

Making the most of Mark's Gospel (2): How does Mark's Gospel "work"?

Basic questions...

WHO wrote the Gospel?

= Mark... Peter (according to Papias and others)

HOW was it to be used?

= Read aloud... a drama!

WHY was it written?

= to convey the Gospel – 1:1

WHAT is the message?

= Who is Jesus? Why did he come? What does it mean to follow him? (1:1-3, 1:14-15)

How does Mark's gospel "work"?

Challenge: few explanations (like in Luke 18:1)...

So notice HOW Mark tells the Gospel story

E.g. read Mark 15:33-39. Think: why is v38 surprising?

Sets of three = groups of related incidents

e.g. 1:40-2:17, 2:18-3:6, 4:35-5:47... to shed light on each other

"Sandwiches" = Topic A... then Topic B... then back to Topic A

e.g. 5:21-43, 11:12-21... 14:1-11

Repeated words and phrases

e.g. 7:14-23 what makes a man unclean (x3)

e.g. the Cross (x3) = 8:31, 9:31, 10:32-34

e.g. Jesus' mission statements (x3) = 1:38, 2:17, 10:45

Notice how Mark uses the Old Testament – and ask WHY (see previous session)

Think: where are we in the story? = notice the structure of Mark's Gospel

Act 1 - in Galilee = 1:1 – 8:30 = the King revealed... and at work

Act 2 - on the way to Jerusalem = 8:31 – 10:52 = learning the way of the Cross

Act 3 - in Jerusalem = 11:1 – 16:8 = Gospel climax: judgement and salvation

An outline of Mark's gospel

1:1-8:30 = part 1: Galilee – the King revealed and at work

1:1-15	Introduction: The Son of God promised in the OT is here – so repent and believe!
1:16-39	Jesus demonstrates kingly authority over men and Satan. He uses his authority to preach.
1:40-2:17	Jesus has authority to cleanse & forgive – that's why he has come. Controversy begins...
2:18-3:6	Jesus the King is about grace, joy and healing... in contrast to the religion of the Pharisees... who determine to destroy him.
3:7-35	Jesus is rejected by the old Israel. He calls a new Israel and a new family – a people who will do God's will.
4:1-34	<i>An explanatory sermon</i> : Jesus' kingdom comes through God's Word. So listen! Our response to the Word determines Jesus' response to us.
4:35-5:43	Jesus reveals his rule over nature, Satan, sickness and death. This is what the Kingdom of God will be like. People respond with either fear or faith.
6:1-30	Jesus is rejected – & his followers prepared for rejection too. Why? Because their hearers won't repent.
6:30-56	Miracles by the lake reveal that Jesus has come as the rescuer-Messiah. But the disciples don't understand Jesus' identity and mission.
7:1-23	Jesus exposes what our hearts are like. This is what he's come to rescue us from. The Pharisees' man-made religion is part of the problem, not the solution.
7:24-8:10	Jesus' mission extends: he came first for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles – for any who humbly trust in Him for rescue.
8:11-30	Peter confesses that Jesus is "the Christ". But a miracle is needed for people to see who He really is... <i>A blind man is healed...</i>

8:31-10:52 = part 2: on the way to Jerusalem – learning the way of the Cross

8:31-9:1	<u>Jesus must be killed</u> . His followers must suffer also, trusting that Jesus' future return means present suffering is worth it.
9:2-29	God's Son is glorious—so listen to him. The last days are here & Jesus is sovereign over evil—so trust him.
9:30-50	<u>Jesus must die</u> . His followers must serve like Jesus, not want to be great. We need Jesus to die, because sin and hell are inescapable.
10:1-31	It's impossible for man to gain eternal life by his own effort. But God makes it possible when someone comes to Jesus.
10:32-52	<u>Jesus will die in the place of others</u> . So humbly follow him, learn to serve like him. Cry to him for mercy. <i>A second blind man is healed...</i>

11:1 – 16:8 = part 3: in Jerusalem – judgement and salvation

11:1-25	Jesus is God's long-expected King. He comes to rescue – but also to judge Israel and her religion.
11:27-12:17	The representatives of Israel reject Jesus. But he will reject them: though killed he will rise in judgement and found a new people of God.
12:18-44	The Lord is the God of resurrection power. So give God his due – by honouring his Son as Lord.
13:1-37	<i>An explanatory sermon</i> : the old order will soon be ended, by Jesus the judge. Keep on following Jesus and don't be led astray.
14:1-26	Preparing for the Passion: In fulfilment of Scripture Jesus the Passover lamb goes willingly to his death, inaugurating the new covenant.
14:27-52	In his death Jesus will bear God's wrath. The sin of Jesus' followers makes clear that man will contribute nothing to his salvation.
14:53-15:15	The arrest and trial of Jesus. He is the innocent, suffering king – who is rejected by all.
15:16-39	Crucifixion, death and burial. God's king is forsaken by God in his death. But in his death he judges old Israel and brings salvation to a new people.
15:40-16:8	The empty tomb. Jesus definitely died and rose again. He is the Christ who will gather together the new people of God: <i>the centurion confesses that Jesus is "the Son of God."</i>