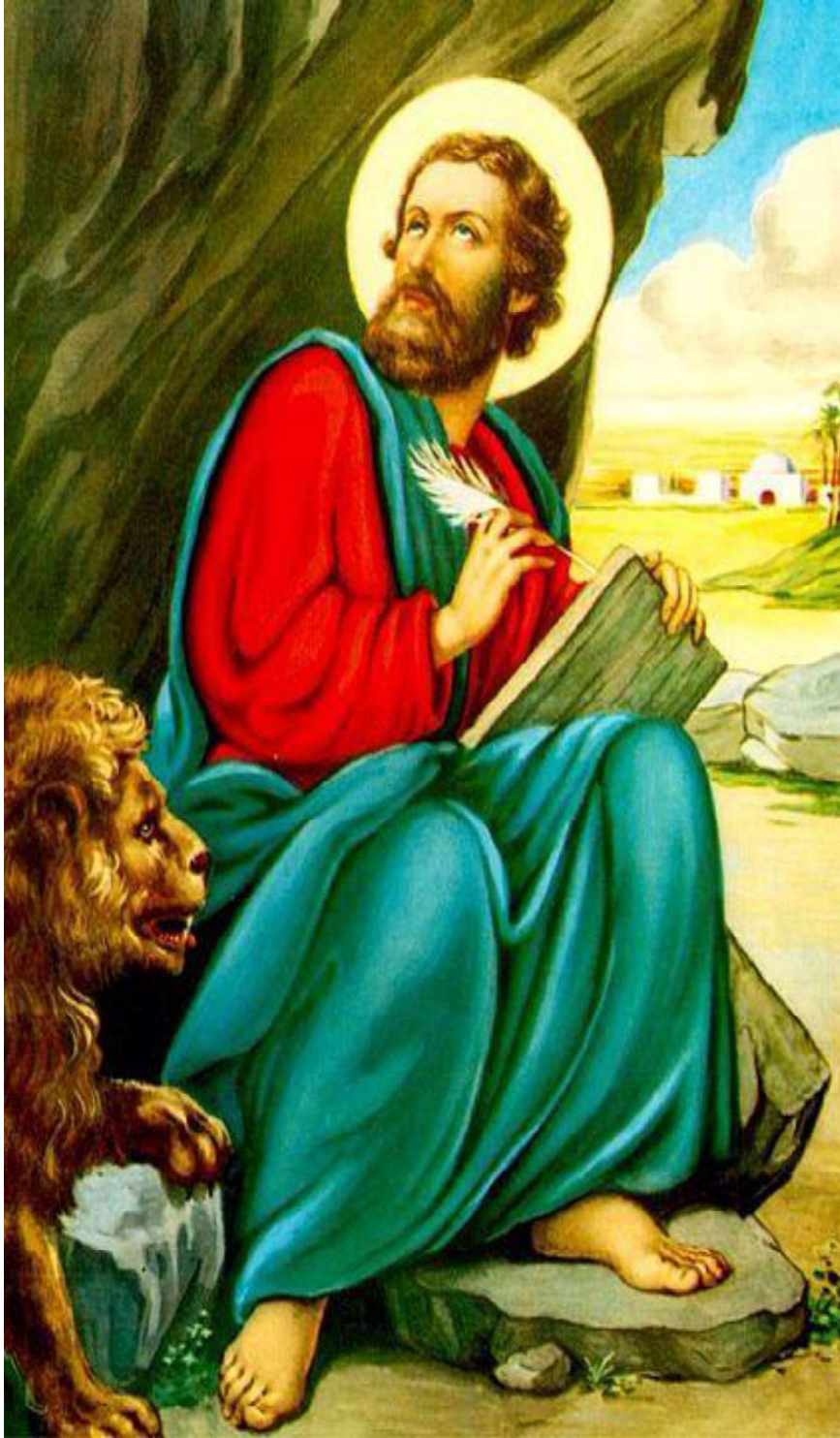


The Gospel According to St. Mark
Bible study Curriculum for Elementary Ministry



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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



An 8 minutes illustrative video that could be used by servants to prepare or to show the kids a part at the beginning of each unit. Use only till minute 8:20, as the last part is not verified.
<https://youtu.be/HGHqu9-DtXk>

Servant's preparation:

A link to 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 introductory sermon to the Gospel of St. Mark by Abouna Daoud Lamei in English:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibq9HrbU1b8&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy>

Who is St. Mark?

- ❖ He was born in Libya near Egypt to Jewish parents.
- ❖ He is a relative to St. Barnabas and to St. Peter, the disciple.
- ❖ He moved to Jerusalem with his family while Jesus was preaching.
- ❖ His house was the first church where Jesus instituted the Eucharist with His disciples.
- ❖ His Jewish name is "John" while his Roman name is "Mark".

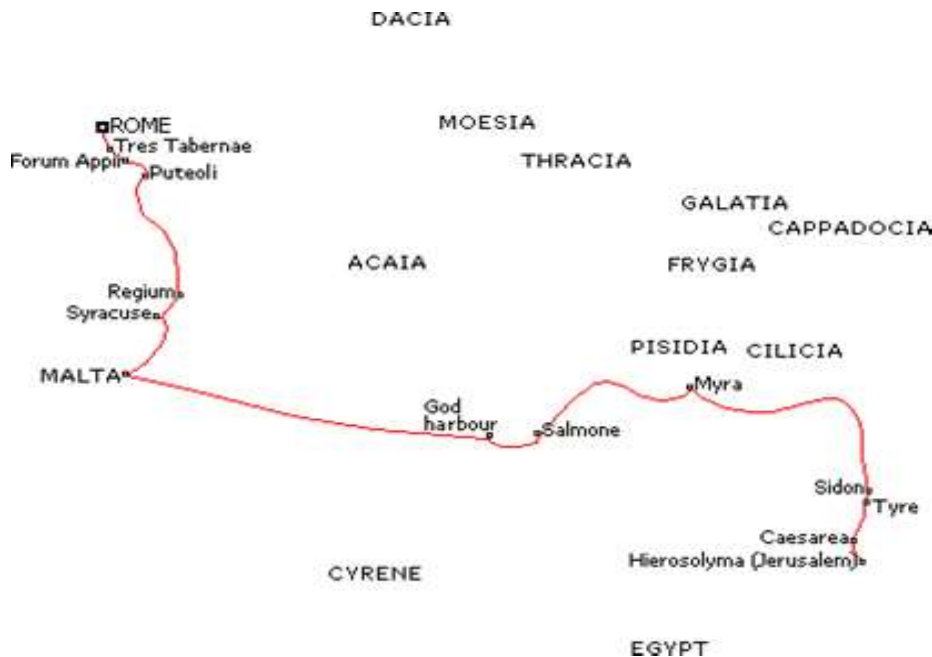
- ❖ He was chosen among the 70 apostles.
- ❖ He was with Jesus at Cana of Galilee wedding, Passover and when Jesus was arrested, he was the young follower who left his garment and ran away.

Why do we see a lion in his icon?

- ❖ St. Mark attracted his own father to Christianity when he struck two hungry lions dead with the sign of the cross.
- ❖ He started his gospel by describing John the Baptist as a lion roaring in the wilderness and he also portrayed Jesus as the Divine Master serving with power like a lion.

The message of the Gospel:

- ❖ He began his preaching with St. Peter in Jerusalem then joined St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first missionary journey. But he left them and returned to Jerusalem. Later he traveled with St. Barnabas to Cyprus. Afterwards, St. Paul needed St. Mark with him and they both preached in Colosse (Col 4:10), Rome (Phil 24; 2 Tim 4:11) and perhaps in Venice, from which St. Mark proceeded to Libya his homeland.
- ❖ In 61 A.D. he went to Egypt and established the church of Alexandria which we all belong to. Then he preached in Rome with St. Peter.
- ❖ 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 inspired by his teachings.
- ❖ Since he wrote his gospel to the Romans, he did not include many prophecies from the Old Testament as opposed to the gospel of St. Matthew which was written for the Jews and which therefore included many of those prophecies. St. Mark also explained in his gospel to the Romans many popular Jewish words and traditions.
- ❖ The Romans believed in authority and influence through war and violence, so he presented 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, He knows what's in the heart and mind of people 2:8, He speaks with authority 1:21, He feeds the multitude 6:30-44, and He is the destroyer of death 5:21-43. His authority is evident through love, service, humility, and through pain.



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) Resistance of His service (Chapter 2)
- 6) Jesus continued His preaching (Chapter 3)
- 7) The people marveled at His parables despite resistance from 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 trouble but to prepare his disciples' minds to accept the cross. He fed the multitude, healed whoever touched Him, 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 into Jerusalem (Chapter 11).
- 3) Resisting Him in Jerusalem (Chapter 12).
- 4) The cross and the signs of the end (Chapter 13).
- 5) The preparation for 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.



Chapter 13

Servant's preparation:

A sermon about Chapter 13 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abouna Daoud 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 demonstrated His Divine power.

Remember:

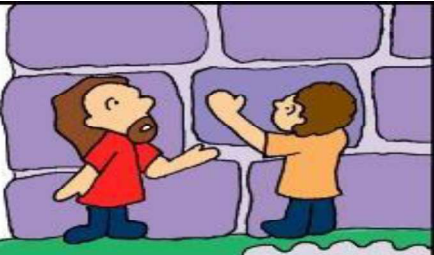
Last lesson we talked about many questions Jesus was asked but we focused more on the 2 most important commandments: Love God with all your heart and love your neighbor. We said that the neighbor could include family, friends, enemies, and everyone on earth. God wants us to keep Him as our top priority 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
2. The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age
3. The Great Tribulation
4. The Coming of the Son of Man
5. No One Knows the Day or Hour

Mark 13



As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him. "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and... buildings!" And Jesus said... "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down." v1-2



"Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" Jesus (said)... nation will rise up against nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines. These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs. For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of... creation... False Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray... the elect. v3-8, 19-22



...In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven... Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds... And then He... will gather together His elect... from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven... But of that day or hour no one knows... but the Father alone. Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come. v24-33

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 remains unbuilt and a mosque is built in its place. Jesus then mentions many signs that will happen before the end of the world, warning people that these signs could say that the end is near. But no one knows the day except God. That is why we have to repent and BE READY.

Goal we learn:

In this chapter, we mainly focus on the fact that we have to be ready, as we don't know the day the world will end. When someone dies, that is considered the end of the world for him/her as well since it's the end of his/her chance to repent and return to God.

Our church fathers advised us to consider every day in our lives as a potential last day. We should not 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, may we hear the angel say "Welcome, ..., come on in!!" We all hope and pray to be ready for that time.

Lesson delivery idea

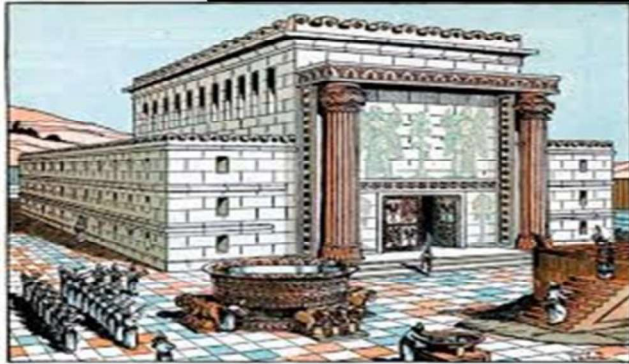
Signs of the end of the world:

1. Earthquakes, Famines, Plagues and Wars
2. The appearance of signs in heaven like the darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the 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

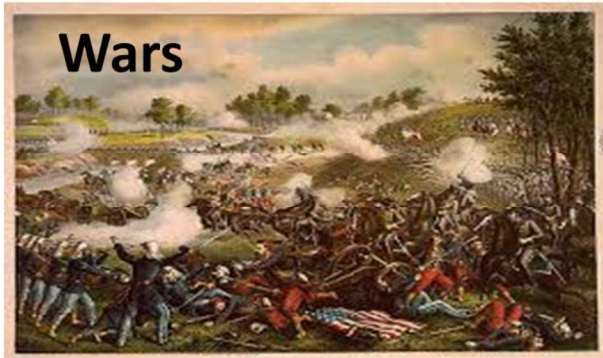
Sign	Exact meaning	Symbolic meaning
Destruction of the temple	It was destroyed in the year 70 AD by the Romans.	God rejects Jewish worship when Christianity is established.
Wars, earthquakes, and troubles	They happened before the year 70 AD and will happen before the end of the world due to evil and 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 reassuring news to know that the gospel will reach everywhere. It is a call for all of us to preach to others.
Abomination of desolation	When pagans bring idols into the temple. This happened when Antiochus the Greek was trying to offend the Jews	It might happen again with the Antichrist before the end of the world, when he tries to

	by sacrificing to his pagan idols in the temple.	offend Christians 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 70 AD.	It is a symbol of those who are weak in faith and might not endure the tribulation at the end of the world.

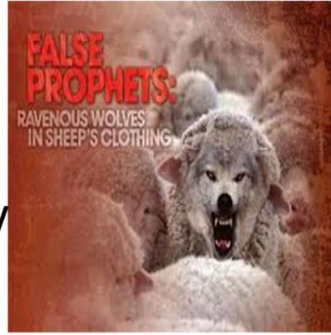
"Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down."



This happened 40 years later when Titus the roman emperor attacked Jerusalem and burnt the temple completely , all the gold covering it melted and not one stone remained attached



Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.



After all those signs, the time for the end is unpredictable and so fast.....

Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak.

When ?

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come”.



Discussion:

1. AROUND THE CIRCLE: As we get started, let's all take a second to share one thing we would definitely want to do before the world ends.
2. ASK: Why do you think someone would want to predict the end of the world?
3. ASK: Do you think it's a good idea or a bad idea to try and predict the end of the world? Why?
4. ASK: What do you think God wants us to be focused on between now and the end of the world?

NOTE: Let us stay focused on the topic at hand and that's teaching that no one can predict the end of the world. So Christians should focus on remaining faithful. Don't get sidetracked by every small detail. Keep your focus on the big picture.

5. ASK: 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: What are some of the signs Jesus says will accompany the end of the world? (*Earthquakes, wars and rumors of war, famines, the arrival of false Christs, the arrival of false prophets, etc.*)
7. ASK: When Jesus begins to answer their question about when it will happen, how does He start His answer? (*The answer is in verse 5.*) "Take heed that no one deceives you"
8. ASK: What does Jesus essentially tell His followers to do when they hear reports about the end of the world. (*Jesus says do not believe them.*)
9. ASK: 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: If you had to sum up verses 33-37, how would you do it?

11. ASK: 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: 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.

Game:

Give the kids certain tasks to be done in a specific time, let them try while the stopwatch is timing them. Those who finish on time, get a reward. The point is life on earth is timed, then people are judged for what they have accomplished in the time given to them.

Memory Verse:

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