

# READING MARK TOGETHER

## APRIL 2026

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**Who?** Based on tradition, the Gospel was written by John Mark, a coworker of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25), using the eyewitness testimony of Peter.

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**When?** Mark may have been the first Gospel to be written, around 55–65 AD.

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**What?** Mark's Gospel is one of the Bible's biographical accounts of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. The word "gospel" means "good news" – it is not just a collection of stories but an explanation of why knowing Jesus is good news. The Holy Spirit was at work as Mark wrote: Mark's Gospel is God's word.

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**Why?** Mark begins his account by telling us it is "the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God". He wants us to understand what it means for Jesus to be the Son of God and the Christ (God's promised king). Through Mark, Jesus teaches us about his kingdom and what it means to follow him. Like the other Gospel accounts, there is a focus on the sufferings and death of Jesus as a key part of understanding his identity. The meaning of Jesus' life and death was first preached orally by eyewitnesses, but God ensured this good news was preserved for future generations through Mark's writing.

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# THE STRUCTURE OF MARK'S GOSPEL

## 1:1–8:26 – Jesus in Galilee

- A collection of miracle accounts introduce us to Jesus, the King with divine power over sin, sickness and Satan.
- His ministry prompts different responses. Some follow him, a growing number oppose him, and others are undecided.
- Several times, Jesus stops people talking about his identity, because of wrong ideas about his mission as the Christ.

## 8:27–10:52 – On the Way to Jerusalem

- At the centre of the book is Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ – but the disciples misunderstand what this means.
- Jesus explains that his kingship involves suffering and death on a cross. He has come as the servant king.
- Jesus teaches his disciples that following him means taking up one's cross and walking a path of Christ-like service.

## 11:1–16:20 – The Cross and the Tomb

- Jesus enters Jerusalem, confronts Israel's leaders, and goes to his death on a cross. But this is not the end: he rises again, just as he said. He really is the Christ, the Son of God.

*Your Bible may say: "Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include 16:9–20." Many argue Mark ended at 16:8, and the other verses were added later. The evidence for this, however, is not clear-cut. These verses have historically been accepted as genuine and in God's providence they are part of our Bibles. At the very least, they are another testimony to the resurrection.*

## FIVE KEY QUESTIONS

You might find it helpful to make notes as you read, so that you can remember what the Lord has been teaching you, use it to encourage others, and bring it to him in prayer.

1. **What is Jesus teaching me about who he is?** The main question Mark helps us answer is: who is Jesus? He is the Christ, the Son of God, the Servant of the Lord, and more!
2. **How does this passage help me understand the gospel better?** Jesus calls us to "repent and believe the gospel" (1:15). What is the good news that I'm called to believe?
3. **What does it mean to follow Jesus in this passage?** We learn a lot from Mark's Gospel about discipleship. We learn this through Jesus' teachings and example, the failures of the disciples, and the actions of others in the narrative.
4. **What will it look like for me to follow Jesus today?** In the specific circumstances of your day, how is the Lord leading you to respond to his words with worship, love, trust, service or obedience?
5. **How is this passage good news for my non-church family, friends or neighbours?** Asking this question helps us to be ready to share the gospel with others, and reminds us to pray for those outside of God's kingdom.

## ADVICE FOR READING MARK

Mark is the shortest Gospel and is filled with action. Instead of recording long sections of teaching, Mark focusses on miracle accounts and short conversations. It is a straightforward book to read, yet still has lots of depth to meditate on. There are extra resources on our website to help: [litchardmission.co.uk/rbt](http://litchardmission.co.uk/rbt)

Some specific points for reading Mark:

- There are lots of misunderstandings throughout Mark. This reminds us of our need to **ask for God's help** as we read.
- There is a danger of over-familiarity when reading Mark. Take time to **read slowly**, and re-read carefully.
- Mark's Gospel contains several "**sandwiches**", where the account of one event is included as a "filling" within another event. For example, the two healings in 5:21–43, or the account of Jesus' trial and Peter's denial in 14:53–72. Ask: how are the different parts of the sandwich related?
- It can be helpful to look at **parallel accounts** in the other Gospels (use a Bible with cross-references). Are there details only Mark includes or omits? Is this significant?

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### A possible 30-day reading plan

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|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1:1-15    | <input type="checkbox"/> 4:21-41 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7:24-37   | <input type="checkbox"/> 10:32-52    | <input type="checkbox"/> 14:26-52   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1:16-39   | <input type="checkbox"/> 5:1-20  | <input type="checkbox"/> 8:1-21    | <input type="checkbox"/> 11:1-25     | <input type="checkbox"/> 14:53-72   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1:40-2:17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5:21-43 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8:22-9:13 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11:27-12:17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15:1-20    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2:18-3:6  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6:1-29  | <input type="checkbox"/> 9:14-29   | <input type="checkbox"/> 12:18-44    | <input type="checkbox"/> 15:21-41   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3:7-35    | <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30-56 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9:30-50   | <input type="checkbox"/> 13:1-37     | <input type="checkbox"/> 15:42-16:8 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4:1-20    | <input type="checkbox"/> 7:1-23  | <input type="checkbox"/> 10:1-31   | <input type="checkbox"/> 14:1–25     | <input type="checkbox"/> 16:9-20    |

