

The Gospel of Mark

Houston, We Have a Serious Problem	
The Problem	2 of the 4 Gospels in our NT, <u>are</u> written by disciples of Jesus: Matthew and John. That means <u>Mark</u> and <u>Luke</u> were not written by original disciples of Jesus. Furthermore, we have no indication that Mark and Luke were even affiliated with Jesus and his ministry. Those issues beg a necessary question.
The Question	How could Mark – not one of the original twelve, and not even affiliated with Jesus in his ministry – write a <u>Gospel account</u> ? What qualifies him to be one of those writers?
The Information We Need to Answer the Question	(1) ⁵¹ <u>A young man</u> , wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, ⁵² he fled naked, leaving his garment behind (Mark 14:51-52). (2) ¹¹ Then <u>Peter</u> came to himself and said, “Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.” ¹² When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of <u>John, also called Mark</u> , where many people had gathered and were praying (Acts 12:12). (3) ¹³ She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my <u>son Mark</u> (1 Peter 5:13)
Answer	(1) The kid following Jesus in Mark’s Gospel is Mark. This episode isn’t referenced in the other Gospels. (2) Mark and his mother, Mary, had a direct relationship with one of the original 12: Peter. (3) Peter refers to John Mark as his “son” (meaning spiritual son)
What the Gospel of Mark is a Nutshell	Peter’s Account of Jesus written by Mark. Think of it as a rabbi/scribe relationship like Jeremiah and Baruch.

Mark’s Uniqueness from the Other Gospels	
The First Gospel	We assume that Matthew was the first Gospel written because it appears first in our New Testament. Mark, however, was the first Gospel written, somewhere between 55-59 AD.
The Source for Matthew and Luke	Since it was the earliest, Matthew and Luke used it as a source. In fact, when you compare the three, Matthew and Luke use Mark’s outline. When there is a story that needs more detail than presented in Mark, they give it more detail and then come back to Mark’s outline.
The Ox Gospel	The Lion, Ox, Man and Eagle will help you remember the essence of each Gospel in their biblical order. Matthew (Lion): Jesus is King of the Jews. <u>Mark (Ox): Jesus is the Servant of the Lord, Son of God, and Savior of the World.</u> Luke (Man): Jesus is 2 nd Adam (Perfect Man). John (Eagle): Jesus is the Word Incarnate who Ascends to Heaven.
The Original Audience is the Most Important Piece to Understanding the Gospel	(1) Mark’s mother was a wealthy and prominent Christian in the Jerusalem Church. (2) But Mark was involved with 2 missionary journeys <u>throughout the Roman Empire</u> : (1) with Paul and Barnabas (he deserted them) and then (2) with Barnabas. (3) The Christians Mark cultivated in these journeys throughout the Roman Empire were being persecuted. (4) As a result, Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark to <u>Christians within the Roman Empire, both Jew and Gentile</u> , to encourage them to be faithful to the Servant of the Lord, the Son of God, and Savior of the World in the midst of it.
An Important Word in Mark	Romans were interested in <u>fast-paced</u> accounts because they wanted to read it in one sitting. The most used word in Mark is “immediately.” Consequently, that’s why the book is so short.
The Main Purpose	Encourage Christians within the <u>Roman Empire</u> to be faithful to the <u>Son of God</u> , the <u>Servant of the Lord</u> , and <u>Savior of the World</u> : Jesus.

Theme One: Jesus is the Son of God	
Rome and the Son of God Designation	In Rome, Emperors/Caesars were “Son(s) of the “g”ods. As such, their decrees – even the oppressive, evil, and persecutory ones – were considered “euangellion” (Gospel/Good News). Every decree that was sent out to the Empire began with “the beginning of the euangellion about (the Caesar) from (a messenger)”

Notice How Mark Begins	The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, ^[a] the Son of God, ^[b] ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” ^[c] — ³ “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”
The Significance	(1) Mark begins his Gospel with the good news: there is a Son of God, and it isn’t a Roman Caesar (2) A messenger confirms this message: John the Baptist (3) This was an assault/direct attack on Rome, their Caesar, and the atrocities they were committing. (4) And it’s also a message of hope for the Roman Christians, whose lives were being snuffed out.
The Son of God in Mark	(1) Jesus is affirmed not by the Roman “g”ods, but by the father in heaven: “this is my Son, whom I’m well pleased (Mk 1:9-11) (2) Jesus as the Son of God was confirmed through his miracles and ministry, unlike the Caesars who were confirmed by heredity or through the sword. (3) The Son of God is singular because there’s only 1: a fact proved by his resurrection. Every Roman Caesar was a Son of God. And none of them rose from the dead. (4) That’s why the phrase “Son of God” occurs 14 times in the Gospel of Mark

Theme Two: Jesus is the Servant of the Lord (the Ox)	
Rome and the Servant of the Lord Designation	Within the Roman Empire, the people – both citizen and non-citizens alike – were designated as “servants” of the Caesar. The Caesar was deity. They were at his mercy.
But Notice the Middle Theme in Mark	⁴¹ When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴² Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:41-45)
The Significance	Unlike Caesars – who took the lives of those (Christians) who refused to serve them – Jesus is the servant who freely gave His life as a ransom for many.
The Jew and the Servant of the Lord	The Jewish idea of the Servant of the Lord comes directly from Isaiah 53: ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
Jesus’ servanthood fulfilled the Scriptures (Jewish) and challenged the notion of Caesars existing to be served (Gentile).	

Theme Three: Jesus is the Savior of the World	
Rome and the Savior of the World Designation	Roman Caesars and the Romans themselves considered themselves to be the Saviors of the World. But their method for saving the world was much different than Jesus’. They conquered by force and gave citizens under their rule the opportunity to be citizens of Rome. The Roman way would “save them” in essence.
Mark’s Challenge to This	Jesus is the Savior of the World, both the Jew and Gentile. Not Rome. Not the Roman way of life. And he doesn’t aim to conquer the human heart and make them adopt his way of life through force. He conquered by giving up his life and conquering the human heart through love. And that’s the message that conquers not just Jews, but Gentiles also
As Told by Mark in Regions Outside Israel	²⁴ Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. ²⁵ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ “First let the children eat all they want,” he told her, “for it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” ²⁸ “Lord,” she replied, “even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” ²⁹ Then he told her, “For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone (Mk 7:24-30).

