



Who Is This?

Amazed by Jesus in Mark's Gospel

Bible Intensive

Mark: When and Where?

When was Mark written and who was it written for?

- How does that shape the way the story is told?
- How does that shape the way it speaks to us?

Papias (early Christian) and Tacitus (Roman historian) help fill in the picture.

Eusebius, writing in the fourth century,
quoting **Papias**, writing in the second century,
reporting what happened in the first century.

“But such light of piety shone in the minds of those who heard Peter [in Rome] that they were not nearly satisfied with a single hearing or with an unwritten account of the divine proclamation. And so with all kinds of entreaties they begged Mark (whose Gospel is now in circulation), a follower of Peter, that he might leave behind a written record of the teaching that had been given to them orally. And they did not rest until they prevailed upon him. To this extent they were the impetus for the writing called the Gospel according to Mark.”

Eusebius, writing in the fourth century, quoting **Papias**, writing in the second century, reporting what happened in the first century.

“When Mark was the interpreter [or: translator] of Peter, he wrote down accurately everything that he recalled of the Lord’s words and deeds—but not in order. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied him; but later, as I indicated, he accompanied Peter, who used to adapt his teachings for the needs at hand, nor arranging, as it were, an orderly composition of the Lord’s sayings. And so Mark did nothing wrong by writing some of the matters as he remembered them. For he was intent on just one purpose: to leave out nothing that he heard or to include any falsehood among them.”

Tacitus, writing in the second century,
describing a persecution in Rome in the 60s CE

“Yet no human effort . . . could make that infamous rumor disappear that Nero had somehow ordered the fire. Therefore, in order to abolish that rumor, Nero falsely accused and executed with the most exquisite punishments those people called Christians, who were infamous for their abominations. First, then, the confessed members of the sect were arrested; next, on their disclosures, vast numbers were convicted, not so much on the count of arson as for hatred of the human race. And derision accompanied their end: they were covered with wild beasts’ skins and torn to death by dogs; or they were fastened on crosses, and, when daylight failed, were burned to serve as lamps by night.”

Mark: When and Where?

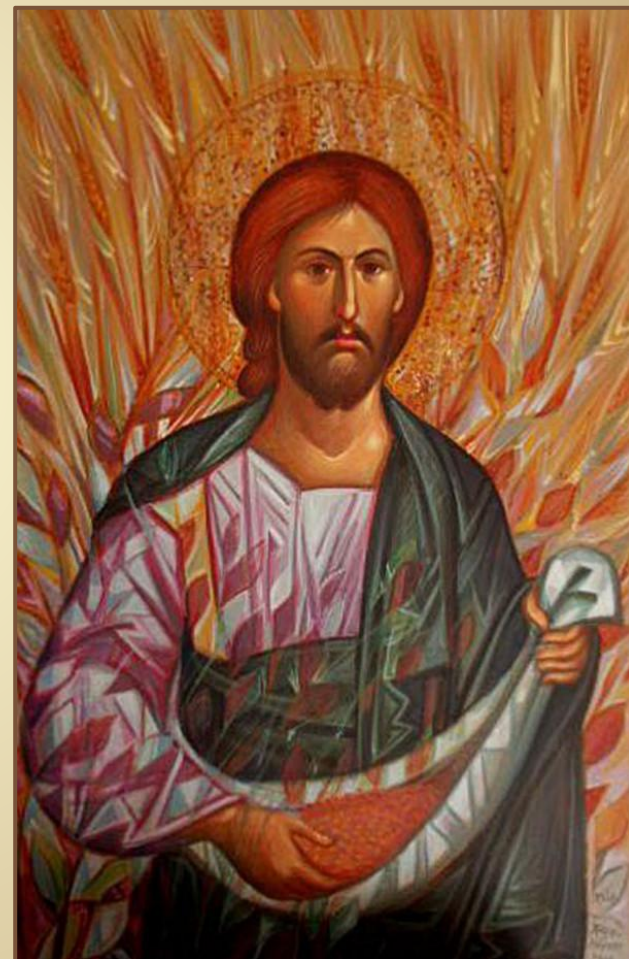
What has the audience been experiencing?

- Clues from Mark 13:
 - Handed over to councils
 - Beaten in synagogues
 - Trials before Roman magistrates
 - Family betrayal

What does the gospel have to say to them?

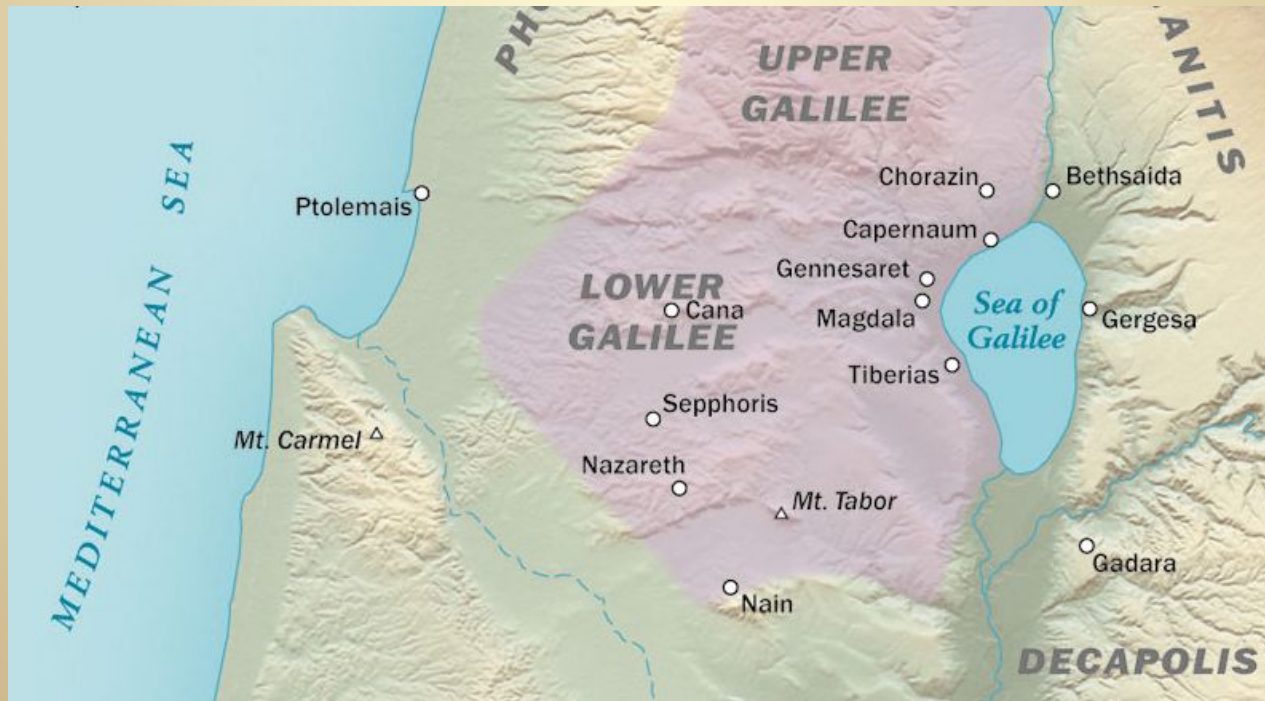
Parable of the Soils

- Why introduce Jesus's teaching with this parable?
 - It provides a lens to assessing the people Jesus will encounter (and ourselves).
- Which characters does each type of soil represent?
 - The Rich Ruler (10:17-22)
 - The Pharisees
 - Who is good soil?
 - The disciples?



Sea Crossings

- The Sea divides between Jewish and gentile territory.
- It also symbolizes the chaos opposed to God.



Fear or Faith?

- Cause for fear:

- Tossing on the seas of chaos: 4:35-41
- A terrifying man among the tombs: 5:1-20
- On the path to death: 6:12-29
- In the wilderness: 6:30-32

- Cause for faith:

- Jesus can provide for his own: 6:30-44

- A test: 6:47-52

- A retake: 8:14-21



“On the Way” to Jerusalem

Mark 8:22 – 10:52

- The healing of the Blind Man in Bethsaida (8:22–26)
 - First Passion prediction (8:27–31)
 - Response that reveals misunderstanding (8:32–33)
 - Reiteration of the meaning of Jesus’ Messiahship and its implications for the community of his disciples (8:34–9:1)
 - Second Passion prediction (9:30–31)
 - Misunderstanding (9:32–34)
 - Reiteration (9:35–37)
 - Third Passion prediction (10:32–34)
 - Misunderstanding (10:35–41)
 - Reiteration (10:42–45)
- The healing of Bartimaeus in Jericho (10:46–52)



**Will the
disciples
understand?**

The Disciples at the End

- So, will the disciples understand in Mark's gospel?
- The Last Supper and Arrest (14:12–52)
 - Note: Jesus is good at predicting stuff.
 - Jesus predicts his own impending suffering and their desertion.
- But . . .
 - Peter, specifically, rejects Jesus's prediction (and they all agree).
 - They can't stay awake in the garden.
 - “*All* deserted him and fled.”
 - Notice who takes care of Jesus's body after his death. (15:42–47)
- What do you make of the Markan streaker? (14:51–52)

How does Mark end?

- The most reliable manuscripts end at 16:8.
 - The following verses are believed to be later additions.



How does Mark end?

- The most reliable manuscripts end at 16:8.
 - The following verses are believed to be later additions.
- Do you like that ending?
- Why end the gospel at this point?