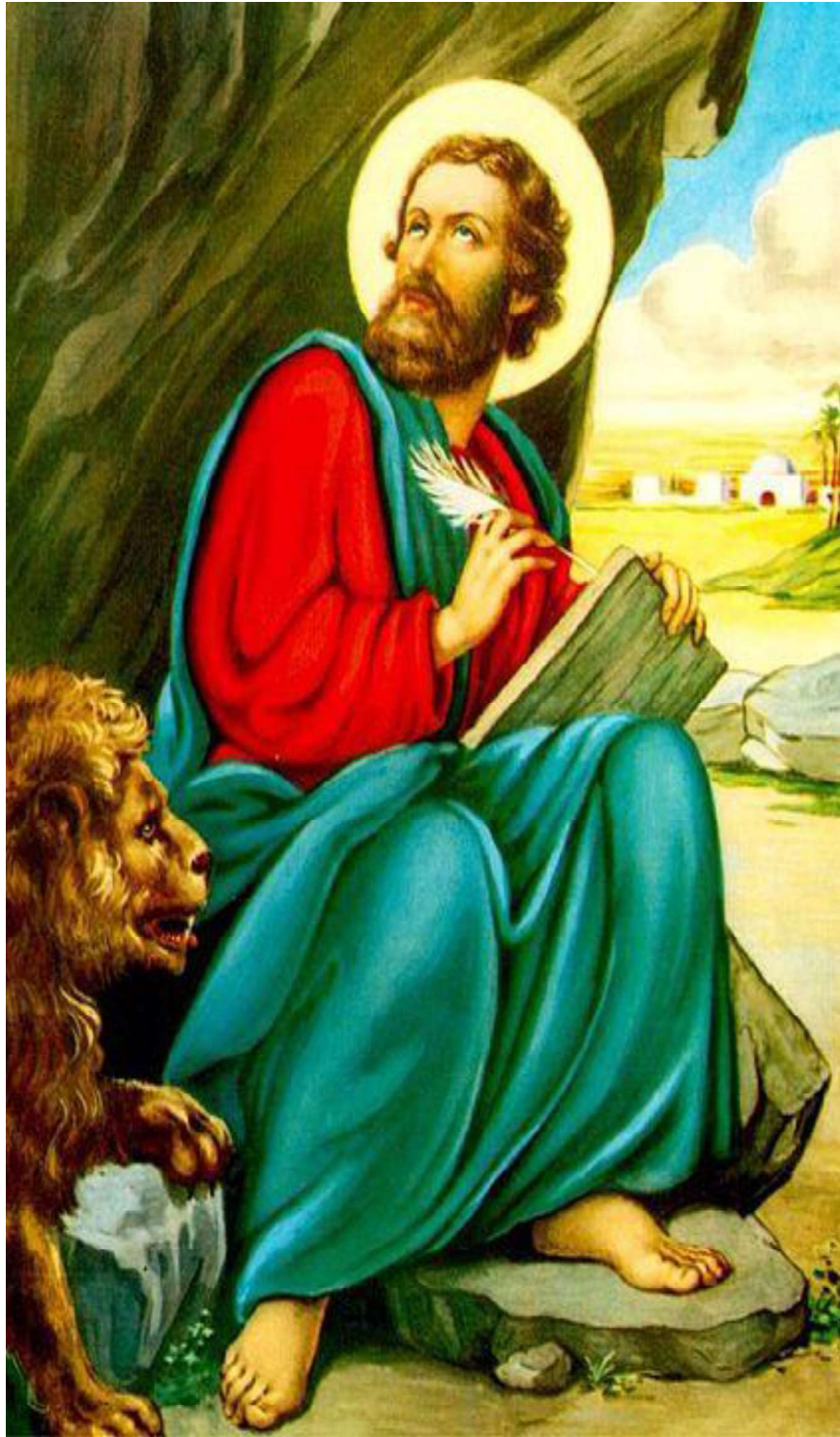


The Gospel According to St. Mark

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".

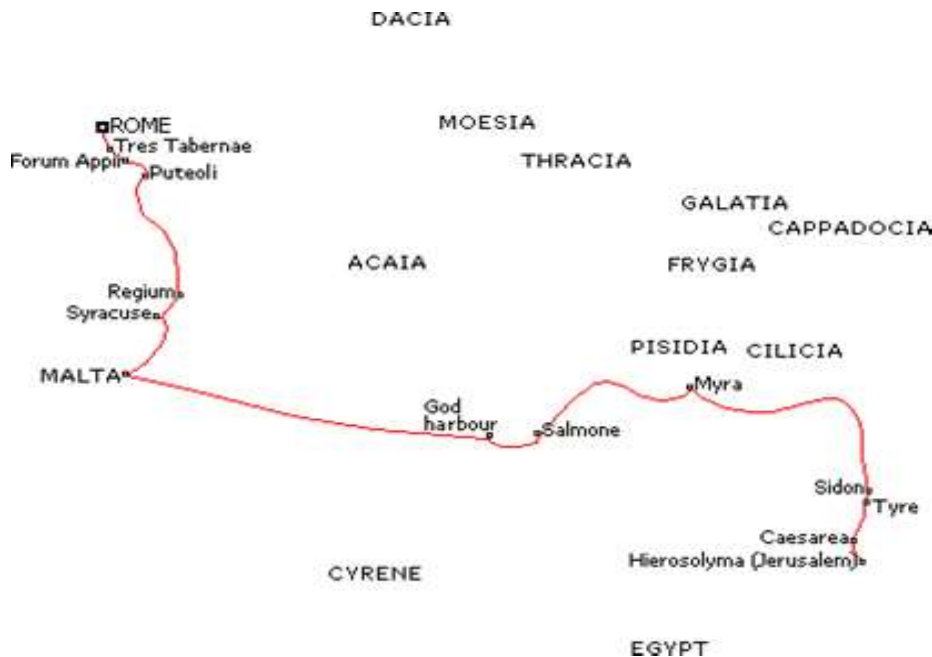
- ❖ He was chosen among the 70 apostles.
- ❖ He was with Jesus at Cana of Galilee wedding, Passover and when Jesus was arrested, he was the young follower who left his garment and ran away.

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 3

Servant's preparation:

A sermon about Chapter 3 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abouna Daoud Lamei in English
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=an85JaFlwg&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=4>

Brief introduction:

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

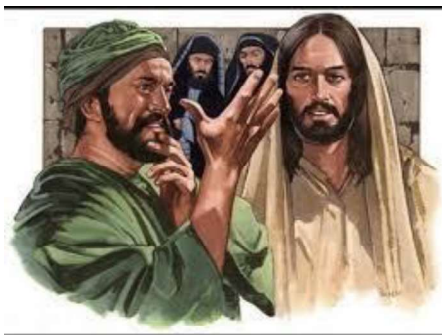
- ✓ Who is St. Mark? He was one of the 70 apostles whose house was the 1st church Jesus used and who later preached in many countries including Egypt where our Coptic church originated.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Romans
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? To show the great power of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

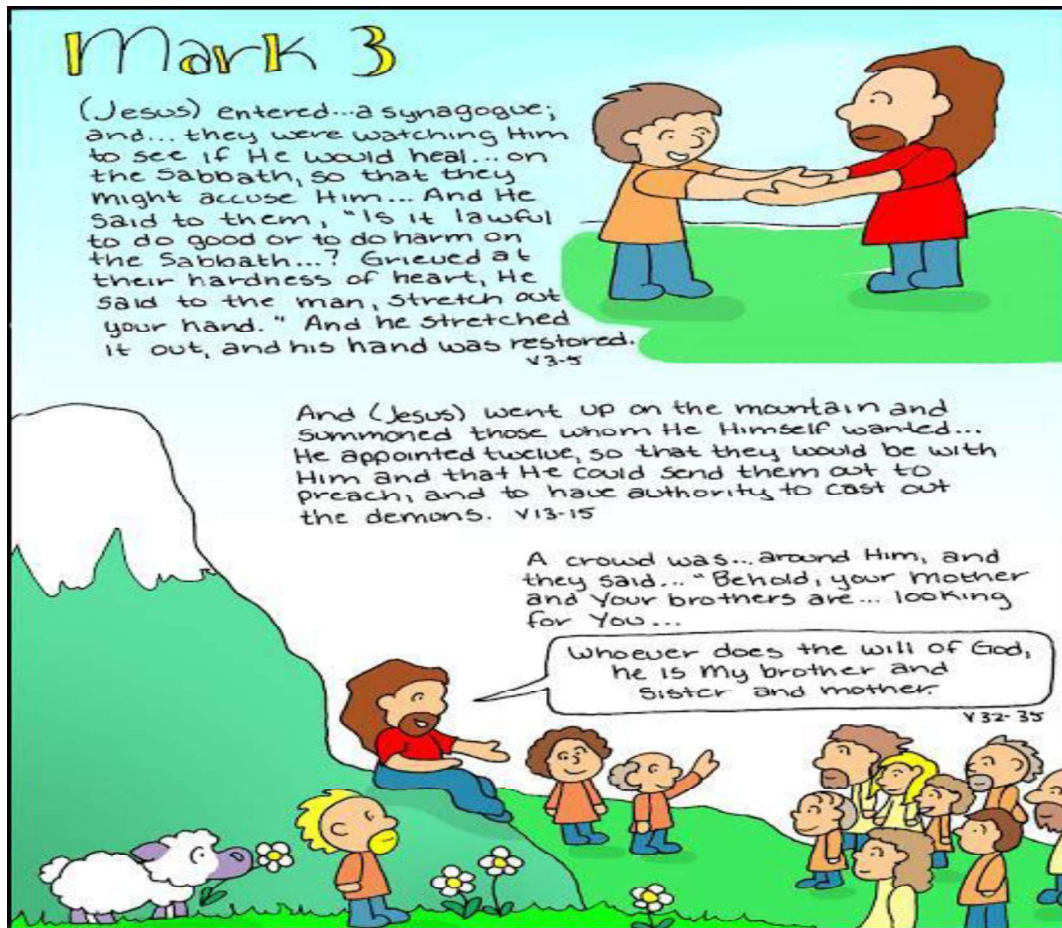
Remember:

Last lesson we enjoyed watching Jesus heal the paralytic man who was lowered from the ceiling and Jesus gave him way more than he asked; He forgave all his sins and made him carry his bed as well. There is nothing too great for God.

Main points in the Chapter:

- 1) Healing a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath
- 2) A Great Multitude Follows Jesus.
- 3) Sending the Twelve Apostles
- 4) A House Divided Cannot Stand
- 5) The Unpardonable Sin
- 6) Jesus' Mother and Brothers Send for Him





Lesson overview:

In a few minutes, briefly explain the main events of the chapter with a picture for each event, reading parts of the chapter.

In this chapter, Jesus continues His ministry in Galilee, which is on the other side, away from Jerusalem. One Saturday, He healed a man with a stiff hand. The Jewish leaders were angry because He did that on the Sabbath as one of the most important laws to the Pharisees was keeping the Sabbath. They would refrain from doing any work, even if the work was to help others. Jesus came to correct this concept. On the Sabbath, He would enter the synagogue and read the scriptures, interpret them, and heal the sick. By doing so, He taught us that the way to keep God's day is to worship Him by loving Him and loving our brethren, especially the sick, the needy and sorrowful.

Some accused Him of having a demon, but Jesus explained why this does not make sense. A divided kingdom cannot stand. Then, He sent His 12 disciples to various cities to preach.

Goal we learn:

In this chapter, you can focus on the sin that is never forgiven.

Why would Jesus say there is a sin that couldn't be forgiven? As we know, we can always repent and confess our sins and God will surely forgive us. However, the first thing that triggers our repentance is a push from the Holy Spirit, making us feel guilty for upsetting God and pushing us

to repent. If we turn off this trigger, who will start the process? Nothing. That is why blasphemy against the Holy Spirit [i.e. refusing to let Him work in our life] is the only unforgiven sin as the person won't be encouraged to repent.

Lesson delivery idea

A great illustration for this lesson is the candle experiment.

Glass and Candle Experiment

Objective: To explain that fire needs oxygen from the air.

Requirements:

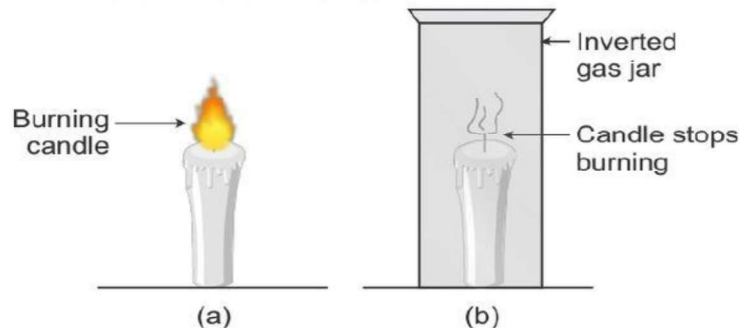
- A candle
- Kitchen lighter/matchbox
- A Glass

Procedure:

1. Light the candle. Take the help of an adult to do so.
2. Place it on the flat plate.
3. Cover the candle with the glass.
4. The candle goes out.
5. Repeat the experiment for better understanding

WHY THIS HAPPENS?

A lit candle needs to draw oxygen from the air in order to continue burning. If you limit the amount of air available, the candle's flame eventually goes out once it uses up all the oxygen. The glass prevents the fire from consuming any more oxygen. Once the fire in the glass has consumed all the oxygen inside the glass, the flame goes out.



Conclusion:

Running out of oxygen makes the flame go out.

What does the candlelight represent? The Holy Spirit burning inside our hearts, asking us to repent every time we sin.

What happens when we invert a glass jar over the candle? It cannot breathe, so it dies. Similarly, if we quench the Holy Spirit inside our hearts by stopping continuous prayers, bible reading and communion, He will not be able to continue burning.

Then who would push us to repent and go back to God?

To keep the fire going, we have to be attentive. We are required to put wood on it daily and ensure it does not go out. The same kind of constant attention is required to keep the light of God's Holy Spirit alive in your own heart and mind. A fire left to itself will eventually go out. One of the surest ways to

quench the Holy Spirit is through simple neglect! Neglect of prayer and study. Neglect the Holy Spirit, and He will become dormant. With time, He will simply go out altogether.

To keep God's Holy Spirit alive and active in you, you must work on that.

Following are two of the most important keys to keeping the fire of the Holy Spirit alive:

The first key is prayer. Often, those who doubt whether they have the Holy Spirit are lacking regular, heartfelt, fervent prayer. Prayer needs to be a daily constant effort. Prayer develops your close personal relationship with God Who gives you His Spirit of power in your life.

It is in daily prayer that we repent before God, and true repentance is a prerequisite to having and maintaining the gift of God's Spirit (Proverbs 1:23; Psalm 51:2-3, 10-11).

The second key is study. God's apostle has continually reminded us of the vital need to pray and to study.

We must approach Bible study as seekers of the truth. Remember, Jesus said that he who seeks shall find (Matthew 7:7-11).

Just as it takes effort to build a fire and to keep it going, it does truly take effort to keep ourselves close to God. However, it takes no effort at all to become deceived. All it takes is neglect!

There is great danger in neglecting prayer and Bible study. These tools are vital to stoking God's Holy Spirit in our lives and keeping His flames hot and bright. Paul warned Timothy, "Do not neglect the gift that is in you" (1 Timothy 4:14); and "stir up the gift of God" (2 Timothy 1:6).

As Christians, we need to remember that conversion does not occur all at once. We must "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). That truly means working day in and day out with daily prayer and study.

Below are four ways the Holy Spirit works in your life:

1. The Holy Spirit will guide you

The Holy Spirit will call you to believe in Jesus Christ. Now, don't mistake the Holy Spirit for a telephone operator working at a call center. The call He makes isn't the type you receive on the phone. His call is one that is internal (Rom. 11:29; Eph. 4:1).

If you have lived long enough, then you know there are times in life when things don't seem to make any sense. You'll feel as if the events in your life have no meaning or that you're wandering. But this isn't the case at all. God is directing your steps and guiding your life

2. The Holy Spirit will empower you

The Holy Spirit will empower you for service. In other words, the Holy Spirit will enable you to do what you've been called to do.

3. The Holy Spirit empowers evangelistic efforts

Jesus is alive, and He is building His church. His church isn't built through political efforts or military quest. His church is established through the proclamation of the gospel.

4. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts

The Holy Spirit also works in us by giving us spiritual gifts

Memory Verse:

29 “but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation”