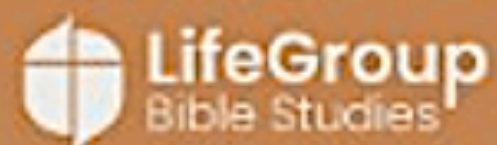




THE STORY
OF JESUS
IN THE
GOSPEL
OF MARK



FALL 2025
SPRING 2026

No One Understood Jesus

- No one understood who Jesus was, not even His disciples
- March 8:11-16
- The Pharisees came and began to argue with Him, asking Him to perform a sign from heaven to test Him. The text says Jesus sighed deeply. The word for “sigh” here is the same word for “deep groan” in the last lesson, but with a prefix that intensifies it.

No One Understood Jesus

- Despite all the miracles Jesus had done and all His amazing teaching, they were still asking for a sign.
- If they didn't believe the signs and wonders He had already done, another sign wouldn't make a difference.
- They weren't really asking for a sign; they were just trying to trap Him.

No One Understood Jesus

- But “this generation” points to the fact that God had given His people prophecies hundreds of years before.
- The Pharisees, of all people, knowing the Old Testament inside and out, should have been able to recognize the signs of His coming.
- They shouldn’t have needed the signs and wonders (miracles) to know who He was.

No One Understood Jesus

- Jesus speaking in metaphor, said to beware the “leaven” of the Pharisees and Herod.
- In the ancient world, leaven was a common metaphor for a pervasive influence.
- Just a little leaven spreads through a whole loaf and changes the whole thing. The Pharisees had religious power, and Herod had political power.

No One Understood Jesus

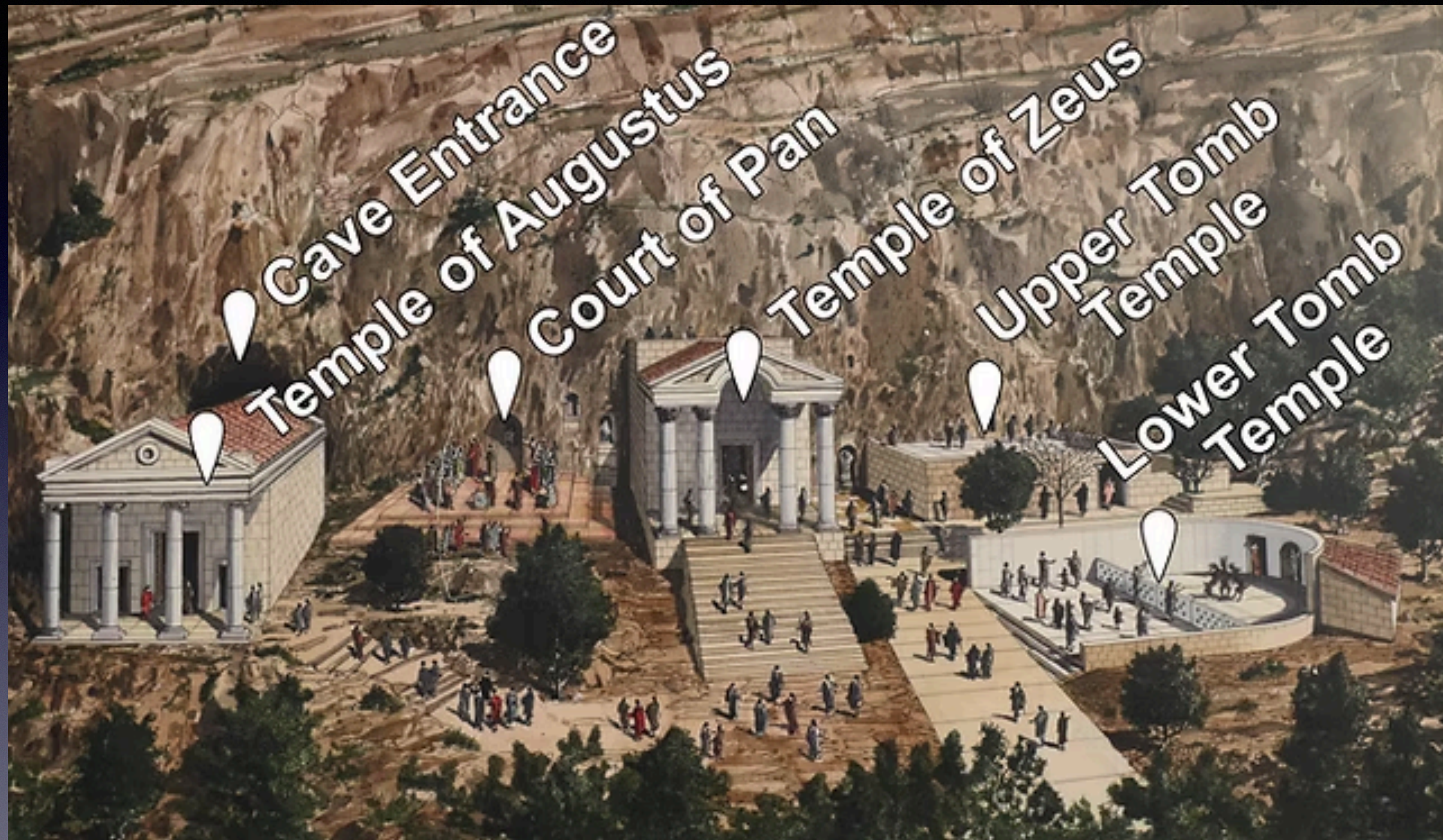
- They brought Him a blind man and begged Him to touch him Jesus spit on his eyes and touched them.
- But it took two times for the man to be fully healed. This is the only two-stage healing recorded in the Gospels. Usually they were immediate.
- Jesus called attention to this to make a theological point.

No One Understood Jesus

- He had just said to them, “Having eyes do you not see?” (verse 18).
- At this point, the disciples weren’t totally spiritually blind, but they couldn’t yet see clearly either.
- They were starting to see, but their understanding was fuzzy. They were like the first step of the blind man’s healing (verse 24).

Self-Sacrifice and Service

- Following Jesus is a life of self-sacrifice and service
- Mark 8:27-38
- Caesarea Philippi was a pagan region known for worshipping the Greek god Pan – the half-man, half-goat god of shepherds, flocks and rustic wilderness.
- Jesus asked His disciples who people said He was.



Self-Sacrifice and Service

- Some said John the Baptist, which didn't make a lot of sense (both were alive at the same time).
- Others said Elijah, whom they expected to return before the day of the Lord (Malachi 4:5–6). Others said, more generally, one of the prophets.
- They could all see He was sent from the Lord, but no one had a clear picture of who He really was.

Self-Sacrifice and Service

- Jesus asked what His disciples said, and Peter answered, “You are the Christ.” Christ is the Greek word for Messiah, which means “anointed one.” All priests and kings were “anointed ones” in Israel, but Peter didn’t just mean any anointed one.
- He meant the future Son of David, who would reign forever, the One they were waiting for (2 Samuel 7).

Self-Sacrifice and Service

- Jesus began to teach them that the “Son of Man” must suffer, be killed, and rise again, and Peter took Him aside and rebuked Him. This description of suffering and dying did not fit Peter’s image of Messiah.
- To be fair, it does seem inconsistent with the “Son of Man” figure who comes on the clouds and is given an everlasting kingdom of all authority, glory and sovereign power over all nations (Daniel 7).

Self-Sacrifice and Service

- The prophecy that describes the Suffering Servant who is pierced for our transgressions does not explicitly call that figure either Messiah or Son of Man (Isaiah 53).
- Most of the Jews at that time thought of Messiah not in these terms but only as the conquering hero who would rescue Israel from oppression, restore the throne to Israel, and reign forever in peace.

Self-Sacrifice and Service

- What they didn't understand was that Jesus' coming would be a two-part process.
- The first coming was as the Suffering Servant, where He came and died for our sins.
- The second coming will be the "coming on the clouds," when His kingdom will be established forever.

Self-Sacrifice and Service

- Jesus explained further: His mission was one of sacrifice, literally losing His life.
- If they wanted to be His disciples, which meant to follow Him, they needed to realize this is what they were signing up for.
- The life of a disciple of Jesus is a life of denying ourselves, of losing our lives.

Self-Sacrifice and Service

- The disciples envisioned Jesus overthrowing Rome and establishing His kingdom – a kingdom on earth, in Israel – with them as His leadership team.
- One day Jesus will return in glory with all His angels and usher in the final kingdom where there will be no more evil, suffering or pain; and we will live forever with Him as coheirs of the kingdom.

The Transfiguration

- The Transfiguration: Jesus is God incarnate
- Mark 9:1-13
- Jesus wanted to reassure them He really is the King, even though He wasn't what they were expecting.
- He revealed His divine glory to them in the Transfiguration.

The Transfiguration

- He took Peter, James, and John with Him to the top of a high mountain.
- There were several times He took only them with Him to witness certain moments:
- The raising of Jairus's daughter, prayer in the garden of Gethsemane the night He was arrested, and this moment, revealing His divine glory.

The Transfiguration

- When God appears in a visible manifestation, it is called a *theophany* (Greek: “God” and “to appear”).
- Old Testament theophanies typically occurred on the top of a mountain (Exodus 3, 19, 24, etc.).
- Jesus took them up the mountain as Moses took Joshua up Mount Sinai to experience God’s presence.

The Transfiguration

- But this theophany manifestation wasn't a burning bush, cloud or lightning but Jesus Himself.
- This reiterates the theology of the incarnation – Jesus is God manifest.
- The image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), the exact representation of His nature (Hebrews 1:3).

The Transfiguration

- His glory was shown in His clothes, which were “intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.”
- White is the color of purity, holiness and righteousness. But it’s an otherworldly righteousness, more than any human could ever accomplish.
- Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus, another sign that He was Messiah (Malachi 4:4–6).

The Transfiguration

- God the Father's voice coming from the cloud said the same thing He had said at Jesus' baptism, "This is my beloved Son," but this time, He added "Listen to Him!"
- Especially because of Jesus' recent rebuke of Peter, they would have been compelled to listen to Jesus' words about Himself, not people's expectations.

The Transfiguration

- As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus told them to tell no one until He had risen from the dead, which they still didn't understand (verse 10).
- Jesus told them Elijah had already come, referring to John the Baptist (verse 13).
- They saw miracles and the Transfiguration, but still didn't see clearly (their view was still fuzzy).

The background of the slide is a solid orange color with a pattern of faint, stylized autumn leaves in various shades of orange and yellow. The leaves are scattered across the entire background, creating a seasonal and warm atmosphere.

Lessons from Thanksgiving

Lessons from Thanksgiving

- Spiritual Lessons
- Political Lessons
- Economic Lesson

Spiritual Lessons

Religious Freedom

- The Pilgrims valued their religious freedom and were willing to endure hardship in order to come to this country and freely worship.
- Among the early Pilgrims was a group of Separatists who were members of a religious movement that broke from the Church of England during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Religious Freedom

- In 1606 William Brewster led a group of Separatists to Leiden (in the Netherlands) to escape religious persecution in England.
- After living in Leiden for more than ten years, some members of the group voted to emigrate to America to escape the decadence of the Old World and experience religious freedom.

Religious Freedom

“Last and not least, they cherished a great hope and inward zeal, or at least of making some way towards it, for the propagation and advance of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the world, even though they should be but stepping stones to others in the performance of so great a work.”

William Bradford

Religious Liberty Today

- Coach Joe Kennedy - Bremerton School District
- Gerald Groff - U.S. Postal Service
- Jack Phillips - Masterpiece Cakeshop (Colorado)
- Lorie Smith - 303 Creative (Colorado)
- Gabriel Olivier - Mississippi evangelist

Political Lessons

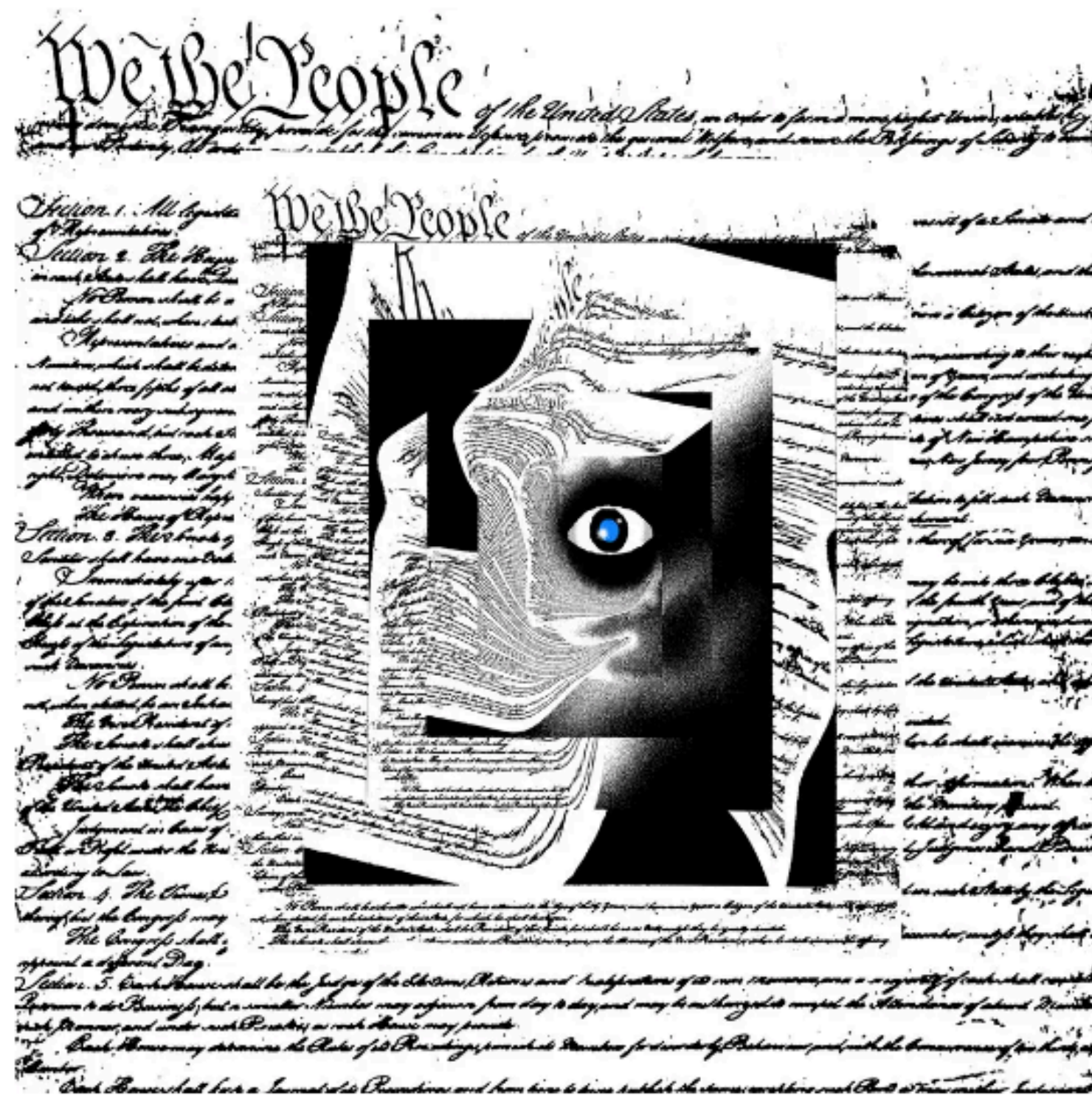
Mayflower Compact

- The Mayflower Compact was the first great constitutional document and is often called “The American Covenant.” It set forth principles of self-government for the first time more than 150 years before our U.S. Constitution.
- The Body of Liberties (1641) contained 98 separate protections of individual rights: due process of law, equal protection, trial by a jury of peers, and prohibitions against cruel and unusual punishment.

Politics and the Constitution Today

The Constitution Is Broken and Should Not Be Reclaimed

Aug. 19, 2022



Politics and the Constitution Today

- Abolish the Electoral College
- Expand the Supreme Court and Term Limits
- Reverse Religious Liberty Provisions
- Halt Deportation and Open Borders
- Equal Rights Amendment

Economic Lessons

Collective System

- After the first year, the colony foundered because of the collective economic system.
- Settlers worked only for the joint partnership and were fed out of the common stores.
- Land and houses were the joint property of the merchants and colonists.

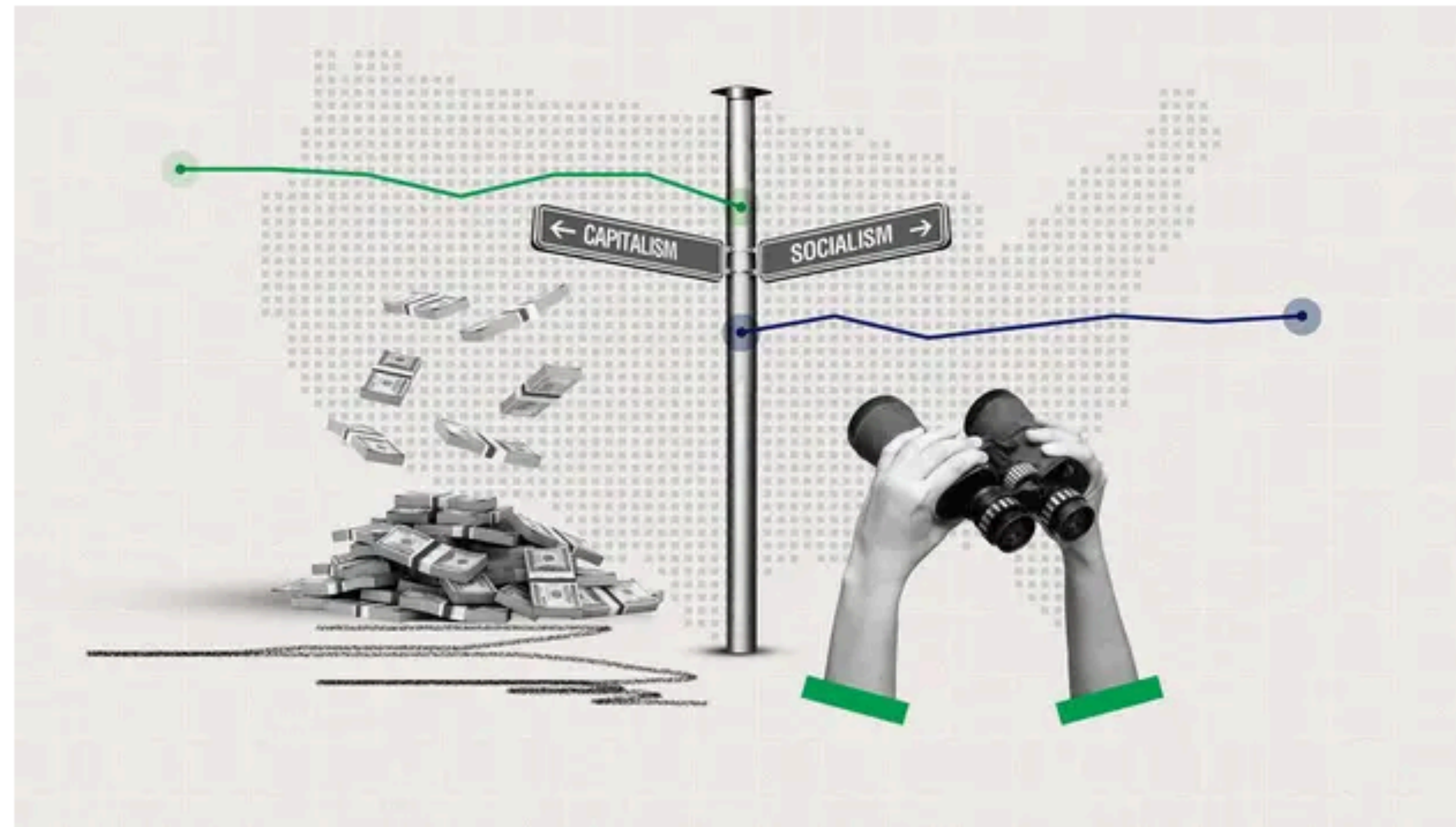
Free Market System

- William Bradford, seeing the failure of communal farming, instituted what today would be called free enterprise innovations.
- Bradford assigned plots of land to each family to work, and the colony began to flourish.
- Colonists were challenged to better themselves and their land, working to their fullest capacity.

Socialism Today

Image of Capitalism Slips to 54% in U.S.

Perceptions of socialism remain steady at 39% positive



Socialism Today

- According to the latest Gallup poll, approximately 39% of Americans have a positive view of socialism.
- Support for socialism is much higher among Democrats (66% positive) compared to Republicans (57% negative), while support among independents is more mixed.
- The newly elected mayors of New York City and Seattle are socialists.

Resources

