

# THE BIG READ – MARK

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Jesus is identified with the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13-14, which is an image of glory. In Daniel's vision, the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven (a symbol of God's presence) and received authority, worship, everlasting rule and an unshakeable kingdom.

Jesus demonstrated His authority as a teacher (1:22), over evil spirits (1:27), over people (1:16-20), to heal (1:30-32), over nature (4:39), over death (5:41-42) and to forgive sins (2:10). He also speaks of His resurrection (9:9), and His return as judge (8:38; 13:26-27; 14:61-62).

## He is the Suffering Servant

Jesus is identified with the servant of Isaiah 53 who would suffer terribly, be tortured and killed. But this suffering and dying is the way in which He would save sinners (10:45).

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## How then shall we live?

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As we recognise that Jesus is the new Adam, the Son of Man, and suffering servant, how should we respond?

### We are to repent and believe the good news.

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15)

### We are to follow Him even if this brings suffering.

“Calling the crowd along with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me and the gospel will save it. For what does it benefit someone to gain the whole world and yet lose his life? What can anyone give in exchange for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” (Mark 8:34-38)

## Introduction

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The New Testament begins with four books that tell the story of Jesus' earthly life and together paint a beautiful portrait of who Jesus is.

After Matthew comes the Gospel of Mark.

Although Matthew's Gospel comes first in the New Testament, Mark's Gospel was most likely the first of the Gospels to be written.

It is surprisingly short – it can be read in about an hour.

It was probably written in Rome around AD60 for a Gentile audience.

It tells us nothing about Jesus' birth and childhood.

### The author of Mark's Gospel

*He was a church kid.* John Mark's (John being his Jewish name and Mark his Roman one) family was part of the early church in Jerusalem (see Acts 12:12), with Barnabas, the famous missionary, being his cousin.

*He was an eyewitness.* Living in Jerusalem, Mark most likely saw many of the events that surrounded Jesus' death and resurrection. Mark certainly would have seen what happened at Gethsemane (see Mark 14:51-52).

*He was failed missionary.* He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey but deserted them (see Acts 13:4-5, 13; 15:36-38).

*He was given a second chance.* He would later become a companion of both Paul (see Colossians 4:10) and Peter (see 1 Peter 5:13).

*He was a great storyteller.* While Mark was with Peter in Rome, he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write his Gospel based on Peter's recollections.

*"Mark, being the interpreter of Peter, wrote accurately all that he remembered..." (Papias)*

The structure of the Gospel follows the preaching of Peter.

<b>Acts 10</b>	<b>Mark</b>
"good news" (v36)	"the beginning of the gospel" (1:1)
"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit" (v38)	"the coming of the Spirit on Jesus (1:11)
"beginning in Galilee" (v37)	the Galilean ministry (1:16-8:26)
"He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil" (v38)	Jesus' ministry focuses on healings and exorcisms
"We are witnesses of everything he did... in Jerusalem" (v39)	the ministry in Jerusalem (11-14)
"They killed him by hanging him on a tree" (v39)	focus on the death of Christ (15)
"God raised him from the dead on the third day" (v40)	"He has risen! He is not here" (16:6)

Taken from 'An Introduction to the New Testament' by D.A. Carson, Douglas Moo & Leon Morris

## The story of Mark's Gospel

Mark's account is fast moving, with 'and' or 'immediately' appearing frequently. It also is full of extra details not found in the other Gospels.

Mark presents the story of Jesus' life in two main sections.

### *Chapters 1-8: The Identity of the Christ*

Mark begins with Jesus' ministry in Galilee, where the focus is on what Jesus did rather than what He said, and it answers the question 'Who is Jesus?' It aims to show that Jesus is the Christ (or Messiah), the Son of God. The section ends with Jesus asking His disciples who they think He is, and Peter's declaration, "You are the Christ." (see Mark 8:29)

### *Chapters 9-16: The Mission of the Christ*

Mark then explains why Jesus came or what it means for Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God. On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus on three occasions explains to His disciples what is going to happen to Him (see Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34) and why, that He was going to suffer and die for the sins of many (see Mark 10:45). Once in Jerusalem, Jesus does what He came to do as He suffers and dies on the cross, and then after three days, rises from the dead.

## The purpose of Mark's Gospel

Mark wants us to see that we will never understand what it means for Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, without His death on the cross. Jesus frequently warns people not to tell anyone about Him (see Mark 1:43-44; 3:11-12; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26; 8:30) because people might get the wrong impression. The two-step healing of the blind man at Bethsaida (see Mark 8:23-25) brilliantly shows how this is possible. Peter sees Jesus but doesn't see Him (see Mark 8:29-33).

Mark wants us to believe that Jesus who died and rose again is the Christ, the Son of God. The surprising ending of the book (see Mark 16:6-8) challenges us about whether we will believe the truth of the eyewitness testimony about Jesus, or whether we will run away from it.

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## Jesus in Mark

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### He is the New Adam

Jesus is introduced in the opening chapter as a new Adam who will rule over a new creation with numerous allusions to Genesis 1-3. He appears as full grown man (1:9), receives God's Spirit (1:10), is tempted by the devil (1:12-13), rules over the animals (1:13), is identified as King (1:15), is fruitful and multiplies as new people are brought into His kingdom (1:17-18), and with His first two miracles heals old Adam and Eve (1:25-26, 30-31).

### He is the Son of Man