



Commentary

Mark

Mark is the second Gospel (an account of Jesus' life and ministry) in the New Testament. Like the other Gospels, Mark records Jesus' life: His miracles, betrayal, death, resurrection, and commission. Mark is the shortest Gospel, and it is action-packed from start to finish covering who Jesus is and what He did. Mark filled his gospel with the miracles of Jesus, illustrating again and again both the power and the compassion of the Son of God.

Mark's first quote of Jesus sets the tone: "The time promised by God has come at last! The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!" (Mark 1:15). Jesus is the long awaited Messiah and He came to take away our sins by dying on the cross and resurrecting to life again to save all who turn from their sin and trust in Him. In Jesus' death and resurrection, He establishes the kingdom and at His second coming He will complete the kingdom.

This Gospel emphasizes two important characteristics of Jesus Christ:

- *His authority as the Son of God
- *His compassionate service to people (particularly in miracles)

The first half of the Gospel concerns the identity of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God (Mark 1:1–8:30). The second half concerns the mission of Jesus (Mark 8:31–16:8).

The Identity of Jesus

The first line of the Gospel introduces Jesus as "the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus repeatedly reminds us that God sent Him to die for our sins (Messiah) and demonstrated this through His supernatural power. Plus every passage in Mark, every miracle, every conversation, every deed, points back to Jesus' authority as the Son of God.

The Mission of Jesus

Mark reveals Jesus as God's Servant as He transformed the lives of people both physically and spiritually. His work was always for a larger purpose as stated in Mark 10:45: "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Jesus becomes our model for how to live our lives—serving others as He did.

This gospel does not present Christianity as just a nice story, a fascinating account of events that took place in the first century. It stresses the fact that the death and resurrection of Christ is something to be believed, and it is intended to change lives.

FYI: In early transcripts, Mark's Gospel ends after verse 8 in chapter 16, where the women flee the tomb frightened and bewildered. The longer ending appears in our Bibles today, though most versions note that it is not in our earliest manuscripts.