

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.

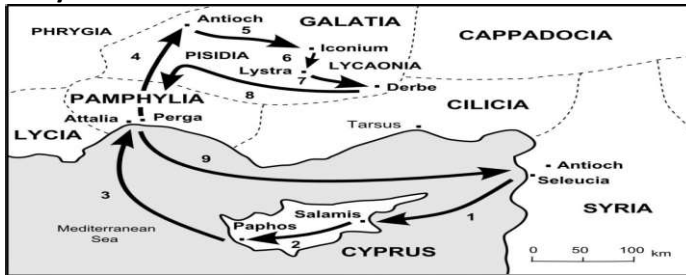
- ❖ The pagan mob rose in anger, which compelled St. Mark to leave Alexandria to Perga (Lybia), and from there he headed to Rome, where he joined St. Peter and St. Paul, to remain with them until their martyrdom in the year 64 A.D.
- ❖ When St. Mark returned to Alexandria in the year 65 A.D. to find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

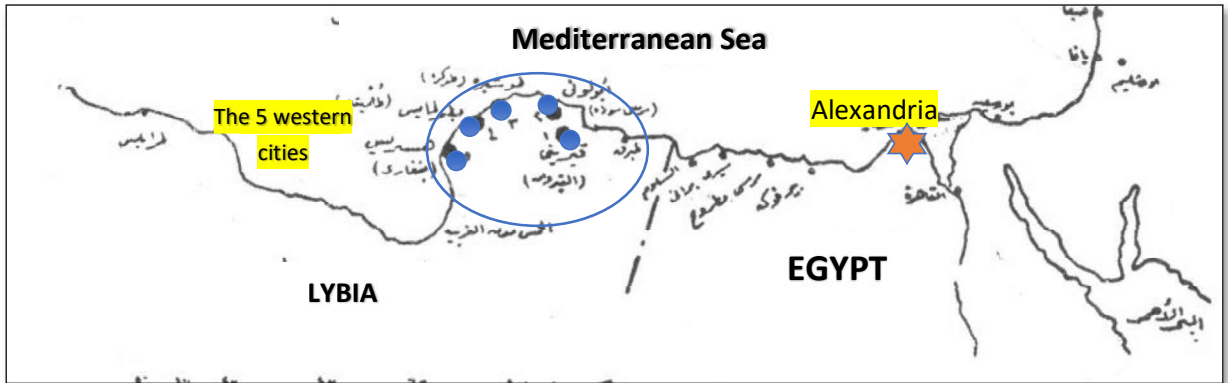
- ❖ It is believed to be the oldest of the four Gospels written between the years 65 to 70 A.D.
- ❖ While in Rome, the people asked him to write a summary of what they had received by word of mouth, so he wrote it to the Romans after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- ❖ Writing his gospel to the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



F. Chapter 16

Servant's preparation:

A sermon about Chapter 16 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKFlpeipXT0&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=22>

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 saw the events of the crucifixion, how Jesus went through all that pain for His love to mankind. He was unjustly judged, scourged, hung on the cross and died for our sins. He didn't try to defend Himself because He knew that this is why He came on earth.

Main points in the Chapter:

1. He Is Risen 1-8
2. Mary Magdalene Sees the Risen Lord 9-11
3. Jesus Appears to Two Disciples [Emmuas disciples] 12-13
4. The Great Commission 14-18
5. Christ Ascends to God's Right Hand 19-20



Lesson overview:

The story of Easter begins in the book of Genesis when God created a perfect world. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and their sin messed up their relationship with him. Since that time, there has been a distance between God and humans. Then God sent Jesus, who was perfect, to bridge the distance. Jesus died on the cross for our sins, taking the punishment for us. Because Jesus died and rose again, we can have a good relationship with God again.

Jesus rose from the dead and the first to witness this news were the women who went to the tomb. They took the news to the disciples. Jesus appeared to Emmaus disciples on their way to a far city and they only knew after He broke the bread. Jesus appeared to many groups of disciples, then He finally ascended into heaven in front of them.

Meditation:

1. He Is Risen 1-8

- The women set forth to the tomb not thinking about the guards nor the seal. They had left the previous day, before the Jews went to Pilate to ask for of the guarding and the sealing of the tomb. They only worried about the stone; “who will roll it away from the door of the tomb?” All had forgotten, amid the horrible events of the Cross, the issue of His Resurrection; that is why the women worried about the stone that closed the door of the tomb, not thinking of Him, who is capable of rising while the door is closed!
- Anba Paulis El-Boushy says, [The Lord has risen while the stone on the door of the tomb was sealed. In the same way He was delivered by St. Mary, while still a virgin, according to the prophesy of Ezekiel (Ezek. 44:1-4). The rolling away of the stone from the door of the tomb was in order to proclaim the resurrection clearly; lest, if the stone stayed sealed, it would be assumed that the body was still in the tomb
- The women came heavy hearted, but the Resurrection of the Lord turned their grief into joy and granted them the ability to preach the Resurrection to all, telling them to set forth to Galilee to encounter the Risen One from the dead, according to His promise.
- It is interesting that this story contains three women. This alone speaks to the validity of the text. In Greco-Roman culture, women were not equal to men. Therefore, the early church would not have made up this story and made the people who found the grave be women.

2. Mary Magdalene Sees the Risen Lord 9-11

St. Mary Magdalene saw Him early on the first day of the week, that is after the darkness of the night was cast away from her heart, and enjoyed Him after being freed of the seven demons

3. Jesus Appears to Two Disciples [Emmaus disciples] 12-13

4. The Great Commission 14-18

In the talk of the Lord Jesus with His disciples after His resurrection, the following are to be noticed:

(1) The Lord rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart.

(2) Having enjoyed the work of the Resurrection within them, they were commanded to preach the gospel to the whole world and to every creature. The evangelist started his book with the voice of the

one crying in the wilderness and ended it with the Lord's invitation to preach to the world as a voice crying in the wilderness.

(3) Baptism, amalgamated with faith, is the main object of salvation

(4) He granted them possibilities, that are not their own, but gifts that support them in preaching.

5. Christ Ascends to God's Right Hand 19-20

The evangelist confirms that the Lord who ascended to heaven, is working with the preachers, and confirming the words through accompanying signs. Although He ascended up in glory, yet He continued to work so that the whole Church would ascend with Him and in Him and would enjoy the fellowship of His glories.

Remember, we are not our own. The earliest disciples realized this and moved by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, they changed the world. Imagine what you could do if you had the same frame of mind!

Let's pray that we can have the same kind of attitude and God can use us in the same way.

Application:

In this chapter, you focus on the resurrected Jesus who gave us life after death. He fixed the problem of sin and death that had entered humans a long time ago. We should remember the great salvation we received every time we approach His body and blood on the altar.

Optional illustrative fun experiment:

OBJECT LESSON: [Opening game]

Smooth plate, clear drinking glass, penny, votive candle, and colored water

Set the plate down.

For some of us, it might be hard to really understand what happened when Jesus died on the cross. What does that mean for you? Let's look at it this way: Imagine this is you.

Bring out the penny. Set it on the plate.

No matter how hard we try to be good, all of us have done bad things. We call this sin.

*Pour the colored water into the plate.**

Sin covers us up. We're drowning in it. There's no way out for us on our own. But then God sent his son, Jesus.

Place the lit candle onto the plate. The candle needs to be setting in the water but not covering the penny. Jesus came to be a light. He lived a perfect life. And then he died on the cross.

Place the drinking glass over the candle. (After a few seconds, the light will go out and then the water will soak up inside the glass.)

That amazing act of love takes our sin away. If we accept Jesus and ask for his forgiveness, he will forgive us of our sins. They are gone forever.

That's what Easter is all about.

The story of Easter:

- When you hear the word “Easter” it might bring to mind baskets full of jellybeans and chocolate bunnies. Or maybe Easter egg hunts in the backyard. Or maybe even putting on your Sunday best to come to church.
- But what is Easter really all about?
- God made the world and everything in it. He created Adam and Eve – the first people and he put them in a beautiful garden to live. The world was perfect. Adam and Eve had a good relationship with God – they got to see him and talk with him. The garden was filled with gentle animals and great food to eat. There was only one tree in the garden which God had said “do not eat from this tree.” God had given humans only one rule. And as we read, they couldn't even obey that one rule.
- In following the serpent's advice and eating the fruit, Eve and Adam had disobeyed God. The perfection that had been in the world was destroyed. People had brought sin into this world. Sin took away the good relationship that Adam and Eve had with God.
- Sin separates us from God. It creates this great distance between us – a gulf, a chasm. For thousands of years, people have tried to cross that distance. But we can't do it. That's the bad news.
- But here's the good news. We may not be able to cross the distance, but God can. And he did. God loves us so much. He wants to have a good relationship with us, like he had at the beginning with Adam and Eve. He doesn't want our sin to keep us away from him.
- So, the Father sent his son, Jesus, to earth. He came to earth so that he could make a way for us to have that good relationship with God again. But how could he do that?
- Jesus came to take our death for us. The word for that is sacrifice. Jesus died on the cross as the sacrifice for our sins. Jesus came to die for us, and he succeeded in his mission.
- After his death on Friday, he was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb that belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. For everyone involved, they thought that was the end of the story.
- Then on Sunday, Mary Magdalene went to visit the tomb. It's like when people go visit a cemetery. They go to visit the place where a loved one's body is buried.
- But when Mary got to the tomb, it was empty. There was no body to visit. Mary did not understand what had happened.
- Jesus is alive! He conquered death. He destroyed sin.
- Jesus is alive! If we put our trust in Jesus, he will give us new life with him. He will take away our sin. He will give us back that good relationship with God.
- Do you believe that he died for you and rose from the dead? Do you trust in him?
- If you answered “yes” then remember that Easter is a time to celebrate what Jesus did for us. Actually, every time we come to church; we can celebrate that. This news is too good not to celebrate all of the time. And to share with others.
- God loves us. He wants to have a good relationship with us. He sent Jesus to die for us and take away our sin. Jesus rose from the dead. This is happiness. This is good news. This is Easter.

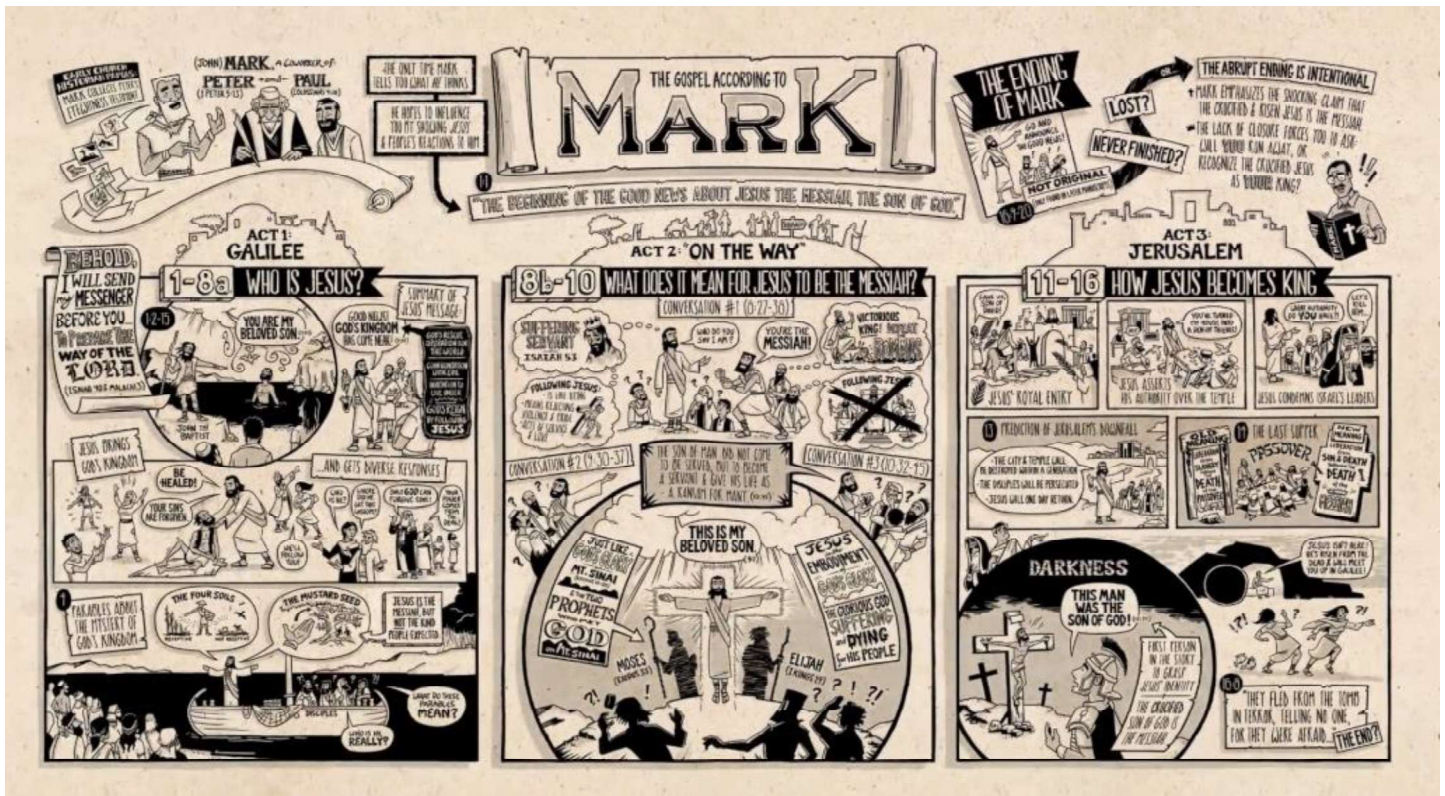
Memory Verse:

15 And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

VI. Summary of main points of the gospel:

let's review what we have covered so far.

- The book of Mark focuses on Jesus' service and sacrifice
- First Gospel written
- Omitted unimportant things to Gentiles like genealogy of Christ, fulfilled prophecy, references to the Law, and some Jewish customs
- Distinctive word of Mark's gospel, "immediately", which was used 40 times
- Miracles are predominant (show Christ's compassion) 18 of them
- Key verses: Mark 10:43-45; Mark 8:34-37
- Gives a crisp and fast moving look at Christ
- 40% of the book focuses on the last 8 days of Christ's life



THE END