



INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW MATERIAL



1. [Bible Project – Gospel of Mark Overview.](#)



2. Andy's [overview sermon at One Hope](#) – Sunday 5th Feb 2023 -
another introductory video available soon.



3. [ESV Study Bible Introduction to Mark](#) (longer)

MORE VIDEO RESOURCES

1. [LUMO Gospel of Mark](#) (ESV) – These dramatized videos are



in chapters and can prove helpful in a bible study as an alternative way to absorb it!



2. [The Gospel of Mark read by David Suchet](#) at St. Paul's cathedral in London in March 2017 (NIV).



LOOK CAREFULLY FOR MARKAN SANDWICHES!

Mark uses a ‘sandwich technique’ when he frequently interrupts the telling of one story by inserting another.

At first the second story may appear to be unrelated, but Mark has an important theological purpose for doing so.

For instance, in chapter five, a synagogue ruler (Jairus) begs Jesus to heal his daughter (5:21-24). Mark then inserts the account of Jesus healing a woman with chronic bleeding (25-34), before returning to the raising of Jairus’ daughter (35-43). This connects on the theme of ‘faith’. Other such ‘sandwiches’ emphasise themes around discipleship, witnessing, or the dangers of falling away. Mark uses this unique way of recording events to highlight key themes.¹

It can be quite helpful to our understanding of these passages to realise that the middle content often proves to be the interpretive key to the whole.

See also: 6:7-30, 11:12-21, 14:1-11.

Can you find any of these in chapters 1-4?



WHY THE SECRECY?

Sometimes Jesus commanded people to stay silent about who He is. This might seem strange, but it often served to protect him from false expectations about being a political Messiah (e.g. a military king to overthrow the Romans). He is also far more than a mere miracle or wonder worker, because his task was far greater than healing diseases. He came to die on a cross for sin. From time to time, that singular task needed protection from the great crowds that followed him.

THE ‘BACKSTORY’ TO THE GOSPEL

CS Lewis wrote ‘The Magician’s Nephew’ five years after writing ‘The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe’, providing a *backstory* to the story of Narnia. In the same way, Mark wrote after Peter and Paul were already preaching about Jesus on mission. It served to provide the *backstory* of the gospel that was being preached already – an account of the life, teaching, mission and impact of Jesus.²

DON’T MISS THE OBVIOUS!



Every story in Mark is about Jesus (even the two accounts about John the Baptist ultimately serve to point you to Jesus): His identity, His authority, His mission and His calling. He is Son of God, the Servant-King who deserves our worship, faith, discipleship and very lives.

¹ Edwards, J. *The Gospel According to Mark* (Pillar NT Commentary Series. Eerdmans, 2002) p11-12.

² <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/mark-as-the-backstory-to-the-gospel-mark-11-as-a-key-to-marks-gospel/>

7 STUDIES IN MARK CHAPTERS 1-4

MARK 1:1-15

“The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God”



Opening question: What is the gospel?

Try to summarise it succinctly together in your group.

Read v1-8

Why does Mark start his gospel like this?

What was John the Baptist's ministry for?

What can we learn and apply from his ministry? [how are we to understand v8?]

Read 9-13

What do these accounts teach us about Jesus?

Why was Jesus baptised by John then 'driven' out into the wilderness?

What matters for our lives here?

Read 14-15

Why did Jesus begin in Galilee?

What is essential to the message about Jesus?

Why is 'repentance and faith' necessary?

Mark 1:14-45

"The King's Speech"



Opening question:

Who in your life holds a position of unrivalled authority? Discuss!

Read 14-20

What did Jesus mean when he said, 'the time has come, the kingdom of God is at hand'?

Read Jeremiah 16:15-17 - discuss what it meant for Jesus to call these men to be "fishers of men."

What does this teach us for today about the nature of Christian discipleship?

Read 21-34

Describe the different reactions to Jesus here.

What is Mark showing us about Jesus in this early event in his ministry?

What do we learn about Jesus' identity and mission here?

Read 35-45

What can you learn from Jesus here about your own walk with God?

What was significant about Jesus' encounter with this man with leprosy?

Why did Jesus warn the man to tell no-one? What resulted?

What application can be made from this encounter for our lives?

Mark 2:1-17

“Jesus, Friend of Sinners”



Opening questions:

Who do you know who needs to respond to Jesus?

What do you find difficult about talking to them about the gospel?

What would it take? Discuss!

Read 2:1-5

Describe the scene.

What do you think led these men to take such drastic action?

How does Jesus respond to this need and why is it so shocking?

Read 5-12

Why were the scribes/teachers so concerned?

What reactions to Jesus are similar today?

What does this account reveal about Jesus?

Read 13-17

What is significant about the calling of Levi?

Why did the religious leaders hold this view?

What about this still applies to our situation today?

Mark 2:18-3:6

“The New Wine of Christ”



Opening question:

What's the difference between *legalism* and genuine faith? Share an example.

Read 18-22

Why was it the wrong time for Jesus' followers to fast?

What 'rules' do you think we have today that are not biblical or supported biblically?

Explain the two pictures of the cloth and the new wine.

Discuss the dangers and pitfalls of legalism.

Read 23-28

What does it mean that “the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath”?

Is the Sabbath still relevant today? (Why or why not?)

What does Jesus mean that he is the “Lord of the Sabbath”?

Read 3:1-6

Jesus was “grieved at their hardness of heart.” What's an example of your own heart being hard like this?

Why did the religious leaders want to kill Jesus?

What do we learn about religiosity vs saving faith here?

What can we share with a Christian or a non-Christian from what we learn here?

Mark 3:7-19

“He Called to Him Those He Wanted”



Opening question: What historical steps were involved for you to come to hear the gospel and respond to it?

Read 3:7-12

How does this section draw to a close Jesus' ministry in Galilee?

What caused it and how did he respond?

What titles for Jesus has Mark used so far? Why are they significant?

Why did Jesus order them not to make him known?

Read 13-19

What's significant about Jesus' calling of the twelve apostles? Why 12?

What was to be their task?

What is similar or different to our calling today? Discuss why!

In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus' encourages his disciples to 'go and make disciples' too.

- How can we do this more effectively and intentionally?
- What comfort and requirements are provided for this important work?
- Who can you be praying for? Share and pray!

Mark 3:20-35

“Confronting Rejection”



Opening question:

If Jesus is good news, why do so many seem to strongly disagree? Discuss.

Read 20-21

Why did Jesus' family think this about him?

Have you had a family member react to your faith and reject Jesus?

How have you responded or how might you respond?

Read 22-30

What was the underlying view of Jesus from the religious leaders?

What does Jesus' reply in parables mean?

How was it a reply to their accusations?

What does it mean to “blaspheme against the Holy Spirit?”

[How does the context help us to understand this?]

Read 31-35

Why did his family pursue him like this?

How is his response important for us today?

How might you pray in response to this section of Mark's gospel?

Mark 4:1-34

“Parables and How to Understand Them”



Opening Questions: Why do you think we connect to the telling of stories?

Discuss!

Read 1-9

Why do you think Jesus taught from a boat?

Before you read further - why do you think Jesus used stories like this?

How might we contextualise this method today?

Read 10-20

What does Jesus say his dual purpose of parables is? Why?

What is common to each of the first three seeds in the sower story?

What is the central idea of this parable (1-20)?

Read 21-34

What do you think is the main point of each of these parables?

How do they each explain what the kingdom is like?

What principles help clarify the parables?



GOSPEL LIFE ACCORDING TO THE PARABLES