

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
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

<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.

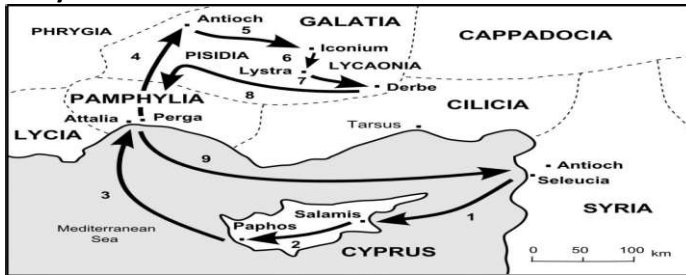
- ❖ The pagan mob rose in anger, which compelled St. Mark to leave Alexandria to Perga (Lybia), and from there he headed to Rome, where he joined St. Peter and St. Paul, to remain with them until their martyrdom in the year 64 A.D.
- ❖ When St. Mark returned to Alexandria in the year 65 A.D. to find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

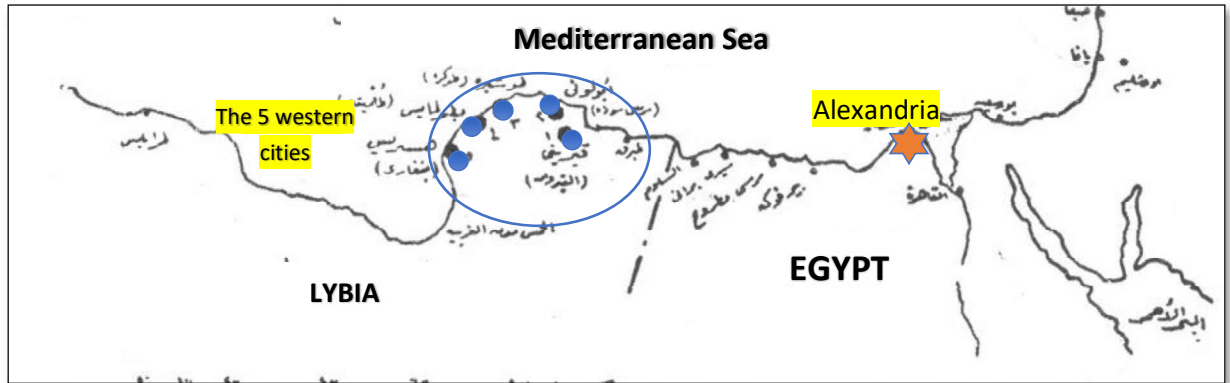
- ❖ It is believed to be the oldest of the four Gospels written between the years 65 to 70 A.D.
- ❖ While in Rome, the people asked him to write a summary of what they had received by word of mouth, so he wrote it to the Romans after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- ❖ Writing his gospel to the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



## B. Chapter 2

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

A sermon about Chapter 2 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-z\\_fBdphaBk&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPg4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-z_fBdphaBk&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPg4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=3)

### **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.

### **Remember:**

Last lesson we studied how Jesus started His ministry on earth by getting baptized, fasting for 40 days then being tempted by the devil. Jesus showed His divine power through giving commands and immediately things happen like healing sick, casting demons, and calling His disciples. Today we will move to another powerful miracle that Jesus performed.

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

Christ had come to minister to the whole world, expounding His work in divine love and without limit. But His loving acts faced opposition, opposition to His authority, His behavior, His rites of worshipping, and His obedience to the law of the Sabbath.

- 1) Opposing His authority: Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic 1-12
- 2) Opposing His behavior: Matthew the Tax Collector and His love to sinners 13-17
- 3) Opposing His rites of worshipping: Jesus Is Questioned About Fasting 18-22
- 4) Accusing Him of not keeping the Sabbath: Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath 23-28

This chapter includes four negative questions, intended to raise doubts about the Lord's authority, His behavior, His rites of worshipping, and His obedience of the Law: These questions are:

- A- *"Why does this man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"* (verse 7).
- B- *"How is it that He eats and drinks with tax-collectors and sinners?"* (verse 16).
- C- *"Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"* (verse 18).
- D- *"Why do they (Your disciples) do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"* (verse 24).

These questions were presented, yet the questioners did not wait for answers. Their intention was just to attack Lord Christ. His supreme acts of love were not rewarded with thanks and love, but with insults and false accusations. Despite that, the Master did not forsake His love or refrain from laying down His life, even for the sake of His adversaries.





### **Lesson overview:**

In this chapter, Jesus heals the paralytic man which we will talk about shortly, then He saw Matthew the tax collector and how much love he had in his heart, so Jesus chose him to be one of the 12 and ate at his house with other sinners inviting them to repentance. The scribes and Pharisees always try to accuse Jesus of mistakes especially the one of breaking the law of the Sabbath. He explained to them that the Sabbath was made for man, not the man for the Sabbath as He is Lord of the Sabbath. Good deeds should not be delayed because it is the Sabbath.

### **Meditation:**

#### **1) Opposing His authority: Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic 1-12**

- A. The Evangelist St. Mark presents to us Lord Christ, the Authority. When He is in a house, it is filled with people until there is no longer room to receive more, not even near the door. This crowd came, not to flatter Him, or to get social or material gain, but to receive the word that proceeded from His mouth to satisfy their depths, and to heal their inner wounds. That is the Messiah, the Minister of humanity with His word of love and unfailing services.
- B. Some scholars believe that if the sick man was healed because of the faith of the four men who brought him, that the paralytic demonstrated his faith, by his consent to be carried and lowered from the roof. These four men refer to the Church as a whole: Three are the orders of the clergy (bishops, priests, and deacons) and congregation. All are bound to work together with one spirit, in order to bring forward every paralytic soul to Lord Christ.
- C. St. John Chrysostom complimented these men, saying: [They placed the sick man before the Lord, without uttering a word, leaving everything to Him .] With the same spirit, Miriam and Martha sent a message to the Lord, saying: “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick” (Jn. 11:3). How wonderful to surrender our prayers before the Lord, with a true faith that “His will be done,” believing that He cares for us, and will grant us much more than we ask for!
- D. The Scribes should have rejoiced, to see the paralytic enjoy the grace of remission of his sins and healing of his soul. Yet, having been blinded by their ego, they saw in what the Lord said, a blasphemy and an escape from healing the body. So, they said: “Why does this man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mk. 2:7). The Lord did not

adopt an adversarial position towards them. But with His infinite love, He desired to heal their souls with that of the paralytic:

- E. So, He clarified two things: First, that He knew their thoughts. He said to them; “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? (verse 8), assuming that they might comprehend that He is capable of forgiving sins. Secondly, to correct their belief that healing the body is more difficult than healing the soul. That is why, by healing the visible body, He proved that He is capable of healing the soul and forgiving sins, which are much more difficult, and not visible.
- F. St. John Chrysostom says, [He confused them with their very words; as though He was saying to them: ‘You proclaimed that forgiveness of sins is for God alone; Therefore, you can no longer question my identity<sup>1</sup> .] “But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins He said to the paralytic: ‘I say to you, arise, take up your bed and go your way to your house.” (verses 10, 11).

## **2) Opposing His behavior: Matthew the Tax Collector and His love to sinners 13-17**

- ❖ The Lord went out by the sea to be surrounded by the multitude to hear His words. Yet, in the midst of His time with them, He did not forget someone by the name of ‘Levi, the son of Alphaeus,’ who was sitting at the tax office, with his heart weighed down by the love of money, and his soul soiled by greed. He had no interest but to increase his wealth on his brothers’ expense. He was in need of a word from the Master’s mouth to set him free of his inner bonds to kindle his depths, to compel him to leave everything and follow Christ, his Savior; and even to convince him to call others to join him in enjoying that encounter.
- ❖ The scribes and Pharisees protested against His conduct, assuming that it constituted a violation of the Law as it was unfit for clean hands to eat together with unclean ones (sinners). They were not aware that the Lord’s hands are the grantors of sanctification. St. Cyril the Great says: [Why did the Pharisees blame the Savior for eating together with the sinners? for the Law differentiated between the unclean and the clean. And the Pharisees thought that they ought not embrace both, thus they demanded that Christ should keep the Law of Moses. But their protest was not honestly for the sake of the Law but was out of envy and malice. But He evaded them and responded to their evil intention with a good one. Telling them that He did not come to condemn but as a Physician to heal. That is why, as a Physician, He had to approach the sick to heal them.
- ❖ He is the Physician of the sick and Savior of the sinners!

## **3) Opposing His rites of worshipping: Jesus Is Questioned About Fasting 18-22**

- ❖ Some interpret the words of Christ to mean that when a person walks in the Spirit, with a holy heart in the Lord, he would be, as if in a wedding banquet, full of joy for his Christ. But when he sins, he would feel as if the Bridegroom departed from him. That would push him to practice the labor of repentance with persistent groaning until the Lord renews his joy through His presence in his heart. Fasting, therefore, is not just abstaining from certain kinds of food, but rather practicing repentance with all its labors inside the heart - namely, regret, crying and motions.

- ❖ He had proclaimed that His disciples would fast when the Bridegroom was taken away from them. When they do so, it would be with a new understanding worthy of the New Covenant. Thus, after His Ascension, the Holy Spirit descended upon them and transformed each into a new garment or a new wineskin; that carries the new nature in the image of their Creator and practices worship with a new mind.
- ❖ Thus, the fast of the new covenant, a deprivation of the body became in the New Covenant, the liberation of the soul and refreshment of the inner heart. In other words, the Lord did not want His disciples to practice fasting in its new concept while they were still 'old garment' or 'old wineskin.' But, with the renewal of their lives through His Ascension and condescension of His Holy Spirit upon them, they would be able to practice fasting with a new and fit Christian mind.

#### 4) **Accusing Him of not keeping the Sabbath: Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath 23-28**

He confirmed to them that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and the Maker of the Law. He made the Law not to master man by its killing lettering, but to serve him. If He, the Son of God, became the Son of Man for the sake of man, would He not put the Sabbath at the service of man?!

#### **Application:**

In this chapter, you will focus on the miracle of the paralytic man. He and his friends had a simple request to be healed but Jesus gave them far beyond their request. He gave him forgiveness of sins along with the physical healing. Similarly, we may have many requests in prayers, but always remember that God is planning to give us more than what we ask even though it might look different but it is far better as He knows what is best in every situation. Let us not feel disappointed when He doesn't respond but tell Him that we know He is planning for our lives much better than what we request for ourselves

Prayer Place: Say: **Because Jesus is our friend, we're never alone. We can do all kinds of things like love others and tell others about Jesus. Jesus is always with us, ready to help us. Jesus gives us more than what we ask for. We ask for success, He might give us the best grade, we ask for a friend, He might let you make 5 friends... think of other examples** (servant, you may use your own words)

#### **MAKING IT REAL**

I want you to imagine that this story is not in the Bible. The paralytic man stays paralyzed. Jesus never healed him. Why may that be? One reason may be because his friends didn't bother to find a way to take him to Jesus. Another may be that they lacked the faith to do it. Could you blame them? What they did was not easy! In fact, they were in danger of a lot of public criticism and embarrassment. Moreover, they were in danger of embarrassing Jesus. Remember, this is early in His ministry. What if the healing hadn't worked? We'd be left with a failed miracle, a humiliated and paralyzed man, and some devastated friends.

#### **General Discussion:**

- Put yourself in the friends' shoes. What were some reasons not to try? (*We figured there was nothing that could be done, he's too hurt to heal, we would never be able to reach Jesus, we can't get to Him so we might as well give up, we can't tear a hole in someone else's roof, etc.*)

- In what way are these excuses like the excuses we offer when we have the opportunity to tell someone about Jesus or to demonstrate Jesus in our lives to that person? (*There's nothing we can do, our friends are "too lost," it's too much work, it's someone else's problem, haven't we done enough, etc.*)
- There are lots of things that can come up in life that cause us to lose faith. What are some that keep you from getting your friends to Jesus? (*Busy, scared, afraid of what the crowd will think, etc.*)
- Without the four friends, how is this story different? (*The crippled man stays crippled.*)
- Whose faith was it that saved the paralytic? (*The friends' faith.*)
- How can your faith result in others being saved?

Honestly, are you willing to go around any obstacle to reach someone who is lost? Often, serving Christ requires sacrifice. These men risked public embarrassment, expense for the roof, and angry attendees below. However, their task was more important. Is that any less true for us? Is the task of telling others about the love of Jesus more important than anything else that gets in the way? Let us ask God to increase our love for others so that we would be willing to go around any obstacle to see them healed.

Is it possible that the reaction of verse 12 could be heard in your school, your neighborhood, your family? Is it possible that people could witness a miracle, because you had the faith to overcome obstacles?

**Memory Verse:**

***"When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." Mark 2:5***