

Notes & Outlines

MARK

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GOSPEL OF MARK

WRITER: John Mark — John was his Jewish name, while Mark was his Latin surname (Acts 12:12). This is the first historical reference to him in Scripture. His mother was a wealthy and prominent Christian in the Jerusalem church. He was a nephew of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10). He evidently was the spiritual son of Simon Peter (1 Peter 5:13). The Gospel of Mark has long been considered Peter’s Gospel, as Mark evidently got much of the material in the Gospel record from him. In view of the fact that Simon Peter brought him to a saving knowledge of Christ, it is natural to suppose that he had great influence in Mark’s life.

Mark joined Paul and Barnabas before the first missionary journey (Acts 13:5), but he turned back at Perga in Pamphylia (Acts 13:13). There is neither need to defend John Mark for turning back nor to explain or excuse his conduct. It is obvious that he failed in the eyes of Paul. Paul’s refusal to permit him to accompany them on the second missionary journey is witness enough (Acts 15:37, 38). It severed the combination of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:39). Let us hasten to assure you that John Mark made good later on — even Paul acknowledged him as a profitable servant of the Lord (2 Timothy 4:11; also note another reference made by Paul to Mark in Philemon 24).

DATE: Since this was the earliest of the Gospels written, the date of its writing was probably prior to A.D. 63. It is quite likely that it was written from Rome to the Romans. No doubt Mark was with Paul in Rome at the time. The Epistle of Paul to the Romans had preceded him and was in circulation there, so Mark had access to the epistle. It is well to keep in mind that Mark had the *facts* of his Gospel from Peter and the *explanation* of his Gospel from Paul.

THEME: There are two phrases in the first chapter that set before the reader the theme of this Gospel:

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ” — verse 1

“Jesus came” — verses 9 and 14

Mark presents the beginning of the gospel. It is not the beginning of Jesus Christ, but the beginning of the gospel.

“JESUS CAME” — Mark roots this phrase in the prophecy of Isaiah and the proclamation of John the Baptist, and not in Bethlehem or in Jerusalem as we find in John’s Gospel. He begins with Jesus at His baptism, temptation, and His ministry in Galilee. Mark is the Gospel of miracles. Jesus is presented as the Servant of Jehovah (Isaiah 42:1, 2).

Jesus came, in the winsomeness of His humanity and the fullness of His deity, doing good. This was only the beginning of the gospel. He died and rose again. Then He said to His own, “Go.” The gospel was then completed. This is the gospel today.

KEY VERSE: Mark 10:45

PECULIAR CHARACTERISTICS: The style of Mark is brief and blunt, pertinent and pithy, short and sweet. Mark is stripped of excess verbiage and goes right to the point. This is the Gospel of action and accomplishment. Here Jesus is not adorned with words and narrative, but He is stripped and girded for action.

Mark is written in a simple style. It is designed for the masses of the street. It is interesting to note that the connective *and* occurs more than any other word in the Gospel. It occurs 1,331 times. It will reward the reader to thumb through the Gospel and note the chapters and verses where this is true. Modern rhetoric might consider it a breach of good grammar, yet there is no word that conveys action as does this word. *And* always leads to further action.

Mark wrote this Gospel in Rome, evidently for Romans. They were a busy people and believed in power and action. This Gospel was brief enough for a busy man to read and would appeal to the Roman mind. Few Old Testament Scriptures are quoted and Jewish customs are explained, which gives additional proof that it was written for foreigners. Mark was written by a busy man for busy people about a busy Person.

OUTLINE:

The Credentials of Christ

- I. John INTRODUCES the Servant**, Chapter 1:1-8
(Death of John, 6:14-29)
- II. God the Father IDENTIFIES the Servant**, Chapter 1:9-11
(Transfiguration, 9:1-8)
- III. The temptation INITIATES the Servant**, Chapter 1:12, 13
- IV. Work and words ILLUSTRATE (illumine) the Servant**, Chapters 1:14 — 13:37
 - A. Miracles**
 - 1. Healing (physical)**
 - a. Peter's wife's mother (fever) and others, 1:29-34
 - b. Leper, 1:40-45
 - c. Palsied man let down through roof, 2:1-12
 - d. Man with withered hand, 3:1-5
 - e. Many healed beside Sea of Galilee, 3:6-10
 - f. Woman with issue of blood, 5:21-34
 - g. Sick at Nazareth, 6:5
 - h. Disciples heal, 6:13
 - i. Sick in land of Gennesaret, 6:53-56

- j. Deaf and dumb of Decapolis, 7:31-37
- k. Blind man of Bethsaida, 8:22-26
- l. Blind Bartimaeus, 10:46-52

2. Nature (natural)

- a. Stills the storm, 4:35-41
- b. Five thousand fed, 6:32-44
- c. Walks on sea, 6:45-52
- d. Four thousand fed, 8:1-9
- e. Fig tree cursed, 11:12-14

3. Demons (spiritual)

- a. Man in synagogue, 1:21-27
- b. Many demons in Capernaum, 1:32-34
- c. Demons in Galilee, 1:39
- d. Unclean spirits by Sea of Galilee, 3:11, 12
- e. Scribes charge that He casts out demons by Beelzebul, 3:22-30
- f. Demoniac of Gadara, 5:1-20
- g. Syrophenician's demon-possessed daughter, 7:24-30
- h. Demon-possessed boy, 9:14-27

4. Raised from dead (supernatural); daughter of Jairus, 5:35-43

B. Parables and teachings

1. Parables

- a. Fasting with the Bridegroom present, 2:19, 20
- b. New cloth on old garment, 2:21
- c. New wine in old bottles, 2:22
- d. Sower, 4:1-20
- e. Candle and bushel, 4:21-25
- f. Seed growing, 4:26-29
- g. Mustard seed, 4:30-34
- h. Man demanding fruit from vineyard, 12:1-12
- i. Fig tree, 13:28-33
- j. Man on trip, 13:34-37

2. Miscellaneous teachings

- a. Preaching the gospel of the kingdom, 1:14, 15
- b. Preaching in Galilee, 1:28, 35-39
- c. Sabbath, 2:23-28
- d. New relationship, 3:31-35
- e. Synagogue in Nazareth, 6:1-6

- f. The twelve sent out, 6:7-13
- g. The twelve return, 6:30-31
- h. Pharisees denounced, 7:1-23
- i. Leaven explained, 8:10-21
- j. Death of Christ, 8:27-38; 9:30-32; 10:32-34
- k. Mark of greatness, 9:33-37
- l. Rebuke of sectarianism, 9:38-41
- m. Hell, 9:42-50
- n. Marriage, 10:1-16
- o. Riches, 10:23-31
- p. Prayer, 11:22-26
- q. Authority of Jesus, 11:27-33
- r. Taxes, 12:13-17
- s. Resurrection, 12:18-27
- t. The great commandment, 12:28-34
- u. Messiah, 12:35-40
- v. Olivet Discourse, 13:1-27

3. Incidents

- a. Call of disciples, 1:16-20; 2:13-18; 3:13-21
- b. Death of John the Baptist, 6:14-29
- c. Transfiguration, 9:1-13
- d. Rich young ruler, 10:17-22
- e. Ambition of James and John, 10:35-45
- f. Triumphal entry, 11:1-11
- g. Jesus cleanses temple, 11:15-18
- h. Fig tree withered, 11:19-21
- i. Widow's mite, 12:41-44

V. Death, burial, and resurrection INSURE the Servant, Chapters 14:1 — 16:20

- A. Plot to put Jesus to death, 14:1, 2**
- B. Jesus at supper in Bethany, 14:3-9**
- C. Judas bargains to betray Jesus, 14:10, 11**
- D. The Passover, 14:12-26**
- E. The Garden of Gethsemane, 14:27-42**
- F. The arrest of Jesus, 14:43-52**
- G. The trial of Jesus, 14:53 — 15:15**
- H. The crucifixion of Jesus, 15:16-41**
- I. The burial, 15:42-47**
- J. The resurrection, 16:1-20**

RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

- Alexander, J. A. *Commentary on the Gospel of Mark*. Carlisle, Pennsylvania: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1858.
- Earle, Ralph. *Mark: Gospel of Action*. Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, n.d.
- English, E. Schuyler. *Studies in Mark's Gospel*. New York, New York: Our Hope Publishers, 1943.
- Hendriksen, William. *Exposition of the Gospel According to Mark*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1975. (Comprehensive for advanced study.)
- Hiebert, D. Edmond. *Mark: A Portrait of a Servant*. Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1974. (An excellent comprehensive treatment.)
- Ironside, H. A. *Addresses on the Gospel of Mark*. Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, n.d. (Especially good for young Christians.)
- McGee, J. Vernon. *Marching thru Mark*. Pasadena, California: Thru the Bible Books, n.d.
- Morgan, G. Campbell. *The Gospel According to Mark*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1927.
- Ridout, Samuel. *Lectures on the Tabernacle*. Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1914.
- Scroggie, W. Graham. *The Gospel According to Mark*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d. (Splendid outlines.)
- Van Ryn, August. *Meditations in Mark*. Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1957.
- Vos, Howard F. *Mark, A Study Guide Commentary*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978. (Excellent for personal or group study.)
- Wuest, Kenneth S. *Mark in the Greek New Testament for English Readers*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950.

SAMPLE SUMMARY FOR EACH CHAPTER
(for your personal study)

1. Theme of chapter —
2. Most important verse —
3. Most prominent word —
4. Teaching about Christ —
5. Command to obey —
6. Promise to claim —
7. New truth learned —

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