
The Message of Mark's Gospel

The Suffering Servant is Jesus

- Jesus' identity is revealed at key points in the book: at His baptism (1:11), at His transfiguration (9:7), and at His crucifixion (15:39). Mark's Gospel answers the implied question: Who is Jesus?
- Mark reveals at Christ's baptism (1:11) that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Suffering Servant prophecies of Isaiah 42:1 and 49:3.
- Mark utilizes the word "handed over" (betrayed) 17 times to emphasize the betrayal and suffering that Jesus experiences. The Servant suffers (8:31; 10:33-34).
- Mark does not record a genealogy or birth record for Christ. Why? Perhaps because not many people care about the family lineage of a servant.
- Mark also reveals Jesus to be the Son of Man (14X) as well as the Son of God (1:1; 3:11; 15:39).

The Servant Brings Good News

- The book begins and ends with the gospel, the good news (1:1, 14-15; 16:15).
- Mark uses the word gospel (*euangelion*) 8 times, far more than Matthew (4X) or Luke (none).

The Servant Serves

- The only extended discourses in the Gospel are 4:1-34 and 13:3-37, unlike Matthew's Gospel. Many times, Mark references Jesus' teaching ministry without detailing His content. Thus, Mark chooses to reveal Jesus' person by what He does more than by what He teaches. Why? Because servants are doers.
- Mark uses "immediately" 42 times, communicating the action-packed nature of the Gospel. Jesus is constantly doing, constantly serving.
- Mark devotes a larger percentage of his gospel to Jesus' miracles than Matthew or Luke. Matthew and Luke both record 19 miracles of Christ, but even though Mark is much shorter, he still records 18, two of which are unique to his Gospel (7:31-37; 8:22-26).

The Servant's Disciples Follow His Example

- His disciples follow Him (1:17-20; 2:14-15; 3:7; 5:24; 6:1; 8:34; 10:21, 28,32, 52; 11:9; 14:54; 15:41).
- His disciples commune with Him. Jesus "appointed twelve so that they would be with Him" (3:14-15). Discipleship is learning from Him.
- His disciples suffer like Him (8:35; 10:29; 13:9-13), as seen in the life of John the Baptist (1:14).
- His disciples proclaim good news like Him. Mark uses "proclaim" 14 times. Jesus came to earth to proclaim (1:38); His disciples follow His example (1:17; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15).

Theme Verse:

10:45—"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."