

Subject: *Know Your Bible – Part 13*

Scripture: *Mark 1:1-15*

Gospel of Mark: Writer and Date

- Tradition states that John Mark wrote this gospel using Peter's sermons as his main source of information.

The Gospel of Mark allows us to see the life and ministry of Christ through Peter's eyes. Unlike the epistles, the gospels do not identify the writer in the text. Mark was the unfaithful servant who deserted Paul's mission team during their first journey (Acts 15:37-39), but later was restored to faithful service and fellowship (2 Tim. 4:11).

- This gospel was probably written between 55-65 AD.

Early church fathers generally agree that Mark wrote this gospel in Rome. Many scholars believe that Mark was the first of the four gospels to be written.

Unique Features of Mark

- Mark is the shortest and simplest of the four gospels.

Almost 40 percent of Mark is the record of the last eight days of Christ's life and His resurrection (Mk. 11:1-16:20).

- Mark presents Christ as the suffering Servant.

For this reason Mark does not mention Christ's birth or ancestry. The message of this gospel is found in the key verse: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45).

- Mark is written as a fast-paced action story.

This gospel account is vivid, colorful, and full of action. Unlike the other gospels, Mark focuses on Christ's works rather than His teachings. Only a few of Christ's parables are found in Mark, but this gospel contains over half of Christ's 35 miracles.

- Mark includes a wide range of emotional reactions.

These are the reactions of people toward Jesus and His ministry (amazement, awe, scorn, and offense) as well as Jesus' reactions (compassion, anger, grief, sorrow, and sympathy).

- Mark apparently was written for Gentile readers.

Mark translated Jewish terms for his readers and in some places used Latin (Roman) expressions. He also used the Roman system of time and explained Jewish customs. This gospel has fewer Old Testament references than Matthew.

Key Words in Mark

- 1) Immediately (KJV, “straightway”) – appears 42 times in Mark, more than the rest of the New Testament combined
- 2) Faith (Mk. 2:5; 4:40; 5:34, 36; 10:52; 11:22) – to have faith is to rely upon or place trust in Christ rather than depend on self or personal resources
- 3) Gospel (Mk. 1:1, 14-15; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15) – this is the good news of salvation that Jesus Christ came to earth to conquer the power of sin in the lives of His people by offering Himself as a perfect sacrifice on the cross

Outline of Mark

1. Presentation of the Servant (1:1-2:12)
 - A. Forerunner of the Servant
 - B. Baptism of the Servant
 - C. Temptation of the Servant
 - D. Mission of the Servant
2. Opposition to the Servant (2:13-8:26)
 - A. Initial opposition to the Servant
 - B. Parables of the Servant
 - C. Miracles of the Servant
 - D. Growing opposition to the Servant
3. Instruction by the Servant (8:27-10:52)
 - A. Peter’s confession and the cost of discipleship
 - B. Transfiguration of Jesus
 - C. Deliverance of the demon-possessed son
 - D. Jesus foretells His death
 - E. Jesus prepares His disciples
4. Rejection of the Servant (11:1-15:47)
 - A. Formal presentation of the Servant
 - B. Instruction on Prayer
 - C. Opposition by the Leaders
 - D. Instruction about the Future
 - E. Suffering and Death of the Servant
5. Resurrection of the Servant (16:1-20)
 - A. Announcement of His resurrection
 - B. Appearances of Jesus after the resurrection
 - C. Ascension of Jesus
 - D. Great Commission of Jesus

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