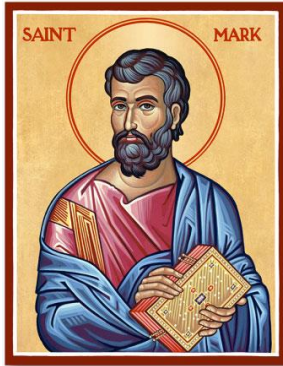


The Gospel of Mark: A Summary

Author: John Mark, companion of Barnabas, Paul and Peter

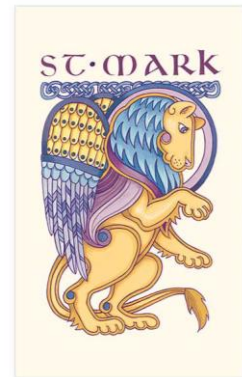
Date Written: 50-67 AD

Date of Narrative: 26-30 AD



Mark is the shortest and most action-packed gospel. The story starts with gusto as John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness. Jesus comes to be baptized and the heavens are ripped open at the sound of the Father's voice. Mark takes us from scene to scene, healing to healing, miracle to miracle. He lauds Jesus as the great Teacher, but provides us with very few examples of his teaching—there are no long speeches in Mark. The first half of the gospel (Ch. 1-8) depicts the Galilean ministry of Jesus. He gathers disciples, works many miracles and shows himself to be the Messiah. Yet his messianic identity is to remain a secret until his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The second half of the gospel depicts only a week's worth of time, but what a week it is! Jesus enters the Temple to the people's acclamation; he teaches and heals. Then he institutes the Eucharist during the Passover meal, is arrested, tried, tortured and crucified. He rises on the third day as he had predicted and astonishes the disciples. The storyline of Mark begins on the banks of the River Jordan in the wilderness, moves into Galilee then across the Jordan to Jericho and then up to Jerusalem, where Jesus' identity is fully revealed as Messiah, Suffering Servant and Eucharistic Lord.

The Early Church Fathers regarded Mark as an abbreviated version of the earlier gospel of Matthew. Yet Mark has been at the center of scholars' interest over the past 150 years. Many scholars now regard Mark as the earliest gospel and as a source for Matthew and Luke, especially since over 90 percent of its verses are present in the gospel of Matthew. Mark was mostly likely authored by John Mark, who makes several appearances in the NT. Especially to be noted are his travels with Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25, 15:37-39; 2 Tim 4:11) and his discipleship under Peter (cf. 1 Pet 5:13). Papias, an early second century Church Father, tells us that Mark was a disciple of Peter in Rome and wrote his gospel based on Peter's eyewitness testimony.



An extremely important theme in Mark's gospel is discipleship. Disciples in the ancient world would seek out a teacher or rabbi and "follow" or "come after" him. Discipleship involved not only learning from the teacher, but developing a personal relationship with him. Jesus turns the tables by seeking out his own disciples and calling them to follow him. He then sends them out to carry on his work (3:14; 6:7; 11:1; 14:13). Yet Mark displays the weaknesses and failures of the disciples. Mark focuses on the disciples' ability or inability to see, hear and understand who Jesus is (Isa 6:10; Mark 4:12; 6:52; 7:14; 8:17-8). He even tells how they abandoned Jesus in his hour of need (14:50). Notably, the women who witness the resurrection and are told by the angel to announce it to the disciples but they say "nothing to anyone." (16:8) Mark leaves it up to the reader to carry out the gospel message and tell others of Jesus' resurrection.

The central spiritual message of the gospel of Mark is the life of Jesus. Through His example, the reader should come to "Repent and believe in the gospel." (1:15) Jesus calls his hearers to enter the Kingdom of God which is at hand (1:15; 4:11; 9:1, 47) and to become faithful disciples who will carry their crosses (8:34). He warns of the coming of the Great Tribulation and the end of the age (13). His message is most fully embodied in his suffering and death, in which he gave his life for the world (15). Yet the bodily resurrection of Jesus launches us into the true hope of the Kingdom of God: the defeat of death and the dawn of eternal life (16).

By Mark Giszczak

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/bible/introduction-to-the-new-testament/gospel-of-mark>

MARK

	Introduction and Preparation A brief introduction sets Jesus's ministry in motion. <u>John the Baptizer prepares the way.</u> <u>Jesus is tempted in the wilderness.</u> <i>CHAPTER</i> <i>1:1-13</i>	The Servant at Work An unbroken chain of events reveals Jesus helping people in need. <u>Because people are in darkness, He enlightens.</u> <u>Because people are sick/afflicted, He heals.</u> <u>Because people are without hope, He encourages.</u> <u>Because people are in bondage to satanic control, He liberates.</u> <u>Because people are sinful, He forgives.</u> <i>CHAPTERS</i> <i>1:14-8:30</i>	The Servant Rejected . . . Then Exalted A growing discontent among the authorities leads to Jesus's suffering and death. <u>He presses the claim, "Messiah."</u> <u>He spends more time alone with His disciples.</u> <u>He comes into open conflict with His enemies.</u> <u>He is hated, deserted, tortured, crucified, and buried.</u> <u>He is raised bodily from the dead!</u> <i>CHAPTERS</i> <i>8:31-16:20</i>
Emphasis	Service to others		Sacrifice for others
Scope	Ministry to the multitudes		Ministry to the Twelve
Sections	Action . . . reaction . . . confrontation		Revelation . . . crucifixion . . . exaltation
Theme	Jesus is the Suffering Servant, who gives His life to save the world.		
Key Verse	10:45		
Christ in Mark	Jesus suffered and died so that salvation would be available to all people (10:45).		