



**FOUNDATIONS
OF FAITH**

The Message of the Bible

Week 24: Mark

The Structure of Mark

Prologue 1:1–13	Galilee 1:14–6:6a	Outside Galilee 6:6b–8:26	On the Way to Jerusalem 8:27–10:52	Jerusalem 11:1–13:37	Death, Burial & Resurrection 14:1–16:8
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The Teaching of Mark

The Prologue (1:1–13)

1. The title of the Gospel is given in v. 1: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

2. Mark describes the ministry of John as fulfillment of OT prophecies.

Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. (Ex 23:20)

“Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming;” says the LORD of hosts. (Mal 3:1)

A voice is calling, “Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.” (Isa 40:3)

3. The central message of John’s ministry was “repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (v. 4).

4. John pointed to Christ as one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit (v. 8).

²⁴ For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶ Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. ²⁸ You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God. (Ezek 36:24–28)

5. In the baptism of Jesus, we again see his divine identity: “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased” (v. 11).

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; (Isa 61:1)

I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.” (Ps 2:7)

Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one *in whom* My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. (Isa 42:1)

The Galilean Ministry Begins (1:14–3:6)

1. Mark provides a short summary of the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee (1:14–15). He will do this again at 3:7–12 and 6:6b.

But there will be no *more* gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make *it* glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. (Isa 9:1)

2. Following the introduction to Jesus' Galilean ministry, Mark includes the calling of Peter, Andrew, James, and John (vv. 16–20). Interestingly, after the next two summary statements, Mark will again include notes about discipleship (3:13–19; 6:7–13).
3. One purpose in the Gospel of Mark is to be a guide for the reader in how to be a disciple of Christ.
4. Jesus is correctly identified by the unclean spirit in the synagogue: "I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" (1:24). However, it was not the time for Jesus' identity to be revealed and definitely not by a demon.
5. In the beginning of Mark's record of Jesus' ministry, many are healed. However, Jesus' mission at this point was to preach the good news of the kingdom of God (1:38).
6. Jesus' forgiveness of the paralytic's sins sparked the ire of the scribes, for they recognized that only God could forgive sins (2:7, 10–11).
7. This section ends with a series of questions related to the Sabbath.

The Galilean Ministry Continues (3:7–6:6a)

1. Jesus' identity is again correctly adduced by unclean spirits: "You are the Son of God!" (3:11).
2. The Parables of the Kingdom (4:1–34)
 - a. The Sower (3–20) – only a few accept the word of Christ
 - b. The Lamp (21–25) – proclaimed to all, understood by some
 - c. The Growing Seed (26–29) – God is responsible for growth of His kingdom
 - d. The Mustard Seed (30–32)
3. The fact that Jesus can calm the storm is a definite demonstration of His deity (v. 41).

⁸ Or *who* enclosed the sea with doors When, bursting forth, it went out from the womb; ⁹ When I made a cloud its garment And thick darkness its swaddling band, ¹⁰ And I placed boundaries on it And set a bolt and doors, ¹¹ And I said, "Thus far you shall come, but no farther; And here shall your proud waves stop"? (Job 38:8–11)

Thus He rebuked the Red Sea and it dried up, And He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness. (Ps 106:9)

You rule the swelling of the sea; When its waves rise, You still them. (Ps 89:9)

4. Even the demons recognized who Jesus was: "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" (5:7).
5. The pinnacle of the stories Mark includes shows that Jesus wielded power over death, man's greatest enemy. In performing these miracles, Jesus is demonstrating that the kingdom of God was indeed at hand.

6. Mark leaves unanswered the question of Jesus' listeners: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" (6:3). Its answer is left for the reader.

Ministry outside Galilee (6:6b–8:26)

1. As earlier, with a change in locality, Mark inserts a note about the disciples.
2. Despite the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus walking on water, the disciples remained ignorant with hardened hearts (6:52). They were like their fathers (Num 14 and 21). However, in the story that ensues, their faith begins to grow.

On the Way to Jerusalem (8:27–10:52)

1. Peter's confession, "You are the Christ" (8:29) marks a major turning point in the book. But what does it mean to be the Messiah?
2. Jesus begins to teach them about the Messiah (8:31–33) and about what it will mean to follow Him (34–38). His teaching continues in the chapters that follow.
3. Jesus' mission becomes clear: He must be delivered up to die and to be raised from the dead. The background for Jesus' teaching about the Messiah's suffering is Isaiah 53.
4. In the transfiguration, the Father testifies again to the sonship of Jesus: "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!" (9:7).
5. At this point, His disciples still did not understand His mission to die, even when He referred to His resurrection (9:9).
6. The story of the possess son demonstrates the necessity of faith.
7. The kingdom of God ...
 - a. is received as a child (10:14–15),
 - b. is entered with difficulty by the rich (10:17ff.),
 - c. will be a place of reward for discipleship (10:28–31),
 - d. considers greatness in terms of service, not privilege (10:32–45), and
 - e. is entered by faith in the Son of David (10:46–52).

Ministry in Jerusalem (11:1–13:37)

1. Mark 11:1–10 shows the great excitement surrounding Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. (Zech 9:9–10)

⁸ Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons shall bow down to you. ⁹ Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? ¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. ¹¹ He ties his foal to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine; He washes his garments in wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes. ¹² His eyes are dull from wine, And his teeth white from milk. (Gn 49:8–12)

2. Just as quickly as the crowd praises Jesus (11:9–10), their King leaves Jerusalem only with His disciples (v. 11).

3. When Jesus and His disciples return to Jerusalem, He demonstrates His zeal for the house of God.

<p>Even those I will bring to My holy mountain And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; For My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples. (Isa 56:7)</p>	<p>“Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your sight? Behold, I, even I, have seen <i>it</i>,” declares the LORD. (Jer 7:11)</p>
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4. Jesus turned the cursed, withered fig tree into a teaching opportunity with His disciples, specifically regarding a proper perspective for prayer.
5. In chapters 11 and 12, Jesus responds to a series of challenges at the temple:
 - a. In response to a challenge on His authority from the chief priests, scribes, and elders, Jesus reveals their hypocrisy with a confounding question about John the Baptist’s authority. Leaving his question unanswered left Jesus’ implicit claim to the same authority unchallenged.
 - b. Jesus continued his confrontation with these men with a parable about the wicked tenants, which they clearly recognize as about themselves (cf. Isa 5:1–2; Ps 118:22–23).
 - c. Jesus succinctly answers their question regarding taxes to Caesar. Jesus was no rebel; rather a revivalist.
 - d. Again, Jesus answers questions about misunderstandings of the Old Testament. In this case, the resurrection. His perspective is seen in v. 25.
 - e. The last question was about Jesus’ view of the greatest commandment. This scribe correctly agrees with Jesus about the superiority of obeying these two commandments over burnt offerings and sacrifices (vv. 32–33). He was close (v. 34).
6. In 12:35–37, Jesus addresses an important point about His sonship using Psalm 110:1. The Messiah was to be more than a mere earthly king as the son of David; He was the Son of God.
7. Mark 13 is the longest teaching of Jesus in the Gospel, which reveals the importance that Mark placed upon this subject. In restating the teaching of the OT and adding his admonitions, Jesus’ main concern is to teach His disciples how to live up to and during these days. His message is universal (v. 37).

The Death and Burial of Jesus (14:1–15:47)

1. During the Passover meal that Jesus shared with his disciples, He inaugurates for the first time the Lord’s Supper.
2. Jesus’ words emphasized that all the events surrounding His betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion were happening in order “to fulfill the Scriptures” (14:49).

<p>“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, And against the man, My Associate,” Declares the LORD of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; And I will turn My hand against the little ones.” (Zech 13:7)</p>	<p>⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke <i>was due</i>? (Isa 53:7–8)</p>
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3. During His trial, Jesus affirms before the high priest that He is “the Christ, the Son of the Blessed *One*” (14:61–62).

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." (Ps 110:1)

I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. (Dan 7:13)

4. Jesus' also confirmed by Pilate's own words that He was "the King of the Jews" (15:2), a testimony also heralded in jest by the soldiers (15:18) and by the inscription of His charge (15:26).
5. Jesus again identified Himself as the prophesied son of David in using Psalm 22:1 in relationship to Himself. Psalm 22 speaks of the suffering that the Messiah would experience.
6. The final explicit testimony to Jesus' divine Sonship is given by the centurion: "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (15:39).

The Resurrection of Jesus (16:1-8)

1. Compared to others, Mark gives a shorter account of the resurrection (vv. 1-8).
2. Vv. 9-20 are not present in the earliest manuscripts containing Mark. Their presence in later documents explains their presence here. Most likely these verses were not in the original text. However, most of their content is present in the other Gospels.

The Purposes of Mark

1. To show that Jesus fulfilled the OT promises and was indeed the Messiah (the Christ), the Son of God.
2. To demonstrate what it means to follow Jesus.

How should I respond?