

MARK

The most concise, vivid, and
in some ways exciting of the
Gospels

Writing of the Book

- The only name that has ever been attached to the second gospel is Mark.
- The only Mark ever identified as the author by early believers was John Mark, who worked so closely with Peter as to be identified as his “son,” the cousin of Barnabas, who traveled with Paul and Barnabas, the son of a wealthy family in Jerusalem.

Writing of the Book

- Mark wrote his Gospel while Peter was still alive, dating it most likely around 50, and no later than 60.
- External and internal evidence points to Rome as the most likely site of composition.
- Mark clearly has a Gentile audience in mind, explaining the Aramaic expressions he uses and his using Latinisms.

Outline of Matthew

- I. Thematic Prologue: The Gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God (1:1-15)
 - a. The Beginning of the Gospel (1:1)
 - b. John the Baptist's Preaching (1:2-8)
 - c. Jesus' Baptism (1:9-11)
 - d. Jesus Temptation (1:12-13)
 - e. The Beginning of Jesus' Proclamation (1:14-15)

II. Jesus Invades the Wilderness and the City with the Gospel (1:16-8:26)

- a. Jesus' Inaugural Ministry in Galilee (1:16-3:6)
- b. Jesus' Itinerant Ministry in Galilee (3:7-6:29)
- c. Jesus' Withdrawal to the Wilderness beyond Galilee (6:30-7:23)
- d. The Gentile Mission (7:24-8:10)
- e. Questions Concerning Signs and Seeing (8:11-26)

III. Jesus Invades Jerusalem (8:27-15:47)

- a. The Journey to Jerusalem (8:27-10:52)
- b. Jesus Confronts Jerusalem (11:1-13:37)
- c. Jerusalem Opposes Jesus (14:1-15:47)

IV. Unfinished Epilogue (16:1-8)

Purpose and Message

- The central theme of Mark is the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- He wants us to be clear on his identity as the Son of God.
- The supernatural nature of Jesus is the central theme.
- All the preliminaries of Jesus' birth and early years are skipped over, moving quickly to the baptism, where God himself tells us who Jesus is.

Purpose/Message *continued*

- The divine reality of who Jesus is expressed by everyone he comes into contact with **except for the religious leaders.**
- It is a **supreme irony** that those who should have been the first to see who Jesus was were unwilling to acknowledge him (the religious leaders), attributing his power not to God, but to the devil.
- Mark attributes this to the **purpose of God foretold by the prophets.**

Major Themes

The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

- **Mark focuses on the actions of Jesus, not his words, and prioritizes the death and resurrection of Jesus** (10 chapters on the whole of Jesus' life, six on the death and resurrection).
- The last words of the angelic being to the trembling women are about the resurrection.
- **Jesus' death was no accident, but the plan of God.**

Major Themes

The Ministry of Jesus as Servant

- The Son of God chose to be a servant.
- First, he is the preacher/teacher who proclaims what the people need to know about God.
 - Jesus was called “Teacher” by his own followers, the crowd, and his enemies.

Major Themes

The Ministry of Jesus as Servant *(continued)*

- Second, **Jesus is the one who heals and sets free, who works miracles on behalf of others.**
 - He is filled with compassion at the suffering around him, spends long hours healing diseases.
- When the task becomes too large, Jesus gives his apostles authority over demons and disease and sends them out to heal and set free as they preach his message.

Major Themes

Silence

- One of the distinctive things about Mark is his emphasis on Jesus' commands to those who he has healed, or told some profound truth to, not to disclose it but to **be silent**.
- **First**, in exorcisms, demons are commanded to silence because **Jesus did not want the evil spirits to testify** to the truth, as he did not want to be associated with them in any fashion whatsoever.

Major Themes

Silence *(continued)*

- Second, in some instances (but not all), people who were healed were commanded to be silent.
 - In this case the reason was to relieve the pressure of the crowds on Jesus' ministry.
- In the **third** instance, Jesus tells his disciples to be quiet about him being the Messiah because **they did not understand** and would not understand until after the resurrection, and it **would not have helped** for them to be proclaiming something they only partially understood at best.