

## Chapter 1

# Answer Key for Double-Check Questions

1. *What is the one aspect about Paul's conversion that makes it such a powerful example to others?*

Paul was a Pharisee who zealously protected and interpreted Jewish Law. His conversion brought about a radical change in his beliefs and behavior.

2. *What type of messiah were some people expecting during Jesus' time?*

Many wrongly thought the messiah would be an earthly military or political ruler, like King David.

3. *Name one of the religious groups Jesus encountered and explain its philosophy.*

**Pharisees:** This group of Jews was known for their strict adherence to all the laws of the Old Testament. They believed in resurrection.

**Sadducees:** This group of Jews was largely made up of the elite, wealthy class and had close ties to the chief priests. They did not believe in resurrection.

**Scribes:** These people were scholars and teachers of the Jewish Law and Scripture. They were associated with both the chief priests and the Pharisees.

**Zealots:** These people believed that God wanted Israel to be an independent nation again, free from foreign rule. They preached a violent overthrow of the Roman occupiers.

4. *Give three examples showing how Jesus' followers abandoned him when things got tough.*

The Apostles fall asleep when Jesus asks them to pray with him. Peter denies that he knows Jesus three times after Jesus' arrest. As Jesus is in agony, dying on the cross, none of his followers are there. Only a few women watch from a distance.

5. *How does Jesus' Resurrection transform the meaning of the cross?*

Before Jesus' Resurrection, it was a means of torture and humiliation. Now it has become a symbol of hope in the Resurrection and life after death. Through his death on the cross, Jesus Christ saves us from sin and death.

6. *Why does Mark specifically focus on Jesus' challenges and suffering?*

The Christians Mark was writing for were suffering from persecution, and some were tempted to deny their faith. Mark's focus on Jesus' challenges and suffering help these early Christians understand and identify with Jesus' human nature and encourage them to make the sacrifices needed in taking on their own crosses.

7. *In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus says that whoever wants to be a disciple must "take up his cross, and follow me" (8:34). Why does Jesus say this?*

Jesus wants his followers to know that following him does not mean a life free of all sacrifice; rather, following him will require sacrifice, but it is a sacrifice leading to salvation and fullness of life.

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