



## Putting the Puzzle Pieces Together

Sixth Series: "The Top Edge" New Testament: Gospels  
Lesson 19: Mark

### I. Introduction

A. Consider the outline of the New Testament:

Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

History: Acts (written by Luke)

Epistles:

Paul's: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews

General: James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, Jude

Revelation

B. Consider the time frame for the writing of the New Testament: 50 to 95 AD

### II. Mark

A. Introduction:

1. This is the shortest and simplest of the four gospels

"Mark's gospel is a good story, told with an economy of words and a forthrightness of style. Therefore, Mark's gospel tops the charts in the popular ratings." (Where the Action Is, Ralph P. Martin, p. 6)

2. John Mark was not an apostle. He is most likely giving Peter's account of the gospel.

"The early church felt that this was true and took that position. For example, Papias, one of the early church fathers, recorded that John Mark got his gospel from Simon Peter: 'Mark, the interpreter of Peter, wrote carefully down all that he recollected, but not according to the order of Christ's speaking or working.' Eusebius says that 'such a light of piety shone into the minds of those who heard Peter that they were not satisfied with once hearing, nor with the unwritten doctrine that was delivered, but earnestly besought Mark (whose gospel is now spread abroad) that he would leave in writing for them the doctrine which he had received by preaching.'" (Mark, J. Vernon McGee, p. X)

3. It is more of a topical narrative than a biography.

B. Author: "John, whose surname was Mark" (Acts 12:12, 25, 15:37)

1. Peter apparently visited his house regularly (Acts: 12:13-16)
  2. Barnabas was his cousin (Col. 4:10)
  3. He accompanied Barnabas and Saul on the first missionary journey (Acts 12-13)
  4. He left early and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13)
  5. Paul would not take him on second missionary journey, so Barnabas took him to Cyrus.
  6. 12 years later, he was with Paul during his first Roman imprisonment (Col. 4:10, Philemon 24, 1 Pet. 5:13)
  7. Paul wanted to see him near the end of his life (2 Tim. 4:11)
- C. Theme: The story of the servant (See Mark. 10:45)
- D. Timing: This may have been the first gospel written (some scholars believe Matthew was written first) – probably before 63 AD. The temple is prophetic in 13:2. May have been late AD 40's or 50's.
- Early tradition indicates that it originated in Rome.
- E. Audience: written for a Roman Audience.
1. "This may be why Mark omitted a number of items that would not have been meaningful to Gentiles, such as the genealogy of Christ, fulfilled prophecy, references to the Law, and certain Jewish customs that are found in other gospels. Mark interpreted Aramaic words (3:17, 5:41, 7:34, 15:22) and used a number of Latin terms in place of their Greek equivalents (4:21, 6:27, 12:14, 42, 15:15-16, 39)." (Talk thru the Bible, p. 320)
  2. Mark has an evangelistic purpose – directed to a Gentile audience who knew little about Old Testament theology. He was instructing and encouraging Roman believers.
- F. The material in this gospel.
1. It is written in a simple style. The word "and" occurs 1331 times!
  2. Mark emphasizes action not words. 42 different times he uses the term "immediately."  
 "...it rushes on in a kind of breathless attempt to make the story as vivid to others as it was to himself. Mark is very fond of the historic present. That is to say, he talks of events in the present tense instead of the past." (The Gospel of Mark, Barclay, p. XXI)
  3. Jesus' activities are seen as the work of the "mighty and authoritative Son of God."
  4. There are only two extended discourses: 4:1-34, 13:3-37
  5. Only 18 of Christ's 70 parables are included, but over half of the miracles are included.

“Mark’s language is characterized by broken sentence structure, colloquialisms, and extra expressions that may reproduce Peter’s style of speaking. He uses the historic present tense 151 times to depict action in progress. The vivid descriptions in this book are often more detailed than the parallel accounts in Matthew and Luke.”  
(Talk thru the Bible, p. 321)

6. Mark seldom refers to the Old Testament
7. Mark is clearly focused on the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. 40% of this gospel covers the last eight days of his life.

G. An outline:

From the Interpretation of St. Mark’s Gospel by Lenski, p. 18

- a. Introduction
- b. Jesus proves Himself to be the Christ, God’s Son, by His mighty teaching and deeds. 1:14-8:26
- c. Jesus proves Himself to be the Christ, God’s Son, by teaching and enduring the passion which is followed by the resurrection (8:27 – 16:20)

H. Some key bible stories in Mark:

1. The parable of the Sower and Soils	4:1-25
2. The Gerasene Demoniac	5:1-20
3. Sending out the twelve	6:7-13
4. Jesus walking on water	6:45-52
5. The rich young ruler	10:17-22
6. Jesus driven out the money changers	11:15-26
7. The resurrection	16:1-12

### III. So what?

- A. Key question: Who do you say that I am? (8:27)

### Discussion Questions:

1. Consider the story of the leper in Chapter 1 vs. 40-45. What does his statement reveal about his belief in Jesus? Why do you think Jesus touched him? What is the impact of a touch in your life?
2. Consider the faith of the father in the story found in 9:14-29. Discuss his faith. How does his faith compare with yours?
3. Consider the rich young ruler in 10:17-31. Why did the young man think he would inherit eternal life? How will **you** inherit eternal life?