

The Gospel According to St. Mark  
Bible Study Curriculum  
High School Ministry







# Table of Contents

- I. Introduction ..... I-2
- I. St Mark Proclamation Maps ..... I-5**
- II. Unit 1:..... II-7
  - A. Chapter 1 ..... II-7
  - B. Chapter 2 ..... II-13
  - C. Chapter 3 ..... II-18
  - D. Chapter 4 ..... II-23
  - E. Chapter 5 ..... II-27
  - F. Chapter 6 ..... II-32
- III. Unit: 2 ..... III-36
  - A. Chapter 7 ..... III-36
  - B. Chapter 8 ..... III-39
  - C. Chapter 9 ..... III-44
- IV. Unit 3:..... IV-50
  - A. Chapter 10 ..... IV-50
- V. 4- Unit 4:..... V-56
  - A. Chapter 11 ..... V-56
  - B. Chapter 12 ..... V-60
  - C. Chapter 13 ..... V-66
  - D. Chapter 14 ..... V-72
  - E. Chapter 15 ..... V-78
  - F. Chapter 16 ..... V-83
- VI. Summary of main points of the gospel:..... VI-87

## I. Introduction

<b>The 4 Gospels comparison</b>				
	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
<b>To whom it was written</b>	Jews	Romans	Greeks	Christians
<b>Subject</b>	The Messiah the king	The Messiah the conqueror of Satan	Christ the lover of mankind	Christ the Incarnate Word
<b>Main message of Jesus</b>	Fulfills the Law	Performs wonders	Saves mankind	Dwells among us
<b>Gospel content</b>	Focuses on prophecies	Focuses on deeds	Focused on history	Focused on theology
<b>Symbol</b>	The human face	The lion	The Ox	The Eagle

<b>Symbols of the Four Gospels</b>			
			
<b>Matthew</b> <i>Winged Man</i>	<b>Mark</b> <i>Winged Lion</i>	<b>Luke</b> <i>Winged Ox</i>	<b>John</b> <i>Eagle</i>

An 8 minutes illustrative video that could be used by servants to prepare or to show kids part at the beginning of each unit. Use only till the minute 8:20, as the last part is not verified.

<https://youtu.be/HGHqu9-DtXk>

### **Servant's preparation:**

*A link for the whole series of 22 sermons covering the whole book of St. Mark's gospel*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibq9HrbU1b8&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy>

An introduction sermon to Gospel of St. Mark by Abouna Daoud Lamei in English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibq9HrbU1b8&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy>

### **A BIOGRAPHY OF SAINT MARK\***

#### **HIS UPBRINGING**

- ❖ St. Mark was born in 'Cyrene,' one of the cities of Pentapolis in Libya, in a town called 'Ebryatolis,' from Jewish parents related to the tribe of Levi. His father's name is 'Aristopolis,' and his mother
- ❖ 'Mary' was a pious woman, of some stature among the early Christians of Jerusalem.
- ❖ Mark had two names (Act 12:12, 25; 15:37): **John**, a Hebrew name which means "the kingdom of God," and **Mark** a Latin name which means "Hammer."

- ❖ St. Mark was a relative of Barnabas, the Apostle. (nephew or Cousin Col. 4:10). His father was also a cousin of St. Peter's wife.
- ❖ He learned and mastered both Greek and Latin.
- ❖ After the barbarians attacked their home, they left Cyrene to Palestine, where he and his mother enjoyed the company of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mark's mother, Mary, was one of the women who ministered to the Lord with their resources. She offered her house to the Lord to eat the Passover with His disciples in the upper room. There, He washed their feet and gave them the Sacrament of the Eucharist. By that, her house became the first church in the world, consecrated by the Lord Himself through His holy presence and His practicing of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In that same upper room, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples (Act 2:1-4), and in it the disciples assembled.
- ❖ St. Mark was one of the seventy apostles chosen by the Lord for ministry, as testified by **Origen** and by St. Epiphanius.
- ❖ St. Mark attended the wedding of Cana of Galilee; and he was the man carrying the pitcher of water who met the two disciples sent by Lord Jesus to prepare the Passover (Mk. 14:13,14; Lk. 22:11). He was also the young man who left his linen cloth and fled naked during the incident of the arrest of the Lord (Mk. 14:52)

\*Much of the information above is from Holy Tradition which other denominations do not often acknowledge. We have got to appreciating and valuing the wealth we have in our tradition.

### **Why do we see a lion in his icon?**

- ❖ St. Mark attracted his own father to Christianity when he struck two hungry lions dead by the sign of the cross.
- ❖ He started writing his gospel by describing John the Baptist as a lion roaring in the wilderness and he also portrayed Jesus as the Divine Master serving the power of a lion.

### **HIS MISSIONARY WORK:**

- ❖ He began his preaching with Saint Peter in Jerusalem then joined St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first missionary journey, but he left them and return to Jerusalem. Later he traveled with St. Barnabas to Cyprus from which he proceeded to Lybia his homeland.
- ❖ In 61 A.D. he went to Egypt and established the church of Alexandria which we all belong to. History tells us the story of how Anianus accepted the Christian Faith, as the first Egyptian to do so. When Mark's footwear needed repair, he approached Anianus the shoemaker, who, as the needle pierced his finger, he uttered the words "O God the One." St. Mark healed him in the name of Lord Christ, and began talking to him of "God, the One." Anianus and his household accepted faith. As Christian faith quickly spread in Alexandria, St. Mark ordained Anianus a bishop, and with him three priests and seven deacons.

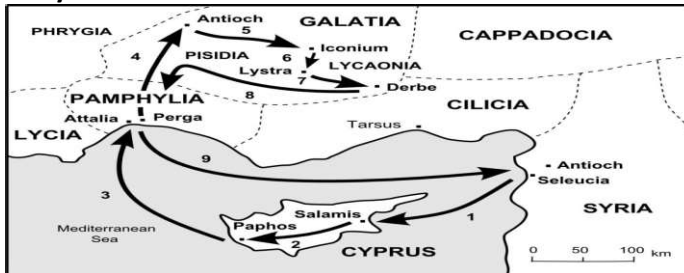
- ❖ The pagan mob rose in anger, which compelled St. Mark to leave Alexandria to Perga (Lybia), and from there he headed to Rome, where he joined St. Peter and St. Paul, to remain with them until their martyrdom in the year 64 A.D.
- ❖ When St. Mark returned to Alexandria in the year 65 A.D. to find out how the Christian faith had flourished, he decided to visit Pentapolis before getting back to Alexandria to be martyred at the district of 'Bokalia.'

### **The message and features of the Gospel:**

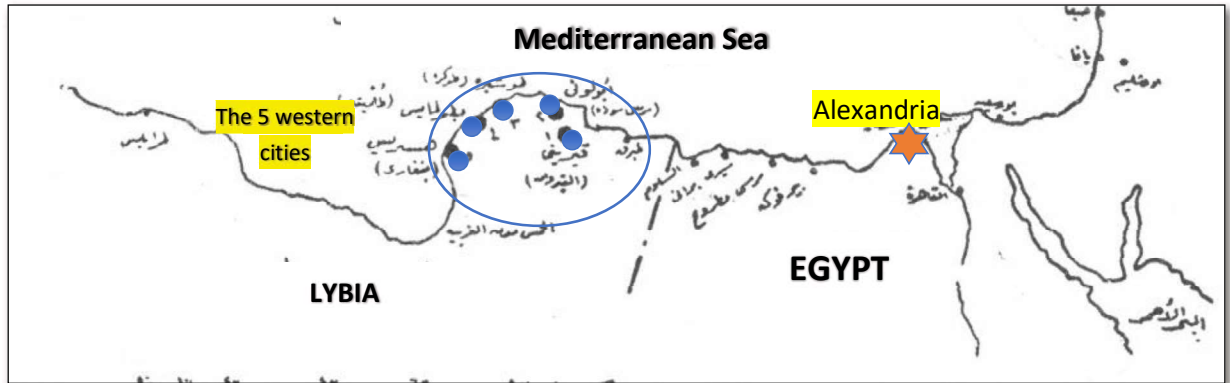
- ❖ It is believed to be the oldest of the four Gospels written between the years 65 to 70 A.D.
- ❖ While in Rome, the people asked him to write a summary of what they had received by word of mouth, so he wrote it to the Romans after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- ❖ Writing his gospel to the Romans, explains why he may have not included many prophecies from the Old Testament like the gospel of Saint Matthew which was addressed to the Jews and why he had to explain many popular Jewish words and traditions.
- ❖ The Romans believed in authority and influence through war and violence, so he offered to them Jesus Christ as the true ruler over devils 1:27, disease 1:42, nature 4:41, plants 11:12-20, and the temple 11:33. Angels minister to him 1:13, He is Lord of the Sabbath 2:28, knows what's in the heart and mind of people 2:8, speaks with authority 1:12, feeds the multitude 6:33, the destroyer of death 5:35. His authority is evident through love, kindness, service, humility, and through pain.
- ❖ The Romans believed in authority through violence, pride, and oppression, but St. Mark the Evangelist proclaimed the authority of the Lord through humility and ministry to others (9:33; 10:35, 45).

# I. St Mark Proclamation Maps

## First Journey with St Paul



## The Medetirraian Missionary- Egypt and the Five Western Cities



### 1- Unit 1: (Chapter 1-6)

#### Getting to Know Christ: Chapter 1:1-11

#### His Ministry in Galilee: Chapters 1:12-6:30

- 1) In chapter 1, St. Mark begins by describing Christ as a servant to mankind, sacrificing Himself, aiming to deliver us. That is why he does not detail the birth of Christ, but rather focuses on His ministry.
- 2) John the Baptist prepares the road for Christ the servant (Chapter 1)
- 3) Jesus served in Galilee, prayed for us in the desert, healed many on the Sabbath, in the house, by the sea, and wherever He went.
- 4) Jesus called others to preach with Him (the disciples)
- 5) His service is resisted (Chapter 2)
- 6) Jesus continued His preaching (Chapter 3)
- 7) His parables were marveled at by the people despite the resistance by the scribes (Chapter 4).
- 8) He commanded the evil spirits, death, and disease (Chapter 5).
- 9) Strange behavior towards this Servant who is unique in His love and work (Chapter 6)

### 2-Unit 2:

#### His retreat from Galilee (Chapters 7 to 9)

- 1) Jesus left Galilee not to avoid the trouble but to prepare the minds to accept the cross. He fed the multitude, healed whoever touched Him, and comforted even the Gentiles.
- 2) St. Mark recorded many conversations and questions that revealed Jesus's person and mission in chapters 8 to 10.
- 3) Through His transfiguration, He acknowledged His kingdom.

### **3-Unit 3:**

#### **His service in Judea chapter 10:**

In this chapter, he provides us with life examples for the path of the cross.

- A. The difficult commandment (no divorce)
- B. Accepting children with love
- C. Wealth
- D. Leaving all to take up the cross
- E. Discarding the love of higher positions.

### **4- Unit 4:**

#### **Crucifixion and resurrection chapters 11 to 16**

- 1) The events of the passion week,
- 2) His entry to Jerusalem (Chapter 11).
- 3) Resisting Him in Jerusalem (Chapter 12).
- 4) The cross and the signs of the end (Chapter 13).
- 5) The preparation of the cross (Chapter 14).
- 6) The events of the crucifixion (Chapter 15).
- 7) His resurrection declared the glory of this unique Servant, who is capable of rising from the dead.
- 8) The One who rose from the dead is still serving us, as He sent His disciples to preach and He is still serving His church.
- 9) He ascended to heaven so that our hearts may ascend with Him also



## II. Unit 1: Getting to know Christ His ministry in Galilee

This unit includes 6 chapters over 6 classes.

### A. Chapter 1

#### **Servant's preparation:**

A sermon about Chapter 1 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNmgydQK\\_KM&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNmgydQK_KM&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=2)

#### **Brief introduction:**

At the beginning of each lesson, please review book overview questions.

- ✓ Who is St. Mark? He was one of the 70 apostles whose house was the 1<sup>st</sup> church Jesus used and who later preached in many countries including Egypt where our Coptic church originated.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Romans
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? To show the great power of Jesus Christ who through His amazing actions, He demonstrated His Divine power.

#### **Main points in the Chapter:**

- 1) John the Baptist Prepares the Way 1-8
- 2) John Baptizes Jesus 9-11
- 3) Satan Tempts Jesus 12-13
- 4) Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry 14-15
- 5) Four Fishermen Called as Disciples 16-20
- 6) Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 21-28
- 7) Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed 29-34
- 8) Casting out demons 35-39
- 9) Cleansing a leper 40-45





## Lesson overview:

- The gospel of St. Mark started when Jesus was 30 years. St. Mark, did not start his gospel with the events of the Nativity, or by the genealogy of Jesus Christ, However since he was writing to the Romans, those of authority, he expounded the Lord Christ “the Son of God,” who has the real authority over the soul or the inner life, and the body or the outer life. He is the Son of God who floods us with the waters of His perfect love, not the love of authority or domination.
- Jesus was preparing for His ministry on earth which would last about 3 years ending with our salvation. Since the first sacrament we use for a newborn is Baptism to be born of the Holy Spirit; Jesus started His service by getting baptized by John, then being tempted by Satan then calling His disciples to follow Him.
- St. Mark, in writing about John the Baptist, quickly passed through the Lord’s Baptism, temptation, missionary work, and call to four disciples; while expounding on the essence of his gospel: “**Christ, The Minister of Mankind,**” who serves with humility and love, yet also with authority and power.
- Jesus did many miracles including casting out demons, healing the sick and cleansing a leper. Many miracles were performed on the Sabbath day to prove that He is Lord of the Sabbath.

## Meditation:

### **1) John the Baptist Prepares the Way 1-8**

St. Mark quoted two prophecies concerning the Forerunner of the Lord: one of which according to the prophet ‘Malachi’ (3:1), and the other, is according to Isaiah (40:3). The two prophecies reveal the identity of the “Forerunner of the Lord,” who prepares His way:

- (1) ‘Malachi’ called him, “the messenger of the Lord.” The Church used to picture St. John the Baptist, with two wings like an angel
- (2) Isaiah called him “*The voice of one crying in the wilderness.*” So, he came as an angel of mercy to reveal “the Savior” to us, and to illuminate our minds in acknowledging “the Lamb of God,”

The theme of his preaching was “the baptism of repentance,” to enjoy the remission of sins. His baptism had its power, not in itself, but in its symbolism of the baptism of the Lord Christ. The baptism of John was a mere symbol, cleansing the body, but that of the Lord Christ sanctifies both the body and the spirit.

### **2) John Baptizes Jesus 9-11**

St. Ambrose says in his interpretation of the Gospel of Luke: [The Lord was baptized, not to get purified, but to purify the water. As Christ, Who knew no sin, descended into the water, it gained the power to purify everyone who is buried therein, casting away his sins in it.]

### **3) Satan Tempts Jesus 12-13**

His strife against Satan for 40 days refers to the ancient people who despite the exodus from the land of bondage, spent 40 years in the wilderness, striving in numerous temptations, and ultimately failed to enter the Promised Land. However, we are led by a new Leader in Whom we

are hidden, who fights for us, grants us victory and conquest, and enters with us not into a land that flows with milk and honey, but the everlasting divine bosom.

**4) Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry 14-15**

**5) Four Fishermen Called as Disciples 16-20**

The Lord Christ came, not only to minister personally to humanity, but to ordain disciples who would carry His same Spirit, to work by them and minister through them.

He called them from the Sea of Galilee, referring to the sea of this world, so as to soar them up above its waves, in order to be able to rescue every soul drawn down by its whirlpools.

**6) Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 21-28**

The evangelist presented to us, the first work of the Lord, in a Sabbath, in a synagogue, in Capernaum. There He casts out an unclean spirit, after rebuking it and rejecting its testimonial to Him.

***Why did St. Mark start with that miracle, in his presentation of the works of the Lord?***

He intended to proclaim that the Lord Christ is a unique Teacher, to whom His listener themselves, amazed by His teaching, bear witness, saying; *“What new doctrine is this?”*

Christ did not let demons acknowledge Him, as it is not fit for them to take over the apostolic office. They also do not have the right to speak, with their unclean tongues, of the secret of Christ’s redemption.

**7) Peter’s Mother-in-Law Healed 29-34**

In His casting away of the demon or the unclean spirit, the Lord spoke with authority, ordering it to come out; but when He encountered a sick person, to escape the praise of men He took her by the hand and the fever left her. The compassionate One has a true authority over us, by His words as well as by the touch of His hand.

**8) Casting out demons 35-39**

**9) Cleansing a leper 40-45**

Jesus could have said just a word to cleanse him. But, in compassion, He put out His hand, to proclaim that He is the Creator Who discerns between the sickness and the sick, between the sin and the sinner.

He puts out His hand, lovingly touching everyone, whatever his uncleanness, to cure him. He wanted to proclaim that He, as the Maker, and Lord of the Law, does not get defiled through touching a leper: Leprosy instead, escapes by His touch. By His compassionate touch, and His words *“I am willing; be cleansed,”* He was proclaiming that the world is in need of a practical touch of love, amalgamated with the commandment, and even preceding it

**Application:**

In this chapter, you can either focus on the power of Jesus as He started His ministry on earth or focus on the idea that the disciples when called, dropped everything, and followed Jesus.

1- As we can notice that St. Mark in his gospel was trying to show the Romans who cared so much about power that Jesus the true God who came to earth was so powerful. His power shows in this chapter in the following points:

- Jesus does not need to be baptized as He is God but to show us how to be perfect, He started His ministry by getting baptism at the hands of John the Baptist
- Before starting His ministry, Jesus fasted for 40 days then He conquered Satan who was not sure whether this is the son of God. Satan tempted Him with Food/body satisfaction, pride, and wealth. Jesus defeated him through the scriptures
- Jesus did many things by one brief but kind command, examples include:
  - i. “Follow me” [ calling His disciples]
  - ii. “Come out” [ casting the demon]
  - iii. “ Lifted her and immediately the fever left her” [ healing Simon’s mother in law]
  - iv. “Be cleansed” [healing the leper]

### Read Mark 1:14-20

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Simon, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen. What kind of people do you think they were? *(Probably rough, tough guys. Uneducated blue-collar workers.)*
2. Verse 18 says they followed Jesus “at once.” What does this urgency teach us? *(We should not hesitate in our obedience. The message is too important!)*
3. Jesus states He will make them “fishers of men.” What does this mean? *(They will go out and evangelize to other people.)*
4. What would it mean for you to be a fisher of men? What would you have to give up to do it?

Split students into four groups. Ask each group to read one of the following passages: Mark 1:21-28, 29-34, 35-39, and 40-45. Have each group tell the rest of the class what happened in the passages they read. Optional idea: Ask each group to act out a short skit which demonstrates the events of their passage instead.

#### General Discussion:

- What do these four stories have in common? *(They all involve great acts of healing and miracles.)*
- Which miracle impresses you the most? Why?

Mark will spend a lot of time reporting miracles that Jesus performed during his ministry.

- What qualities does Jesus demonstrate through these accounts? *(power, compassion, humanity, etc.)*
- How would you define compassion? *(caring about others, etc.)*
- Why do you think these stories immediately follow the calling of the disciples? Is there some connection? What could it be? *(If you want to follow Jesus, you must be prepared to serve, be compassionate, etc.)*

If we truly want to be “fishers of men” and understand what Jesus is all about, we have to be aware that there are needs all around us. And, like Jesus, we need to “immediately” set about the task of meeting them. We may not be able to cast out demons or perform miracles—as some of His followers did in Scripture—but we can help people.

2- Right after Jesus was baptized, He began his ministry, and He chose some men to come with Him as He traveled and preached. There were 12 of them, and we know those men as the 12 disciples.

You might think these guys were special somehow; like maybe they had EVERYTHING in the Bible memorized, or they spent more time praying than sleeping, but the truth is, they were regular guys just like us. They sinned just like we do. They weren't perfect, and they didn't do anything to deserve traveling with Jesus and becoming one of His disciples. But they did do one thing that made them kind of special; they dropped EVERYTHING.

The first two men Jesus called were actually brothers, Simon and Andrew. Simon and Andrew were fishermen, so they spent their days out on the Sea of Galilee together casting nets and catching fish. Fishing was especially important in two ways.

1. It provided them with food to eat. I'm sure they sometimes wished they could eat something else for dinner, but at least they wouldn't starve.

2. It provided them with money. Any fish they didn't eat they could sell at a market. Then they would have money to buy food, clothes, fishing supplies, and EVERYTHING else that might pop up.

- So, for Simon and Andrew fishing was EVERYTHING. It took up all their time and provided them with EVERYTHING they needed to survive. But remember what I said, they dropped EVERYTHING. Jesus saw them casting their nets and called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people." (Mark 1:17)
- And they did. They left their nets, their fish, their home, their friends, their money. Simon and Andrew dropped EVERYTHING to follow Jesus.
- But that is not all. Just a little while later Jesus saw another group of fishermen out in a boat. There were brothers named James and John fishing with their father. Jesus called out to the brothers, and immediately they left, leaving EVERYTHING behind, including their father. James and John dropped EVERYTHING to follow Jesus.
- I can't imagine what it must have felt like for them, leaving EVERYTHING and everyone they ever knew, including their dad, to follow a stranger.

### **Drop everything:**

We are blessed that we don't have to drop EVERYTHING in order to follow Jesus. We still have homes, toys, money, and refrigerators filled with food.

Instead of dropping EVERYTHING, God asks us to drop somethings. Can you think of anything God might want us to get rid of? Maybe disobeying your parents or saying ugly things about someone. And if you are super busy, God might want you to drop something so you can spend more time reading your Bible, or praying, or going to church.

This week I want you to try doing one special thing for God. Maybe you could learn a Bible verse instead of watching TV, or maybe pleasing God by being a helper to your parents or teacher. It might not seem like it's big or important, but to God it's EVERYTHING.

**Closing Prayer – Drop Everything**

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to ask to thank God that even though we aren't perfect, we can still please Him and follow Jesus by dropping at least one bad thing.

**Memory Verse:**

**17 Then Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” 18 They immediately left their nets and followed Him.**