

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 11TH, 2025 // THE GOSPEL OF MARK

INTRODUCTION (THE GOSPEL OF MARK)

THE AUTHOR

(John) Mark (Acts 12:25) was born in Jerusalem into a fairly wealthy family. Mark's mother had a large house with servants where early Believers were able to meet (Acts 12:12–16).

- He was a cousin of Barnabas, an early church leader, and went on the first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas.

IMPERFECT PEOPLE

Mark was a co-worker with Paul (Colossians 4:10) and a close friend of Peter. Paul had issues with Mark because he deserted them on that first journey and was unwilling to go with them on the second journey.

- Their relationship was eventually restored (2 Timothy 4:11), like Peter, who denied Jesus three times.

A COMPILED WORK

Mark is credited with writing this book, but early church history (Papias) points to Mark collecting Peter's eyewitness accounts and compiling them together.

- Mark was not one of the 12 disciples, and it is believed that Peter may have been the one who led Mark to Christ, referring to him as his son in 1 Peter 5:13.

VERY EASY GOSPEL TO FOLLOW

The Bible is the most translated book in the entire world. Mark is the shortest gospel and is written so that people who are unfamiliar with 1st-century Judaism can follow along. Written, possibly in Rome, with gentile (non-Jewish) readers in mind.

- Most scholars agree that Mark's Gospel was the first of the four to be written, though some believe that Matthew was first.

THE ULTIMATE SERVANT

Mark records fast-paced "snapshots" of what Jesus *did*, and not as much about what Jesus *said*.

- Mark uses the word "immediately" over 40 times throughout the book, showing Jesus as **the ultimate servant in action**. Over half of Christ's 35 recorded miracles are in the Gospel of Mark.

PURPOSE

The Gospel of Mark can be broken into three parts, showing Jesus' travel from Galilee to Jerusalem.

- As we go through each section, Mark will reveal the answers to the following questions: 1) **Who is Jesus?** 2) **What does it mean that Jesus is the messiah?** and 3) **How does Jesus become King?**

PREPARING THE WAY (MARK 1:1–8)

"THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD"

The word gospel translates to "good news," and for the Romans, it meant "joyful tidings." It was often attributed to a historical event that introduced a new situation for the world.

- It is the **good news of Jesus**, the historical man who walked the earth, the **good news of Christ**, the promised Messiah, and the **good news of the Son of God**, who is also God the Son.

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER

The prophets spoke of a forerunner of the Messiah in Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3. They foretold that **God would send His messenger to prepare the way for the Lord**.

- John's arrival in the "wilderness" would be the first prophetic voice to the people of God in 300 years, **calling them to acknowledge their rebellion and disobedience**.

"PREPARE THE WAY... MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!"

"**Prepare the way**" creates the imagery of building up a great road for the arrival of a majestic king after patching holes and knocking down obstacles and hills in the way.

- Preparation for The King is done in our hearts, where **we allow him to address the things in our lives that hinder us from allowing Him to fill the voids in our hearts**.

STRANGE INSTRUCTION FOR JEWS

"John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a **baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins**."

- Baptism simply means "immerse or overwhelm." And this call to be baptized would have been very strange for Jews as **they believed only gentile converts to Judaism needed to be baptized**.

THE OBEEDIENCE OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Though it was strange, we see that **"the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him."**

- It is estimated that 300,000 people traveled several miles outside the city to be baptized by John in the Jordan. In response to the Messiah's coming, **many recognized their sinfulness and the need to do something about it**.

THE DESCRIPTION AND PROCLAMATION OF JOHN

John appeared with similarities in appearance (2 Kings 1:8) and in message (reform and preparation) to that of Elijah (Malachi 4:5–6).

- John declared that someone greater was coming. He pointed to Jesus, not to himself. The baptism John brought was a prelude to what Jesus would bring—**lasting change from the inside out through the Holy Spirit**.

JESUS' BAPTISM (MARK 1:9–13)

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS OF THE ULTIMATE SERVANT

The proclamation that the Messiah would come from Nazareth in Galilee would have been surprising to those coming out of Jerusalem. The people of Nazareth were held in very low regard.

- In John 1:46, Nathanel displayed the general view of Nazareth when he asked, **"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"**

JESUS' BAPTISM SHOWED APPROVAL OF JOHN

Jesus was sinless and perfect. He was not baptized because He needed cleansing from sin, but **to do the will of the Father, give us the example to follow, and show approval of John's ministry**.

- At Jesus' baptism, we see "the heavens being torn open, and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove" (Luke 3:22; John 1:32), and God the Father showing His approval of His Son.

JESUS' TEMPTATION IN THE WILDERNESS

Matthew and Luke detail three specific temptations that Jesus faced during His time of testing in the wilderness.

- Mark is the only one to mention that Jesus was with wild animals while in the wilderness. He is showing **Jesus' authority over the wild animals as well as over the angels serving Him during this time**.

THE CALL (MARK 1:14–20)

JESUS' GALILEAN MINISTRY BEGINS

John's work had ended with his imprisonment, and Jesus' ministry began. Though Mark focuses on the work of Christ, including miracles, he wants us to know that **Jesus proclaimed the good news of God**.

- People would hear that the Kingdom of God was near, and **they would encounter the One who would bring the Kingdom into fruition**.

"THE TIME IS FULFILLED"

There are two Greek words that can be translated as time. The first is *chronos*, meaning linear time, and the other is *kairos*, meaning strategic opportunity or the time of decisiveness.

- Jesus used *kairos* to communicate that through Him **the Kingdom was near, and the time of opportunity had come**.

HE SAW SIMON AND ANDREW

John 1:35–4:54 shows that this was not the first time Jesus had met these fishermen. Mark doesn't detail their interactions before the call, but he does mention their response, **"Immediately they left their nets and followed him."**

- Jesus did not choose his disciples based on **who they were**, but on **what He could do through them**.

THE SONS OF THUNDER (3:17)

As Jesus traveled a little further down the beach, He came to James and John, who were with their father Zebedee in a boat mending their nets.

- We see the willingness of these men to **leave their families, livelihoods, and traditions behind to follow Jesus Christ**, the Ultimate Servant.

REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED

- The call to Israel was to repent in preparation for the coming Messiah. For us, this call remains, even though the Messiah has come. We are to **recognize our sinful, disobedient nature and address it through repentance**.
- Then, our **next step in obedience to Christ should be baptism**. We have a **Baptism Service coming up next Sunday, the 18th**.

"REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS!"

- Repentance is not about "feelings," though it is good to feel sorrow for sin. Repentance is more about action—it is a change of direction. We cannot come to the Kingdom of God unless we leave our sin behind.
- A genuine belief in the gospel is more than acknowledging it is true—it speaks of a relationship of trust and dependence.

"FOLLOW ME..."

- With Jesus' invitation to the disciples, we see what Christianity is all about—**following Jesus**. With the call to follow Him, Jesus also gives the promise that **He will make us into something we are not**. The idea of Jesus "making us fishers of men" implies a gradual process of training. **Are we willing to submit to Him and the process?**