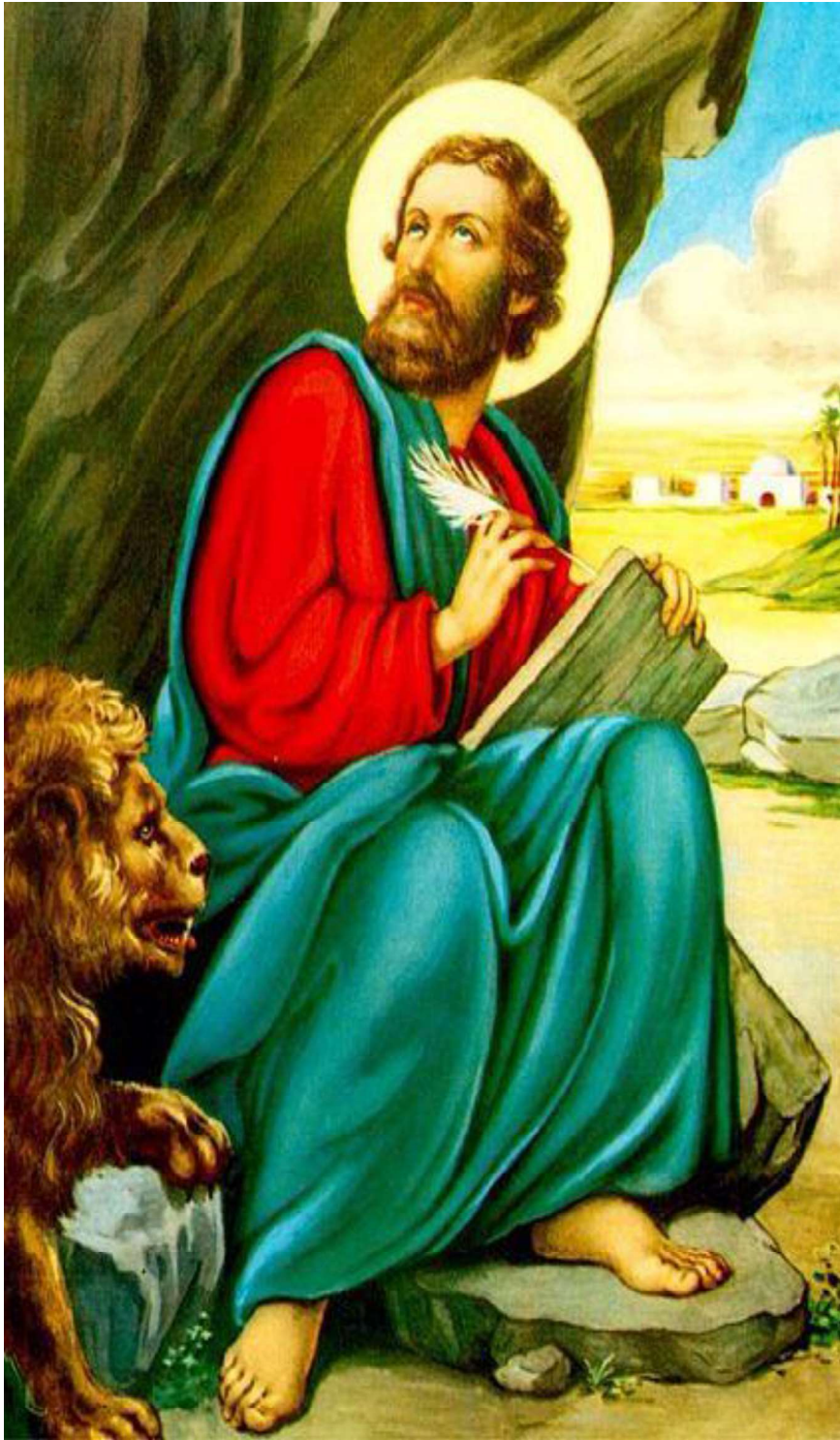


The Gospel According to St. Mark

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 9

Servant's preparation:

A sermon about Chapter 9 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abouna Daoud Lamei in English

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

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_xaXhCFsBs&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=10

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 focused on “³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” Jesus fed 4000 men with few loaves and fishes. He always cares about our earthly needs but wants us to worry about our heavenly life. Shall we leave things for Him and set God as the top priority in our lives, carry the cross and follow Him? If we do that, then we will be glorified with Him in heaven.

Main points in the Chapter:

1. The Transfiguration of Christ
2. A Boy Is Healed
3. Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection
4. Who Is the Greatest?
5. Jesus Warns of Offenses
6. Tasteless Salt Is Worthless





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 was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John. Later, He taught them about the role of John the Baptist as an Elijah who was to prepare the way for the Messiah. After Jesus returned to His other disciples, a man pleaded with Him to cast an evil spirit out of his son. Jesus cast out the evil spirit and taught His disciples about the need for prayer and fasting. Jesus answered an important question about “who is the greatest?” We will talk about this in details. He also mentioned how terrible it is to cause someone to stumble. If our hand, eye, or ear cause us to stumble, we should treat it firmly. By this, He means that if watching something makes you sin, then do not watch. If going to a place or being with a person, leads you to sin, then prevent yourself from going there or being with that friend because eternal life is more valuable than anything.

Goal we learn:

In this chapter, we will focus on “Who is the greatest?” Jesus explained it to His disciples. Everyone thinks of the greatest as the one who does the best and becomes the first, but Jesus thinks of it differently.

We can also focus on the faith of the father of the mute boy when he said to Jesus humbly, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” How can our faith grow? Through the power of combining fasting and prayer.

Lesson delivery idea 1: [Who’s the greatest?]

In today’s lesson, we are learning about who Jesus says is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Read Mark 9:33-37 (Who is the Greatest?)

Lesson – First and Last

Supplies – building blocks, objects of varying weight (books, supply containers, etc), small prizes (Keep watch as the children play the following games for some winners – Most Encouraging, Most Joyful, and Best Teamwork.)

Today’s lesson is going to be a little bit different. We actually have a few games we are going to play, and we even have some prizes for the winners. Are you ready?

Game 1: Balance

Stand up, then lift one foot up off the ground, and hook one arm under your knee to keep that foot up. If your foot touches the ground or you lean on or touch something, you’re out. Ready? Go!

Great job! Are you ready for your next test?

Game 2: Teamwork

I am going to choose a partner for you to work with, and together you will have two minutes to build a tower as tall as you can. Ready? Go!

Awesome work! On to our next test.

Game 3: Strength

This time we are testing your strength. I need everyone to choose one of these objects, and when I say go, you will hold it high above your head, no bending elbows. Ready? Go!

Amazing! Ok, last test.

Game 4: Love

For our final test, when I say go, I want you to go around the room and tell each person something you like about them. Ready? Go!

Great job everyone!

Y’all did an amazing job! And I think you deserve some prizes. Are you ready?

Our first prize is for Most Encouraging, and it goes to _____!

Our next prize is for Most Joyful, and it goes to _____!

Next we have a prize for Best Teamwork, and it goes to _____ and _____!

Great job! Let’s give them a round of applause!

Did I miss out on any awards? Raise your hand if you expected the prizes to go to those who won the games. That’s normally how it works, isn’t it? The person who can run the fastest, jump the highest, and lift the most gets the prize. But there is one man who thought it should be a little bit different. Any guesses? Jesus!

Jesus was talking to His disciples one day and He heard them arguing about which one of them

was the best. So, Jesus stepped in to end the argument. Jesus said that those who are last on earth, will be first in heaven, and those who are first here, will be last.

That probably sounds a little bit confusing to you, so listen closely.

Usually when we win something everyone knows and celebrates us. If you win an Olympic race you get a gold medal. If you win the Superbowl, you get a ring. If you win an Oscar, you get a trophy. And with all those wins, you get lots of attention.

And while winning all of those is great, Jesus says you have already gotten your reward. All the praise and attention you received on earth is your reward, but it won't matter in heaven.

Then Jesus told them about the winning that really matters. Do you know what He wants you to win at? Serving others.

When you help those in need. When you do the jobs no one else wants to do. When you encourage others and make them feel special. Jesus wants you to win at serving.

It was a hard lesson to learn for the disciples, so it will be a hard lesson for us too. But just like learning anything else, we have to practice. Look for ways to serve others every day and everywhere. And even though you won't get a trophy or a round of applause, Jesus will be cheering you on, and that's better than ANY prize you could ever get.

Extra Discussion Questions:

- How is a child humble? (Allow for children to respond.)
- According to scripture, who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? (The person who is humble.)
- What were the disciples arguing about on the side of the road? (Which of them would be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.)
- Why do you think they were arguing about it? (Allow for discussion.)
- Could the disciples have been struggling with pride? (Allow children to respond.)
- Who did Jesus say was the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? (He who is humble.)

Activity– First Charades

Divide the class into small groups of 2-3. Give them a few minutes to plan out a short silent skit showing a way we can be first in the eyes of Jesus. Then let each group perform and see if the others can figure it out.

Closing Prayer – First and Last

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to ask God to show them ways that they can be first in His eyes.

GAME: PICK YOUR ORDER

In this game, children learn how easy it is to put themselves first and learn the importance of humility.

TOPICS:

Humility, Pride, Teamwork

MATERIALS:

Deck of cards, Masking Tape ,Table, Xandy



PREPARATION:

Remove two suits from a standard deck of cards and separate the remaining cards by suit. Shuffle each suit and place each group of cards face down on a table in the front of the room. Use masking tape to create two long lines in the back of the room, one for each team.

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

Divide the class into two teams. Each team will line up in a single file in the front of the room, facing the table. There are two objects to the game: (1) The player with the highest card (ace) on each team will receive a piece of candy. (2) The first team to line up numerically by card wins the game. One suit of cards will be used by each team.

When you say, "Go!" the first person on each team will draw the top card from the stack. He or she can keep the card or pass it to the next person in line. If a player keeps the card, he or she must run to his or her team's line in the back of the room and line up numerically with other teammates as they arrive. If a player decides to pass the card, he or she must count to 15 aloud before picking another card from the stack. The person receiving a passed card has no choice but to keep it and run to his or her line and line up in numerical order. Play continues to the next players in line, until everyone has a card, and one team is declared the winner.

Application:

Today, we learned the differences between humility and pride. We found that God sees those who are humble as the greatest in His Kingdom. We also discovered that Jesus came to serve, not to be served, and that we are to do the same.

Lesson delivery idea 2: [How do we grow in faith?]

Mark 9:1–29. Obtaining blessings

Read the following scenarios aloud and invite students to think about what the scenarios have in common:

1. A young woman is critically injured in a car accident. Doctors give her a small chance of survival.
 2. A young man wants to excel in school, but he has always struggled with reading.
 3. A woman is constantly negative. She wants to think and speak more positively but struggles to do so.
- What do each of these scenarios have in common?

Invite students to think about any blessings they or someone they know are seeking that seem impossible to obtain. Invite them to look for a principle in [Mark 9:1–29](#) that can help them obtain these blessings.

“When facing the challenge of faith, the father asserts his strength first and only then acknowledges his limitation. His initial declaration is affirmative and without hesitation: ‘Lord, I believe.’ I would say to all who wish for more faith, remember this man!

- What can we learn from this father about what we can do in times of unbelief? (After students respond, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we hold on to what we believe ...*)
- What can we learn about dealing with unbelief from the other part of this father’s statement in [verse 24](#)? (After students respond, add the following phrase to the statement on the board: *and seek the Lord’s assistance, ...*)

Invite a student to read [Mark 9:25–27](#) aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did in response to the father’s pleas.

- What did the Savior do in response to the father’s pleas?
- How would you complete the statement on the board, based on what you have learned from this account? (After students respond, complete the sentence on the board so it conveys the following principle: **If we hold on to what we believe and seek the Lord’s assistance, He will help us strengthen our faith.**)

Refer to the situations listed on the board, which you discussed at the beginning of the lesson.

- How can this principle be used in such situations?

Encourage students to apply this principle during times of unbelief. Remind students that this father initially brought his son to some of Jesus’s disciples to be healed. Invite students to imagine they are these disciples.

- What question did the disciples ask Jesus?
- What did the Savior teach His disciples?
- How can prayer and fasting influence a person’s faith? (After students respond, help them understand the following truth: **We can increase our faith in Jesus Christ through prayer and fasting.**)

“This account [of Jesus casting out an evil spirit from a man’s son] teaches that prayer and fasting can give added strength to those giving and receiving blessings. The account can also be applied to your personal efforts to live the gospel. If you have a weakness or sin that you have struggled to overcome, you may need to fast and pray in order to receive the help or forgiveness you desire. Like the demon that Christ cast out, your difficulty may be the kind that will go out only through prayer and fasting.”

- According to this statement, what are some situations in which this truth could apply?
- When has prayer and fasting helped increase your faith in Christ and allowed you to receive the righteous blessings you sought?

Ask students to reflect on blessings they seek for themselves or others that might be obtained by increasing their faith in Jesus Christ through prayer and fasting. Invite them to write down a goal to pray and fast for these blessings.

Mark 9:28–29. Fasting combined with prayer

“We observe that in the scriptures, fasting almost always is linked with prayer. Without prayer, fasting is not complete fasting; it’s simply going hungry. If we want our fasting to be more than just going without eating, we must lift our hearts, our minds, and our voices to our Heavenly Father. Fasting, coupled with mighty prayer, is powerful.”

Memory Verse:

36 “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”

Or 23 “Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”