

## I. Setting the groundwork for the gospel

### A. Mark's point

1. **Mark 8:27-29 (ESV)** <sup>27</sup> *And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"* <sup>28</sup> *And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets."* <sup>29</sup> *And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ."*
  - a. Who do the people closest to Jesus, from whom we have a credible witness, affirm Jesus is?
  - b. He is the Christ!
    - (1) The Messiah
    - (2) The Anointed One
    - (3) The Promise of God for the Salvation of the World
2. Mark's point is to nurture faith and obedience through a careful retelling the evidence regarding Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

### B. What we need

1. In order for us to embrace Mark's message and respond with our whole hearts with faith in Jesus and with obedience to His word
2. **We need to set the groundwork for understanding and accepting this gospel as gospel.**

### C. How will we lay the foundation? Plan: Answer four questions

1. Who is this Mark, the author of this gospel?
2. What is this work we call a gospel?
3. Why did Mark write this gospel?
4. How should we respond to the gospel?

## II. Four Questions That Set the Groundwork for Mark's Gospel

### A. Who is Mark, the author of this gospel

1. First admission:
  - a. No authorial identification in the book
  - b. Most affirmations are based on Papias (early 1<sup>st</sup> cent, quoted by Eusebius, 4<sup>th</sup> cent)
    - (1) "This is what the Elder used to say: Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote accurately, though not in order, all that he remembered of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had not himself heard the Lord or been his follower, but later, as I said, he followed Peter. Peter delivered teachings as occasion required, rather than compiling a sort of orderly presentation of the traditions about the Lord. So Mark was not wrong in recording in this way the individual items as he remembered them. His one concern was to leave out nothing of what he had heard and to make no false statements in reporting them."
    - (2) Mark, the protégé of Peter, wrote down what Peter remembered and taught about Jesus.
2. Who is this Mark, associated in history with Peter and accepted author of this gospel?

## B. 10 Mentions in the New Testament

1. Historical Narrative
  - a. Mark the identifier Acts 12:12 (ESV) *When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.*
  - b. Mark the rookie Acts 12:25 (ESV) *And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.*
  - c. Mark the helper Acts 13:5 (ESV) *When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.*
  - d. Mark the deserter Acts 13:13 (ESV) *Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem,*
  - e. Mark the rejected Acts 15:36-41 (ESV) <sup>36</sup> *And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.”* <sup>37</sup> *Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.* <sup>38</sup> *But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.* <sup>39</sup> *And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus,* <sup>40</sup> *but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.* <sup>41</sup> *And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.*
2. Pauline Affirmations: “Fellow-worker”
  - a. 11 Years of Silence Regarding Mark before Paul begins to mention him in letters to churches
  - b. Paul’s “fellow-worker” Colossians 4:10-11 (ESV) <sup>10</sup> *Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him),* <sup>11</sup> *and Jesus who is called 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.*
  - c. Philemon 1:24 (ESV) *and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.*
  - d. 2 Timothy 4:11 (ESV) *Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.*
3. Peter’s protégé
  - a. 1 Peter 5:12-14 (ESV) <sup>12</sup> *By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.* <sup>13</sup> *She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.* <sup>14</sup> *Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.*
  - b. Mark ministers alongside Paul and Peter in Rome
4. Mark’s own testimony
  - a. Mark 14:51-52 (ESV) <sup>51</sup> *And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him,* <sup>52</sup> *but he left the*

*linen cloth and ran away naked.*

- b. This detail makes no sense, serves no purpose, unless it is the author's signature, a way of saying, "Yes, this is me. I am the one writing. I'm authenticating my authorship by sharing a detail I alone would know."

**C. What does Mark's story tell us about this gospel?**

1. It is written by someone who has a real relationship with both the gospel and the subject of the gospel.
2. Mark has run away from Jesus, sat on the sidelines, deserted the ministry, and found his way through grace to usefulness and enduring witness
3. **This is the power of the gospel, the power of Jesus, to change the lives of those who encounter him: taking them from cowardice and shame to faithfulness and joy.**
  - a. **Romans 1:16 (ESV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.***
  - b. Power of God to change lives, to give purpose and meaning to life, to set life on a new course that brings Him glory and satisfies the soul with deep and abiding and fearless joy.

**III. What Now?**

**A. Jeremiah 2: God's indictment of those who lose sight of Him**

1. After describing Jeremiah's call to ministry and the ministry to which God has called Him, God proclaims His indictment against sinful Israel
  - a. The fathers and the priests did not say, "Where is the Lord?" (2:6, 8)
  - b. The people did not actively seek God in the ordinary, everyday features of life
    - (1) v. 11 *My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit*
    - (2) v. 13 *My people have committed two evils:*
      - (a) *They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters*
      - (b) *And hewn out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water*
2. God indicts His people who lose sight of Him,
  - a. who fail to trust Him for their daily bread,
  - b. who do not seek Him for their needs,
  - c. those who put their trust in themselves and their own efforts
  - d. those who treat God's personal covenant with His elect and chosen people as religious fiction

**B. The gospel of Mark as preventative**

1. The gospel Mark sets before us leads us to Jesus
  - a. To seeing Him as He is
  - b. To encountering Him in the minutes and hours and days and weeks of our everyday lives.
2. The gospel of Mark tells us the living truth about Immanuel, God with us
  - a. Who He is
  - b. and how he is with us
3. The gospel of Mark provides a preventative opportunity to turn our eyes upon Jesus, love Him, live for Him, and avoid the indictment made against ancient Israel