

Invitation Materials

Author:

No author is named in the text. However, an early tradition ascribes this Gospel to Mark, the son of Mary (Ac 12:12) and the companion of both Paul (Ac 12:25; Col 4:10; Phm 24) and Peter (1 Pe 5:13).

Date:

A.D. 50-70.; probably in the mid-60s.

Theme:

Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God.

Historical Background:

- 1 Mark was written for a Gentile audience; traditionally, the church at Rome.
- 2 In A.D. 64, a big fire engulfed Rome and destroyed much of the city. Despite his efforts to rebuild the city, many people believe the Emperor Nero himself had arranged for this fire. To shift the focus off himself, Nero placed the blame for this tragedy on the Christians. This led to an outbreak of severe persecution which tested the faith of many.
- 3 It was to the people in this situation that Mark may have written this Gospel. This book would encourage these suffering believers by showing Jesus' authority over all types of opposing forces.
- 4 At the same time, Mark called on them to serve Christ faithfully even as they share in his sufferings.
- 5 Mark was probably the first Gospel written, forming the basis for much of Matthew and Luke.

Characteristics

- 1 Mark is not so much a biography of Jesus as it is a character sketch.
- 2 Without any introduction, or infancy narrative, Jesus bursts onto the scene as a fully grown man.
- 3 Three years of ministry are packed into chapters 1-10, while Jesus' final week stretches out through chapters 11-16.

Outline

1:1-45	Get Ready
2:1-3:6	You Are Forgiven
3:7-35	Are You Family?
4:1-34	Are You Listening?
4:35-5:43	Believe!
6:1-30	Obey!
6:31-7:37	Come and Eat!
8:1-30	Who Is Jesus?
8:31-10:45	Come to Christ!
10:46-12:44	What's Important?
13:1-37	Watch!
14:1-15:20	Abba, Father!
15:21-16:8	Son of God

Discussion Questions

Open

- 1 Whose character sketch fits you best? John Key? Bill Gate? James Bond?

Dig

- 1 Read the captions and the first lines in chapters 1-8, whom does Jesus heal and how? What important teaching do you notice? What reactions to Jesus do you notice?
- 2 Given the situation of the readers, why did Mark emphasize what Jesus did?
- 3 Read these passages about Jesus' death (8:31-32; 9:9-10; 9:30-32; 10:32-45; 12:1-12). What is the context of each passage? What does it imply about the cause of his death?
- 4 After all the stories of power in chapters 1-8, why this change in emphasis?

Reflect

- 1 Mark shows Jesus as a king come to free his people from that which oppresses them. How have you experienced the freedom that comes from Jesus?

Invitation materials and discussion questions are taken from Serendipity Bible