

Mark

Jesus in Action

I. Introduction to Mark

Mark is the second book in the New Testament and the second among the Gospels.

'Gospel' is a translation of a Greek word; evangelion, a good message. It comes from the compound Greek words good and angel.

The word is used in two ways. First, it was used in the message of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:14, "Christ died, was buried and rose again."

Romans 10:9-10," We must confess with our mouth and believe with our hearts to receive this salvation."

Mark 1:15, "Repentance, or turning from sin must be coupled with belief.

Second, the word Gospel is also used to describe the first four books of the New Testament, which tell the story of Christ's life, death and resurrection.

The Gospels include the claims of Christ. Among other things, Mark records that Jesus claimed:

- 1:15 the long awaited Kingdom of God was available to all
- 8:35 true life is found in surrender to Him
- 9:47 it's better to get sin out, than to keep it in your life
- 12:30 we must love God above all else
- 14:61-62 He was Son of god and Savior

Jesus proves His claims by His actions

Mark 2:10-12, "'But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins'—He said to the paralytic, ' I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.' Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw *anything* like this!"

Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels, containing 16 chapters and 678 verses. Part of the reason for the brevity is his omission of any information regarding Jesus' birth or upbringing. Both Matthew and Luke contain two whole chapters given to introducing Jesus and giving account of his birth.

Marks get right to the action! After a brief record of His baptism and temptation, the ministry of Jesus is in full swing.

Mark

Jesus in Action

Chapter 1 alone includes:

He calling of Andrew, Peter, James and John
Healing the sick
Casting out demons
Cleansing lepers
As well as key insight into the devotion life of Jesus (Mark 1:35)

Mark is filled with action and much of the action is in the realm of the miraculous. All-in-all, there are at least 18 miracles recorded in Mark's Gospel, not including the resurrection of Christ.

The Man with an Unclean Spirit	Mark 1:23-26
Healing Simon's Mother-in-Law	Mark 1:30-31
Healing a Leper	Mark 1:40-45
Healing Palsy	Mark 2:1-12
The Withered Hand	Mark 3:1-6
Stilling the Storm	Mark 4:35-41
The Gadarene Demoniac	Mark 5:1-20
The Daughter of Jairus	Mark 5:21-43
The Afflicted Woman	Mark 5:25-34
Feeding the Five Thousand	Mark 6:30-46
Jesus walking on Water	Mark 6:47-56
Syrophoenician Woman	Mark 7:24-30
Deaf and Dumb Man	Mark 7:31-37
Feeding the Four Thousand	Mark 8:1-9
The Blind Man	Mark 8:22-26
The Demoniac Boy	Mark 9:14-29
The Blind Men near Jericho	Mark 10:46-52
The Withered Fig Tree	Mark 11:20-25

Mark

Jesus in Action

These miracles demonstrate His power over, nature, the spiritual and material world, and even death. And prove beyond doubt that Jesus was the promised Messiah sent from heaven to save earth.

John records, these miracles led to Nicodemus to Christ (John 3:1-2, John 20:30-31).

All these miracles are recorded in other Gospel accounts with the exception of the healing of the blind man in Bethsaida. (Mark 8:22-26) This miracle perhaps more than others reveals that we cannot develop a human pattern for the miraculous. Jesus heals this man differently than other blind men he encountered.

The miracles recorded by Mark are more than fascinating stories to capture the attention of the reader. Since the book of Mark seems to be addressed to a Roman audience, he relies upon the miracles of Jesus to prove His deity rather than the use of Old Testament scripture as Matthew (Mark 15:39). Matthew was written to a Jewish audience, Luke to the Greek world, and John to the church.

Although the Gospel of Mark does not name its author, it is the unanimous testimony of early church fathers that Mark was the author. Copies from the 2nd Century include his name. It is believed he was an associate of the Apostle Peter, and evidently his spiritual son (1Peter 5:13). He received from Peter the first-hand information of the events and teachings of the Lord, and preserved the information in written form. This also dates back to the early 2nd Century.

It is also generally agreed that Mark is the John Mark of the New Testament (Acts 12:12). His mother was a wealthy and prominent Christian in the Jerusalem church, and the church probably met in her home.

Mark joined Paul and Barnabas on their first journey, but soon left them, seemingly because of the difficulty of ministry. He was not permitted on the second missionary, which led to a strong disagreement between Paul and Barnabas, and a split in their ministry (Acts 15:37-38).

Mark was restored to ministry through the efforts of Barnabas. Near the end of Paul's life he called for Mark to be with him (2 Timothy 4:11).

Mark

Jesus in Action

II. Outline of Mark

Mark tells one continuous story of the life and ministry of Jesus. A two section division may be helpful as you read.

Section 1 Chapters 1-10 3 ½ Years of Public Ministry

Mark presents the person of Jesus. The standout aspect in Jesus' ministry is His sovereignty.

Sovereignty over sickness	1:32-34
Sovereignty over nature	4:35-41
Sovereignty over Satan	5:1-20
Sovereignty over death	5:35-43

Section 2 Chapters 11-16 His Final Week (His Passion)

Mark walks us to the cross and Empty Tomb.

Triumphal Entry	11:1-11
Final Teaching	11:12-14:9
Betrayal, Arrest, Crucifixion	14:10-15:47
Resurrection and Ascension	16:1-20

III. Why Study Mark

Because of its rapid pace, Mark serves as a valuable way to introduce Jesus to the new believer. That may have been its original purpose. Our world is becoming increasingly secular. People want proof. Mark provided ample proof for the claim that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of mankind.

Mark 8:29, "He said to them, 'but who do you say that I am?' Peter answered and said to Him, 'You are the Christ.'"

A good understanding of Mark is essential to help us obey the exhortation found in Hebrews 12:2. ". . . **looking** unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (**Looking:** to turn your eyes away from other things and fix them on Jesus).

Mark is filled with valuable lessons for Christian living and service.

1:35	A Lesson on Devotions
	Jesus rose early, got away from distractions and spent time alone with the Father.
1:45	A Lesson on Obedience
	The Leper failed to obey because the command did not make sense.
6:38-42	A Lesson on Provisions

Mark

Jesus in Action

- Their limits did not limit God
- They had to offer what they did have
- Jesus provided what was lacking

8:34-38 A Lesson on Discipleship

There are requirements for any who want to follow Christ.

- Deny self: say no to fleshly and emotional desires
- Take up your cross: surrender to the will of God
- Follow: go only where Jesus leads

9:23-24 A Lesson on Faith

While many of the encounters with Christ recorded in the Gospel's illustrate faith, this story reveals that true faith is often shadowed with doubt.

- His faith was proven when he trusted, even when his mind was filled with doubt.
- The unstable, double-minded man described in James 1:8 is the one who chooses to act on his doubt, rather than upon his faith.

10:17-22 A Lesson in Folly

The Rich Young Ruler chose to pass up what was eternal, for what was temporary. Like Esau, who chose a bowl of soup over his inheritance, the Rich Young Ruler chose his possessions rather than following Christ. It is clear his possessions possessed him, and a love for what God forbid cost him everything.

10:42-45 A Lesson in Servant-hood

The economy of God stands in contrast to the ways of men. The highest position in God's Kingdom is the servant. Jesus exemplifies Christian servant-hood in verse 10:45. We never outgrow being a servant although areas of service may change.

Finally, Mark gives a vivid portrait of the crucifixion of Christ. He records how Jesus enters Jerusalem on Sunday, riding on a donkey. This fulfills the prophecies of Zechariah, Daniel, and the Psalmist.

Daniel 9:25	when He would arrive
Zechariah 9:9	how He would arrive
Psalms 118:26	response of the people

After spending the early part of the week teaching in the Temple precinct and encountering opposition from the religious leaders, Jesus gathers with the Twelve to celebrate Passover. It is in this setting where He institutes communion.

Mark 14:22-25, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, and

Mark

Jesus in Action

when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, 'This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.' 'Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'"

Events begin to move rapidly from this point.

- Judas leaves the Passover meal to betray Christ by making a deal with the religious leaders. He is compensated with 30 pieces of silver. The Old Testament price for a slave.
- The remaining eleven disciples follow Jesus to Gethsemane. While He prays; they sleep; at His arrest, they flee.
- Upon His arrest, He is taken before the Sanhedrin, the religious counsel
- During His trial before the religious leaders, Peter denies Christ (as foretold by Jesus, Mark 14:30), Christ is condemned to death and sent to Pilate.
- The Roman authorities were involved because the religious leaders wanted Jesus crucified publicly. (Later in Acts, Stephen is killed by stoning, without Roman consent).
- Pilate attempts to free Jesus by offering Barabbas, a convicted murderer
- The people of the cry out for Jesus to be crucified.
- Jesus is then beaten, and taken outside the city and killed

Mark makes it clear that Jesus was killed for claiming to be the Savior, Son of God, and King. (Mark 16:61-61, 15:2 and 26)

Mark records only one of Jesus' seven utterances from the cross. This verse gives key insight into the events of Christ's suffering as a result of bearing our sin. He bore the greatest penalty of all, separation from God the Father.

Mark 15:34, "'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' which is translated, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'"

Three days later, Christ conquers death, hell and sin, by rising from the dead. After the Resurrection, Mark includes a great commission of his own. This coupled with Matthew 28 gives the church its marching orders. Mark 16:15,

'And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.'"

To preach the Gospel means to herald, declare, proclaim, publish. We should seek to spread the Gospel with every medium possible.