

The Making of Mark

Monday

The winning pitcher, the losing manager, a sportswriter: each person would describe a no-hitter from his or her own perspective. The writers of the four Gospels wrote about Jesus from their own perspectives too. Each man emphasized a different part of Who Jesus is.

1. Read Mark 10:35–45. How did Mark see Jesus?

Matthew	King
Mark	_____
Luke	Man
John	God

2. Write out four words you would use to describe Jesus.

3. What are you doing to get to know Him better?

Above all else, Jesus wants to be your Savior. If you don't know Jesus as your Savior or don't know what this means, talk to a parent, Sunday school teacher, or pastor.

Tuesday

Mark wrote his Gospel to Greeks living in Rome. Many people in this day believed the only way to be great (successful) was to gain and use power.

1. How does the unsaved world try to become successful?
2. Read Mark 10:35–45. How did Jesus' disciples want to become great?
3. What would being successful look like for you?

If your answer includes words like "popularity," "money," "respect," or "power," be careful that the world does not press you into its mold. If we want to be great, we have to do it Jesus' way.

4. Look again at Mark 10:43. How did Jesus say a person would become great?

Wednesday

Read Mark 10:45. This verse is not only your memory verse for this week but also the key verse of Mark's Gospel.

The word "minister" means "to serve." Jesus was always looking for opportunities to serve others both physically and spiritually.

1. Did Jesus deserve to be served? Why?
2. What did Jesus do?
3. What instruction did He give in verse 15?
4. What lesson did He want His disciples (and us) to learn?

Ask God to open your eyes to ways you can serve today. Keep a list of the things He shows you.

Thursday

To review, read Mark 10:45 and John 13:15 again today.

1. How do these verses relate to each other?
2. Read Galatians 2:20. Who did Paul say lived in him?

If you are a believer, your assignment on earth is to continue Jesus' ministry. He doesn't necessarily ask you to wash your friends' feet, but He does expect you to serve like He did.

3. For each of the time frames below, think of a service project you could do. Look at the list you made yesterday to get you started.

5–10 minutes

2–3 hours

1 day

long-term (ongoing)

What are you willing to do for Jesus? Choose a project from your answer above and commit to doing it.

Friday

Jesus performed His greatest miracle when He rose from the dead after being crucified.

1. Read Mark 15:33 and 34 and 16:9–14. Write in your own words what happened in these passages.
2. Read Mark 10:45. Why did Jesus die on the cross? Circle the answer in this week's memory verse on page 4. (Hint: it begins with an *r*.)
3. Define this word using a dictionary.
4. Read Romans 3:23 and 6:22 and 23. Why do people need to be ransomed by Jesus?

Thank Jesus for dying on the cross and rising again to rescue you from sin.

Saturday

Jesus had to give up something when He came to earth. Read Philippians 2:5–8.

1. What did Jesus do to become a servant to people?
2. Why do you think He did it?
3. Reread verse 7. Jesus' willingness to be a servant for your sake should motivate you to be willing to serve too. List three small (or big!) things you can do today to serve other people.

Ask God to help you do these acts and to create a servant's heart in you.

WEEK 1

Memory Verse

“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

My Own Dash

by Karen Cecilia Johnson

I hear her car. Running toward the front door, I explode with emotion, "Kristen's dead! Kristen's dead!" I burst into tears. Through my broken words, I share the few known details of my friend's death. "The . . . the police . . . found her body. Kristen was so. . . Why would someone kill her? I'm scared, Mom." I sob uncontrollably.

My parents seem as shocked as I am.

That terrible night, I lie awake, questions racing through my mind.

What happened? Why? What should I do? Why am I so upset? Could something like this happen to me? Will I ever feel safe?

I doze in and out of sleep all night, tossing and turning. When the alarm goes off, I pull the covers over my head. I hope that if I don't get up, the nightmare won't be real.

My parents gently offer, "We'd like to attend the funeral with you." I don't want to admit it, but this gives me comfort.

The day of the funeral arrives. The church is packed, mostly with teenagers. I anxiously look around for someone I know. My parents seem to understand. My mom hands me some tissues as she finds a seat in the back row.

My friends and I walk toward the front of the church. The open casket stares at me from the center of the aisle. I really want to remember my friend alive, but I'm drawn toward the casket. Part of me needs to see

my friend one last time.

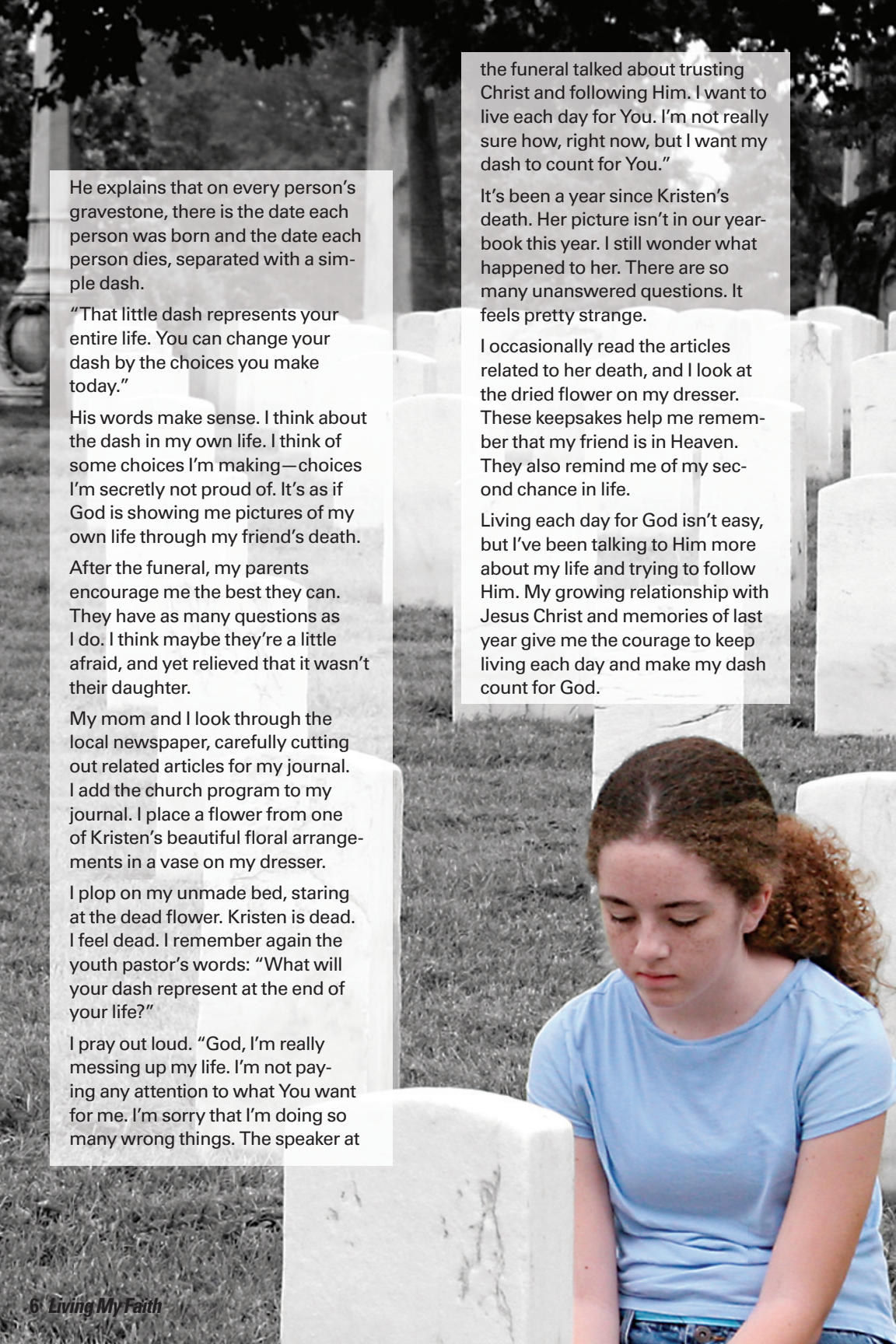
Before the service starts, the family shows a video of Kristen's life. The pictures remind me of my own childhood: playing with my tiger-striped kitten, my first day of kindergarten, decorating the Christmas tree, and blowing out birthday candles. I realize there won't be any pictures of a first date, graduation, or wedding for my friend.

A soloist begins to sing. My mind wanders. It doesn't seem like a time for singing, but a time for feeling sad and hopeless. Then I hear our pastor say that because my friend had trusted Jesus Christ, she is in Heaven, without any pain or sorrow. For a moment, I actually experience some comfort and hope.

God. I haven't thought much about Him lately. I go to church on Sunday with my family and attend youth group, but I've really been living my own life at school. I've cut classes, hung out with friends who have a negative influence on my life, and repeatedly lied to my parents to cover up my escapades. Today it seems important to me to discover what I believe.

My mind is drawn back to the funeral. I'm not sure what it really means to follow Christ, but I commit myself to finding out.

I hear our youth pastor's words: "Something incredible has invaded the life of a teenager. When bad, evil, heinous tragedies happen, God doesn't turn bad into good, but He uses the situation to His glory."



He explains that on every person's gravestone, there is the date each person was born and the date each person dies, separated with a simple dash.

"That little dash represents your entire life. You can change your dash by the choices you make today."

His words make sense. I think about the dash in my own life. I think of some choices I'm making—choices I'm secretly not proud of. It's as if God is showing me pictures of my own life through my friend's death.

After the funeral, my parents encourage me the best they can. They have as many questions as I do. I think maybe they're a little afraid, and yet relieved that it wasn't their daughter.

My mom and I look through the local newspaper, carefully cutting out related articles for my journal. I add the church program to my journal. I place a flower from one of Kristen's beautiful floral arrangements in a vase on my dresser.

I plop on my unmade bed, staring at the dead flower. Kristen is dead. I feel dead. I remember again the youth pastor's words: "What will your dash represent at the end of your life?"

I pray out loud. "God, I'm really messing up my life. I'm not paying any attention to what You want for me. I'm sorry that I'm doing so many wrong things. The speaker at

the funeral talked about trusting Christ and following Him. I want to live each day for You. I'm not really sure how, right now, but I want my dash to count for You."

It's been a year since Kristen's death. Her picture isn't in our yearbook this year. I still wonder what happened to her. There are so many unanswered questions. It feels pretty strange.

I occasionally read the articles related to her death, and I look at the dried flower on my dresser. These keepsakes help me remember that my friend is in Heaven. They also remind me of my second chance in life.

Living each day for God isn't easy, but I've been talking to Him more about my life and trying to follow Him. My growing relationship with Jesus Christ and memories of last year give me the courage to keep living each day and make my dash count for God.

SELFLESS SERVICE

DANA...

watches her younger brothers and sister while her parents go out to eat. Kyle and Josh want to watch a movie they have seen at least fifty times. Tracy is begging for popcorn and help with her math homework. How will Dana treat her brothers and sister? How will she serve her parents?

KELSEY...

got the highest test grade in her math class. Today she is working in a study group with three other students. Sarah seems really confused on the simplest equations. Tori and Katie want to push ahead and hope that Sarah will catch up. How will Kelsey study with the other students? What attitude will she have toward them?

JEFF...

wants to be the class president. He's popular and athletic, but not that smart. How will he attempt to get votes? What kind of campaign will Jeff run? Will he promise to do as class president?

MICHAEL...

is the captain of the basketball team. The team is on a winning streak, but Michael has noticed that some of the guys are getting cocky and lazy about coming to practices on time. Michael is worried that if the tournament, how can the team will lose. Its shot at the tournament. How can he use when addressing the problem? What will he use to come to practice on time? What will he use to encourage his teammates? What will he use to get them to come to practice on time? What will he use to come to practice on time? What will he use to come to practice on time?

"For even the _____ of _____ came not to be _____ unto, but to _____, and to _____ his _____ a _____ for many" (Mark 10:45).