

Series: Basic Gospel of Mark

Title: Introducing the Gospel of Mark/John the Baptist

Text: Mark 1:1-8; 6:14-29; 9:9-13

Date: September 11, 2022

Style: The Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the four gospels in the New Testament. It has a concise, action-oriented approach to writing. Many see Mark's style as being tied to his intended audience. It seems he wrote primarily to gentiles. This conclusion is based on his relatively few references to the Hebrews Scriptures (see Mark 1:2), along with his effort at translating Aramaic terms into Greek for gentile readers (see Mark 5:41 and 15:34).

Author: "John Mark" in the book of Acts. He was a cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10). He travelled with Paul on the apostle's first missionary journey (Acts 12:25; 13:5). Infamously, he had a falling out with Paul prior to the apostle's second missionary journey (Acts 15:38-40). However, Colossians 4:10 seems to indicate that the rift was eventually restored.

Source: Peter. Church tradition maintains that Mark, a disciple of Peter, made a written record of Jesus' life after having been taught by the apostle.

Date: 64-65 A.D. This dating thought to be true for a couple of reasons. First, we know Mark's gospel was written before 70 A.D., as Jesus spoke of the destruction of the Temple at the hands of Titus as if it had not yet occurred (Mark 13:1). Second, an early date must be assigned to the gospel since it reached circulation prior to the other gospel accounts.

To introduce the Gospel of Mark, we will examine the first person mentioned in the gospel, other than Jesus — John the Baptist. Let's examine the three passages that focus on the life and ministry of the man — Mark 1:1-8; 6:14-29; 9:9-13. From each we will learn about a different priority for Christian living...

PRIORITY #1: HUMILITY

Key Verses: Mark 1:1-8; Matthew 22:37-40; Luke 7:36-38; John 13:1-11; John 3:30

Key Application: It is fitting for believers of all generations to pursue a mindset like the one John possessed. Scripture teaches us that Christ is the head of the church. We are all members of His body (1 Corinthians 12:12); thus, we should submit to His headship. Jesus has called us to "deny" ourselves and follow Him (Mark 8:34). It is through this pathway that we find true joy and life. It is also the way we fulfill Christ's Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40). From Mark's description of John the Baptist, learn the high value of true humility.

PRIORITY #2: SACRIFICE

Key Verses: Mark 6:14-29; Luke 13:32; Mark 3:6; Mark 12:13; Matthew 11:11; Matthew 11:1-6.

Key Application: Mark's analysis of the man's life has application for believers of all generations. Each believer is called to live a life of sacrificial service for the Lord. Scripture says, "...for you were bought at a price. So glorify God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20). It also says, "...present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship" (Romans 12:1). Through the power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel, aim to live

a life of surrender and sacrifice to the Lord. What is God calling you to be and do? Commit yourself wholly to Him.

PRIORITY #3: GOD'S WORD (READ MARK 9:2-13)

Key Verses: Mark 9:2-13; Malachi 4:4-5; Isaiah 53:3-6; Mark 8:31; Mark 9:5-6; Mark 10:37; Mark 14:46; Mark 7:6; Mark 11:17; Mark 14:21, 27; Daniel 9:26-27.

Key Application: Our Lord's rebuke reminds us of our need to align our thinking with God's Word. The Bible is the standard for all beliefs and behavior. Praying on behalf of His disciples, Jesus once said, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." Our society, culture, and world will beckon us to cultivate beliefs and values that go against the grain of God's Word. It is only by staying tethered to the Bible that we will stay safe from spiritual deception. As we begin our study on the Gospel of Mark, may we learn a lesson from the life of John the Baptist — Scripture is our standard for faith and practice!