



MARK



ERWIN KURTH

LIVING WAY
BIBLE STUDY

Living Way Bible Study, Inc. is an auxiliary of the Pacific Southwest District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). All studies are written and/or edited by LCMS pastors. We have been providing studies to churches throughout the U.S. and Canada since 1982.

For a *suggested* donation of \$1-per-lesson within a study (e.g., 23-lesson study of John is \$23) you receive an original of the study, from which you are then free to make copies for your class. Please honor our copyright of these materials.

As a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that relies solely on freewill donations, additional donations are much appreciated and enable us to continue to produce and promote the study of God's Word.

If you have any questions or comments on this study, please contact us. We are always eager to hear from our students and appreciate your comments.

Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

info4LWBS@aol.com

www.livingwaybiblestudy.org

 facebook.com/livingwaybiblestudy

Copyright © 1987, 2016 by Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

This study has been revised and updated in 2016 to include quotations from the English Standard Version, along with the 1984 NIV.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission from Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

WELCOME TO LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY (LWBS)

LWBS is a practical course of study with a special emphasis on the application of God's Word to the life of the individual. While emphasizing practical application, LWBS presents each book of the Bible as the holy, inspired, Word of God, the confessional position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Our purpose is to help equip believers to live joyfully in God's redeeming love and to share with others God's plan of salvation.

It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit will use this study to help you grow in your knowledge and appreciation of our God and His Word. *"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* 2 Peter 3:18

STUDY STRUCTURE

LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY SUGGESTS THIS FOUR-STEP METHOD

- 1. PERSONAL** – The student prays for guidance from the Holy Spirit and answers the Personal Application (P.A.) questions at home using only the Bible (no commentaries).
- 2. SMALL GROUPS** – The class meets for an opening and divides into small groups of 8–10 people. The small group leader guides the group through the P.A. questions, encouraging each to share their answers and discuss further as time allows.
- 3. THE MESSAGE** – The lecture or message is given by a pastor or layperson who has researched the material and presents the study, giving personal insight and augmenting, but not duplicating, the author's comments.
- 4. THE NARRATIVE** – The author's comments or narrative, along with the P.A. questions for the next lesson, are given out at the end of the class. At the next class meeting, before answering the P.A. questions, the small groups may choose to review the author's comments of the last lesson, and share what each has highlighted as meaningful or important.

With this four-step method the student has the opportunity to study the particular section of Scripture covered by the lesson from four different approaches. This emphasizes the Bible text and gives the student an understanding and ownership for each section studied.

Each lesson should be stapled together according to the number of the lesson in the right-hand corner of the page. The P.A. questions for the next week should be attached after the author's narrative for the current week, as they will be the home study for the next class session.

The first meeting of the class is an introduction to the study. Since the members of the small groups have no P.A. questions to discuss at the first meeting, they may use the time to get acquainted or to tell what they hope to receive by studying this course. At the first meeting, the lecturer presents background information about the course, using the Introduction lesson as a guide.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

MARK

ERWIN KURTH

21 LESSONS

AUTHOR INFORMATION	I	LESSON 4 : MARK 3:1–35	19
		Restoring the Withered Hand — Fifth Miracle	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	II	Mark 3:1–6	19
		Healings Continue – Mark 3:7–12	20
LESSON 1 : INTRODUCTION	1	The Twelve Are Chosen and Ordained	
Characteristics of Mark’s Gospel	2	Mark 3:13–19	21
Peculiarities of the Gospel According to Mark	2	The Meaning of the Word Apostle	21
The Theological Thrust	4	Names of the Twelve Apostles – Mark 3:16–19	21
God	4	The Scribes Concocted an Explanation	
Man	4	Mark 3:22–30	22
Behold the Servant of the Lord	4	Who Is Close to Jesus in Kinship?	
Personal Application – Mark 1:1–45	5	Mark 3:31–35	22
		Personal Application – Mark 4:1–41	23
LESSON 2 : MARK 1:1–45	8	LESSON 5 : MARK 4:1–41	26
Mark, John, John Mark	8	Three Parables Cited by Mark	26
Getting to Know Mark Better	8	The First Parable – Mark 4:1–20	26
Choice Passages in Chapter 1	9	A Lamp Belongs on a Stand – Mark 4:21	26
Contents of Chapter 1	9	The Light-Bearers Are Selected and Ordained	
Activities in the Beginning		Mark 4:22–23	27
of Christ’s Galilean Ministry – Mark 1:14–45	10	Where Is the Kingdom of God?	27
Personal Application – Mark 2:1–28	11	More Blessings — Less Also – Mark 4:24–25	27
		The Second Parable: The Seed Growing	
LESSON 3 : MARK 2:1–28	13	in Secret – Mark 4:26–29	28
Five Angles In Studying A Miracle	13	In the Meantime	28
Jesus Forgives the Sins of a Paralytic Man		The Parable of the Mustard Seed	
and Heals Him – Mark 2:1–12	13	Mark 4:30–32	29
The Calling of Levi-Matthew – Mark 2:13–14	14	A Busy Day – Mark 3:22–4:34	29
Second Criticism of Jesus – Mark 2:15–17	14	A Miracle Over Nature – Mark 4:35–41	29
Third Criticism, from the Disciples of John		Personal Application – Mark 5:1–43	31
and of the Pharisees – Mark 2:18	15		
Jesus Responds to the Criticism – Mark 2:19–22	15	LESSON 6 : MARK 5:1–43	33
The Pharisees Launch the Fourth Criticism		The Demoniac of the Gadarenes Is Restored	
Mark 2:23–28	16	Mark 5:1–20	33
Personal Application – Mark 3:1–35	17	The First of Five Withdrawals – Mark 4:35–5:1	33
		The Demoniac of Gadara – Mark 5:2–5	34

A Legion of Demons Is Driven Out of Him Mark 5:6–10	34	LESSON 9 : MARK 7:1–37	55
The “Legion” Enter About 2,000 Swine Mark 5:11–13	35	Again, Pharisees and Scribes Contend with Jesus – Mark 7:1–5	55
Jesus Is Asked to Leave – Mark 5:14–17	35	Jesus Answers the Pharisees and Scribes Mark 7:6–13	56
The First Missionary to the Decapolis Mark 5:18–20	36	The Heart of the Matter – Mark 7:14–23	56
Two Separate Yet Intertwined Stories: Jesus Returned from Gadara to Capernaum Mark 5:21	36	The Importunate Prayer of the Syrophenician Woman – Mark 7:24–30	57
Jairus Turns to Jesus for Help – Mark 5:22–24	36	The Man Who Is Deaf and Mute Is Healed Mark 7:31–37	58
An Interruption by a Woman with a Hemorrhage Mark 5:25–34	36	Spiritual Deafness and Muteness	59
The Raising of the Daughter of Jairus Mark 5:35–43	37	Personal Application – Mark 8:1–38	60
Conclusion of the Story – Mark 5:43b	38	LESSON 10 : MARK 8:1–38	62
Personal Application – Mark 6:1–29	39	Feeding the 4,000 – Mark 8:1–9	62
LESSON 7 : MARK 6:1–29	41	The Messiahship of Jesus Is Challenged Mark 8:10–13	63
Christ Was Rejected at Nazareth – Mark 6:1–6	41	Discussion Revolves Around Bread and Leaven Mark 8:14–21	63
Conflicting Reactions to Jesus	42	A Man Who Is Blind Is Healed at Bethsaida Mark 8:22–26	64
Postscript	42	Who do People Say that the Son of Man Is? Mark 8:27–30	64
The Twelve Are Sent out to Missionize Mark 6:7–13	42	Foretelling His Death and Resurrection Mark 8:31	65
Herod Imagines John Come Back to Life Mark 6:14–16	43	Peter Reacts Impetuously – Mark 8:32–33	65
A Flashback – Mark 6:17–20	43	Christ, in Preference to Self – Mark 8:34	65
The Daughter of Herodias Gets Her Chance Mark 6:21–25	44	Saving or Losing Life – Mark 8:35	66
Herod Is Trapped! – Mark 6:26–28	44	The Vanity of Heaping-up Earthly Goods Mark 8:36–38	66
Personal Application – Mark 6:30–56	45	Personal Application – Mark 9:1–50	67
LESSON 8 : MARK 6:30–56	47	LESSON 11 : MARK 9:1–50	69
In Need of a Vacation – Mark 6:30–32	47	The Transfiguration – Mark 9:1–8	69
The Crowd Follows by Land – Mark 6:33–34	47	Moses and Elijah Appear – Mark 9:4–10	70
Feeding the 5,000 – Mark 6:35–44	48	Elijah Prefigured John the Baptizer Mark 9:11–13	71
Jesus Yearned for Solitude – Mark 6:45–46	48	Happenings at the Base of Mt. Hermon Mark 9:14–29	71
A Third Miracle Over Nature – Mark 6:47–52	49	Another Announcement Regarding His Death Mark 9:30–32	72
Walking on Water? Yes – Mark 6:45–52	50	The Common Urge to be Number One	
The Healer Is Swamped with Work Mark 6:53–56	51		
Personal Application – Mark 7:1–37	52		

Mark 9:33–37	72	LESSON 15 : MARK 12:1–44	96
Be Slow to Judge – Mark 9:38–42	73	Parable of the Wicked Sharecroppers	
Dealing With the Source of Evil – Mark 9:43–50	73	Mark 12:1–9	96
Personal Application – Mark 10:1–22	74	Jesus Applied the Parable to His Defamers	
		Mark 12:10–12	97
LESSON 12 : MARK 10:1–22	76	A Loaded Question – Mark 12:13–17	98
Christ Leaves Galilee – Mark 10:1	76	His Encounter with the Sadducees	
Marriage and Divorce Are Discussed		Mark 12:18–27	98
Mark 10:2–12	76	Which Is the Chief Commandment?	
Children Are Examples of Trustfulness		Mark 12:28–34	99
Mark 10:13–16	78	Great David’s Greater Son – Mark 12:35–37	99
Previous Happenings on the Way from		“Keep a Sharp Eye on the Sharpies”	
Galilee to Judea	78	Mark 12:38–40	99
The Rich Young Ruler – Mark 10:17–22	78	The Widow’s Mites – Mark 12:41–44	99
Personal Application – Mark 10:23–52	80	Personal Application – Mark 13:1–37	100
LESSON 13 : MARK 10:23–52	82	LESSON 16 : MARK 13:1–37	102
The Peril of Riches – Mark 10:23–25	82	Herod’s Temple – Mark 13:1–2	102
Jesus does not Summarily Condemn the Rich	83	The Olivet Discourse Begins	
A Puzzling Phenomenon	83	Mark 13:3–4	103
The Disciples Are Puzzled – Mark 10:26–31	83	Signs of the Last Times – Mark 13:5–8	103
A Detailed Description of His Death		Prediction Regarding the Near Future	
Mark 10:32–34	84	Mark 13:9–10	103
Ambitious Thoughts Take Form – Mark 10:35–41	84	The Holy Spirit Will Supply the Right Answer	
Greatness Defined – Mark 10:42–45	84	Mark 13:11	104
Blind Bartimaeus Is Healed – Mark 10:46–52	85	Fractured Families – Mark 13:12–13	104
Personal Application – Mark 11:1–33	86	The Abomination of Desolation	
		Mark 13:14	104
		Flee for Safety – Mark 13:14–20	104
LESSON 14 : MARK 11:1–33	89	Heed the Signs of the Coming Judgment Day	
The Final Week	89	Mark 13:21–23	104
The Triumphal Entry – Mark 11:1–10	89	The Second Advent Foretold	
Jesus Still Rides On	90	Mark 13:24–27	105
Jesus Surveyed Conditions in the Court		“Even so, come Lord Jesus”	
of the Gentiles – Mark 11:11	91	Mark 13:28–37	105
Cursing the Fig Tree – Mark 11:12–14	91	Personal Application – Mark 14:1–25	106
Cleansing of the Temple – Mark 11:15–19	92		
Faith and Prayer – Mark 11:20–26	92	LESSON 17 : MARK 14:1–25	108
Jesus Wards off the First Group of Critics		Wednesday in the Great Week	
Mark 11:27–33	93	Mark 14:1–2	108
Personal Application – Mark 12:1–44	94	The Anointing of Christ – Mark 14:3–9	109
		Judas Decides To Betray Christ	

Mark 14:10–11	109	Mark 15:24	128
The Upper Room	110	Jewish Reckoning of Time – Mark 15:25	128
“Furnished and Ready”	111	I N R I – Mark 15:26	128
The Announcement of the Betrayal		Jesus Is Impaled on the Center Cross	
Mark 14:18–21	111	Mark 15:27–28	129
The Institution of the Lord’s Supper		The Seven Words from the Cross	
Mark 14:22–25	111	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John	129
Personal Application – Mark 14:26–72	112	Mighty Stirrings at Calvary	
		Mark 15:38–39	130
LESSON 18 : MARK 14:26–72	114	The Women Receive Honorable Mention	
Denial of the Eleven Foretold		Mark 15:40–41	131
Mark 14:26–31	114	Two Courageous Men – Mark 15:42–45	132
The Agony in the Garden of the Oil Press		The Burial of Jesus – Mark 15:46–47	132
Mark 14:32–42	115	Personal Application – Mark 16:1–20	133
The Betrayal by Judas – Mark 14:43–46	115		
Peter’s Impetuousness – Mark 14:47	116	LESSON 21 : MARK 16:1–20	135
Christ’s Humiliation – Mark 14:48–52	116	The Long and Short of it —	
Jesus Is Brought Before the Sanhedrin		the Ending of Mark’s Gospel	135
Mark 14:53–65	116	Late Friday Afternoon to Sunday Evening	
Peter’s Denial – Mark 14:66–72	117	Mark 15:40 – 16:13	135
Personal Application – Mark 15:1–20	118	Good Friday Afternoon	136
		Extra Purchases after the Sabbath Ended	
LESSON 19 : MARK 15:1-20	121	Mark 16:1	136
Places of the Passion Pilgrimage	121	Easter Morning – Mark 16:2–4	137
Jesus Is Brought Before Pilate		The Women Were Afraid – Mark 16:5–6	137
Mark 15:1–5	122	Proclaim the Easter Message – Mark 16:7	137
Pilate Sends Jesus to Herod		What Does the Resurrection Prove?	137
Luke 23:5–11	123	The Easter Directive	137
Pilate’s Three Great Blunders	123	The Certainty of His Rising Again	138
Barabbas or Jesus – Mark 15:6–14	123	Mark Records Three Appearances	138
“Suffered under Pontius Pilate”		Commission of His Church	
Mark 15:15–20	124	Mark 16:15–16	138
A Pathetic Attempt by Pilate to Free Jesus		Closing Words of Mark’s Gospel	
John 19:4–5, 12–16	124	Mark 16:17–18	139
Personal Application – Mark 15:21–47	125	The Ascension and Session – Mark 16:19–20	
			139
LESSON 20 : MARK 15:21–47	127		
Simon the Cross-Bearer – Mark 15:21	127		
The Place of a Skull – Mark 15:22	128		
Rejection of a Drug – Mark 15:23	128		
Casting Lots for Jesus’ Garments			

AUTHOR INFORMATION

ERWIN KURTH

LWBS Courses: *The Gospel According to Matthew (co-author)*

The Gospel According to Mark

The Gospel According to Luke (co-author)

The Acts of the Apostles

The Book of Ezra

The Book of Nehemiah

The Book of Esther

The Book of Job

The Book of Proverbs

The Book of Ecclesiastes

The Song of Solomon

Graduated from Concordia Seminary – 1922 Sixty-five years in the ministry with the LCMS

Areas of particular interest: Christian Stewardship and Bible study. Conducted seminars and workshops in the U.S. and Canada on How to Run A Successful Every-member Canvas

The Kurth-Zehnder Plan is still available in book form

Attended Biblical Seminary in New York City, NY

Fostered intensive Bible study and taught Bible study classes wherever he served as Pastor. These include LCMS churches in Montana, Nebraska, Minnesota, Brooklyn, NY, Fort Wayne, IN, Detroit, MI and California.

Conferred the Doctor of Divinity Degree from Concordia Seminary – 1960 Guest speaker on the International Lutheran Hour

Served as part-time Bible Instructor at Christ College Irvine, in Irvine, CA

Author of Catechetical Helps (Concordia Publishing House)

His life companion, Esther Pfothhauer Kurth, has supported his ministry typing much of his longhand script

Our beloved author, Dr. Kurth, was called home to be with the Lord on October 22, 1989 at the age of 91 years.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MARK

.....

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, (ESV) Copyright © 2001, 2007 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

The Holy Bible, New International Version® (NIV) ® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, by Biblica, Inc.®

The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version...revised - 2nd ed. of New Testament AD 1971

King James Version

TEV (Good News Bible) Today's English Version, Second Edition Copyright © 1992 American Bible Society. All rights reserved.

This study has been revised and updated in 2016.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

CHARACTERISTICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL	2
PECULIARITIES OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK	2
THE THEOLOGICAL THRUST	4
GOD	4
MAN	4
BEHOLD THE SERVANT OF THE LORD	4
PERSONAL APPLICATION – MARK 1:1–45	5

● ● ●

Mark's Gospel is more than a historical account of the travelings, activities, and sayings of Jesus. The main thrust is theological, culminating in the declaration of the centurion, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

● ● ●

Mark's original Hebrew name was John, which means "God is gracious." The name he adopted when he became a Christian was "Mark," which means "Mallet" or "Hammer."

John Mark was not a member of the Twelve, but a convert of Peter ("Mark, my son"). It was "to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark," that Peter went after his deliverance from prison (Acts 12:12–17). Apparently, Mark gleaned much of the material for his Gospel from what Peter told him. Accordingly, his Gospel is called Peter's Gospel by some ancient writers.

When Jesus was captured in the Garden of Gethsemane, all the disciples left Him and fled. However, "a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked" (Mark 14:51–52). Was the young man John Mark? He is the only one of the four evangelists who records this incident.

John Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas, his cousin, on their first missionary journey. At Perga, Mark got the jitters and refused to go any farther. Acts 15:37–40 records the sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas over what to do with young Mark — a quarrel that split the team and sent them on separate ways!

Paul and Mark were later completely reconciled. Paul included him in the list of stalwarts who stood by him in the hour of greatest need: “Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas...and Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me” (Col. 4:10–11). To Timothy, Paul wrote: “Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry” (2 Tim. 4:11).

Mark served also with Peter in Rome, as one can gather from 1 Peter 5:13: “She [the church] who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.” Babylon was the code name for Rome. Tradition connects Mark in the latter part of his life with Rome, and certain early writers held that 1 Peter was written there.

Tradition states that Mark was sent on a mission to Egypt, founded the Church in Alexandria, eventually became its bishop, and suffered as a martyr in the eighth year of Nero (AD 54–68). According to the legend, his remains were obtained by the Venetians and, through a clever deception, conveyed to Venice in AD 827.

In the Gospel of Mark, “his record is emphatically the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, living and working among men, and developing his mission more in acts than by words,” says Rev. C. R. Barnes. Deeds take precedence over speeches in Mark’s Gospel.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MARK’S GOSPEL

We say at the outset: there is but one Gospel, the good news that Jesus is the Savior. However, that one and only Gospel of Jesus Christ is presented from four different viewpoints, as the title of each Gospel indicates: “The Gospel according to...”

Matthew declares: *Behold the Messiah-King.*

Mark states: *Behold the Servant of the Lord.*

Luke proclaims: *Behold the perfect Man, the realized ideal of humanity.*

John announces: *Behold your God.*

The traditional symbols for the four evangelists are the winged man (Matthew), the winged lion (Mark), the winged ox (Luke), and the flying eagle (John). Compare Ezekiel 1:10.

PECULIARITIES OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

1. It is the shortest of the four gospels, consisting of 16 chapters.

Matthew 28 Chapters

Mark 16 Chapters

Luke 24 Chapters

John 21 Chapters

2. John Mark is in a hurry to get his message across concerning “Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” He skips preliminaries and starts with an account of the ministry of John the Baptizer, forerunner of Christ.
3. Mark is brief and to the point when he records activities and happenings. He records the baptism of Jesus in three verses, the temptation in the wilderness in two, the calling of Peter and Andrew in three, of James and John in two, his authoritative teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum in two, and the healing of the demoniac in two.
4. Mark beamed his Gospel to the non-Jewish world, particularly to the Romans. We deduce this from the fact that he explains terms, customs, and traditions which needed no such elucidation if the intended readers were Jews. The following examples bear this out: 3:17, 5:41, 7:1–4, 11, and 34.
5. The key word in Mark’s Gospel is the word “immediately.” The Romans, to whom Mark primarily directed his message, were interested in action, not in long discourses, sermons, and parables. They wanted to know not “What did Jesus say?” but “What did Jesus DO?”

Mark obliges. He proceeds rapidly from one activity of Jesus to another. Jesus did this, and immediately he did that, and straightaway he did something else! The Greek word for “immediately” occurs 42 times in Mark’s Gospel. For variety’s sake, the translators thought it good to substitute for the monotonously repetitious word “immediately,” synonyms such as “at once,” “instantly,” “presently,” “suddenly,” “straightaway.”

Whereas Matthew devotes three full chapters to the Sermon on the Mount, and Luke gives 30 verses to the Sermon on the Plain (6:20–

49), Mark is satisfied to cite a few leading thoughts and let it go at that.

6. Unlike Luke, Mark does not narrate previous circumstances to the public ministry of Jesus. He does not compile genealogies of Jesus, as Luke and Matthew did. He does not identify the parents of John the Baptizer. He does not recount the nativity and adolescence of Jesus. Instead, he begins immediately with “the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (1:1).
7. Unlike John, Mark does not engage in profound statements concerning the deity of Christ, because he must have been convinced that actions speak louder than words. So he presents nineteen miracles which the Son of God performed, wondrous works over D.D.D.N. (Disease, Demons, Death, and Nature).
8. When Matthew writes of Jesus as King, the word has a lofty meaning. When Mark does so, the word is used in disdain. For instance, Mark records Pilate asking Jesus, “Are you the King of the Jews?” (15:2). Shortly afterward, Pilate spoke to the crowd with a touch of sarcasm, “What shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” And they cried out, “Crucify him” (15:11–13).

The soldiers made cruel sport of Jesus. They clothed him with purple and twisted together a crown of thorns, put it on his head, and began to salute him “Hail, King of the Jews!” (15:16–18).

That mock title followed him to the cross. Mark reports that the superscription read: “The King of the Jews” (15:26). The Latin initials for these words are I N R I. We find these letters on crucifixes and on communion wafers. They stand for Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Only in Mark’s Gospel is Jesus mocked as “King.”

*“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

MARK 10:45

THE THEOLOGICAL THRUST

Mark’s Gospel is more than a historical account of the travelings, activities, and sayings of Jesus. The main thrust is theological, culminating in the declaration of the centurion, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” (15:39).

Jesus is the God-man, that is, Son of God (1:1) and Son of Man (2:10).

GOD

He is “the Lord” whose Messianic coming John the Baptizer proclaimed (1:3), “beloved Son” of the Father (1:11), the Healer of man’s soul (“Son, your sins are forgiven” 2:5), “the Son of the blessed” (14:61), and the reconstructor of man’s body, whether diseased, demon-ridden, or dead.

Jesus is also the Sovereign of nature. “He holds the whole world in His hands.” The higher law of His will takes precedence over the lesser laws He implanted in the cosmos. Only God can do wondrous works like those which Jesus performed over D.D.D.N. Therefore, Jesus must be acclaimed God.

MAN

At the same time, He was the Son of Man, with all man’s traits and infirmities, except that He had no sin. The designation “Son of Man” appears 12 times in Mark, a total of 81 times in the four Gospels. It is always applied by Jesus to Himself.

As true man, He walked and wearied, hungered and ate, thirsted and drank, sighed and had compassion, became angry and grieved over the uncharitableness of the Pharisees. He fell asleep in a pitching boat, so weary was He (4:38). He suffered and died. He is our Kinsman, our Elder Brother, Friend, and Confidant, the eternal Contemporary who is with us always.

BEHOLD THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

The above-stated heading is the thrust of Mark’s Gospel. Mark portrays Jesus as the untiring Servant of God and man. For instance, Jesus wishes to talk privately with God in prayer, but His devotions are interrupted. Peter and those with Him break in and tell Him “Everyone is looking for you” (1:35–37). He can’t find time even to eat (3:20). The multitudes relentlessly barge in upon Him. The disciples fear that if there is not a let-up, Jesus will be driven to distraction (3:21). He Himself feels the need of a respite and seeks to escape by ship to a desert place to no avail. The people sense His destination and run on foot from all the towns. Truly, He is the tireless Servant of the Lord.

The core verse reads, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (10:45).

Jesus lived and died and rose again that you and I, believing in Him, should not taste the second death but live eternally with Him in heaven. Blessed be His Holy Name: Jesus Savior!

PERSONAL APPLICATION

MARK 1:1-45

Blessed Lord, who has caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning, grant that we may hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them. Grant us the blessed hope of everlasting life which You have given us in our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mark 1:1-13

1. Name the original twelve apostles directly called by Christ according to Mark 3:14-19.

2. What superscription or title does Mark give his Gospel? (1:1)

3. How does John the Baptizer fulfill his office as forerunner of Christ?
1:2-3

1:4-5

4. John was the last in the long line of prophets. What did he foretell concerning Jesus the Messiah? (1:7-8)

5. Which act, performed by John, indicated the beginning of Christ's public ministry? (1:9-11)

Describe how the three persons of the Trinity were present.

6. How old was Jesus when he began his public ministry? (Luke 3:21-23a)
7. Mark uses merely two verses to describe the temptation of Christ in the wilderness (1:12-13). These verses contain an interesting fact that only Mark presents. It is not found in Matthew 4:1-11 or in Luke 4:1-13. What is that distinctive statement?

8. What do you find is the most effective means you can use in times of temptation?

Mark 1:14-45

9. Mark's Gospel is packed with action. He describes Jesus as going from one activity to another in quick succession. List some of the action-words you find in 1:10-43.

10. The account of the Galilean ministry begins with 1:14 and continues to 7:23. What activities, episodes, and happenings of the Galilean ministry are enumerated in chapter 1?

14-15

16-18

19-20

21-28

29-31

32-34

35-39

40-45

11. Relate a problem in your life in which Jesus has applied His power.

12. Jesus performed miracles over Disease, Demons, Death and Nature. An interesting way of studying the miracles is to observe:

- the nature of the miracle, whether it was over D., D., D., or N;
- the mode Jesus employed;
- the reaction of those present;
- the response of the person benefited; and
- the end result.

Assignment: Follow the above-given directions in analyzing two miracles of the three in Chapter 1: (1) 1:21–28 and (2) 1:40–45.

1.

2.

13. Which verse in chapter 1 do you regard as meaningful to you?

14. Locate on a map in your Bible the geographical places mentioned in the first chapter.

Judea, Jerusalem, Jordan (1:5)

Nazareth of Galilee (1:9)

The wilderness of Temptation (1:13)

Galilee (1:14, 39)

The Sea of Galilee (1:16)

Capernaum (1:21) where Peter and Andrew had a home (1:29)



MARK

MARK 1:1-45

CHOICE PASSAGES IN CHAPTER 1	9
CONTENTS OF CHAPTER 1	9
ACTIVITIES IN THE BEGINNING OF CHRIST'S GALILEAN MINISTRY – MARK 1:14-45	10
PERSONAL APPLICATION – MARK 2:1-28	11

*“And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching
in their synagogues and casting out demons.”*

MARK 1:39



MARK, JOHN, JOHN MARK

The inspired writer of the second book in the New Testament is variously referred to as Mark, John, and John Mark.

Mark means “mallet” or “hammer.” He adopted this surname after his conversion. We read, “Barnabas took Mark” (Acts 15:39) and “Get Mark and bring him with you” (2 Tim. 4:11).

John, meaning “God is gracious,” was his original Hebrew name. Example: “and John left them and returned to Jerusalem” (Acts 13:13, 13:5b, 15:37).

John Mark. Peter, after his deliverance from prison, made his way “to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark” (Acts 12:12). “And Barnabas and Saul...bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark” (Acts 12:25).

GETTING TO KNOW MARK BETTER

1. Mark derived much of the material in his Gospel from Peter. Therefore, the Gospel according to Mark is sometimes referred to, particularly by the ancients, as “St. Peter’s Gospel.” Mark served with Peter in Rome, as we read in 1 Peter 5:13: “She [the church] who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.” “Babylon” was the code name for Rome.



2. Mark was a missionary helper to Barnabas and Saul. “And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark” (Acts 12:25). “When they arrived at Salamis [or Cyprus], they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them” (Acts 13:5). So John Mark enjoyed the privilege of being associated also with Paul.
3. Unlike the evangelists Matthew and John, Mark was not a member of the Twelve. Like Luke, he was simply a disciple of Jesus.
4. His Gospel is the shortest of the first four books of the New Testament, consisting of only 16 chapters.
5. John Mark was temporarily alienated from Paul because of his defection in Perga (Acts 13:13). Barnabas insisted on taking Mark along on the next missionary journey but Paul refused. The team broke up. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus. Paul chose Silas and went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches (Acts 15:36–41).
6. Afterwards, however, John Mark was restored to the friendship of Paul. “Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry” (2 Tim. 4:11).

CHOICE PASSAGES IN CHAPTER 1

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (1:1).

“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased” (1:11).

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (1:15).

“Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men” (1:17).

CONTENTS OF CHAPTER 1

The title of the book is found in 1:1. Luke corroborates Mark’s statement that Jesus is the Son of God (Luke 1:35). So does John (John 1:1–3, 14, 18).

John the Baptizer begins his work of announcing the advent of Christ and engaging in the preparatory work of urging repentance and receiving baptism (1:2–8). John, the forerunner of Jesus, was the last in the line of prophets of the Old Testament.

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee to be baptized of John. The three Persons of the Trinity manifested their presence (1:9–11).

Jesus was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan, and was with the wild animals (only Mark mentions this), and the angels ministered to Him (1:12–13). Matthew goes into greater detail (Matt. 4:1–11), and so does Luke in 4:1–13. Mark contents himself with two verses, for he

is in a hurry to get his message across. His Roman readers were interested in plenty of action on the part of Jesus the Christ.

Finally, in the first chapter, Mark tells what Jesus did at the beginning of His Galilean ministry (1:14–45). He will continue to describe Jesus’ ministry in Galilee as “tirelessly on the go.” Mark employs the word “straightway” or one of its synonyms no less than 12 times in 1:10–43. These action words will occur 30 times more in Mark’s Gospel.

ACTIVITIES IN THE BEGINNING OF CHRIST’S GALILEAN MINISTRY

MARK 1:14-45

Early in Jesus’ ministry, John was imprisoned in the dungeon of Machaerus overlooking the Dead Sea. About that time, Jesus came into Galilee preaching and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel” (1:14–15).

Four disciples are called by Jesus to become “fishers of men.” Simon (Peter) and his brother Andrew, the first set of brothers. James and John, sons of Zebedee and Salome, the second set. Peter, James, and John became members of the inner circle and are present at the raising of the daughter of Jairus (5:22), the transfiguration (9:2), and in the innermost sanctum of Gethsemane (14:33).

Jesus taught in Capernaum on the Northwest coast of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was the home of Peter and Andrew. It became the headquarters of His Galilean ministry, “his own city” (Matt. 9:1). Jesus taught in the synagogue there as one having authority and not as the scribes (1:22).

The disciples and Jesus attended the synagogue in Capernaum on the Sabbath where Jesus healed a demoniac by driving out of him “an unclean spirit” (Mark’s favorite expression for demons; he uses it many times in his Gospel). The fame of Jesus

spread and “they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons” and He healed many (1:32–34).

Jesus could hardly have gotten much sleep that night, what with the many afflicted ones who clamored for His healing powers. He urgently needed spiritual refreshment. So He rose very early before daybreak to pray alone. But the two pairs of brothers searched for Him and said, “Everyone is looking for you” (1:35–37).

At Jesus’ suggestion, they were on the go again, this time to other parts of Galilee. “And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons” (1:39).

A leper expressed his faith in the divine power of Jesus saying, “If you will, you can make me clean.” The heart of Jesus was stirred and He was moved with compassion. He did the unusual. He did not shrink from ceremonial defilement. He “stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, ‘I will; be clean.’ Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean” (1:40–42). After the former leper had reported to the Health Department of his day (the examining priests who kept him in quarantine for the proper number of weeks) the man went out and began to “spread the news” (1:43–45a).

Jesus, being full of love and compassion but also being truly human, was at the point of exhaustion. He could no longer enter the city so He sought rest in desert places. He found none, for the people came to him in droves. They were “coming to him from every quarter” (1:45b). Thus ends this action-packed chapter with multitudes seeking Jesus’ help. How blessed we are to be able to seek and find both spiritual and physical help from the Great Healer of our bodies and souls!

PERSONAL APPLICATION

MARK 2:1-28

O Lord Jesus Christ, who restored the paralytic to newness of physical life, having forgiven his sins, resuscitate us from a life of spiritual lethargy, sluggishness, and inertia. Make us active in furthering the extension of Your kingdom, to the glory of Your holy Name. Amen.

Mark 2:1-5

1. Bethlehem of Judea was the village where Jesus was born. Nazareth was the town in Galilee where Jesus lived from about two years old to “about thirty years of age” (Luke 3:23). What town served as the headquarters of His Galilean ministry?

2. We learned that the word “immediately” or one of its synonyms was used 12 times in chapter 1 portraying Jesus as being constantly on the go. Which synonyms are used for “immediately” in chapter 2? Consult different translations.
2:2, 2:8, 2:12

3. Four friends of a paralyzed man could not bring him into the presence of Jesus through the usual entrance. Why not?

How did the four friends finally manage to place him there?

4. Before He began His healing ministry on that occasion, what was Jesus doing?

5. What did Jesus notice about the men who carried the pallet?

6. How have you known the healing forgiveness of “Son, your sins are forgiven”?

Share an incident when you felt particularly thankful for the healing of your body.

Mark 2:6-17

7. Four groups of people took turns criticizing Jesus. Name them and describe their criticism.
2:6-7

2:16

2:18

2:24

8. How did Jesus prove He had power in the invisible realm of remitting sins?

9. How did Jesus rebuff the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees? (v. 17)

Mark 2:18–28

10. Why wasn't it necessary for His disciples to fast, according to Jesus?

Have you ever tried fasting? Do you consider fasting a good practice for us today? Why or why not?

11. Was it a misdemeanor or even a felony for hungry travelers, such as the disciples were, to pluck heads of grain? Explain your answer using Deuteronomy 23:25.

12. Why did the Pharisees regard the action of the disciples as illegal?

13. How did Jesus answer their objection and show that the law of need is higher than a meticulous observance of a lower law? (2:25–26; 1 Sam. 21:1–6)

14. What conclusion did Jesus draw from the incident of David and his men eating the holy bread reserved customarily for the priests and not for laypersons?

15. What right did Jesus have to make such a judgment?

16. What opposition statements do you hear to Christ and God's Word today?

17. Find a Scripture passage which you find comforting when you hear such opposition statements.

THE CALLING OF LEVI-MATTHEW – MARK 2:13–14	14
SECOND CRITICISM OF JESUS – MARK 2:15–17	14
THIRD CRITICISM, FROM THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN AND OF THE PHARISEES – MARK 2:18	15
JESUS RESPONDS TO THE CRITICISM – MARK 2:19–22	15
THE PHARISEES LAUNCH THE FOURTH CRITICISM MARK 2:23–28	16
PERSONAL APPLICATION – MARK 3:1–35	17

● ● ●

*Jesus said to Matthew, “Follow me.” And
he rose and followed Him.*

● ● ●

FIVE ANGLES IN STUDYING A MIRACLE

A different yet rewarding way of studying a miracle is to view it from five angles.

1. The type of affliction which Jesus relieved, whether Disease, Death, Devil or Nature.
2. The mode He employed, whether through word, touch, additional material, (John 9:6) and/or stages (Mark 8:22–25).
3. The reaction by the recipient and the witnesses.
4. The end result: Good or bad, for or against Jesus.
5. Observations, deductions or applications.

JESUS FORGIVES THE SINS OF A PARALYTIC MAN AND HEALS HIM

MARK 2:1–12

1. Type of affliction: (Paralytic) “Paralysis of any voluntary muscle as a result of some disorder in the nervous system.”
2. Mode: Jesus first absolved him of his sins. These seemed to bother him more than his physical handicap. Then Jesus said, “Rise, pick up your bed, and go home” (2:5b–11).

3. Reactions: Certain of the scribes sitting there questioning in their hearts, “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

Jesus counteracted this first criticism leveled at Him by demonstrating His divine power in the area where they could unmistakably witness it, i.e., in curing the man of his paralysis. This enabled them to draw the conclusion that He possessed divine power in an area they could not see — forgiveness of man’s sins. In this case, He demonstrated His divinity. The people were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!” (2:12).

4. End result: “He rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them” (2:12).
5. Observations: Every one of us has the right to forgive sins or offenses committed against us personally. The offender says, “I regret having done what I did. I’m sorry.” The one he offended responds, “I forgive you” or some such expression. A pastor is privileged to pronounce the Absolution publicly. Each of us has the privilege of forgiving others privately.

THE CALLING OF LEVI-MATTHEW

MARK 2:13-14

The first four to be called as apostles (two sets of brothers: Peter and Andrew, James and John) were fishermen by trade. The fifth, Levi or Matthew, was a tax collector, or publican. Though a Jew, he did not decline a job with the Roman Internal Revenue Service even if it meant levying taxes plus commissions on his own people in and around Capernaum.

The publicans were held in disrepute among the people. Why? Well, take the case of Zacchaeus who was the head of the tax and customs department in the area of Jericho. The Bible says of him, “And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich” (Luke 19:2). “He had got that for which he had given up alike his nation and his soul” (Edersheim).

Matthew was chief of the publicans in the Capernaum territory. He had made a successful bid before the IRS in Rome to raise a certain guaranteed amount in taxes for the Roman government. “The system afforded opportunity for extortion, while doubtless there were some exceptions (Luke 3:12-13). A Jewish publican was a social outcast, looked upon with contempt for raising taxes for a foreign and heathen government. Matthew had charge of the customs of Capernaum” (*Dictionary of the Analytical Bible*, p. 162).

Matthew undoubtedly had mingled with the crowd that followed Jesus, heard his teaching, witnessed the miracles, and was persuaded by the Holy Spirit to become one of this man’s disciples. How he must have flushed with joy when Jesus said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed Him (2:14). He was glad to get away from a career of money-grubbing and from his materialistic lifestyle.

SECOND CRITICISM OF JESUS

MARK 2:15-17

Matthew must have made a considerable amount of money as a tax gatherer, for he had a commodious house and was known for his hospitality. “Many” of his friends and others of shady business practices barged in and took his open house generosity for granted. Present were colleagues of his as well as visitors, plus scribes

and Pharisees. The “publicans and sinners” (the terms were practically synonymous) were particularly interested in Jesus, for their boss had told them, “I am gladly quitting my job. I intend to follow this Jesus as my boss the rest of my life, and that will be in the ways of God. I am glad you attended my farewell party.”

When it came time to eat, the tax people crowded around Jesus and His disciples. When the scribes and Pharisees saw Jesus eating with the “sinners” and tax collectors they spoke critically of Jesus saying to His disciples, “How is it that he mingles with the flotsam and jetsam of humanity?”

Jesus overheard their criticism and responded with a proverbial saying of that day. “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.” In other words: “You scribes and Pharisees fancy yourselves healthy and well in the sight of God, but these publicans know themselves to be sin-sick. I have come for the likes of these.”

THIRD CRITICISM, FROM THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN AND OF THE PHARISEES

MARK 2:18

John the Baptizer was an ascetic (1:6). He was given to fasting and instructed his disciples to follow suit. Every member of Israel was mandated to fast once a year, on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement (Lev.16:29–34). But the Pharisees increased the number of fasting days abnormally, to the point where the Pharisee of the parable could say, “I fast twice a week” (Luke 18:12), customarily on Monday and Thursday which were market days, and they, with their trumped-up sadness of face, could readily draw admiring glances. The criticism was couched in these words, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?”

JESUS RESPONDS TO THE CRITICISM

MARK 2:19–22

Jesus responded by saying in effect, “A new age, evangelical in nature and not legalistic, is in the offing. Bloody sacrifices twice a day, offerings of various kinds, set festivals to be observed on the temple grounds in Jerusalem and nowhere else, will soon be a thing of the past. A new age is at hand. The new won’t be like a patch

In each of the four instances of criticism, Jesus answered and squelched his faultfinders.



on an old garment or like new wine in old goatskin containers. The first shall pass away; the second shall take over.”

In view of this wondrous change, why should the disciples fast in self-mortification? They are members of a wedding party, as it were. They are Christ’s bride. He is the Bridegroom (Eph. 5:31–32). True, as Jesus informed his hearers, the time will come when the Bridegroom will be taken from them. This is the first intimation we have in Mark’s Gospel concerning Christ’s suffering and death. That will be the proper time to fast, to wail and lament (2:20). But victory, to be sure, will follow on Easter morn and on the Day of Ascension.

THE PHARISEES LAUNCH THE FOURTH CRITICISM

MARK 2:23–28

The fourth criticism directed to Jesus in 2:24 was in reference to the Sabbath. “Look, why are they [the disciples] doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” The disciples, as they went through the grainfields, “plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands” (Luke 6:1).

Hungry travelers and the poor were allowed to do this, just so they did not apply a sickle to the standing grain (Deut. 23:25). What the Pharisees found objectionable in this case was that the disciples plucked grain and did manual

work on the Sabbath day (2:24). Jesus countered by reminding the Pharisees of the higher law that governs Sabbath-observance, viz., the law of need. He called attention to what David and his men did when they ran out of food, in their flight from King Saul.

David contacted the priest Ahimelech and asked him for bread. The high priest at the time was Abiathar (2:26). The priest said, “I don’t have any common bread on hand, only twelve loaves of hallowed bread which are placed fresh on the table of showbread every Sabbath and designated for use only by the priests, not by any layperson” (Lev. 24:5–9). However, the need for nourishment and survival was paramount. So the higher law took precedence over the lower law.

Similarly, in the case of the disciples plucking heads of grain on the Sabbath, the higher law of need took over, for “the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (2:27). This ruling cannot be challenged, for “the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath” (2:28). Works of necessity and mercy are allowable on the Lord’s Day.

In each of the four instances of criticism, Jesus answered and squelched his faultfinders.