

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 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.'

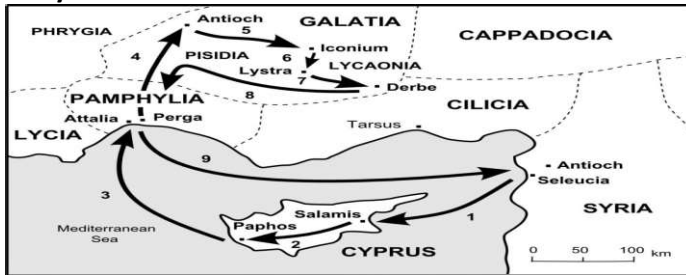
### **The message and features of the Gospel:**

- ❖ 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).

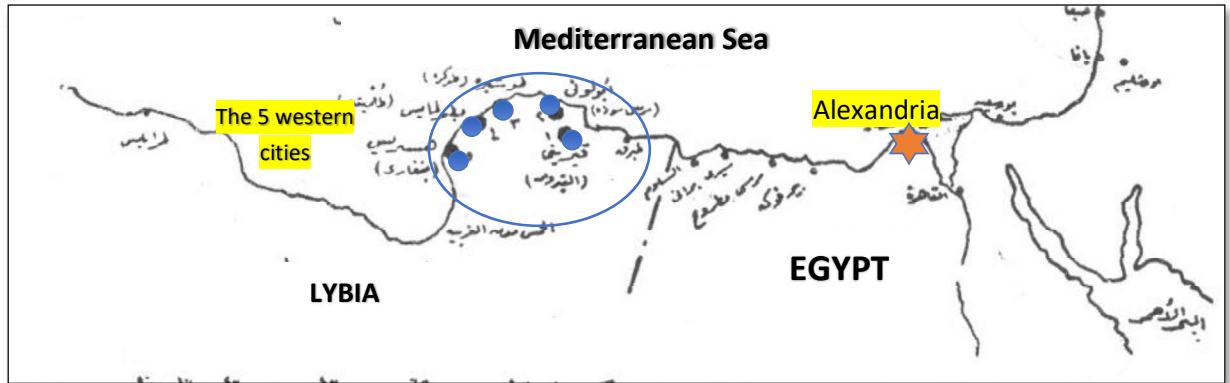


# I. St Mark Proclamation Maps

## 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



## III. Unit: 2

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

- ✓ 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, comforted even the Gentiles.
- ✓ St. Mark recorded many conversations and questions that revealed Jesus's person and mission in chapters 8 to 10.
- ✓ Through His transfiguration, He acknowledged His kingdom

### A. Chapter 7

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

A sermon about Chapter 7 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o78igbnNKk&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=7>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NREX4VaQwHI&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=8>

#### **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 experienced how God cared about our other needs not only our spiritual needs. He gives us in abundance like He had fed the 5000. Jesus came to cover all our needs.

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

1. Defilement Comes from Within 1-23
2. A Gentile Shows Her Great Faith 24-30
3. Jesus Heals a Deaf-Mute 31-37





## Lesson overview:

- ❖ In this chapter, Jesus explained how things that go into the body can not make it unclean but things we say out of the mouth, coming from the heart could make us unclean. This is opposite to what the Jewish leaders taught. According to the elder's tradition, no one is allowed to eat unless they wash their hands, Jesus is not against eating with clean hands, but He wanted to point out that what comes out is more important for eternal life. The Jews used to explain the commandment of honoring your parents in a wrong way, instead of treating your parents with love and care, they taught the people that they can just give gifts to the temple instead of honoring their parents. Those gifts go to the priests. Jesus told them that their teachings are misleading and not according to God's intent.
- ❖ Jesus also declared the great faith of the Canaan woman who begged Him to heal her daughter and He did the miracle because of her strong faith. He told her "it is not good to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the little dogs" to test her faith but she acknowledged that she is willing to eat the crumbs off the table. This shows how humble she is.

## Meditation:

### **1. Defilement Comes from Within 1-23**

- ❖ The Master did not criticize the act of washing in itself, but He criticized getting preoccupied with it, at the expense of inner washing, caring for literal traditions at the expense of the commandment in its depths
- ❖ The Lord Christ criticized the Jews for keeping the killing formalities, under the pretension of holding the tradition; as they were like those who honor God with their lips, while their hearts are far away from Him.
- ❖ When a Jew washed his hands for purification, he used to get water in a clean stone trough according to the rite, then raise his hands upwards, and pour on them some water, then lowers them downwards, and pours more water over the wrists, to get down over the fingers. A Jew used to believe that, unless he does that accurately, he will be possessed by an unclean spirit, by the name of 'Shipta,' to be cursed eventually with poverty and destruction
- ❖ There is no doubt, that the Pharisees' criticism for Christ's disciples, concerning eating without washing their hands, was only out of hypocrisy, as they did not really stand the disciples who freed themselves of these formalities.
- ❖ But He revealed to them, from the Law and prophets, that they are acting out of hypocrisy, breaking the Lord's commandment, and in need of a physician to cure them of their ailment. He presented them with a serious example of their deviation; that they allow anybody to refrain from subsidy of his parents, with the excuse that he has, instead, presented it as a 'Corban' to God. By doing that, he is actually breaking God's commandment, concerning the honoring of parents, supported in this by the deceiving tradition of elders, which is really aiming towards increasing the money coming to the temple, which they get a lion's share of. Therefore, that tradition, was not meant to keep God's commandment, but to oppose and destroy it.

### **2. A Gentile Shows Her Great Faith 24-30**

The conversation between the Phoenician woman and Jesus carried a message for the Jews. From one side, He came to offer to the Jews, the children's bread; yet they rejected the heavenly bread; and from the other side, the Jews used to despise the Gentiles, counting them as unclean like dogs, although they, by their faith, enjoy what the children do not.

### 3. Jesus Heals a Deaf-Mute 31-37

Spitting and touching his tongue, refer to the gift of Divine wisdom, granted by God to humanity, to be able to speak of the wisdom and works of God.

#### **Application:**

- ❖ In this chapter, you would like to focus on the effect of the tongue. Our words can hurt others, can cause us to sin as the tongue shows what is in the heart. We should put a filter on our tongue and think before we talk. (if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all!).
- ❖ **Activity:** Take a tube of toothpaste. Invite someone to squirt out some of it (into a cup or napkin). Ask another to place the toothpaste back into the tube. This is rather impossible, isn't it? The same is true of our words. Once we speak something, we can't just take it back. We must think BEFORE we speak, asking ourselves if what we are about to say is holy, truthful, positive, uplifting... (consider Philippians 4:8).
- ❖ "What's the tongue got to do with it?" This is an old classic saying that seems to always serve as crowd pleaser, but it is not true. The tongue does a lot.
- ❖ The things we say can have huge rippling impact on those around us. Have you ever played "telephone"? Well, the way information mutates can cause rampant gossip and ill feelings to run wild around us.
- ❖ Would you cook in a toilet? Or could you get apples from an orange tree, or sweet tea from a Coke machine? What we are saying here is that we can't be acting like we love and worship God and turn around and badmouth our peers. We need to make sure our mouths are clean, meaning good things come out of them. We don't eat dog's poop (hopefully). So, let's not let it come out of our mouths, either.

#### ***Memory Verse:***

***15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man***