

# *Mark 1*



*Chapter Focus Week*



## Welcome to Mark

Welcome,

We're excited that you've come to study the first half of the Gospel of Mark with us. It is our hope that you will find this a safe space to grapple with God's word, ask questions and hear from God. We have been praying for you and preparing for our time together with expectation.

During our time this week we will follow Jesus and his disciples through the first half of Mark's gospel. In that process, we expect three things to happen:

1. You'll get a great start on learning the gospel and why it is "good news" for all who believe it.
2. Knowing the gospel demands a personal response to Jesus, who is the heart of the gospel message. Spoiler warning: The response Jesus calls each of us to may vary, but we hope none of us will leave this encounter with Mark without being deeply changed.
3. You'll be learning and practicing the inductive study method. What you learn about it will help you both in other Bible study and in other kinds of reading and study.

Thank you, for choosing to invest your time and resources with us this week. We believe that is an act of faith that God will honor as you seek him this week.

We are looking forward to meeting Jesus with you!

Your Mark 1 track staff team

## Mark I Retreat of Silence Guide

*Welcome. Below is a guided retreat of silence. The guide will help you spend time with God and prepare for your week. There are suggested times for each exercise. Don't feel bound by it. God may be inviting you into other ways of meeting with him and processing things in your heart. If so, feel free to put aside this guide. The goal of your time is simply to be with Jesus with all of who you are.*

### **Arrive** 30 minutes

Take some time to arrive. We are usually very scattered after finals and in different places. Our thoughts and emotions are scattered. Take some time to breathe deeply and simply sit before God. Bring your mind and heart into his presence fully. The Lord loves you and is inviting you into relationship with himself. Be with him and allow him to show you his love. Enjoy this as long as you need.

### **Process** 45 minutes

We think of distractions as something that leads us away from God. However, distraction can be things that our soul is preoccupied with. Allow your thoughts and emotions to surface. Write down incidents that come to mind. Next to them write down any emotions you are feeling. Don't judge or analyze each incident. Simply write them down. At the end of this time, hand over this list to Jesus. Allow him to cover you with his peace. What is God saying to you?

### **Read** 45 minutes

Read through your Mark 1 Manuscript Page 1. We will be using a process called inductive Bible study. You may be familiar with this on campus. Below are a few methods we will use in the first step called observation.

1. Break page 1 into logical paragraphs
2. Observe the text (make marks in your manuscript)
  - a. Make a list of people (who), places (where), time (when), situation (what) and
  - b. Connections or "Laws of Composition": repeated words, contrasts, cause and effect, climax, general ideas becoming specific, specific ideas becoming general, metaphors
3. Imagine yourself in the scene in Mark 1: What do you see, taste, smell? Overall impressions.
4. What questions would you like to write down in your manuscript of page 1?

**Pray 30 minutes**

What might God be drawing you to? What is he saying to you? Are there any major themes that stand out to you? What would you like Jesus to do for you this week? Ask him. Close with the Lord's Prayer. Spend time as you need.

*Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning, grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.*

-Proper 28, Book of Common Prayer

# Introduction to Bible Study with a Manuscript

## Methods Used

### A. Observation -- Interpretation -- Application

1. **Observation** Questions: "What does the text say?"
  - a. Reporter questions -- Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
  - b. Laws of Composition -- Repetition, contrast, juxtaposition
2. **Interpretation** Questions: "What does the text mean?"
  - a. Define unclear words, look up places on maps, etc.
  - b. Significance of your discoveries, e.g., "Why does this section follow that one?"
3. **Application** Questions: "What does the text (and especially its main point) mean for me/us?"
  - a. Application arises out of a thorough study of the text. If the Bible is God's word to us, we should expect God to speak to us through the Bible.
  - b. What do I learn about God? Myself? What do I need to change? Is there a promise that can help me?

### B. Whole -- Parts -- Whole

1. **Whole**: "What is our overall view of the passage? (Telescope)"
  - a. Read through to get the flow of the passage.
  - b. Divide into thought units or paragraphs and title them. These may center around a theme, place, event, or time.
2. **Parts**: "What does each section mean?" (Microscope)"
  - a. Using observation and interpretation questions, try to determine the meaning of each section. What is the one main thought of each section?
3. **Whole**: "How do all the pieces fit together?" (Mapping)"

Discover links between the sections, how do they relate to one another? Do they illustrate each other? Build on each other? Is there a pattern?  
What is the common thread through this whole passage?  
How does it connect to the passages before it in the whole book (and ultimately in the whole Bible)?

### Helpful Hints About Manuscript Study

1. Use symbols and colored pens or pencils to trace repeated themes and note other connections.
2. Write all you want in the margins, between the lines, or even on the back of the previous page.
3. We will be using both principles - O-I-A and W-P-W - for individual passages and for the whole book.

## Laws of Composition

Adapted and expanded from *Methodical Bible Study* by Robert Traina, p. 50-52.

A writer constructs a piece of writing in a way that will most effectively get the message across. Because the structure carries the content, if you can discover the basic structure of a piece of writing, you can find the main points the writer wants to communicate. One way of discovering the structure of a piece of writing, including a passage of Scripture, is to look for laws of composition which the writer has used. These laws (or principles of construction) are used not only by writers, but by engineers, architects, composers, speakers, painters and others, for these are universal ways the mind works, and universal ways of discovering the purpose in the mind of the writer, the architect, etc. Here are some laws of composition we find most frequently in studying Scripture.

<b>Repetition</b>	The reiteration of the <u>same</u> terms.
<b>Continuity</b>	The repeated use of <u>similar</u> words, phrases, ideas.
<b>Contrast</b>	The association of <u>opposites</u> .
<b>Comparison</b>	The association of <u>like</u> things which vary in some way.
<b>General to particulars</b>	The movement from a general idea or activity to particulars about that idea.
<b>Particulars to General</b>	The movement from a particular to a general idea or activity.
<b>Cause to effect</b>	Progression from cause to effect.
<b>Effect to cause</b>	The progression from effect to cause.
<b>Explanation or illustration</b>	The presentation of an idea or event followed by its explanation.
<b>Preparation or Introduction</b>	The inclusion of the background or setting for events or ideas by which the reader is prepared to understand what follows.
<b>Progression to Climax</b>	The arrangement of material in such a way as to progress from great to the greater and then to the greatest.
<b>Means to end</b>	The setting forth of the means to an end as well as the end itself. Often the words "that," "so that," or "in order that" are present. Means to an end is like a <u>planned</u> cause & effect.
<b>Interrogation</b>	The use of a question or problem followed by its answer.
<b>Juxtaposition</b>	The placing of incidents or ideas side by side, to point to their relationship to one another. In Mark's Gospel the author alternates Jesus' action and teaching so that they clarify and interpret each other.
<b>Inclusion</b>	The reporting of one event within the reporting of another.

## Mark's Personal History

Any character sketch of *Mark* is partial at best because all that is known of him comes from ten Scriptures and later early church writing and tradition. He is not identified specifically in his Gospel, but the early Church Fathers uniformly agree that Mark was indeed the author (cf. Eusebius, Papias at end of 1st C., Anti-Marcionite Prologue; confirmed by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Jerome). Though the evidence is scanty, from the verses that concern him and from the Gospel written by him, there emerges a portrait of an energetic, loyal, hard-working and intelligent servant of Christ.

### The Scriptures mentioning Mark are:

- Acts 12:12** "When this had dawned on him (Peter), he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying." (approximately 39-44 A.D.; *Mark Is* 23-28)
- Acts 12:25** "When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark." (Same approx. dating)
- Acts 13:5** "When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper." (Approx. 46 A.D., *Mark Is* 28-3(3))
- Acts 13:13** "From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them and returned to Jerusalem." (Same approx. dating)
- Acts 15:36-39** "Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the brothers..." Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus." (Approx. 49 A.D.; *Mark Is* 31-33)
- Col. 4:10** "My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)" (Early 60's; *Mark Is* in his mid-40's)
- II Tim. 4:11** "Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry." (65-67 A D.; *Mark Is* 48-50)
- Philemon 24** "Epaphras, my fellow prisoner for Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers." (Early 60's; *Mark* \*mid-40's)
- I Peter 5:13** "She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so; does my son Mark." (Mid-60's; *Mark Is* 46-48)



Mark, a Palestinian Jew, was probably born approximately 13-20 A.D, depending on dating. He would have been given the Hebrew name John (Hebrew, Johanan—"Jehovah is gracious"). The Roman surname Mark (Greek, Markos; Latin, Markus) would have been adopted at some later time in his life. The frequent practice of first century Jews to bear a Greek or Roman name in addition to their Hebrew name is evidenced by Paul's change from the Hebrew Saul to the Roman Paulus.)

Mark's gospel was probably written from Rome to the largely gentile church in Rome in the 60's A.D. Mark was Peter's and Paul's attendant until the latter were killed in Rome around the Neronian persecution about 65 A.D. Peter's influence is quite strong in Mark. His sermon to Cornelius (Acts 10:34-43) is a very close outline of Mark's gospel. As a Palestinian writing to Romans in a time of persecution, Mark gives accurate geographic detail (11:1), uses Aramaic words (5:41; 7:34) and defines them in Greek. There are also several latinisms and military language (e.g. 4 watches instead of the Jewish 3). While Mark explains Jewish terms and customs, making a Palestinian audience doubtful, he refers to baptism, the Holy Spirit and John's imprisonment without explanation.

## Mark Daily Personal Worship Guide

It is likely that you will already have enough to reflect on this week – however, if you find yourself stuck during quiet times, feel free to use this guide. Alternately, you can use it when you go back home as you reflect and review.

**INVOCATION.** Almighty God, you who calls me to prayer, and who offers yourself to all who seek your face, pour out your Holy Spirit upon me today and deliver me from coldness of heart, a wandering mind, and wrongful desire. By the power of your Spirit, place within me steadfast love and devotion, so that today I may worship and serve you with all my life; through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

**REFLECTION.** Silent and written

**Monday:** Read Isaiah 40:1-9. Reflect on pages 1, 2, and 3 of the manuscript, particularly 1.26. What difference should it make that the Kingdom of God is at hand? How might God want His Kingdom to break into your world this week? How should you respond to the call to repent and believe? What repentance and faith issues confront you? Read 4.28-7.14

**Tuesday:** Read Isaiah 61:1-3. Reflect on pages 3 to 6.3. Who do you identify with most in the interactions (the four friends, Pharisees and Scribes, etc.)? Where is your heart now and in which direction is it headed? How is this state of your heart influencing your view of and response to others, to Jesus? In light of Jesus, how will you respond to the condition of your heart?

**Wednesday:** Read Psalm 1. Reflect on pages 7-9.17. What issues are raised for you in this section? What are the questions or circumstances that you have to bring to Jesus? Spend some time talking with him about these, asking him to give you the eyes of faith to see them as he does.

**Thursday:** Read Psalm 23. Reflect on pages 13.1-16.3. What affect does your leadership and influence have? Where do you need to trust in Jesus' shepherding care?

“Be still, my soul, thy God doth undertake  
To guide the future as He has the past.  
Thy hope, and confidence let nothing shake;  
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul, the waves and winds still know  
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.”

**PRAYERS.** Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, intercession. 1) for yourself, 2) for others, 3)for Mark 1, and 4) for your chapter and Chapter FOCUS Week

**HYMN 125 (Hymns II)**

**BENEDICTION.** Be held in the center of God's will today, and know the joy, freedom and power of walking by faith and in faithfulness. Amen.



