The Gospel of Mark: A Quiet Time Guide

Frank Ivey
Dear friends,

You are about to begin a fantastic journey! It is a journey through the Gospel of Mark. Mark is one of the four New Testament portraits of Jesus. The word “gospel” means “Good News,” and the stories that emerge from these four books clearly shout out one amazing truth: that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed God Himself, with skin on, walking among us! He has come to us so that we might know Him, and might know life as it can and should be.

Mark is the briefest and most compact of the four gospel accounts of Jesus public ministry. It is full of action and activity; it jumps quickly from one scene to another. Jesus is always in the midst of a crowd, or controversy, or off on some adventure. The Jesus you will encounter here is anything but boring or out of touch.

This Quiet Time Guide is designed to take you through the book of Mark one day at a time. Each day you will read a new chapter in Mark, and each day you will have a new memory verse and questions for reflection and study.

The word “quiet time” simply refers to a time that you spend alone with Jesus. It should include time where you speak to Jesus (praying) and time where you listen for Him to speak to you (reading your Bible, meditating on a scripture passage, being still and listening for His whisper in your heart).

For your quiet time, you will want to find a quiet place where you can have some uninterrupted time alone. Ideally, you will want to find a place that you can use each day at approximately the same time, which will help you develop a rhythm and routine.

As you begin each day’s quiet time, my suggestion to you is for you begin by asking Jesus to speak to you. Read through the day’s chapter expecting Him to have a personal word for you. As a phrase or verse jumps out at you or strikes a chord, stop and reflect on it. You may want to underline those words in your Bible or make notes in your margin.

As you start to answer the study questions, do not get hung up on having the “right” answers. See what the story seems to say to you. And don’t be afraid to ask someone with more Biblical knowledge for help if you’re stumped.

On the other hand, only you can answer the reflection questions. These are designed for you to take some of the principles found in the scripture you’ve read and apply them to your own life. They should take some thoughtful honesty to answer.

And finally, the “Action” part of the quiet time is to help you to interact personally with Jesus and to commit to living out what you’re learning.

Regardless of where you are in your personal journey with Jesus, my hope is that God will use this Quiet Time Guide to help deepen your love and intimacy with Him.

Have a great adventure!

Frank Ivey
Quiet Time #1

Memory Verse:
“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”
_II Corinthians 5:17_

Scripture Passage:
Mark 1

Study:
1. What was significant about the voice from heaven in Mark 1:11?

2. Why is Jesus’ time in the desert in Mark 1:12-13 important to us as disciples of Christ?

3. What are Jesus’ first words to Simon and Andrew in Mark 1:17? What do they say to us about what kind of relationship we are to have with Jesus?

4. Why did Jesus get up early in Mark 1:35? What can we learn from His actions?

Reflection:
1. Am I willing to allow Jesus to touch and heal the parts of my life that I am most ashamed of (as He did with the leper in Mark 1:40-42)?

2. Am I willing to follow Christ with my life (as did Simon and Andrew), wherever it may lead?

Action:
1. Thank God for giving you the chance to know Him through Christ Jesus.
2. Tell God those things in your life you are ashamed of.
3. Ask Jesus to “make you clean,” as He did with the man with leprosy.
4. Reaffirm your willingness to follow Jesus wherever He may lead you.
5. Ask Jesus to make you aware of His presence as you go through today!
Quiet Time #2

Memory Verse:
“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”
Colossians 1:15

Scripture Passage:
Mark 2

Study:
1. What does Jesus’ first words to the paralytic in Mark 2:5 (“Son, your sins are forgiven”) say about our greatest need as humans? What do these words say about who Jesus is (see Mark 2:6-7)?

2. Why do you think Levi (whose name changes to “Matthew”, the author of the first Gospel) responds to Jesus as He does in Mark 2:14?

3. Who were the kind of people that Jesus spent time with in Mark 2:15-16? Why did Jesus spend time with such people (see Mark 2:17)?

4. The religious leaders (Pharisees) were not pleased with Jesus in Mark 2:18 and Mark 2:23-24. What did Jesus do that made them angry? What can we learn from Jesus’ actions about what is really important? (hint: it has to do with our motivation for our actions!)

Reflection:
1. Is my relationship with Jesus like Levi’s, who immediately invites Jesus over to his house and throws a party (Mark 2:14-15)? Am I excited about being with Jesus? Am I ashamed of Him?

2. Who am I more like--the Pharisees who did all the correct religious things for the wrong reasons, or Jesus and His disciples who were more concerned with honoring God with their hearts (Mark 2:18-28)?

Action:
1. Tell Jesus one thing about Him that you like.
2. Thank God for the good things in your life that He has given you.
3. Ask Him to give you a genuine excitement and love for Him.
4. Pray for Jesus to give you the courage to “do the right thing,”
but with the right motives as you go through today.
Quiet Time #3

Memory Verse:
“Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.”
John 1:12

Scripture Passage:
Mark 3

Study:
1. Why did Jesus get angry at the religious leaders (Pharisees) in Mark 3:5? What does this say about what kind people He wants us to be?

2. What to the evil spirits say to Jesus in Mark 3:11? What is the difference in their “belief” in Jesus and the kind of belief He wants us to have in Him?

3. In Mark 3:7-10 and Mark 3:20, crowds of people rush to be near Jesus. Then in Mark 3:21, his own family accuses Him of being “out of His mind.” Later in Mark 3:22 the teachers of the law (the Pharisees) accused Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebub (the devil). What was it about Jesus that caused such a wide range of reactions? What does this say about what kind of relationship we should have with Jesus (see Matthew 12:30)?

4. What did Jesus mean by His words in Mark 3:33-34?

Reflection:
1. Am I willing to be completely “for” Jesus, or is my tendency to try to “sit on the fence”?

2. Do I treat other Christians as if they are my “brothers and sisters?” How can I honor Jesus in my relationships with others who love and follow Him?

Action:
1. Let God know how you are feeling today—about yourself, about Him, and about your life and relationships.
2. Ask Jesus to begin changing the parts of you that want to “sit on the fence.”
3. Pray for a special love for those people in your life who are trying to follow Christ.
4. Thank God for the gift of being able to know Him personally.
through Jesus’ death on the cross.
5. Commit to being “for” Jesus today!
**Quiet Time #4**

**Memory Verse:**
“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”
*Matthew 5:16*

**Scripture Passage:**
Mark 4

**Study:**
1. What do the different seeds represent in Jesus’ parable in Mark 4:3-8? *(hint: see Mark 4:14-20)* Which seed most closely represents your relationship with Jesus right now?

2. In Mark 4:21-22, Jesus talks about bringing things into the open, like putting a lamp on a stand (rather than covering it up). How does this parable relate to our lives? What is it that Jesus wants us to be sure not to hide?

3. In Mark 4:30-32 Jesus compares the “Kingdom of God” to the transformation of a mustard seed into a large plant. If “Kingdom of God” refers to our relationship with Christ (His Kingship in our lives) what does this parable say to us about what it is like to follow Jesus?

4. What is the answer to the disciples question in Mark 4:41? *(hint: see Colossians 1:16-17)*

**Reflection:**
1. What are three things I can do to make sure my life remains “good soil” for Jesus—where He can grow and multiply and not get choked out?

2. Do I really believe that Jesus can calm the storms of my life? Am I confident enough in Him to “sleep through the storm” like Jesus, or do I panic like the disciples?

**Action:**
1. Thank Jesus for the unique and special way He created you.
2. Hand over any “storms” you are fighting in your life to Jesus. Ask Him to calm them and to help you trust in His plan for your life.
3. Ask God to make your life “fertile soil” for your relationship with Him.
4. Pray for courage to allow others to see Christ growing in you (put your lamp on a stand!).
Quiet Time #5

Memory Verse:
“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”
John 10:10

Scripture Passage:
Mark 5

Study:
1. Who are the ones who become afraid of Jesus in the story of the demon-possessed man in Mark 5:1-20? (hint: see Mark 5:7,10 and Mark 5:15-17.) Why do they fear Jesus?

2. What happens to the demon-possessed man after Jesus sets him free from the demons? (hint: see Mark 5:15 and Mark 5:18-20)

3. In Mark 5:25-34, the bleeding woman’s first reaction to Jesus is also fear. What is Jesus’ response to her? What does Jesus call her? What does this say about how Jesus looks at us?

4. In the story of Jairus’ daughter (Mark 5: 21-24, 35-43) why does Jesus say to Jairus “Don’t be afraid; just believe” after Jairus hears that his daughter has just died (Mark 5:36)? How does Jesus “back up” his words to Jairus?

Reflection:
1. What are the “demons” I struggle with in my life? Am I willing to allow Jesus to “set me free”?

2. Do I really believe that Jesus is in control of my life? Am I willing to trust in Him, even when it seems to make more sense to despair and to be afraid? (see Romans 8:28!)

Action:
1. Spend a few moments thinking of words that describe Jesus. Then let Him know how much you like Him and appreciate Him.

2. Ask God to make you aware of the “demons” in your life. Ask Him to begin to “set you free” so you can become the person He created you to be.
3. Apologize to Jesus for the ways you have hurt Him this week. Ask Him to forgive you and cleanse you.
4. Pray for the ability to trust God in all circumstances.
Quiet Time #6

Memory Verse:
“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
Romans 6:23

Scripture Passage:
Mark 6

Study:
1. Why did the people from Jesus’ hometown “take offense to him” in Mark 6:3? How do you think some of your friends will react as you begin to change as you grow closer to Jesus?

2. So many people rushed to Jesus that He didn’t even have time to eat (Mark 6:31). How did Jesus respond when they interrupted his time of very needed rest? Why?
   (hint: see Isaiah 53:6 and Psalm 23:1-4)

3. How many people does Jesus feed in Mark 6:37-44? How much food does Jesus have to start with? What does this say about God’s ability to do big things with small packages? (for instance, your life and mine)

4. Why were the disciples afraid when they saw Jesus walking on the water (Mark 6:47-52)? What are some things we can do to begin to see Jesus more clearly? (so we won’t mistake Him for someone else, as did the disciples!)

Reflection:
1. Am I willing to face rejection and ridicule from some of my friends for my decision to follow Christ?

2. Is my first reaction to Jesus one of fear? Shame? Guilt? What does Jesus want me to feel towards Him?

Action:
1. Tell Jesus that you love Him. Ask Him to make your heart tender towards Him.
2. Let God know how much you need a shepherd to guide you in your life.
3. Offer your life to Jesus for Him to do what He will with it.
(You never know what He might do with small packages!)

4. Thank Jesus for all the blessings in your life.

5. Commit to going to church this weekend! (Ask a YL Leader if you don’t know where to go.)
Quiet Time #7

Memory Verse:
“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

*John 3:16*

Scripture Passage:
Mark 7

Study:
1. Why did Jesus call the Pharisees and teachers of the law “hypocrites” in Mark 7:6?  
   *(hint: read Mark 7:5-9)*

2. In Mark 7:14-15, Jesus says that it is not what goes into a person (food) that makes him or her unclean (sinful/separated from God). Instead it is what comes out of a person that contaminates him or her. Why is this?

3. What are some of the things Jesus says that come out of us that make us unclean? Where in us do they come from?

4. When Jesus heals the deaf and mute man (he could not hear or talk) in Mark 7:32-35, he first touches the man’s ears and tongue. Why do you think He does this? What would these actions have communicated to the man with no hearing or speech? What do they say about what kind of a person Jesus is?

Reflection:
1. What are the things and thoughts that come out of my heart that need to be “made clean?”

2. What are the parts of my life that are broken and need Jesus’ touch?

Action:
1. Ask Jesus to remind you of how much He loves you.
2. Confess to Him the things in your heart and life that need to be made clean.
3. Tell Him the broken parts of your life that need His healing touch.
4. Praise Him for all that He is doing in your life!
5. Commit to encouraging someone who is hurting today.
Quiet Time #8

Memory Verse:
“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”
Galatians 2:20

Scripture Passage:
Mark 8

Study:
1. In Mark 8:11-12, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees who come to Him looking for a sign to “test” Him. What does Jesus say to them? What does His response say about what kind of relationship we should have with Jesus? (hint: see Hebrews 11:1 and II Corinthians 5:7)

2. What does Jesus’ healing of the blind man in Mark 8:22-26 tell us about the process of transformation that happens to us when we encounter Christ? (hint: see I Corinthians 13:12)

3. What is significant about Peter calling Jesus “Christ” in Mark 8:29? What does the word “Christ” mean? (hint: see appendix for definition of “Christ”)

4. What is important about Jesus’ prediction of His death in Mark 8:31? (hint: it has to do with Jesus’ reason for coming to earth!)

5. In Mark 8:34-38, what does Jesus say following Him will cost us?

Reflection:
1. What kind of faith do I have? What is my faith based on?

2. Am I willing “lose my life” for Jesus’ sake?

Action:
1. Tell God how much you appreciate and admire Him.
2. Ask Him to “open your eyes” so you can see Him clearly.
3. Pray for the gift of faith that trusts God even when it seems to make no sense.
4. Thank Him for giving you a relationship with Him
5. Commit to Him your life and your future—wherever He may lead!
Quiet Time #9

Memory Verse:
“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
I John 1:9

Scripture Passage:
Mark 9

Study:
1. In Mark 9:7 we hear a voice from heaven. What is the significance of this? Where else have we heard these words come from heaven (hint: see Mark 1:11)?

2. In the story of Jesus’ healing of the boy with the evil spirit, what two things does Jesus say were required for the healing (hint: see vv. 23-24, 28-29)? Describe in your own words the kind of “belief” that Jesus is talking about.

3. What does Jesus say we must do to become the “greatest” in His kingdom?

4. What do Jesus’ words in Mark 9:42-48 say about how seriously God takes our sin? What happens to our relationship with God when we sin? How do we “get back right with God?” (hint: see I John 1:9)

Reflection:
1. What kind of belief do I have in Christ? Is it a belief that I depend on and that shapes who I am?

2. Am I willing to be a servant to others? Will I honor Jesus by putting others first in my life?

Action:
1. Spend a few silent moments sensing God’s nearness.
2. Confess to Jesus your sinfulness and any specific sins that the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.
3. Thank Jesus for God’s forgiveness, which He paid for on the cross.
4. Affirm to God your belief and trust in Him, and ask Him to “forgive your unbelief.”

5. Commit to serving others and putting them first today!
Quiet Time #10

Memory Verse:
“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”
Jeremiah 29:13

Scripture Passage:
Mark 10

Study:
1. What do you think Jesus means when He says we must “receive the kingdom of God (God's reign and control in our lives) like a little child” (Mark 10:13-16)?

2. What is the main point about the story of the rich young man in Mark 10:17-22? (hint: it has to do with our heart and the reason for our actions)

3. In Mark 10:42-45, why does Jesus say that to be great we must become a slave to all? Who is the “Son of Man?” (hint: see appendix for the definition of “Son of Man”)

4. What did Bartimaeus have to overcome before he could be healed by Jesus (hint: see Mark 10:48)? Do your friends ever act like Bartimaeus' did?

Reflection:
1. Do I love Jesus enough to risk everything to be with Him? Or is there something else in my life that I love more (as did the rich young man)?

2. Am I willing to follow Christ, even when my friends tell me not to?

Action:
1. Tell God how wonderful He is (use your own words and adjectives!).
2. Let Him know you need Him today.
3. Ask Him to give you courage to love Him more than anything else in your life.
4. Pray for a friend of yours who does not know Jesus personally.
5. Commit to following God, even when your friends tell you not to!
Quiet Time #11

Memory Verse:
“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”
John 14:6

Scripture Passage:
Mark 11

Study:
1. In Mark 11:1-11 Jesus makes a grand entrance into the city of Jerusalem. Imagine in your mind what it would have been like to be in the crowd that day. What did the “triumphal entry” signify? Why did Jesus ride into the city on a colt? (hint: see Zechariah 9:9!)

2. Why did Jesus get upset when he came to the temple in Jerusalem (Mark 11:17)? What did He do? What can we learn from this?

3. What was the reaction of the “chief priests and the teachers of the law” to Jesus (vv. 18-19)? Why?

4. In Mark 11:22-26, Jesus talks to His disciples about prayer. What are two things Jesus teaches us here?

Reflection:

2. Who in my life do I need to forgive?

Action:
1. Thank Jesus for all the blessings in your life.
2. Confess to Him any sins that the Holy Spirit lays on your heart.
3. Thank God for giving you the chance to know Him.
4. Ask Him to give you a heart full of thanksgiving.
5. Pray for the kind of faith that will move mountains.
6. Commit to forgiving those people in your life who have wronged you!
Quiet Time #12

Memory Verse:
“Jesus replied, ‘If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.’”
John 14:23

Scripture Passage:
Mark 12

Study:
1. Why did the Pharisees try to trap Jesus in vv. 13-17? What did Jesus’ response say to us about the attitude we should have concerning money and possessions?

2. What does Jesus claim is the greatest commandment? What is the second? If we put God first and others second, where do our desires and needs fit in?

3. What does Jesus criticize the teachers of the law for in vv. 38-40? What are some ways that people today act like the Pharisees whom Jesus condemned?

4. What is significant about the widow’s offering in vv. 41-44? What can we learn from this?

Reflection:
1. Who do I put first in my life? How do I rate on the greatest two commandments?

2. When I give, do I do it for show or from the heart? When I give to Jesus, do I give Him my all?

Action:
1. Ask Jesus to allow you to know Him better today.
2. Share with Him something you are struggling with.
3. Ask Him to give you strength to trust Him in your struggles.
4. Offer Him your heart, soul, mind, and strength as your gift to Him today.
5. Commit to putting someone else’s needs ahead of your own today!
Quiet Time #13

Memory Verse:
“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”
Romans 8:28

Scripture Passage:
Mark 13

Study:
1. In Mark 13 Jesus describes the end times leading up to His second coming. What will those times be like? What will happen to Jesus’ followers?

2. Jesus continually tells His followers to “watch out” and to “be on your guard.” What is He warning us about?

3. What will be some of the false signs of those claiming to be Christ? How can we know who is the “real thing”? (hint: see vv. 26-27)

4. When will the end times occur? How can we be ready?

Reflection:
1. Am I willing to suffer persecution for my relationship with Jesus?

2. Am I ready for Him to come again? Why or why not?

Action:
1. Thank Jesus for the gift of allowing you to know Him.
2. Confess to Him your fears.
3. Ask Him to give you courage to follow Him, even when it is not easy.
   4. Tell Him how much you need Him and love Him.
   5. Pray for one of your friends or family who do not know Jesus.
Quiet Time #14

Memory Verse:
“For God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
Romans 5:8

Scripture Passage:
Mark 14

Study:
1. What is the reaction of Jesus’ disciples to the woman who anoints Jesus? Why would Jesus say she was “anointing Him for burial?”

2. What did Jesus pray about in Gethsemane? How can we imitate His attitude in our own lives? (hint: read Philippians 2:3-11)

3. In Mark 14, two of Jesus’ closest friends betray Him. Have you ever been betrayed by a friend? How do you think this made Him feel?

4. In Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin (vv. 53-65), what are the charges brought against Him? (hint: see John 2:18-22)? Who does Jesus claim to be in verse 62?

5. What is the reaction of the high priest to Jesus’ claim? What penalty do they say Jesus deserves? Who is it that really deserves this penalty? (hint: see Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23)

Reflection:
1. In what ways have I betrayed Jesus like Peter did?

2. Do I really believe that I deserve the penalty of death for my sin?

Action:
1. Thank Jesus for rescuing you from the penalty of death.
2. Ask for forgiveness for the times you have betrayed Him.
3. Pray for Jesus to help you put God’s desires first in your life.
   4. Sit still for a moment and let Him love on you.
   5. Tell Him you love Him too.
Quiet Time #15

Memory Verse:
“God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”
II Corinthians 5:21

Scripture Passage:
Mark 15

Study:
1. What do you think made Jesus endure all the physical torture and mockery without fighting back?

2. How does Jesus’ death on the cross specifically fulfill some of the prophecies in the Old Testament?
   (hint: read Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, Psalm 109:25, Psalm 69:21, and Amos 8:9)

3. Why would Jesus cry out in verse 34: “My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?” What light does our memory verse for today shed on what was happening here?
   (hint: see appendix)

4. What is the significance of the tearing of the temple curtain?
   (hint: see Hebrews 9:6-7 and 10:19-20)

Reflection:
1. Do I believe that Jesus died just for me?

2. What difference does Jesus’ death on the cross make in my life?

Action:
1. Thank Jesus for dying for you.
2. Ask Him to make you clean again today.
3. Read Psalm 103 aloud.
   4. Be still and listen.
   5. Let Him know how much you love Him.
Quiet Time #16

Memory Verse:
“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
Matthew 28:20

Scripture Passage:
Mark 16

Study:
1. What is the significance of Jesus’ empty tomb?
How does this event set Christianity apart from other religions?

2. Why did the disciples not believe at first that Jesus was once again alive?
How does Jesus respond to them when they finally comes face to face?

3. What does Jesus say the reward is for those who believe?
What is the punishment for those who do not?

4. Why does Jesus sit at the “right hand of God” (v. 19)?
(hint: read Philippians 2:5-11)

Reflection:
1. In what ways am I like the disciples who didn’t believe that Jesus was alive?

2. Am I willing to bet my life on my belief in Him?

Action:
1. Tell Jesus something you like about Him.
2. Thank Him for the many blessings in your life.
3. Read Psalm 51.
4. Confess to Him the areas in your life where you have not honored Him.
5. Ask Him to give you a “pure heart” and to restore to you “the joy of your salvation.”

5. Commit to walking in His footsteps today.
More Quiet Times

Congratulations! You have made it through the Gospel of Mark. Although you have reached the last Quiet Time Guide in this series, our hope is that you not only have learned how to begin reading and studying scripture, but also have begun a habit of spending daily quiet time with your Savior. There are many wonderful quiet time and devotional guides available, as well as Bibles with study notes and references. But whatever you use, our suggestion is that you commit to reading a Bible chapter every day, beginning with the books in the New Testament. Pray for Jesus to speak to you, and He will! Never forget, He is a God who wants to be found (Jeremiah 29:13) and who will never leave you (Romans 8:31-39).

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Scripture verses taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version
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“Christ”
The word “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word “Messiah,” which means “Anointed One.” This originally referred to one who was chosen by God to become the King of Israel, but by the time of the New Testament it came to mean God’s own Son who would come to deliver and restore God’s people to their rightful place before God.

“Son of Man”
The title “Son of Man” is a title Jesus uses throughout the Gospels to refer to Himself. In fact, Jesus uses this term almost exclusively rather than the title we are more familiar with, “Son of God.” “Son of Man” on the one hand means simply, “a son of a man,” or “man.” Here Jesus is emphasizing His full humanity. On the other hand, “Son of Man” is a term associated with the Messiah (“Anointed One” or “Christ”) in the Old Testament book of Daniel (Daniel 7:13-14).

Jesus on the Cross
When Jesus cried out on the cross He was basically saying, “Daddy, Daddy, where are you?” For the first time in all eternity, Jesus found Himself separated from God the Father. As Jesus took our sins upon Himself (II Corinthians 5:21 says that He actually “became sin”), he also suffered the penalty of spiritual death (separation from God) that we deserve. Because God the Father is holy and perfect, He could not come in direct contact with sin, and could not even look at His Son on the cross. Therefore, on the cross Jesus fulfilled both the physical (death) and spiritual (separation) penalties for our sin. (Galatians 3:13, Isaiah 53:4-12, Romans 6:23)