



INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW MATERIAL



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



2. Andy's [overview sermon at One Hope](#) – Sunday 5th Feb 2023 - and [introductory videos.](#)



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: 3:20-35; 6:7-30; 11:12-21; 14:1-11.



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/>

SEVEN STUDIES IN MARK CHAPTERS 5-8

MARK 4:35- 5:20

“WHO IS THIS?”



Opening question: Have you ever experienced rough weather while travelling? Discuss!

Read 4:35-41

Describe the scene and discuss how the disciples were feeling through this account.

Why did Jesus perform this miracle?

What Old Testament connections can you make with this event?

What does this teach us about Jesus' word?

How is verse 41 directed to Mark's readers?

How might this story change the way you pray for those who are suffering, or for your own suffering?

Read 5:1-20

What's the significance of the location to this story?

Why did Jesus send the unclean spirits into the pigs?

Why do you think the locals wanted Jesus to leave (v17)?

What was the outcome of this man's deliverance?

What great things has Jesus done for you? Who could you tell about it?

Are there any other applications you can find for today from these two accounts?

MARK 5:21-43

“THE INCOMPARABLE CHRIST”



Opening question:

Revelation 21:1 says “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.” What guarantee/s do we have that this will come to pass?

Read v21-34

Describe the scene as it unfolds. What do you notice? What is there you can relate to?

Why was the woman healed in this way?

Jesus questioned who touched him (v31). Why did he ask this?

Why do you think the stories of Jairus’ daughter and this woman are interweaved like they are?

Read 35-43

The girl was pronounced dead. How is her death not the end? What did Jesus mean when he said she was only “sleeping” (v39)?

What did Mark intend to convey through his record of these two miracles?

Basing your answer on this story, why might it be a blessing to be broken?

What do you think is the main idea or takeaway message for us today?

What is the relationship between faith and healing?

Who can you be praying for in light of this passage?

MARK 6:1-29

“Off With His Head!”



Opening question:

Have you ever faced opposition because of your faith? Can you share what happened and how you felt about it? How might you respond today?

Read v1-6a

Describe the relationship between Jesus and his hometown.

How might we find a way through similar unbelief in ourselves?

Read v6b-13

What is the purpose of shaking the dust off their feet?

What resources did the disciples have (or didn't have) for their task?

Discuss the differences between being safe and being sent.

How is their experience similar to or different for us today?

Read v14-29

Describe your favourite birthday party! How was Herod's different?!

Who was Herod and why would he have initially shown interest in John the Baptist?

What were the various positions on Jesus that Herod heard about? (v14-15)

Why did Herod come to this conclusion about Jesus? (v16)

What does this teach us about Herod's family?

How are Jesus and John the Baptist similar or different?

What does this account teach us about Jesus and his reception at the time? What about for our time?

How might you pray for our political leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-4) or for those you know who oppose the gospel (Matthew 5:44)?

MARK 6:30-56

“Take Heart, it is I!”



Opening question:

Why do you think it is helpful to know the Old Testament when you read the New Testament?

Read v30-44

Why does Mark focus on the disciples' return rather than on what they had achieved on their mission earlier?

How many were present at this event? Discuss!

What contrast between Jesus and his disciples stands out here? How might that be true today?

How does Mark intend us to view this miracle?

[This event has some Old Testament echoes that you may like to study further (see Numbers 27:12-23, 2 King 4:43, Ezekiel 34, Psalm 23).]

Read v45-52

What can you identify and relate to with the disciples' reactions?

Why did Jesus walk out there in verse 48?

What do we learn about Jesus' identity? (Compare this with Exodus 33:19-22; 34:6).

How are Jesus' words in verse 50 important for us today?

Why didn't the disciples comprehend what they experienced?

Read 53-56

How does this connect with previous events in Mark's gospel?

What other Old Testament echoes might be on display here? (i.e. Psalm 103:1-5)

What is the difference between Jesus' disciples and the crowds who pursued him? How might that be evident today?

How are these event small-scale glimpses into something bigger?

How might all these events give you confidence in the work of Jesus in your life?

MARK 7:1-23

“A Matter of the Heart | The Heart of the Matter”



Opening question:

What traditions do you promote in your life/family life? What positives or perils do they involve?!

Read v1-13

What kind of handwashing is being discussed here in verses 2-4?

What is the accusation brought against Jesus disciples?

Explore how Jesus counters it.

Can you explain what Jesus means in verses 11-13?

What might a modern version of this hypocrisy look like?

Read v14-23

Where does Jesus say defilement comes from?

In verse 19, why are the words in brackets significant?

Explore the list in verses 21-22. What from the 10 Commandments are listed and why do you think this is significant?

How might you or I need to watch out for this same religiosity as the religious leaders?

Discuss what *religiosity* versus a *relationship* with God looks like.

What 'traditions' do we as evangelicals attach too much importance to? What about in our own church?

Bonus question: How is the gospel the cure for the church's hypocrisy? (i.e. Luke 18:9-14).

MARK 7:24-37

“He Does All Things Well”



Opening question:

Think of someone you know who has clearly demonstrated their faith in Jesus. What can you share about how they displayed their trust? How are/were you encouraged by that?

Read v24-30

What is significant about Jesus' location to this account?

Describe the situation in verses 25 and 26.

How does this passage relate to the one before it (i.e. from verses 1-23)? How might the religious leaders with their traditions have reacted to this encounter?

What do you make of Jesus' reply?

Who does this parable refer to?

The woman's reply is also surprising. What about it did Jesus note?

Do we share her attitude in our own faith?

Read v31-37

What purpose would Jesus have in taking this man aside?

Why did Jesus use his fingers, spit, and then sigh?

Now also read Isaiah 35:1-10. What connections do you notice?

What spiritual reality does this healing point to?

How might verse 37 still be a small view of Jesus?

How do these accounts compare with the previous section about the hearts of the religious leaders (1-23)?

What about miracles today? Should we expect them?

Share and pray for those you know who need to discover the person of Jesus and the wonder of his power to save.

MARK 8:1-30

“Who do you say that I am?”



Opening question:

What can you highlight from our journey in Mark so far? Has anything particularly stuck out to you? Discuss!

Read v1-13

What do you notice in this account?

How is this story different to the similar account in Mark chapter 6?

In what way do we tend to follow the Pharisees in asking for a sign (v11)?

Read v14-21

Why does Jesus warn his disciples about the 'leaven' of the Pharisees and Herod? What did he mean?

How are we like the disciples?

What does Jesus appeal to that is helpful for us too?

Read v22-26

Why does Mark incorporate this story at this point? How does it relate?

What does his 'two-stage' healing reveal about understanding Jesus?

Read v27-30

Why did people think Jesus was one of the three options in verse 28?

Why is this considered the centre of Mark's gospel?

What does 'Christ' mean?

Why did Jesus want this concealed?

How is this question relevant to every one of us today?

Spend some time in prayer, asking for God's help in a world blinded to his truth (see 2 Corinthians 4:4).

O LOVER TO THE UTTERMOST,

May I read the meltings of thy heart to me
in the manger of thy birth,
in the garden of thy agony,
in the cross of thy suffering,
in the tomb of thy resurrection,
in the heaven of thy intercession.

Bold in this thought I defy my adversary,
tread down his temptations,
resist his schemings,
renounce the world,
am valiant for truth.

Deepen in me a sense of my holy relationship to thee,
as spiritual Bridegroom,
as Jehovah's Fellow,
as sinners' Friend.

I think of thy glory and my vileness,
thy majesty and my meanness,
thy beauty and my deformity,
thy purity and my filth,
thy righteousness and my iniquity.

Thou hast loved me everlastingly, unchangeably,
may I love thee as I am loved;
Thou hast given thyself for me,
may I give myself to thee;
Thou hast died for me,
may I live to thee,
in every moment of my time,
in every movement of my mind,
in every pulse of my heart.

May I never dally with the world,
and its allurements,
but walk by thy side,
listen to thy voice,
be clothed with thy graces,
and adorned with thy righteousness.³

Amen!

³ "Christ is all" from *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions (Banner of Truth)* p18.
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