



Alpha-Omega Bible Study: The New Testament
Session 1: The Gospels
Lesson 3: The Gospel of Mark

READ

- A. Review the list of theological themes and doctrines covered in Alpha-Omega.
- B. Choose one of the following two reading plans. For either, look for recurring themes and perhaps mark them in your Bible.
 1. Read all of Mark
 2. Read only the following sections from Mark:
 - 1:1 – 2:12
 - 4:35 – 5:43
 - 8:27 – 9:13
 - 10:13 – 11:25
 - 14:1-72

REACT

- A. Use the space below to write down key observations or questions that arose as you read the text. Note here the themes or doctrines you found in the passages.

B. Questions:

1. Mark's gospel begins suddenly with Old Testament prophecies and a reference to John the Baptist and his ministry. *(In addition to Mark 1:1-8, it will be helpful to read 2 Kings 1:7-8; Isaiah 40:1-4; Malachi 2:17-3:1, 4:5-6; and Mark 9:9-13).* How is Mark connecting the beginning of his story of Jesus with God's work that has gone before? Why is John the Baptist so important to the story of Jesus?

2. Mark pays particular attention to Jesus' identity, yet records many incidents where Jesus instructs people not to tell anyone about him (see 1:24-25, 34; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36; 8:30; 9:9). Why would Jesus command silence and seek to minimize the proclamation of his identity and miraculous powers?

Note: As you read, you may wish to highlight or underline the various titles given to Jesus (e.g., Son of God, Son of Man, Christ).

3. Review Mark 8:14-21, 31-33; 9:14-19; 10:13-16. In these and other passages, why does Mark portray Christ's disciples as full of weaknesses and misunderstandings in spite of their privileged position with Jesus? What does this teach us about what it means to follow Jesus?

4. How are Jesus' identity and power revealed in his confrontations with demons (e.g., 1:21-28; 5:1-20; 7:24-30)? How are they revealed in his healing miracles (e.g., 2:1-12; 3:1-6; 8:5-13)? What impact does or should this have on how you relate to Jesus today?

5. In Mark, the "gospel" or "good news" is something to be proclaimed (1:14; 13:10; 14:9; 16:5), something to believe in (1:15), something to lose your life for (8:35), and something to leave home for (10:29). Based what you have read in Mark, write your own definition of the "gospel." What more do you need to learn about the gospel? What do you need to change in your life to respond to or better line up with the gospel of Jesus Christ?

REMEMBER

Commit the following verses to memory:

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.

-- *Mark 8:34-35 (NRSV)*