

# Gospel of Mark

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## Jesus the Servant of God

### Introduction:

The Romans were the rulers of the known world, men of few words and much action. They have no knowledge of the OT or Jewish culture, therefore no interest in prophecies fulfilled or Messiahs given. They would, however, be interested in a leader claiming special authority and seeming to have supernatural power. Mark writes of a man, who does not just speak, but Jesus, the servant of an all-powerful God, who acts. No genealogies, no prophesy, few words. Just a man of power, actions, and miracles, a man the Romans could admire and understand.

The theme of Mark is Jesus Christ, the Son of God (1:1), the Suffering Servant (10:45)

“The beginning of the Gospel of **Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**” Mark 1:1

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to **serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**” Mark 10:45

Rome’s Christians were terribly persecuted under Nero (54-68 AD). According to the early-second-century historian Tacitus, Nero burned Christians alive as torches to light his gardens at night. He killed other Christians in equally severe ways (e.g. feeding them to wild animals for public entertainment). Mark’s Gospel would strengthen Roman believers in the midst of this persecution by showing how Jesus persevered in the face of opposition and continued in the will of the Father on the road to the cross. Also, Mark’s Gospel encourages believers as they see the suffering servant triumph over death.

### Statistics:

- 16 Chapters, 678 Verses, and 15,171 words

### Author:

Although the Gospel of Mark does not name its author, it is the unanimous testimony of early church fathers that Mark was the author. He was an associate of the Apostle Peter, and evidently his spiritual son in the faith (1 Peter 5:13). From Peter he received first-hand information of the events and teachings of the Lord, and preserved the information in written form. It is 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 probably a portion of the church met in her home. Mark joined Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, but not on the second because of a strong **Disagreement** between the two men (Acts 15:37-38). However, near the end of Paul’s life he called for Mark to be with him (2 Timothy 4:11).

### Date of Writing:

The Gospel of Mark was likely one of the first books written in the New Testament, probably around **50 to 70** A.D.

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## Purpose of Writing:

Mark wrote to Christians who previously had heard and believed the Gospel (Romans 1:8). He desired that they have a biographical story of Jesus Christ as **Servant** of the Lord and Saviour of the world in order to strengthen their faith in the face of severe persecution, and also teach them what it meant to be His disciples.

**Key Words:** “**Immediately**” and “**Straightway**” and “**Authority**”

## Key phrase of Mark:

There are two important phrases in chapter one that are matched by similar phrases toward the end of the book. These serve as a frame for the Gospel. We read references to Jesus as being the Son of God in 1:1; this is matched by the centurion’s declaration in 15:39: “Truly this man was the Son of God.” Jesus’ identity as the Son of God is critical in Mark; this phrase appears at significant points throughout the Gospel. Take time to read Mark 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 12:6; 13:32; and 14:61. This sonship in Mark relates to what we might call “family resemblance:” Jesus is God himself, come to earth.

The second framing phrase appears at 1:10 where we read of heaven being “opened” at Jesus’ baptism. The same Greek word is used at 15:38: And the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from top to bottom.” In regard to the meaning of these “tearing’s”...Jesus has the Holy Spirit’s power, power from the supernatural heavenly world, and Jesus’ death eliminates the Mosaic Law’s barriers between a holy God and sinful humankind.

## Outline

- I. Introduction of the Servant (1:1-13)
- II. The Service of the Servant (1:14-10:52)
  - A. Galilean Ministry (1:14-7:23)
  - B. Withdrawal with Disciples into Various Gentile Regions (7:24-8:26)
  - C. The Road to Jerusalem (8:27-10:52)
- III. The Sacrifice of the Servant (11:1-15:47)
- IV. The Success of the Servant (Resurrection) (16:1-20)

## Pivotal point:

8:27-30 (Jesus tells of His coming death)

## Key Verses:

1:15, 8:34-37 and 10:45

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## Characteristics of the book:

### A. AN EARLY GOSPEL...

1. Probably the first one written
2. All but 31 verses are quoted in the other gospels leading many to conclude that Matthew and Luke based their gospels on Mark.

### B. A CONCISE GOSPEL...

1. The shortest of the four gospels
2. Mark's entire gospel can be read aloud in 1.5 hours

### C. A FAST-PACED GOSPEL...

1. Over 40 times he uses a word translated "straightway" or "immediately"
2. Two-thirds of the verses begin with "and"
3. The present tense is used frequently (e.g., they come...He says...He sends...)

### D. A VIVID GOSPEL...

1. Mark presents "lively little touches" not found in the other gospels
2. "...he wrote with all the graphic distinctiveness and vividness of an eyewitness
3. It may have been Peter's reminiscences, or perhaps his own, that account for such details

### E. AN EVANGELISTIC GOSPEL...

1. It opens with "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ..." - **Mark 1:1**
2. It closes with "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" - **Mark 16:15**

## Summary of Mark:

- We only need to read the Gospel of Mark to or three times to see his uppermost purpose capture us.

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- He wants us to see Jesus **at work**. It is as though Mark is saying, “look at what Jesus did proves who He was.” What He wrought authenticates what He taught.
- We also note the genealogy is skipped. Both Matthew and Luke contain the genealogy of Jesus Christ, but not here in Mark.
- The Gospel of Mark begins right away at the **Jordan** river with John the Baptist saying, “There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stop down and unloose.” (Mark 1:7).
- In Matthew it takes eight chapters to reach what takes Mark 7 verses.
- It is like Mark is doing a summary of what is covered in Matthew.
- Mark is more focused on what Jesus **did** than what He said; this would more to appease the Roman’s than any other because they were more into the Theatrics rather than the words.
- Mark’s Method in His Gospel:
  - There are no groupings, he maintains a un-halting succession of Astonishing doings – He keeps the business at hand moving.
  - Mark does this through abrupt transitions, “Straightway” – “Immediately.”
  - Mark wants us to see that this is the most tremendous episode, the most tragic climax, and most astounding Divine overruling ever known. This is truly the Son of God!
- Mark in this first Chapter is saying “**Look and see!**”
- Right ~~is~~ away in the short preface we see four voices that may startle us:
  - **Mark** – “JESUS Christ, the SON OF GOD” (Mark 1:1) c.f. Malachi 3:1
  - **Isaiah** – “Prepare ye the way of THE LORD (Mark 1:3) c.f. (Isaiah 40:3)
  - John the Baptist – “There cometh ONE MIGHTIER” (Mark 1:7) c.f. (Isaiah 40:10)
  - God – “Thou art MY BELOVED SON” (verse 11) c.f. (Psalm 2:7)
- Then at once Jesus public ministry begins – “Straightway” a rapid succession of astounding exploits.

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- A Demon is cast out in the synagogue (verse 26)
- A woman with fever is healed in a home. (verse 31)
- Many sick were healed (verse 34)
- A leper is cleansed (Verse 42)
- All this is in the first Chapter of Mark. We see the “Immediately” the “Straightway” everywhere. The people being astonished at His doctrine and amazed by His authority (1:22, 27). Through all this His fame spreads abroad and many are healed throughout the area so much that He was not even able to enter the cities (1:45).
- Ministry is not without harsh criticisms; chapter two brings four criticisms:
  - The Scribes – (verse 7)
  - The **Pharisees** – (verse 16)
  - John the Baptists disciples – (verse 18)
  - The Pharisee’s again – (verse 24)
- As we follow Jesus’ journeys through Galilee, surrounding areas, and then to Judea, we realize what a rapid pace He kept. He touched the lives of many people, but left an indelible mark on His disciples. At the **Transfiguration** (Mark 9:1-9), He gave three of them a preview of His future return in power and glory, and again it was revealed to them who He was.

However, in the days leading to His final trip to Jerusalem, we see them amazed, fearful and doubting. At Jesus’ arrest, He stood alone after they fled. In the following hours of the mock trials, Jesus boldly proclaimed that He is the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One, and that He would be triumphant at His return (Mark 14:61-62). The climatic events surrounding the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection were not fully witnessed by most of His disciples. But several faithful women bravely witnessed His passion. After the Sabbath, early in the morning of the first day of the week, they went to the tomb with burial spices. When they saw the stone had been rolled away, they entered the tomb. It was not the body of Jesus they saw, but an angel robed in white! The joyful message they received was, “He is risen!” Women were the first evangelists, as they spread the good news of His resurrection. This same message has been broadcast throughout the following centuries and we are its recipients today.

- **Practical Application:** We are privileged to have this written record of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to teach us its meaning. Those who have placed our faith in Him must be people of action and obey His last command, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every **creature**” (Mark 16:15). The disciples obeyed (as recorded in the Book of the Acts), and so must we. At His return we will bow before Him in worship and praise and victory.



## THE GOSPEL OF MARK #6

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What group of people would have interest in someone claiming special authority and seeming to have special authority? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Mark presents Jesus Christ as the \_\_\_\_\_?  
a. Servant of God   b. Servant of the Holy Spirit   c. Servant of God   d. Servant of Man
3. Mark's Gospel would strengthen Roman believers in the midst of persecution by showing Jesus persevered in the face of \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the reference is the pivotal moment of the Gospel of Mark?  
a. 9:27-30   b. 10:27-30   c. 8:27-30   d. 13:20-30
5. The Gospel of Mark begins right away at what geographical location?  
a. Sea of Galilea   b. Dead Sea   c. Jordan Valley   d. Jordan River
6. Mark is more focused on what Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ than what he said.
7. Mark goes through abrupt transitions \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Slowly and methodically   b. Abruptly and immediately   c. Straightway and immediately
8. In the short preface of Mark we see what four voices? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

