



MARK

The Gift of God



Structure in *Mark*



- The *parable of the soils* (4:1-25) serves as a key to unlock 4:26--8:26 (*ears to hear*)
- Jesus' call to discipleship (8:34-38) unlocks the rest of the Gospel
 - Repeated themes: *deny self, take up cross, follow Him*



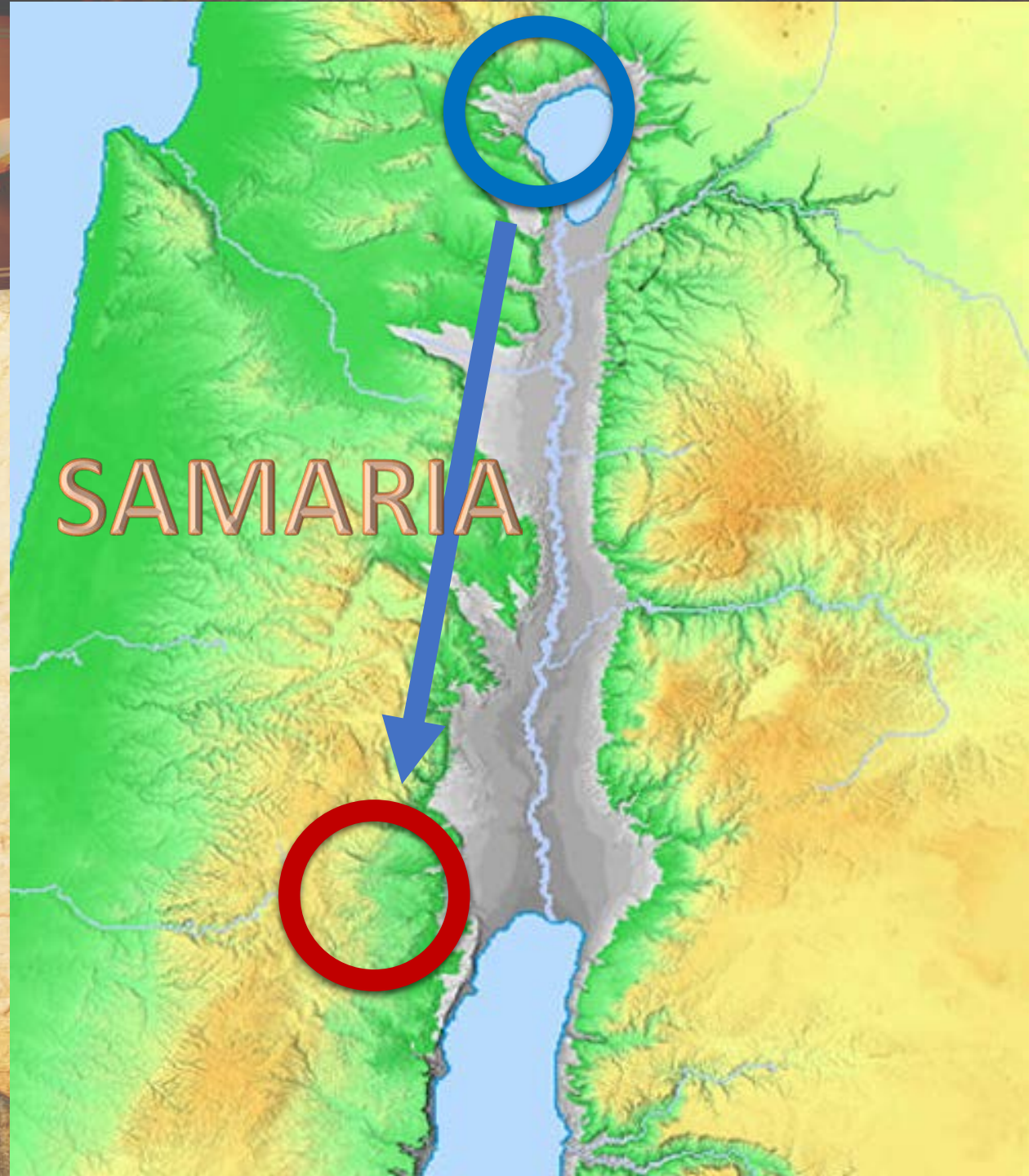
*Do You Have a
'Disciple' Heart?*


Mark 10:1-52

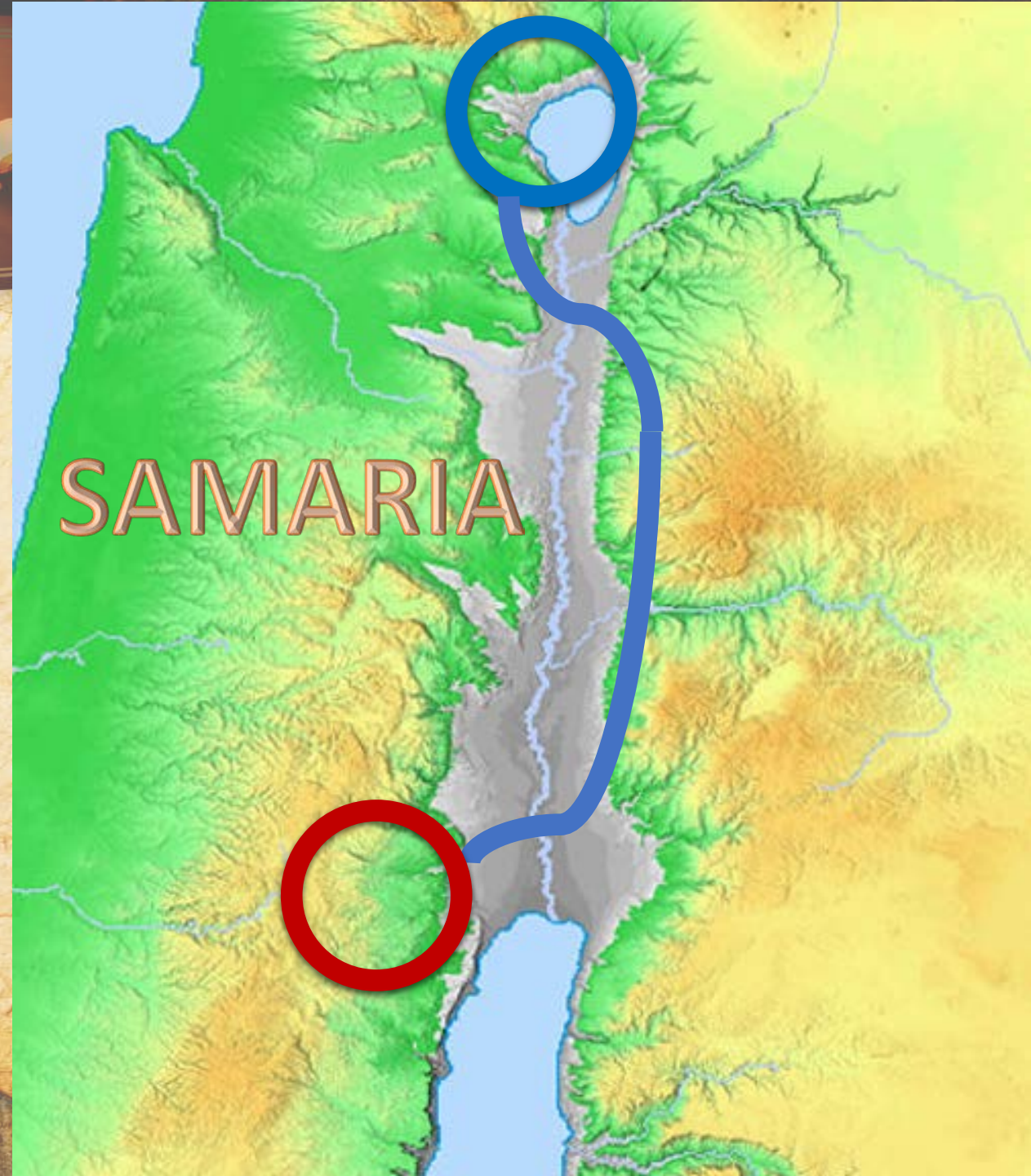
Mark 10:1-52



1. Hard Hearts (1-12)
2. Dependent Hearts (13-16)
3. Distracted Hearts (17-31)
4. Proud Hearts (32-45)
5. Humble Hearts (46-52)



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- From Capernaum in Galilee, across the Jordan River, down thru Perea, back across the Jordan, then *up to* Jerusalem



Hard Hearts



- Divorce is a sensitive issue
- Many of us have been affected by it
- The point is not to condemn, but to instruct for *life*
- The goal is *holiness*, as God defines it

Hard Hearts



- This is a test (2)
 - A very controversial issue – could alienate many people
 - Put Him at odds with rabbis
 - Could get Him beheaded (Mark 6:17-29)

Hard Hearts



- Is it lawful for a man to divorce a wife?
- Deut. 24:1-4
 - Not *permission to divorce* but a warning regarding re-marriage (see Jeremiah 3)
 - Due to *hard-heartedness – stubborn, obstinate* (not *hardened* - 6:52)

Hard Hearts



- Gen. 2:24 (Mal. 2:13-16)
 - God's original intent: male and female become *one* for life
 - God joins them together
 - Not man's place to separate them

“Yeah, But...”



- “I’m not being fulfilled!”
 - Is it about *you*? (see 8:34; 9:35)
 - God’s ways lead to *life* (Eph. 5:22-33)
 - “Wives, submit to your husbands”
 - “Husbands, love your wives”
- Who decides what *good* is? (Gen. 2:18)

Dependent Hearts



- The disciples rebuked parents for bringing their children to Jesus for blessing (13)
 - Good intentions? (cf. 3:7-10, 20; 6:31-32)
- Jesus was indignant (or *very much grieved*)
 - The disciples didn't get it (see 9:36-37)



Dependent Hearts

- “such as these” (14)
 - *Those who possess similar qualities*
- “like a child” (15)
- The kingdom of God belongs to those who come with nothing but utter dependence
- God receives such – so should we (9:37)

Distracted Hearts



- Contrast to *utter dependence* of a child, and the antithesis of 8:34-38
 - Trying to gain the whole world and keep his soul, too

Distracted Hearts



- “Good Teacher” (17)
 - Faulty understanding of *good*
 - Faulty understanding of Jesus (18)
 - Looking for some spiritual secret to ensure *eternal life*

Distracted Hearts



- Jesus lists commandments (*defraud?*)
 - “I have kept all these...”
 - Self-assurance or disappointment?
 - “One thing you lack” (the secret?!)
 - Sell all, give to the poor, and follow Me (*deny self and follow behind*)

Distracted Hearts



- The greatest commandment(s): Love God and love your neighbor (Mark 12:28-34)
- All the commandments in v. 19 are from the 'neighbor' side of the law
- Jesus subtly brought him to the 'God' side (e.g. - *no other gods*)

Distracted Hearts



- Hard for the wealthy (23)
 - Cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24)
 - An ungodly desire for *wealth* is really *idolatry* (self-worship)
 - Even though it is hard (23), God can still save rich people (27)

Distracted Hearts



- “we have left everything and followed You”
 - “for My sake/the gospel’s sake” (29; 8:35)
 - True Christian *koinonia* (see Acts 2:44-45)
 - Seek first His kingdom and righteousness (Matt. 6:33)
 - “First-last” (31) – Peter or the wealthy?

Proud Hearts



- On the road to Jerusalem (32)
 - Jesus walking alone ahead, pressing on
 - Disciples amazed, followers fearful -- because He is heading into opposition?
- Reminder of the plan (33-34)
 - *According to Scripture* (1 Cor. 15:3-4)

Proud Hearts



- James and John want special seats (35-37)
- “You do not know what you are asking”
 - *Able to drink* – active – *you do it*
 - *Be baptized* – passive – *done to you*
 - As described in verse 34
- Now the others are indignant (41; see 14)

Proud Hearts



- Man's way: lord it over, exercise authority
- God's way: *great* is measured by service
 - Humble obedience brings exaltation (Phil. 2:8-9; Matt. 23:12; James 4:10)
 - Jesus is the prime example (Phil. 2:1-11)
 - Give His life (*soul*) (45; see 8:35-37)

Humble Hearts



- Blind beggar – *utter dependence* (46)
- “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”
 - Messianic title (Mark 12:35-37; cf. 2 Sam. 7:8-16; Matt. 21:9)
 - Isaiah 35

Humble Hearts



- “What do you want Me to do for you?”
(51; see 36; cf. Matt. 12:34)
- He was crying out for *mercy*
- “Rabboni, that I may see”
 - He understood his helpless condition and in child-like faith asked for mercy

Humble Hearts



- Illustration of Israel's need:
 - The blind man recognized the Messiah, and in humble faith received new sight
 - If Israel would recognize the Messiah in humble faith, they, too, would receive *new sight* (cf. Mark 4:12)

So What?



- It is always *gooder* to do things God's way
 - Am I adopting God's understanding, or looking for loopholes?
- Any other gods in my life? Anything I am not willing to *deny*?

So What?



- Do I understand God's big agenda?
 - Am I willing to submit to it?
- Am I humbly serving others, or trying to make it about me?
 - Give my life (soul) for Jesus' and the gospel's sake?