a disciple?

- Accepting the demands of Jesus
  - leaving everything 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:14, 16-17
  - fishing for people 1:17; 2:15-17; 3:13-14
  - using wealth in service of Jesus 10:17-22; 2:15-17
  - obedience to the will of God 3:31-35

What marks a disciple?

- The 'journey' section 8:27–10:52
  - the blind men 8:22-26; 10:46-52
  - three parts, each including
    - passion prediction
    - misguided response by disciples
    - discipleship teaching

8:27–9:29

- passion prediction 8:27-33
- discipleship teaching 8:34–9:9
  - personal attachment to Jesus 8:34-38
    - take up the cross 8:34 = voluntary suffering
  - listen to Jesus 9:7
  - the priority of prayer 9:29

9:30–10:31

- passion prediction 9:30-32
- relationships with other disciples 9:33–10:31
  - greatness 9:33-37
  - inclusion (or not) 9:38-42
  - beware causing others to stumble 9:43-48
  - call to peaceful relationship 9:49–10:31

What marks a disciple?

- Watchfulness
  - 'keep awake' γρηγορεῖτε *grēgoreite* 13:34-37
- Restoration after failure
  - Peter in 14:27-31, 66-72—and 16:7

Jesus' promise of the restoration of the Twelve—even after their desertion and denial—is the message that Mark holds out to readers who, like Peter, may have failed under threats but may still experience forgiveness and restoration. In a first-century setting, where opposition from relatives and neighbors or intimidation from Jewish and Roman authorities might have led some Christians to compromise their witness, this hope would have been very meaningful. (Larry W. Hurtado, 'Following Jesus in the Gospel of Mark—and Beyond', 24-25)

10:32–52

- Identify the passion prediction
- What misunderstanding follows?
- How does Jesus correct the misunderstanding and teach about discipleship?