

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.

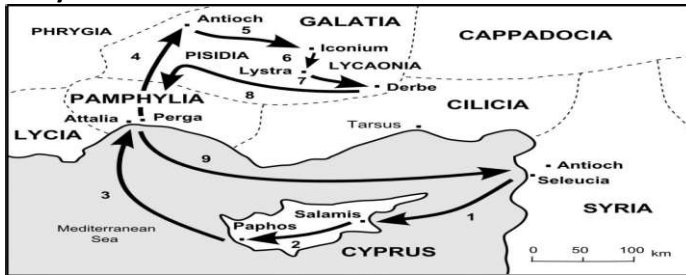
- ❖ The pagan mob rose in anger, which compelled St. Mark to leave Alexandria to Perga (Lybia), and from there he headed to Rome, where he joined St. Peter and St. Paul, to remain with them until their martyrdom in the year 64 A.D.
- ❖ When St. Mark returned to Alexandria in the year 65 A.D. to find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

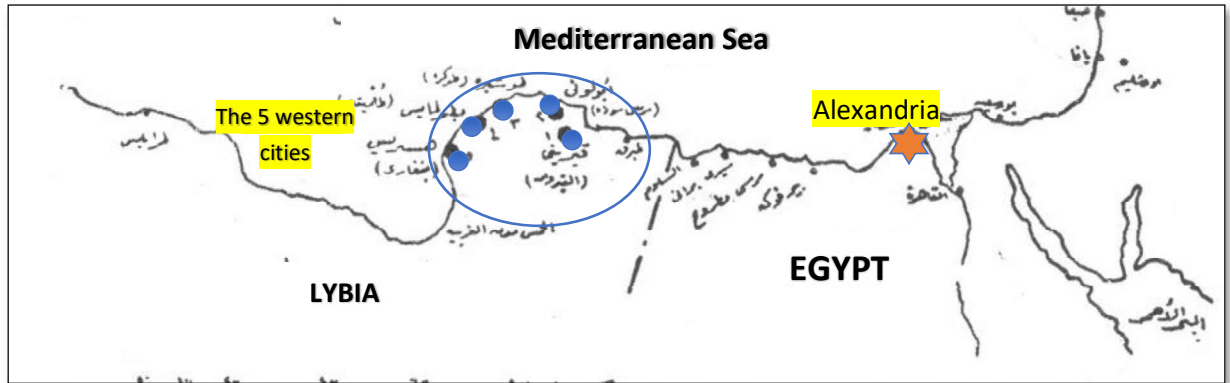
- ❖ It is believed to be the oldest of the four Gospels written between the years 65 to 70 A.D.
- ❖ While in Rome, the people asked him to write a summary of what they had received by word of mouth, so he wrote it to the Romans after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- ❖ Writing his gospel to the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



C. Chapter 13

Servant's preparation:

A sermon about Chapter 13 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuJkT4_id0w&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=17

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yvej5QX9GM&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=18>

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 we talked about many questions Jesus was asked but we focused more on the 2 most important commandments, Love God with all your heart and love your neighbor. We said the neighbor could include family, friends, enemies, and everyone on earth. God wants us to keep Him as our top priority in our busy lives. If we truly love God, it would be so easy to love everyone else because our hearts would be filled with God's love.

Main points in the Chapter:

1. Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple 1-2
2. The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age 3-18
3. The Great Tribulation 19-25
4. The Coming of the Son of Man 26-27
5. No One Knows the Day or Hour 28-37

Lesson overview:



In this chapter, Jesus announces to us how the world would end. First when the disciples asked Him about the temple, He told them it will be totally destroyed, this happened around year 70 AD, when the Romans seized Jerusalem, destroyed it and the temple was also burnt. Jesus said that it won't be rebuilt as a sign of Him rejecting the Jews who didn't believe in Him. As of now the temple in Jerusalem remained unbuilt and a mosque is built in its place. Jesus then mentioned many signs happening before the end of the world warning people that these signs could say the end is near but no one knows the day except God, that is why, we have to repent and BE READY.

Meditation:

1. Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple 1-2

The Jew was so attached to the temple, to consider any harm done to it as a sign of a great displeasure on God's part, with His people! That is why, it was fitting, for the Lord, to reveal the destruction of the materialistic world as a whole, as a preparatory way for the Last Advent of Christ over the clouds, and the destruction of the material temple, to establish the spiritual temple of the Lord.

2. The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age 3-18

- Jesus's talk to the disciples came to put their hearts at ease. He is preparing for them, beforehand, His heavens; presenting the signs of His Last Advent; which although bitter, yet, they were comforting. If He bore their fathers on eagles' wings to bring them to Himself out of Egypt, He is sending them His Holy Spirit, to carry them above all incidents, to enjoy His ultimate encounter on the clouds.
- The first sign of His advent would be the appearance of false christs and prophets, to deceive humanity, and to set the kingdom of the devil; pretending to do that in the name of God.
- The occurrence of wars and disasters would precede the destruction of the temple, on the hand of the Roman leader Titus. The Roman empire was aflame with wars, all along the interval between the ascension of the Lord Christ and the destruction of the temple; like that war which took place in Alexandria at about the year 38 A.M, the year 49 A.D.; the plague in Rome; and the earthquakes in Crete, 46 A.D.; in Rome, 51 A.D.; in Laodicea Phrygia, 60 A.D.; and in Jerusalem, 67 A.D.
- These signs will also precede the end of the world, and the second advent of the Lord Christ because Satan is afraid of . But the soul, steadfast in Christ, would not be disturbed, but would rise above all events, to get to enjoy His kingdom and exalted peace.
- Some Church Fathers and scholars see that that abomination of desolation refers to the entrance of enemy soldiers into the temple and defiling it.

3. The Great Tribulation 19-25

It occurs through the appearance of the Antichrist, opposing the Church in the world. But it is a short one, permitted by God, and within His care, shortened by Him for the sake of His elects, to keep them from despair.

Fr. Theophlactius: There are many, who claim to bear the name of Christ, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Many Church Fathers believe that these things are going to happen literally, before the advent of the Lord Christ over the clouds. The material world will totally collapse, in order for the eternal heavenly kingdom to appear.

4. The Coming of the Son of Man 26-27

St. Cyril the Great: Christ, does not come secretly nor in a vague way, but as the Lord God; He comes in glory, that is fit for divinity, to turn everything to the better; renewing the creation and reconstructing the nature of man 4 .

5. No One Knows the Day or Hour 28-37

- Verses 30,31: That saying by the Lord had been literally realized; when some, if not all those listening have witnessed the events of the desolation of the temple and destruction of Jerusalem.
- As to the rest of events, they were all actually realized, when the Gentiles accepted the Lord Christ in their lives, as though He came to proclaim His glory within them.
- Those words of Christ have inflamed the Church, in the time of the apostles; assuming that they were living the end of age, and that they are going to see His advent on the clouds.
- St. Augustine believes that the Lord Christ knows the day, yet, proclaims otherwise; in the sense, that He does not know it, in a way to reveal it. He may mean by that, what a teacher does, if asked to reveal the questions of his examination, his response would be that he does not know; in other words, it is a secret that he could not reveal.

Application:

In this chapter, we mainly focus on the fact that we have to be ready as we don't know the day the world ends. The world ends when someone dies as well as his chance to repent and return to God. Our church fathers advised us to consider everyday in our lives as a potential last day. We don't mean to live in fear or be pessimistic, but it means we have to remember that one day, we will meet God and we need to be ready. We need to carefully check ourselves and change any bad habits keeping us away from God. At the door of heaven, shall we hear the angel say " Welcome, ..., come on in?!!" We all wish to be ready for that time.

Signs of end of world

1. Earthquakes, Famines, Plagues and Wars
2. The Appearance of signs in heaven like the sun, moon, and stars.
3. Churches Are Desolate and the Love of Believers Is Cold
4. The Appearance of False Christs
5. The Restoration of Israel
6. The Spread of the Gospel to the Ends of the Earth

Sign	Exact meaning	Symbolic meaning
Destruction of temple	It was destroyed year 70 AD by Romans	God rejects Jewish worship when Christianity was established
Wars, earthquakes, and troubles	They happened before year 70AD and will happen before end of world due to evil and people not repenting	Believers should not be troubled when they hear all that but focus on their repentance.
The gospel would reach the whole earth	The church expanded even through tribulation. The gospel will reach everywhere before the world ends	It is an assuring news to know that the gospel will reach everywhere. It is a call for all of us to preach others.
Abomination of desolation	When pagans bring idols into the temple, this happened when Antiochus the Greek was trying to offend the Jews by bringing his idols in Solomon's temple.	It might happen again with the Antichrist before end of the world, when he tries to offend Christian by destroying churches.
People on the housetop won't go to their house	It happened before the temple destruction that the Jews were fleeing their homes	Believers should focus on their spiritual life and prepare for heaven and not worry about earthly matters.
Woe to those who are Pregnant and to those nursing babies	The Romans were cruel to those women when they attacked Jerusalem in 70AD	It may refer to souls, not yet mature, and having not yet delivered fruits of the spirit, that would not be able to stand affliction, nor escape, being as heavy as a pregnant or a nursing woman.

5. ASK A FEW: The very first thing that the disciples do when Jesus announces the end of the world is to ask when it will happen. We would probably do the same. Why is that?
6. ASK A FEW: What are some of the signs Jesus says will accompany the end of the world? (Leaders – *Earthquakes, wars and rumors of war, famines, the arrival of false Christs, the arrival of false prophets, etc.*)
7. ASK A FEW: When Jesus begins to answer their question about when it will happen, how does He start His answer? (Leaders – *The answer is in verse 5.*) “Take heed that no one deceives you”
8. ASK A FEW: What does Jesus essentially tell His followers to do when they hear reports about the end of the world. (Leaders – *Jesus says do not believe them.*)
9. ASK A FEW: In verse 32, Jesus says, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” If the Bible says that the Son of God doesn’t know the timeframe, do you think that regular men and women like Camping, Miller, or the Mayans can predict it accurately? Why or why not?
10. ASK A FEW: If you had to sum up verses 33-37, how would you do it?
11. ASK A FEW: While others are focused on dating the end of the world, and predicting what it’s going to be like, what does Jesus want us focused on?
12. ASK A FEW: What is the best way we can do that?

Wrap Up:

Let me be clear about the end of the world: I do not know when it is going to happen. But, that’s OK. My job as a believer in Jesus Christ isn’t to predict the hour...it’s to live my life with that hour in mind. As far as Jesus is concerned, our role is to watch for Him at His return. We are to live our lives faithfully and expectantly because He could return at any moment.

How does making incorrect predictions about the end of the world bring God glory? It can’t! On the other hand, how does living faithfully in light of the coming end of the world bring God glory? In many, many ways!

So, that’s our task. We have to live our lives as though each day were our last. We need to focus on the truth that we can’t know the date so we should be faithful in the meantime.

Memory Verse:

³³ Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.