

# Mark Introduction

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 22 September 2013

Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[ 0 : 00 ] We are beginning today our study of the Gospel according to Mark. So if you'll please turn there with me. I don't know if you feel this or not, but whenever we begin something new and end something old, that's a little bittersweet for me.

We've just completed our study of Nehemiah, which took us just a couple of months. Prior to that, we studied through the book of Romans. And each time, I take my little handy ribbon bookmark that came with my Bible here, and I keep it right where we're at.

And that's kind of my go-to spot as I'm studying throughout the week. And it's a little painful sometimes to move it from the end of a book to something new. The case of Nehemiah really blessed my heart to get to study it, and I hope it did yours as we learned from it together.

I always get to the end, and I wonder, did we wring it dry? Did we get everything that it was to get out of it? Sometimes I want to start back at the beginning because it's been such a blessing to us and just say, this was too good.

We're going to start over, and we're just going to do it again and see what else God would teach us from this book. Nevertheless, I do think it's time to move on, and we're going to begin our study of Mark.

[ 1 : 11 ] And as excited as I am that we did Nehemiah and we're finishing it, I'm as equally excited to begin to plow through Mark together. To be totally honest with you, and just to show you how very base my mind can be sometimes as I begin to ponder what should we do next and had a desire to look at one of the Gospels together, I started, I picked Mark because it was the shortest.

The 16 chapters versus Matthew's 28 chapters. I just said, yeah, that would be good because, whew, 28 chapters, that's a lot of work. Mark, that's how base my mind is, but I've come to see that this was a very particular reason that we've come together to study Mark together in these coming months.

So, let's take a look together simply this morning at Mark 1.1. The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Join me in prayer. Father God, we praise You this morning for Your goodness to us in Christ, the One who has taken this debt that we had, that we could not pay.

We could deposit into it all we wanted, and it would never have been filled, would never have been satisfied. But Christ has paid that debt on our behalf.

[ 2 : 39 ] We praise You for that, that we now have life in Him. And we praise You for the Gospel according to Mark, this inspired work, written by Mark, moved along by Your Spirit, that testifies to this One, Jesus Christ.

Father, help this study to enrich our lives individually, and to enrich our lives corporately, for Your glory. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

So, Mark 1.1. I get to reread our text numerous times today, which is really wonderful, because it's so short. The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

But before we look carefully at this, I think it's important that we get a little bit of background. We have some framework to move forward in together. And I know that as I study that type of thing, it carries with me, because I spend a lot of time each week looking at the Gospel of Mark.

But I know that you don't. Like, you may not necessarily, like, spend a bunch of time each day reading and picking up commentaries and studying and meditating on this. And so I'll bring it back around.

[ 3 : 48 ] We'll fill in some of the details of these things later. I don't want to give you a perfect explanation of all of the framework and then expect you to remember it in the coming 8 to 12 months, is my guess here.

So I just want to kind of get your mind going in the right direction as we look at Mark together this morning. Mark is one of the three, what are called the synoptic Gospels, which that word comes from the Greek word.

It simply means together seen. They include many of the same stories, often in the same sequence, with similar wording. This would be Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

These are the synoptic Gospels. It is widely accepted, although we don't know for sure, this can't be factually stated, but it is widely accepted that Mark was the earliest written of the Gospels.

More than likely in the mid to late 50s AD is when Mark penned this book. We see evidences of that because Matthew and Luke both seem to borrow heavily from the Gospel of Mark in its structure.

[ 4 : 54 ] 95% of Matthew, for example, is borrowed from the Gospel of Mark. Often the danger with Mark is that we see it simply as the comic book version.

Some of you I talked to this week, I actually made that comment about, that we simply view it as the comic book version or the Reader's Digest, for those of you who are older in the crowd, version of the Gospel.

That's very action-packed. It moves along very quickly. There's not a great emphasis on Jesus' words, but rather his actions in the book. The temptation with Mark is always to read a story here, and then go to the corresponding story in Matthew and preach from that.

But I know that in this journey together, there's going to be many times I'm just going to want to flip to Matthew, where there's a lot more detail and try to flesh it out for you in a greater degree there.

As such, Mark's often neglected. It's pushed off. It's a lesser Gospel in some people's minds. But this book is also part of the inspired Word of God.

[ 6 : 00 ] This account of the Gospel was penned in this way for very specific reasons, and so we must treat it with reverence, right? We can't say, hey, Mark, kind of not a detailed guy.

Let's go read Matthew instead. This book was given to us for our benefit together. I found it fascinating, and I'm not dogging on MacArthur, because this is not what he did or the point he was making, but as I was listening to an introductory sermon he preached on Mark, he brought to everyone's attention that this was the last book of the New Testament he had preached at Grace Community Church.

Over a 20-year span, he came to Mark last and finally to complete that journey. And boy, I hope someday I can say, this is the last book of the New Testament that I haven't preached yet at Christ Family Church.

That'd be a real blessing. I looked for, as I like to do, MacArthur's commentaries. You know he has a commentary on every book of the New Testament except Mark? Probably because he wrote a very wonderful one in multiple volumes on Matthew.

What would he have said that he would have said in a commentary setting? That is totally fine, right? So again, I'm not dogging on John MacArthur, but it's appropriate that we would preach from the Gospel of Mark and that we approach it together.

[ 7 : 19 ] So as I said, probably, more than likely, the earliest written. It's very simple in its format. You won't see this so much in the English, but in the original language, it's very, very simple in its format.

Possibly written entirely in Aramaic and later translated into Greek. That's a distinct possibility because of some of the way the phrases are translated. If not, it was at very least written in very rudimentary Greek.

It's what's called a socio-rhetorical gospel. A better way of thinking of that would be a persuasive biography. It contains a lot of the very basic elements of Greek biography, as well as some of the very simplest versions of Greek logic.

So Mark wrote this as a fairly common man, as we'll see here soon, for common men. It wasn't necessarily meant for the high-minded.

A persuasive biography. When we use that term rhetorical, now we mean lofty speech without much meaning behind it, meant to convince you of something that you probably shouldn't believe in to begin with.

[ 8 : 35 ] We see a lot of rhetoric come out of Washington, D.C., for example. That's not the type of rhetoric we're talking about here. So we'll use that term persuasive biography.

And the aim of that persuasion, what he is ultimately driving us to, Mark is here, was to persuade those who would read this book to become disciple-making disciples.

To serve the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ to the glory of God. That's what he's trying to persuade. I can think of nothing higher to persuade people of. A good thesis statement for the gospel of Mark is found in Mark chapter 10, the last half of verse 43 through 45, which says, Jesus' words, We're going to see this kind of carry throughout the entire book as we study it together. Now, how do we know that Mark wrote this? As with the other synoptic gospels, he doesn't name himself as the author. Not like Paul's letters where he begins with a salutation, I, Paul. Here we don't see that being recorded. And it's believed that they did that because they were trying to put themselves in proper position. This is not a story about Mark. This is a story about Jesus Christ.

[10:02] No need for his name to be even included in this. So it's been held in Christian tradition that Mark was the one that penned this letter. He fits the model of the type of man that would have written in this way.

And there's some early church records, some extra biblical sources that name Mark as the author of the gospel of Mark. And therefore, we accept it as such.

This is a reliable reason to believe that Mark was, in fact, the writer. Some of you may have heard this actually being referred to as the gospel of Peter. Mark knew Peter very well, spent a lot of time with him.

Mark himself was not an apostle. We're going to look at where we actually find him in the scriptures and what we can know about Mark. But Mark himself wasn't an apostle. He didn't have a firsthand account of the gospel.

But he spent much time with Peter. It's highly likely that this was going on. And therefore, you could actually think of it in those terms. Some of the evidence of that being the way that Peter's own sin is magnified in the gospel of Mark.

[11:07] His failures, there's much made of it here. And I believe that Peter wanted people to see how desperately he needed grace in his life. So who was Mark?

Let's turn to Acts chapter 12. We're going to step away from Mark for a little bit and we'll come back to it. In case you haven't already memorized. Chapter 1, verse 1.

For the sake of time, I'm not going to tell you all the events that have led up to where we are now, but we know that the Christian church is now spreading rampantly.

Actually, the first 12 chapters of Acts could easily be looked at. The work of the gospel advancing to Judea and Samaria. It's kind of the story of Peter and the way he's doing that.

The last 16, so from chapter 12, about halfway through towards the end and then on through the end of the book, is how the gospel advances to the utmost ends of the earth. The way that Paul and these other missionaries begin to take the gospel out.

[12:16] And here we see in chapter 12 a bit of a transition. So look at verse 1 of chapter 12. I'll set the stage for you. It says, So here we have Herod.

The king appointed by the Roman government, pleasing the Jews, not all of the Jews, but those who were in leadership, by martyring the very first apostle killed. That would be James here.

We've already seen Stephen killed, but this is the first apostle that's killed for his faith, being James. And he saw that it made them happy that one of these Christians, one of these followers of the way, was put to death.

And so to continue to make them happy, he arrests Peter. And boy, Peter must have been mighty by the Spirit because it gives him four squads of soldiers to guard him.

They worked in six hour shifts, which meant he would have been guarded around the clock. And the intention was to kill him. The very next day, they were going to kill him.

[13:38] In verse 6, we see that there were two soldiers guarding him. Again, what a dangerous man. This man who was carrying the truth of God. Two soldiers bound with chains on either side.

And we see this amazing work as the church is praying for him. An angel is sent in, looses the chains, leads him out of the prison. Guard's still sleeping. Leads him out of the prison.

He thinks that it's a dream. The gates are opening for him. He just has no idea what's going on.

Thinks it's a total dream. Verse 9 says he thought he was seeing a vision. Verse 11 says, But when Peter came to himself, he said, Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.

Verse 12, 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. So there's the very first

mention.

A man known by the name of John Mark. His Hebrew name was John. His Greek name, his Roman name was Mark.

[14:49] So you'll probably hear me refer to him often as John Mark today. And then in the future, we'll just call him Mark. But this is the very man that penned the gospel according to Mark.

Notice here, the only mention of him is to clarify who Mary is. It seems like just about everybody, as part of the gospel account, was named Mary. So here we have which Mary I don't really know, but we do know that she's the mother of John Mark.

So Peter goes to a place that's familiar to him. We're going to see in just a moment that this is the place that these people, the church were gathered earnestly praying on his behalf.

So we know then, because he goes to this place, it's a familiar place to him, it's where the church is meeting, that he knew John Mark. Peter and John Mark knew one another. At very least, that he was the kid sitting in the corner in Mary's house.

This is where we see him for the very, very first time. The story gets so incredibly fascinating. For the sake of time, I'm not going to read it all to you. You may be familiar with it. Peter knocks on the gate of the courtyard, and a servant named Rhoda hears his voice, and she's so excited, because they're inside praying for him.

[16:00] She's so excited, she doesn't open the gate. She goes running back in, and here we see this incredibly faithless church call her insane, tell her it's probably his angel, and they don't go out to open the gate.

That really made me thankful as I was reading this this week that God uses even our faithless prayers to accomplish things just the same, because they didn't expect that God would actually do this work to deliver Peter.

So Peter goes in, he meets with them. So there's the completion of that, but this is the first place we see John Mark. Now, down in verse 25 of chapter 12, we see it recorded, and Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.

We're going to see some evidence later on that John Mark is the cousin of Barnabas. So here they go, they're in Jerusalem, they've met with the church, the church is advancing everywhere, and now they return from Jerusalem, they're headed to Antioch, and they take with them John Mark.

Here's our guy. Now chapter 13. Now there were in the church of Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Menaon a member of the court of Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul.

[17:24] While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Then after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off. Here's the commissioning for the very first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas.

Verse 4. So being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews, and they had John to assist them.

Now at this point, we don't really know a whole lot about him. But we see, we'll see later, cousin to Barnabas, goes along with them. He's the son of Mary, the church meeting in their home.

And then we see that he goes along on this trip to assist them, which more than likely means that he was a humble man, he wasn't a teacher, he wasn't being sent out to proclaim the gospel, he was being sent out to serve alongside and bring to deacon these apostles that were going out, to come alongside them and provide for their need, to track down the food, to look for shelter in this journey along with them.

So probably, I'm conjecturing at this point, but probably a man of very simple means, which is an encouraging thing to me, because I am no Paul and I am no Barnabas.

[18:46] So he goes with them. Skip down to verse 13. Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos, some really nutty things happened in Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia, and John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

And John left them and returned to Jerusalem. So he doesn't go back to Antioch, he's now bailed on the mission journey, he doesn't go back to Antioch, but instead goes back to his original home, back to Jerusalem.

He disappears for a little while. He doesn't show up in the record anywhere until we get to chapter 15. A bunch of accounts, Paul and Barnabas' travels, the advancing of the Gospel.

They return to Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas do, to participate in this council that forms, that meets together, because the Judaizers were coming in to these Christian fellowships, and they were saying to Greeks, if you're to be found right with God, this Jesus thing is great, believe that, but you also must be circumcised.

You also must keep the law as a sign of the covenant between God and you. They met together to set this straight. Paul and Barnabas go to be part of this as missionaries to the Gentiles, they wanted to be involved in this activity.

[ 20 : 09 ] And after this, verse 36 of chapter 15, 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.

Let's go back the route we went before and let's check in on all of these churches, all this Christian fellowship that has begun to happen. Verse 37, now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.

But Paul thought it best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. And there arose a sharp disagreement so that they separated from each other.

Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. Now the language here gives us key that Paul's feelings about this man as well as the Greek word withdrawn means that John Mark bailed on the first missionary journey because he was afraid.

He said, I did not sign up for this. I did not know that this was where you were going to lead me. And he bailed. He was a coward. He jumped off.

[ 21 : 13 ] He got out of the situation altogether. And here we see that there's an argument that arises. Barnabas sticking up for his cousin. It's been a couple of years. Maybe he's grown up.

Maybe he just needs a second chance. Paul who says, I don't want people with me who are going to be cowardly. I don't want them with me. And so they disagreed and they went there separate ways.

I'm not here to give you commentary on that. I don't really know what was right and proper. But here we have Barnabas and Paul split directions. Barnabas takes Mark with him. Paul takes Silas. And the gospel continues to advance in this way.

Now at this point we don't see any record in the New Testament narrative about Barnabas for two years. It doesn't show back up. We don't know exactly. We know they went to Cyprus. We don't know exactly what happens. John Mark disappears from the narrative for ten years.

No clue what happens to our little John Mark. What he's out there doing. What's going on with him. Now in the meantime I think you're familiar with much of the story.

[ 22 : 15 ] A lot of the further advancing of the gospel. Paul is thrown in prison. In Rome. There's a first imprisonment he's thrown in Rome. This is the place that he wrote the letters.

The books we now call Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians. And guess where John Mark shows up. Turn to Colossians 4.10.

I love this. Ten years he's gone. What is he doing in this ten year period of time? We know he went with Barnabas to Cyprus. What next? What happened? Philemon verse 20.

Oh excuse me. Colossians 4.10. There's Paul writing to the church. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you. And who? Mark, the cousin of Barnabas.

This is where we learn that it's Barnabas' cousin. Concerning whom you have received instruction, if he comes to you, welcome him. If I get the opportunity to send to you John Mark, welcome him.

[ 23 : 26 ] They had endeared themselves to one another once again. There had been some reconciliation on their part. And in fact, the evidence that John Mark was growing in faith, he would have not been in a Roman prison had he not been bold for Christ.

So, how did he get? He went from Jerusalem off to Cyprus with Barnabas. How did he get to Rome? We don't know. But somehow, he was enough of a threat to the empire as he was advancing the gospel that he gets thrown in prison with Paul, right?

The apostle of apostles. Here's little John Mark sitting next to him in prison. And they have apparently reconciled to a great degree. Philemon, verse 23.

Let me just read this one to you. He says, Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greeting to you and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

Paul had now linked arms with Mark for the sake of the gospel. Isn't that precious? He shows back up in this way. And then again, in Paul's second imprisonment, the very last letter that he ever wrote to Timothy, 2 Timothy, chapter 4, verse 11, the very end of his life here, he writes to Timothy, Do your best to come to me soon, for Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.

[ 24 : 47 ] Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you for he is very useful to me for ministry. So here's this worker who's come alongside Paul and has given him the service.

Do him for the work of ministry. Isn't that precious to see the reconciliation taking place there? I long to be with Mark, the one that he would want nothing to do with on the second journey.

No! He's a coward. Leave him behind. I'm taking Silas. It's the very one that he asked Timothy to bring along with him for this work.

This ministered to me to see that God used a man who bailed on the mission to pen one of the four gospels, one of the four accounts of the life of Jesus Christ.

There's hope for us yet, isn't there? In all of our failure that God would work and move in us.

Because you know that recovering sinners are the only type of people there are?

[ 25 : 57 ] People who have failed and made mistakes. It's the only type of people that there are. Mark turned from his cowardice to boldness. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been in this prison.

He wouldn't have worked alongside Paul. We are recovering liars. I hope, turning to truth. We're recovering thieves, becoming honest.

We're recovering murderers. The case of Paul. Paul himself is recovering murder. We're recovering idolaters, turning from worship of ourselves and turning to the worship of God.

So this is the background of Mark. It's likely, I worked really hard on trying to make this a fact for you, I just couldn't quite do it. There's too much maybe in the equation.

But it's likely that Mark penned this gospel while he was sitting in the Roman prison alongside Paul. An interesting thought to have, that he sits in prison and he thinks, what can I do for the sake of the kingdom and the Spirit impresses upon him to write down the gospel.

[ 27 : 04 ] And I like to think that he was checking with, that's right, isn't it? Like, can you confirm this? Yeah, we're doing this well. We're moving along. We're getting this down right. This may have been happening at the very same time.

And so Mark starts his gospel account with the beginning of the gospel. The good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Right? This one, this person who had delivered him from his sin, even this sin of cowardice, of bailing out on the mission that was set before them.

So why do we study the gospel accounts? Why do we continue to preach to one another the gospel? It's because we need to hear it. Why are we going to look at this? I think most of you are probably pretty familiar with the life of Jesus.

Why should we take time and work hard, labor, some of us more than others, but to labor to really understand what this book means for us.

[ 28 : 03 ] I like the C.S. Lewis quote I came across this week. He said, we have to continually be reminded of what we believe. We have to continually be reminded of what we believe.

No belief will automatically remain alive in the mind. It must be fed. No belief just pops up and stays there. You have to feed it.

We have to continue to preach the gospel to ourselves. We have to keep pumping it in to our very living so that we will respond appropriately, so that we will worship God rightly in this world.

That's the value of coming to this book. To peer in 16 chapters at the life of Jesus Christ and the way He came as a servant and poured Himself out for the church.

Because we're meant to model this very activity. Christ is our high standard, our high goal. He is the one that we're driving to be like. In Sunday school this morning we talked a little bit about this as we're studying the attributes of God.

[ 29 : 04 ] Don't try to be like me. I hope to set some example for you in trying to be like Christ. But if you try to be like me, you can accomplish that.

You can get to this stature. Because it's not much of a stature. Try to be like Christ. And spend your life doing that. I am far from perfect. I need grace.

Christ perfect, holy, set apart. He walked this earth to show us how we ought to live. He is the high mark, the high goal. We have to be continually reminded of what we believe.

Because no belief will remain alive in the mind. It must be fed. So He tells us here, this is the beginning. The sentence, the beginning of the gospel, the good news.

I'm sure he had in his mind Old Testament Scriptures. He saw that Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of so much promise. He was the reality of so much shadow.

[ 30 : 07 ] Finally, fully, the kingdom of God has arrived. Isaiah 49 says, Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news.

Lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news. Lift it up, fear not. Say to the cities of Judah, behold, your God. This is what Mark is saying.

Mark is this herald of good news and he's saying to us, behold, your God. Isaiah 52, 7, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, your God reigns.

This is what he's coming to tell us about. The good news of Jesus Christ. That we were once dead but we now have life in him.

This is what he's coming. This debt that we could not pay has been paid on our behalf. We have been ransomed. We have been adopted. We have been delivered.

[ 31 : 14 ] We're justified in God's sight. We're clothed in Christ's righteousness. This is the good news. That eternal damnation was ours and now eternal glory belongs to us because of Christ.

The good news. I hope it's good to you this morning. The good news of Jesus Christ, right? Jesus, the Hebrew name Yeshua, was a very modern, excuse me, a very common name in this day. Lots of Joshua's out there, right? It means though God is salvation. What a fitting name for our Lord. God is salvation.

And we attach so often this Greek word Christos, Christ, to it because it means he is the anointed one. So Jesus, the anointed one.

Not your buddy down the street, Joshua, right? But Jesus Christ, the anointed one. We have since, because of some Greek linguistic versions, we can rightly say and pronounce this word Jesus.

[ 32 : 20 ] And we have, as the Christian church, given that name to him. Right? We have said, this is Jesus. We name our kids Joshua, right? With the same root. We don't call him Jesus. Some cultures do, right?

But we tend to do that because this is the name that we've reserved for him alone. God is salvation. This is the one by which that salvation comes.

And then he calls him the Son of God. Now, it's a doctrine that we won't get into this morning in its entirety. But if you remember from our study of Nehemiah, we saw a very interesting use of language as the people came together to worship, that they went out and they called together the sons of the singers.

Do you remember us talking about that? We talked about how this language was a common Hebrew way of stating that someone was in the same order as. So in Nehemiah's day, they weren't going out and looking for the offspring of the singers, the kids of the singers, but they were looking to those who belonged to the order of the singers to come together.

And as an aside, I said, have you ever considered Jesus being called the Son of God in that regard? We don't because we don't really understand that. This is not our cultural context.

[ 33 : 38 ] But they would have fully understood. Both the Hebrew and Greek mind would have seen this thing, the Son of God, and seen that Jesus is in the same order of God.

This title would have meant that he possesses equality with God, that he is God himself. This is a great declaration of Jesus Christ's deity.

God sent in man's form to minister to us. Phenomenal. Absolutely phenomenal. And the insane thing to me beyond that is that we are now called in Christ sons and daughters of God.

Which is not to say that we have equality with God, but we are now created in the order of. Right? Made in his image. Destroyed by sin but now restored in Christ.

Our hearts turned back towards him. Martin Luther, the great reformer, said, it is not imitation that makes sons. Going through the motions.

[ 34 : 42 ] Doing the religious thing. It is not imitation that makes sons. It is adoption that makes us imitators. The preciousness of that truth because our hearts have been regenerate.

We have now been made in the order of God. And this is Mark coming to us to pen this gospel. I don't know if any of you felt kind of the shock, and I did, when I, like, this is Mark, the guy that bailed on Paul, I forgot his name.

Right? I knew a guy bailed on Paul and Barnabas for cowardice. I remember that. I remember the story. I remember they got an argument about it. But it was Mark, the guy that got to write the gospel according to Mark.

Look at the grace in his life. The outworking of the gospel. Beloved, that is the same grace that we have. And take people who are not worthy of God's favor.

That we can do nothing to earn it. You may have some weight and burden on your back. Some thing that you have done or not done that you should be doing that is weighing you down this morning.

[ 35 : 52 ] Take a note from the book of Mark. Look at who he was, and then who he became by the grace of God. Right? A coward who bailed on the mission.

And actually, up to this point, the mission hadn't even been that bad. There was a guy that was possessed. Paul let him have it. Drove out some demons. And that's when John Mark bailed. Right? They had yet to be shipwrecked and beaten and stoned and all those things. Right? That hadn't even happened yet. And he bailed. And here he is in a Roman prison likely writing down the account of the life of Jesus Christ.

Do you think Mark would have had any notion when he bailed, walked himself back to Jerusalem in shame that he would affect countless millions of believers with his gospel account.

A phenomenal, phenomenal way that God used him. God uses us all in phenomenal ways.

Whether it's quite like writing a gospel. But he uses us all to be sure.

[ 36 : 58 ] I'll say to you again, Mark's aim was to persuade those who would read this book to become disciple-making disciples. Right? He was a patron of Christ. A follower of his way.

Devoted to him in every regard. And he wants that to be the reality for us as well. He wants us to serve the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

This is the thing in which he's trying to accomplish. Now as I kind of mused over the possibility that John Mark was sitting in a Roman prison with Paul, that he's writing down these words led by the Spirit, Peter's giving to him, that we could possibly see some parallel.

It's possible, right? That they may have been desk buddies writing conjecture entirely. But turn to Philippians chapter 2.

I just want to show you some similarity here. This is not meant to blow your mind just to be an encouragement.

[ 38 : 01 ] It's just another good presentation of the gospel truth. We could very simply outline the gospel of Mark.

This is probably the simplest outline that could possibly be put on it. But we could see Jesus came as a servant chapters 1-13. Jesus died on a cross chapters 14-15 and Jesus was exalted to glory chapter 16.

There is much more complexity to the book itself. But if you want to look at it in its simplest form Jesus came as a servant chapters 1-13 Jesus died on a cross 14-15 and Jesus was exalted to glory chapter 16.

Let's look at Philippians chapter 2. So, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant, than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God as a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

[ 39 : 25 ] Chapters 1-13. Jesus came as a servant. verse 8, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Chapters 14-15, Jesus died on a cross. He was cursed to hang on a tree. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that the name of

Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father.

And there we see Jesus Christ being exalted to glory as it's recorded in chapter 16. So, a way of seeing and outlining the content that we get to move through together as we look together at the gospel according to Mark.

Let's pray.