

An Introduction To The Book of Mark | Mark 10:45

Once again, if you're new----welcome.

If we haven't met, I'm Tyler.

If we have met, my name is still Tyler.

We love going through books of the Bible:

- It's the best way for shaping people into the image of Christ,
- and is the best way to keep me honest, and away from my favorite subjects.

Today, we begin the study of one of my favorite gospels, the gospel of Mark.

Illustration: Several years ago one of the world's renowned scholars of the classics, Dr. [E.V. Rieu](#), completed a wonderful translation of Homer into English. He was 60 years old, and he had been an agnostic his whole life. The publisher soon approached him again and asked him to translate all the Gospels. **When Rieu's son heard this he said:**

"It will be interesting to see what Father will make of the four Gospels. It will be even more interesting to see what the four Gospels will make of Father."

A year later Dr. Rieu, a lifelong gnostic, responds to the gospel he was translating and becomes a committed Christian.

J.B. Phillips asked him, "Did you not get the feeling that the whole material was extraordinarily alive?"

Rieu replied, "I got the deepest feeling. My work changed me. I came to the conclusion that these words bear the seal of the Son of Man and God."

Phillips concluded, "I found it particularly thrilling to hear a man who is a scholar of the first rank, as well as a man of wisdom and experience, openly admitting that these words written long ago were alive with power. They bore to him as to me, the ring of truth."

In the words of **Mr. Rieu's** son, I look forward to seeing what we will make of the Gospel of Mark, but even more so, **what the Gospel of Mark will make of us!**

I pray it **makes us more like Jesus**

- more **sacrificial**,
- more **generous**,
- more **compassionate**,
- more **prayerful**,
- more **holy**,
- more **evangelistic**...

Now you might be wondering out of the four gospels why pick this one to study first?

Simple reason: **Marks is the oldest of the gospels.**

- **Here we have for the first time in history the words and deeds of Jesus recorded!**
- It became the model for Matthew and Luke.
 - **92% of Mark is in Matthew, and about 48% in Luke.**

Let me give you a road map of where I am going today

- 1) I want to talk about the writer
- 2) I want to let you know why that writer wrote what he wrote
- 3) I want you to see the theme of his writing

Now, For just a moment let's take a step behind the book and see **its writer...**

Info: **Virtually everyone agrees that the author was John Mark.**

- **In Acts 12 we find he had a good home**

Acts 12:12 "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying."

- **It was a gathering for the church! Good Home!**

Some GUESS that It was John Mark in Mark 14..

- In vs. 51 after Peter had cut off the soldiers ear it says, “...there followed (Jesus) a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.”
- Whomever this was, was saying by their actions that “this was so terrifying that they would rather to lose their reputation (“running naked”) than be dead with Jesus.”

It could be that little John Marks first mention was as a naked & terrified guy...

In Acts 13:13 he abandoned Paul on his first missionary trip and goes back home... “Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.”

Little John Mark’s first real appearance in scripture is that of a drop out...

AND look what comes of this in Acts 15:

- Acts 15:36 “...Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.”
 - Note: Paul wanted to make a return trip to all of the places they had been.
- And Barnabas was like (vs.37), Okay, let's swing by and pick up my nephew, Johnny Mark.
- (Vs.38) Paul was like, slow down bro. He bailed out on us the last time we took him out.
- And then you have the historical vs.39 “And the contention was so sharp between them.”

Little John Mark was the reason for one of the saddest breakups in scripture...

- The beloved Barnaba’s and the great Paul...

BUT thank GOD, this wasn't the end of the story for Mark...

2 Tim. 4:9 & 11 Paul speaking to timothy said, "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: ¹¹ ... Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

- **At the end of Paul's life, he said:** Bring Mark to me, he is VERY USEFUL!

Point: God can redeem us out of our messes!

2 Applications

1. Some of you are John Mark.

- You've sinned
- you've wondered if God can still use you.
- **He can,** repent of that sin and move forward in grace.

Some of us bailed out like Mark did:

- Some of us bailed out because of the fear
- Some of us bailed out because of anger.
- Some of us bailed out by cursing
- Some of us bailed out by sexual sin.

Point: Your failure does not define you.

- It's never over when Jesus is on the scene.

2. God has a John Mark for You

Question: Will you encourage people who have made the wrong decision?

- They've already messed up, they don't need you coming in and saying "hey, look at this. Look what you did... what it cost?"
- **Never minimize a person's sin, but tell them we serve a gracious king.**

Can you just picture Barnabas talking to Mark: "Get up Mark? Yes, you've sinned but God still has something for you."

Little did Barnabas know that little John Mark would one day be the writer of the Gospel of Mark

Now, that was the writer,

Now let me talk about **why he wrote what he wrote**

This book was written sometime between A.D. 60 or 70

- This the was the time right after the death of Peter and the Neronian Persecution...
- **According to the Roman Historian Tacitus, Nero made the Christians scapegoats for his burning of Rome... he butchered them... the church was driven into Catacombs.**

So Mark wrote the book to encourage the gentile church in Rome!

- He wanted them to see Christ as a Suffering Servant- Savior.
- He wanted them to see Christ as One who speaks and acts and delivers people in the midst of crisis!

Christ is all ACTION in Mark!

- Mark uses the present tense 150 times – Jesus comes, Jesus says, Jesus heals...
- It's the shortest gospel...
 - 11,000 words compared to 19k in Lk & 18 in Matt.
 - YET, there are more miracles recorded in Mark than in any other gospel.
- He spends more time on the last week of Jesus than any other gospel writers
 - 20% compared to 15% in Matthew/Luke
- Christ's life is portrayed as super-busy...
 - He even had trouble finding time to eat in 3:20 and 6:31

It takes a slow reader 2 hours to read through mark

If you take that time, you will feel

- Surrounded by crowds
- Wearied by demons
- Besieged by attacks of demons

You are repeatedly brought face to face with

- the human emotions of Jesus
- and the astonishment of the multitudes

Mark wrote the book to let people see that Jesus went through what they are going through and that HE has the power to handle it...

Mark is saying, “**JESUS IS THE SUFFERING SERVANT-SAVIOR!**” CLING TO HIM!

^That’s why Mark wrote the book of Mark!

Lastly, let’s look at **the theme of the book**

Turn to Mark 10

The theme verse for Mark is **10:45** “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

- **Note:** The irony and encouragement of this verse is the fact that it’s actually a rebuke towards his disciples...

Let me set the scene---- At this point in Mark,

- Jesus has been with his disciples for three years as THE ideal servant
- In **vs. 32-34** Jesus gives a detailed forecast of his death
- AND THEN in **vs. 35- 37** the disciples say this...“**James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.**”
 - **Note:** They thought that the end was near and that they would be picking thrones out soon... AND as part of the inner circle (Peter, James, John), they wanted to get the best thrones!
 - So they approach Jesus privately... **and to make matters worse, Matthew** tells us in **chapter 20** that they actually had their mother ask!

This sound just like the a lot of Christians today!

- I've heard people say, "The Lord takes care of those who take care of themselves."

This reminds me of a parody written by **John G. Stackhouse**

"Name it and claim it, that's what faith's about!
You can have what you want if you just have no doubt
So make out your "wish list" and keep on believen'
And you find yourself perpetually receivin'."

What was the problem the disciples question to Jesus?

- It was a revelation that they saw greatness according to the world's definition.
- Jesus describes the worlds view point in **vs. 42** "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them."

James and John had fallen to the world's idea of seeking personal power!

How did they get there?

- They had been with Jesus for 3 years!
- They were learning from the greatest servant of all time!

How? Because It' easy to get there...

Robert Raines said about this passage

"I am like James and John.
Lord, I size up other people
In terms of what they can do for me;
How they can further my program,
Feed my ego,
Satisfy my needs,
Give me strategic advantage

He says,
I exploit people,
I want to say for your sake
But really for my own.

He says,
Lord I turn to you
To get the inside track
And to obtain special favors,
Your direction for my schemes,
Your power for my projects
You sanction for my ambition
Your blank check for whatever I want.
I am like James and John”

In **verse 41** the disciples learn about what James and John are doing and there is a blow up....

In **verse 42** Jesus calls them together for meeting and says they are acting like the world...

In **verse 43** he says don't do that and then goes on to set the records straight for all time... **Jesus says, “whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.”**

And you have to ask: **Why? Why is it that way?**

- And he answers that... **vs. 44 “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...”**

He calls Himself **“the Son of Man”**... the emphasis on **“THE”**

- That phrase means that he was human but even more...
- **He is not just a human being, but THE human being!**

He is literally saying “The greatest human that ever lived, lived for the purpose of serving others!” **SO YOU SHOULD TOO!**

Jesus says something similar in Luke 22:27 “For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.”

- He says, “Which is greater, the host and his guest, or the waiter?”
- Jesus says, **I AM THE WAITER!**

Mark 10:44 “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Point: Jesus isn't looking for great people... He is THE great person... He's looking for lowly people... Like Little John Mark

- He's looking normal people to do normal service...

So who is the writer?

- Drop out, mess up, Little John Mark

Why did the writer write?

- To encourage broken people

What is the Theme of Mark?

- Jesus came to serve us... to redeem us... so we can in return by GREAT... by serving others.