

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

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.

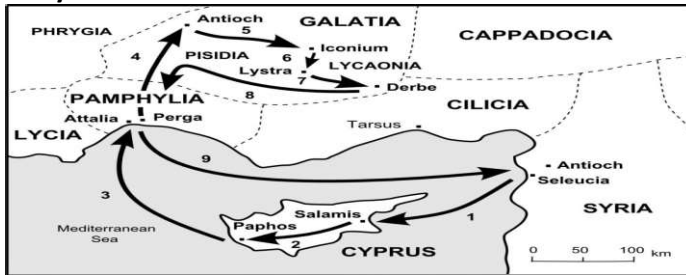
- ❖ The pagan mob rose in anger, which compelled St. Mark to leave Alexandria to Perga (Lybia), and from there he headed to Rome, where he joined St. Peter and St. Paul, to remain with them until their martyrdom in the year 64 A.D.
- ❖ When St. Mark returned to Alexandria in the year 65 A.D. to find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

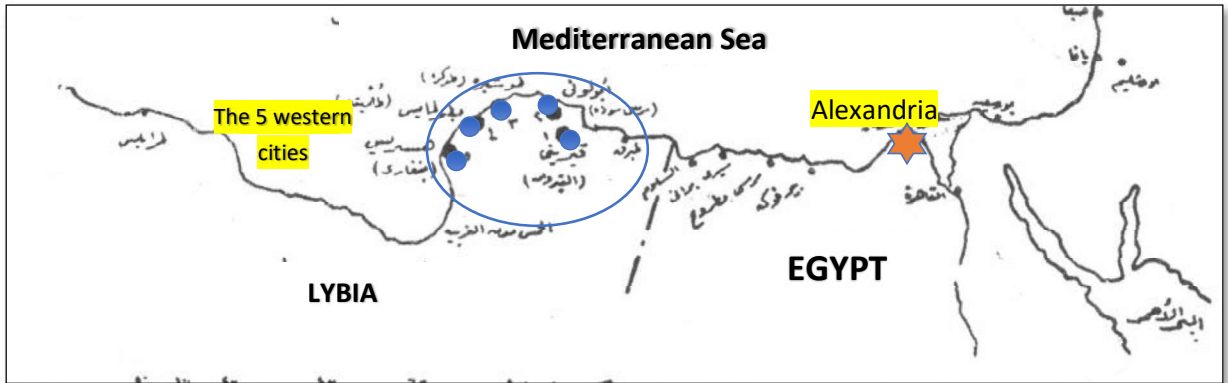
- ❖ It is believed to be the oldest of the four Gospels written between the years 65 to 70 A.D.
- ❖ While in Rome, the people asked him to write a summary of what they had received by word of mouth, so he wrote it to the Romans after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- ❖ Writing his gospel to the 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 8

Servant's preparation:

A sermon about Chapter 8 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16vxV0frr0k&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=9>

Brief introduction:

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

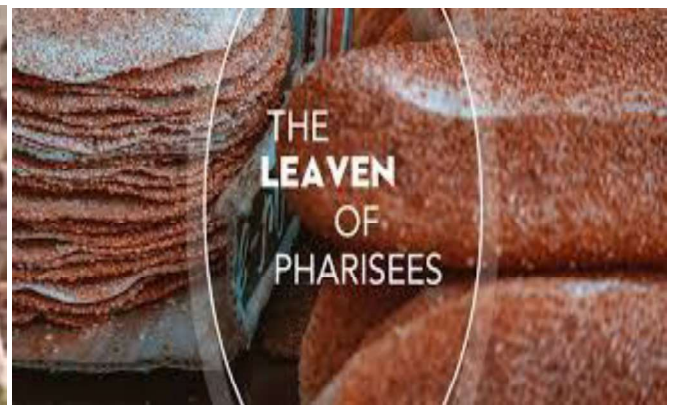
- ✓ Who is St. Mark? He was one of the 70 apostles whose house was the 1st church Jesus used and who later preached in many countries including Egypt where our Coptic church originated.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Romans
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? To show the great power of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

Remember:

Last lesson we talked about how to tame our tongue and that words coming out of the month can be either helpful or hurtful. We used a tooth paste game to conclude that things that come out easy might not go back inside easy or not at all. We also talked about the Canaan woman with the great faith who asked Jesus to heal her daughter, 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 was willing to eat the crumbs off the table. This showed how humble she was.

Main points in the Chapter:

1. Feeding the Four Thousand 1-10
2. Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod 11-21
3. A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida 22-26
4. Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ 27-30
5. Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection 31-33
6. Take Up the Cross and Follow Him 34-38



Lesson overview:

In this chapter, Jesus wants us to focus more on our eternal life, He fed 4000 men with 7 fishes and 7 baskets of leftovers were collected. He warned His disciples of the leaven of the Pharisees. Leaven starts small then causes the bread to rise and puff, just like little sins if left without repentance. Jesus knows what we need on earth and wants us not to worry about it but remember to carry the cross and follow Him to be glorified in heaven. He proclaimed to His disciples about His death and resurrection, but Peter got angry as he thought no one should suffer. Jesus told him, when you think this way, you are pleasing Satan because going to heaven requires us to work hard and may be suffer on earth for God's name.

Meditation:

1. Feeding the Four Thousand 1-10

St. Augustine says: [The 7 loaves mean the 7 works of the Holy Spirit; the 4000 men are the Church built on the 4 Gospels; and the 7 baskets with the leftover fragments are the perfection of the Church.]

2. Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod 11-21

St. John Chrysostom: [They asked for a sign, not to believe, but to test Him. If the adversaries had been ready to receive faith, He would have given them the sign they asked for2]

The Lord sighed deeply in His Spirit, and said: 'Why does this generation seek a sign?' As though, in bitterness, He sees that the generation, which should have been preaching the Gospel and teaching the world about salvation through the Cross, had deviated from that mission to testing the Lord, as did their fathers before them.

3. A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida 22-26

- ❖ Bethsaida was known for its lack of faith, spiritually likened to that blind man.
- ❖ The Lord Christ leading the blind man out of the town may represent a divine invitation to us to live, not for our own sake, but for His, He who loved us and died for us.
- ❖ When healing the blind man, the Lord spat on his eyes, and then put His hands on him. The first act refers to the wisdom coming out of His mouth, and the second, to the need for His divine hands, or His godly capabilities for the work.
- ❖ The Lord Christ asked Him if he saw anything, not that He needed him to know what he sees because the Lord already knows everything. Rather he did it to exhort him to believe, as He did before when He asked Adam, 'Where are you?' not to know his location, but to give him the chance to repent. Because of his weak faith, his vision was not perfect; so, he needed to ask the Lord for help. He answered saying that he sees men like trees, walking (v. 24). He sees, yet without discernment; that is why the Lord put His hands on him another time, granting him that gift, to be able to see everything clearly.

4. Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ 27-30

Peter was able, through a divine proclamation, to recognize "Jesus" as "Christ" on His way to the towns of Caesarea Philippi (v. 27), the center of Baal and Greek pagan worship and Roman authority. Yet, it was not possible for Peter to apprehend the Person of Christ as a Redeemer to be crucified for the sake of humanity which he will raise with Him because that was completely rejected by the Jewish way of thinking. Thus, the Lord Christ hastened to correct that concept.

5. Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection 31-33

6. Take Up the Cross and Follow Him 34-38

He asked them to bear the Cross with Him, through denying themselves. Self-denial means not getting involved in oneself by worrying about the future, fearing sickness, tribulation, or death. It means to be strict with the 'self,' refraining from enjoying the lusts of the flesh.

He offered them the reward; Whoever acknowledges Him through his life and takes up the cross, will receive the fellowship of His glories on the final advent of Christ. On the other hand, for him who is ashamed of His Cross and rejects His commandment in this world, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him on the day of His great glory

Application:

In this chapter, you will focus on Verse 34-36, Jesus wants us to follow Him.

- ❖ These verses begin a new section of Mark's gospel. Up to this point, the disciples have been somewhat clueless as to what Jesus is doing and who He is (i.e., feeding of 5,000, then feeding of 4,000, Parable of the Sower, etc.). The second half of Mark's gospel deals a lot with enlightening the disciples.
- ❖ The story of the blind man is likely put into place here to fit in with what Jesus was teaching the disciples in the next section. He was not only curing physical blindness, but also the spiritual blindness of the disciples.
- ❖ This passage is a turning point for the disciples. From here on out, Jesus focuses on the cost He will pay as Savior to the world. The disciples each begin to realize that their idea for a Messiah is not the same as God's plan.
- ❖ In order to see clearly, we need to deny ourselves and change our ideas of what God should do for us, take up our cross, be willing to accept the consequences that come along with being a Christian, and follow Him and His Will for us.

General Discussion:

- In your daily life, how does denying yourself and following Christ work? What does that look like?
- Who does it mean is in charge—you or Jesus? (*Jesus*)
- Why do you think so few Christians really embrace this lifestyle?

Consider how this may influence career choices, extracurricular activities, relationships, and daily habits. Fortunately, God wants us to turn over to Him not only the parts of our lives that are what we want, but also those parts that cause us frustration, worry, and concern. God wants it all -- our joys, our hurts, and our pain. And He promises to make something beautiful out of us in the process. The life of a disciple is demanding, but it is also deeply fulfilling. Consider your own reasons for being a Christian.

Lesson illustration

<https://youtu.be/dFn1N0tnzyQ> [This link has slides representing the following talk so you can use parts of it if needed.]

There are three commandments in Mark 8:34 that lead up to our Lord's question. We will consider each of these commandments, because if we keep them, we will save our souls. Otherwise, we might gain much temporarily in this world, but forfeit our souls and eternal life.

1 "Desire to Come After Me"

- ❖ Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after me..." (Mark 8:34). Jesus doesn't mean that this desire is optional. Rather, this desire is *essential* to saving your soul.
- ❖ Jesus defines the desire as "to come after me" (Mark 8:34). By this Jesus means that he is going somewhere, and you can go there too, at a later time. He was predicting his death and resurrection followed by his ascension. He has gone on into heaven before us. He promises that we can "come after" him. We will do that "when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).
- ❖ However, for that to happen, we must *desire* it, Jesus says, "If you desire to save your soul, you will lose it" (Mark 8:35). Jesus isn't here speaking of salvation to eternal life, but of saving your soul from the pains of discipleship —from carrying a cross.
- ❖ You can desire pleasure and power in this world to save your soul from suffering here. But that profits you nothing, for you lose your soul in the next world. Or you can desire to bear your cross in this world so that your soul will be saved in the next.

2 "Deny Yourself and Take Up Your Cross"

- ❖ The second commandment is to translate desire into *dedication*. Jesus says, "deny yourself and take up your cross..." (Mark 8:34). We all know that you must sacrifice much to gain much.
- ❖ Jesus expects you to deny yourself, and he doesn't mean denying yourself chocolate. He means dedicating yourself to him at the expense of your very soul. Lose your soul to save it. He denied himself and carried a cross for you. Now it's your turn.
- ❖ This doesn't mean you have to give up the things that are normal and needful in this life, such as education, career, material possessions, food and healthful activities, rest, and recreation, caring for others. But these things must be secondary and fit Jesus's framework, not a "me first" framework.
- ❖ We have to make decisions – important decisions, tough decisions, decisions that will determine our eternal destiny. They are, indeed, "major." And, right there in the middle of these instructions is the Christ's question about what it profits a man if he could gain the whole world and lose his own soul in the process. Well, what is the answer? In the big picture of things, what *would* it profit him? Jesus' inquiry causes us to think about what really matters most in life. In our heart of hearts, just what is it that ranks right up there in the top position on our list of "most important stuff?"
- ❖ If a woman could become the richest female in history, but in the process rebels against God and loses her soul, what profit would there be for her to have heaps of gold and the happiness of being so rich that she cannot possibly count all of her money?
- ❖ If a Christian couple can gather mountains of money, but when it comes to contributing to the Lord's work, they give like beggars, what shall it profit them to have gigantic sums of wealth if they only give God their leftover crumbs and ultimately lose their souls?

- ❖ If two Christian men who are brothers in the flesh run a business that has been in their family for three generations, and they take that business to a financial level that brings them outrageous sums of money in annual profits, but they make a bunch of their profit by dishonesty and other immoral practices, not to mention the fact that, due to their job commitments, they only attend 25% of the services of the church (because a fellow has to make a little living, you know) – *what, what, what* does all of their money profit them, if in the end they lose their souls?!

3 “Follow Me”

- ❖ The third commandment gives *direction* to desire and dedication. Jesus says, “and follow me” (Mark 8:34). This is not the ultimate following of Christ into heaven that we discussed earlier but following Christ’s teaching and example while in this world.
- ❖ This same Peter was the one Jesus rebuked before asking the question, “What shall it profit...?” Jesus said to Peter, “Get behind me Satan! You are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men” (Mark 8:33).
- ❖ Jesus is aware that following him is not easy. There's a lot of opposition along the way. But he says, “If you are ashamed of me and my words in this sinful and adulterous generation, the Son of Man will in turn be ashamed of you when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels” (Mark 8:38).
- ❖ It profits you nothing to follow the world. So, although the journey is difficult, follow Jesus. And remember, “Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14).

Memory Verse:

35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. OR

36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?