

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







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I. Introduction

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

Symbols of the Four Gospels			
			
Matthew Winged Man	Mark Winged Lion	Luke Winged Ox	John Winged Eagle

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.

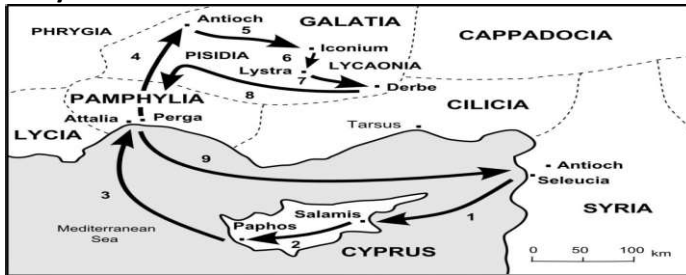
- ❖ The pagan mob rose in anger, which compelled St. Mark to leave Alexandria to Perga (Lybia), and from there he headed to Rome, where he joined St. Peter and St. Paul, to remain with them until their martyrdom in the year 64 A.D.
- ❖ When St. Mark returned to Alexandria in the year 65 A.D. to find 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:

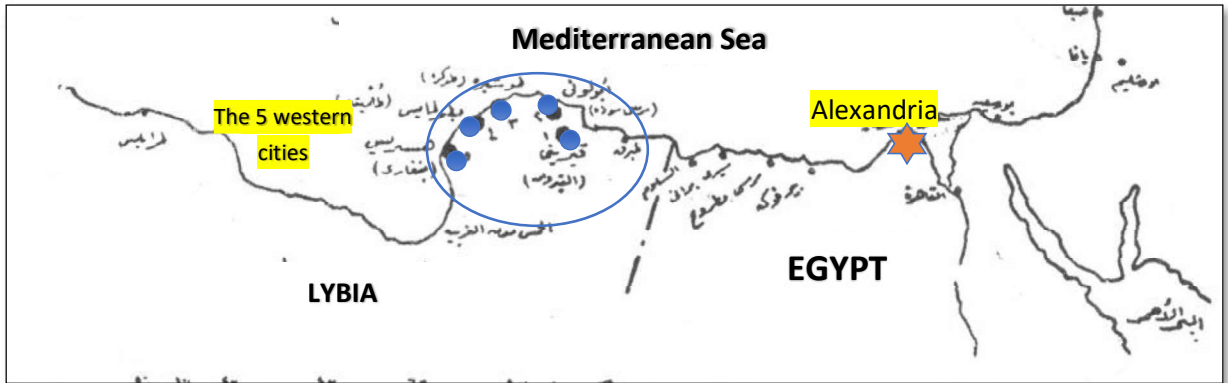
- ❖ It is believed to be the oldest of the four Gospels written between the years 65 to 70 A.D.
- ❖ While in Rome, the people asked him to write a summary of what they had received by word of mouth, so he wrote it to the Romans after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- ❖ Writing his gospel to the 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



B. Chapter 12

Servant's preparation:

A sermon about Chapter 12 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNFFmNLaeRI&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=15>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6xpUwhhOLs&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=16>

Brief introduction:

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

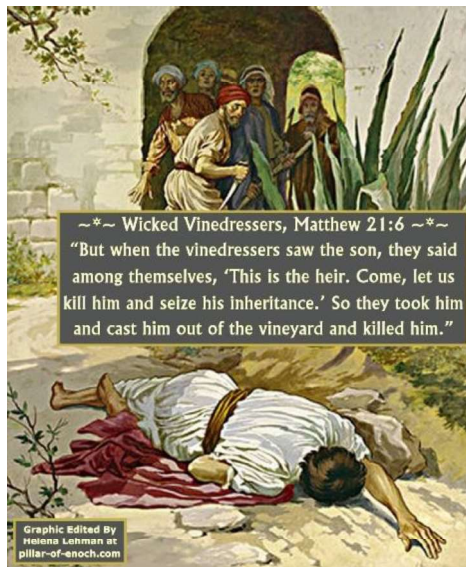
- ✓ Who is St. Mark? He was one of the 70 apostles whose house was the 1st church Jesus used and who later preached in many countries including Egypt where our Coptic church originated.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Romans
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? To show the great power of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

Remember:

Last lesson, Jesus warns us against pretending we are something we are not. If we are indeed going to call ourselves 'Christians', followers of Christ, then we should live our lives as such and glorify His name through our actions. When the disciples were surprised to see the cursed fig tree, Jesus talked to them about having faith in God, they can accomplish what appears to be impossible. He wants us to trust Him for all our needs and to believe He has our best interests at heart. He wants us to boldly ask for what we need in prayer knowing that God will answer us and meet our needs

Main points in the Chapter:

1. The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers 1-12
2. The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar? 13-17
3. The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection? 18-27
4. The Scribes: Which Is the First Commandment of All? 28-34
5. Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord? 35-37
6. Beware of the Scribes 38-40
7. The Widow's Two Mites 41-44



THE GREATEST COMMANDMENTS LOVE GOD | LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

Lesson overview:

In this chapter, Jesus told the vinedresser parable which represents how He took care of the Jews and was expecting them to give fruits, but they didn't, they beat His prophets and killed the son of God later. That is why He deprived them the privilege of being the chosen nation and extended it to the whole world. As for paying taxes, Jesus encourages us to be good citizens and work for our country as well as giving what is meant to be given to God. When asked about life after death, He confirmed they we will be like angels and there will be no marriage and other earthly matters. After being questioned by the Jews, He asked them a tricky question that proves that Jesus the son of David is also the God of David as David calls Him "Lord", but He was born of His descendants. Finally, Jesus praised the poor widow who gave generously to God but in secret as this is the way God wants us to give and serve, without looking for people to praise our service or donation.

Meditation:

1. The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers 1-12

- At vintage-time He sent His servants. He did well to send them at vintage- time, and not at harvest time, as the Jews did not present any fruits.
- God sent many, which the Jews sent back with no dignity or respect, carrying no fruit from them. Finally, He sent them His Only Begotten Son, whom they plotted to get rid of; being the heir, so they denied and crucified Him.

- St. Ambrose shifted from speaking of the Jews, as God's vineyard ignored by their spiritual leaders, to the soul or the life of a believer in the Church of the New Testament, being the Lord's vineyard, which the Lord presented with all possibilities to give fruit. And now, He is asking for fruit! From his own words
- The Lord does not want vain words to press on the virtues, to hinder the growth and maturation of simplicity and all good faculties

2. The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar? 13-17

- If He refused giving it, He would be accused as some revolutionary against the Roman authority; and if He consented, the multitude would lose their confidence in Him, as a Savior from the foreign aggressor.
- Those evil people hoped that He would insult the authorities, to have a chance to accuse Him; but, amazingly, the Lord, wisely, exhorted His listeners to submit to worldly authorities, in the Lord, and to give respect or taxes to whom they are due.

3. The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection? 18-27

- The Children of this world lead a life according to the flesh, full of lusts to beget offspring; That is why they marry and be married. While, those who reach an elect life, bearing all reverence, and qualified for the amazing and glorified resurrection, would naturally have a life, far above that of men of this world. They live in the presence of God, as saints, becoming equal to angels, children of God. Getting rid of every bodily lust, and having in themselves, no place for them, they are likened to the saintly angels, practice spiritual and not material ministry, as sanctified spirits; and at the same time, get qualified for a glory, like that enjoyed by angels.
- The Savior proved the complete ignorance of the Sadducees, presenting them with Moses, their spiritual mentor, as preaching the resurrection from the dead, in a clear way.
- Our Savior will change us all to incorruption, to glory, and incorruptible life

4. The Scribes: Which Is the First Commandment of All? 28-34

- All the commandments represent one unity, unspeakable from each other. While a scribe is asking for a commandment, which is the first of all, the Lord Christ presents two commandments on the same level, closely related, that touch our relationship with God, through our belief in Him, our recognition of His oneness, our limitless love for Him, and our relationship with our neighbor, whom we love as ourselves. The gospel, according to St. Luke revealed who is our neighbor, through the parable of the Good Samaritan
- There is no distinction between our relationship with God and that with our brethren

5. Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord? 35-37

He is the Messiah, the Son of David, and at the same time, his Lord... David recognized Him before long generations, not by himself, but through the Holy Spirit. He was the subject of prophecies and the desire of the Church Fathers

6. Beware of the Scribes 38-40

What the Lord Christ says concerning going around in long robes, says it also concerning love of greetings in the marketplaces, and getting the best places at feasts, and, in pretense, making long prayers. However, the Lord did not mean to attack the dresses in themselves, nor people's greetings,

or sitting in the best places at feasts, or making long prayers, but to attack the inner thoughts and the deep desire to behave that way, for the sake of vain glory, while carrying inside a hard heart that allows man to devour widows' rights.

7. The Widow's Two Mites 41-44

That widow has opened the gate before all believers, to apprehend the true concept of giving. It is the giving of the inner heart, that pleases God's heart, and not just the apparent giving.

St. Jerome: Although she was a poor widow; yet she was far richer than the whole nation of Israel. Such offerings are not evaluated according to their weight, but according to the good will by which they are offered .

Application:

In this chapter, you focus on the what Jesus pointed out as the most important commandment. Love God with all the heart and similarly important is to love people around you. Both commandments go together because no one can claim to love God while hating people, no one can perfectly serve God and pray to Him but yet hurts his friends or talk badly about them.

1- Love God

Our Lord is jealous for us. He loves us fiercely and has earned our time, love, and devotion. What do you put first in your life? It is so easy to put God on the back burner. To let our "selves" take over. We feel like we can make decisions on our own or just squeeze God in on a Sunday morning. Before we know it, we have drifted so far from our faith that we don't even recognize ourselves. If we aren't actively fighting to stay connected to the Lord and worship only him, we will most assuredly drift downstream and find ourselves filling the space in our hearts meant for God with other pursuits. I pray that this week, you will take the time to pray and read your Bible and fight for your relationship with God. Make him number one in your heart.

So, the first commandment means that we sometimes act like we worship other things, or sometimes, people make up gods and tell stories about them and worship these made up gods instead.

In fact, a whole bunch of people in the world back, then, and even some today, worshipped made up gods with made up names. Israel knew there is only one real God and they agreed to do what God told them (Exodus 19:5-8). These days, there are still people who don't believe that God is the one true God and that Jesus is his son. But they still worship something. We are created to worship So if we aren't worshipping God and putting him first in our hearts, then what ARE we worshipping? What are some things we make more important in our lives than God? There's not really a wrong answer here.

Sometimes, we make our schoolwork or homework more important than God. Sometimes we care more about getting good grades than having good hearts. Sometimes we care more about spending time watching TV or playing video games or reading our favorite books than we do spending time with God. Sometimes we choose to skip church or not read our Bible because we have other things to do. Sometimes we care more about our sports team. We want to win; we want to be number one! Schoolwork, sports or other hobbies, our chores, our friends, and families, are all important. But nothing is as important as having a good relationship with God.

What are some things we can do to help us have a good relationship with God? Going to church and Sunday school, reading our Bibles, praying, and treating others well, all show that God is first in our hearts.

2- Love others

LOVE your neighbor, your family, your friends, your enemy

Did you know Jesus summed up the entire Old and New Testaments in three points? He said:

- The Lord is one.
- Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- Love your neighbor as yourself.

“There is no commandment greater than these,” Jesus said in [Mark 12](#).

1. LOVE your neighbor

Your neighbor is the “other”—anyone.

It can be someone across the globe or your actual next-door neighbor. It can be someone in need—and frankly, we’re all in need, whether it be physical goods, love, encouragement, attention, or affirmation.

And your neighbor can be the “[unlovable](#),”. “Even though he was known as a sinful, tax collector, Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus the day he came to town,”. We need to understand that unkind, unpleasant, unlovable people still want to be known and loved even though they don’t act like it. Jesus gives a wonderful example in this story of reaching out to someone who is unloved by many. He goes out of his way to reach out and Zacchaeus’ heart is changed by his love.”

Action: This week identify someone “in need” and act upon it—perhaps a new mom needs a meal prepared or a family member miles away needs a handwritten card or colored picture. Or consider bringing coats and cold weather accessories to a nearby shelter.

2. LOVE your family

Everything starts at home.

We need to respect our family members and feel their needs. They need us to care and give them time and help. Think of what you are missing out towards your family.

3. LOVE your friends

Friends are the family you choose.

You don’t choose your family, but you can choose your friends, so choose wisely.

Action: Make a list of “acceptable” ways friends behave and ways they don’t. Use this exercise as a way to help identify behavior, such as bullying, that should be reported.

4. LOVE your enemy

- Perhaps the hardest of all is loving those who don’t love us back.
- “[Proverbs 15:1](#) says, ‘A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.’ Speak words of encouragement when possible. If not encouragement, then at the very least don’t speak words of hate or retaliation.” Pray for those who treat us badly.
- Loving isn’t always easy, but that’s when it becomes action instead of feeling. In fact John’s gospel says it’s the one way people will know that we’re followers of Jesus: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” ([John 13:35](#)).
- As Christians, we often forget that Jesus loves those people who do not love us. He promised us that our road would be a difficult one.
- There is so much to learn and understand about being a Christian. But you know what the great news is? It is all summed up in this short passage. Do you want to be a strong Christian? Love God and put others before yourself. Do you want this youth group to grow? Love God and put others first. Do you want our church to grow? Love God and put others first. Do you want to make a difference at your school? Love God and put others first. Do you want your friends to know Christ? Etc.
- We can start today by setting an example of love in our families and with our friends. Jesus came to earth as an example of love. If we want to show the world what Christian love is truly about, we should apply this passage to each of our lives and live a life of love.

- I Peter 1:22 says to “love one another deeply, from the heart.” I want you to think of a way that before this time tomorrow you can show someone a loving action that is from the heart. You may feel stupid doing it, but it is a good start in learning how to live a life of love.

Memory Verse: The whole verse or part of it

³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ ³¹ This is the first commandment. ³² And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”