

# **The Book of Mark**

**Who Do People Say That I Am?**

**Summer 2021 Sermon Series  
Companion Guide, Volume 1**



**HOPE GROVE  
CHURCH**



At Hope Grove Church, one of the ways we strive to live out our values is to be a church that is in the Word. As we step in to an extended sermon series in the Gospel of Mark this Summer, we wanted to offer opportunities to study and grow outside of Sunday mornings - which led us to developing this.

With this companion guide, we'll:

- Give space for sermon notes each week
- Read through the entire book of Mark
- Study other passages from the Bible that help us better understand what Mark was writing and why he was writing it
- Encounter other resources that better explain the context and message of the Gospel of Mark

Each week, there will be 5 days worth of content to explore at your own pace - probably an average of 10-15 minutes per day. The content will inevitably overlap with the Sunday sermons, but that's intentional - more study and exposure will hopefully lead to a richer understanding of scripture and deeper personal response. It's our hope that this regular time spent encountering the Word of God will be not only an awesome individual experience, but will be a blessing for our church as well.

We are excited to invite you in to an extended look at the book of Mark this summer!

-HGC Staff

**May 9 - Sunday Sermon, Week 1**

**Title:**

**Passage:**

**Sermon Notes:**

How am I being invited to respond to this message in the days and weeks ahead?

## **May 10 - Background and Overview of the Gospel of Mark**

The Gospel of Mark is a rich and fast-paced text that tends to highlight Jesus' actions during his ministry. It's generally seen as the first of the Gospels to be written, and is based on Peter's accounts of his time with Jesus. It was likely written to Christ-followers in Rome, possibly to provide context and encouragement during a time of persecution. Mark especially gives attention to the identity and the deity of Jesus, ultimately pointing to him as the Messiah.

For two excellent video overviews of the Gospel of Mark, [click here](#) or navigate to this address:

<https://bibleproject.com/learn/mark/>

and

To download the full infographic used in the Bible Project video above, [click here](#) or navigate to this link:

<https://bibleproject.com/view-resource/250>

## **May 11 - Luke 3:1-9**

To give a bit more context to some of the early chapters of Mark, we turn today to Luke 3:1-9. Take a moment and read through that passage. When you've had a chance to reflect a bit, respond to the following:

1. What observations have you made about these verses?
2. What questions come up when reading these verses?
3. What do we learn about John the Baptist? How might that help us better understand the early chapters of Mark?

## **May 12 - Mark 1:1-20**

As promised, we'll read through the entire book of Mark this Summer. When reading through this first section today, keep in mind the context and background information from the past couple days.

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

What is noteworthy about how Mark starts his Gospel?

## **May 13 - Manuscript Study**

At times it can be helpful to look at a passage in a different way. When doing a manuscript study, a passage is typically printed without verse and paragraph indicators to allow an unimpeded view and to make it easier to mark up the text.

Read the text, and make note of any observations you have. Pay special attention to repetition, key words, people, comparisons, connecting words/phrases, and questions that come up when reading. After studying the text extensively, move towards interpretation and personal response.\*

### **Mark 1:35-39**

And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you." And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out." And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Observe - What does the passage say?

Interpret - What does the passage mean?

What message or idea is Mark trying to communicate by including this story early in his writings?

Respond - What does the passage mean for me?

**May 14 - Mark 1:21-45**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

Have you noticed any themes that Mark has already started to repeat?

**May 16 - Sunday Sermon, Week 2**

**Title:**

**Passage:**

**Sermon Notes:**

How am I being invited to respond to this message in the days and weeks ahead?

## **May 17 - Topic - 'Teacher'**

As we move in to week two of the companion guide, we hope this has been intriguing and beneficial so far. While all of it may be helpful, we also understand that it may also be overwhelming - so use this in a way that helps you.

Today, we turn to more contextual information. The Gospel of Mark puts quite an emphasis on Jesus as a teacher, either calling him 'teacher' or referring to his teachings 39 times. Because it's an important theme, it would be helpful to take a look at what a teacher was understood to be in the Ancient Near East.

[Click here](#) to open an article from Ray Vander Laan (That The World May Know Ministries) that gives a solid historical perspective on the practices and expectations of teachers. You can also navigate to this link:

<https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/rabbi-and-talmidim>

There are several other articles and resources on their website that give amazing insight on the history and culture of ancient Israel.

**May 18 - Read Mark 2:1-17**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

How are the stories starting to point to a bigger idea?

## **May 19 - Context - Roman Influence in Judea & Galilee**

It's important to take a bit of time to understand the broader social and political dynamics that were present during Jesus' life and ministry. While we could spend the entire Summer reading really interesting texts about the Roman Empire, provincial governors, and the Jewish cooperation and opposition to their influence, the links below will provide at least a good overview.

As you peruse all of this information, continue to ask the question: How would this dynamic have influenced the way Jesus approached his ministry and how would it have influenced how others responded to his teaching?

### **How Did the Roman Empire Impact Judea at the Time of Christ?**

This is an entry from the ESV Study Bible

<https://www.christianity.com/jesus/birth-of-jesus/roman-world/how-did-the-roman-empire-impact-judea-at-the-time-of-christ.html>

### **Under the Roman Boot -The rule of Roman procurators in Judea**

A snapshot from an Israeli research center (dubbed in English)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cg3HHJ8ZY2c>

### **Christianity from Judaism to Constantine**

A secular historical overview that is very informative but also contains a few PG-13 jokes (Jump to 3:30 for the part specifically about the Roman Empire)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TG55ErfdaeY>

### **Jews in Roman Times**

A companion article to a PBS series on the Roman Empire

<https://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/jews.html>

### **The Jewish Revolts**

Another article from That The World May Know

<https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/the-jewish-revolts>

**May 20 - Read Mark 2:18-3:6**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

How do these stories help us understand Jesus' understanding of his purpose?

## **May 21 - Manuscript Study**

Today we turn to a passage that is parallel to the reading from yesterday - Matthew's account of the disciples picking grain. There are many examples of parallel stories in the Gospels, and it can be helpful to read different writers' perspectives.

### **Matthew 12:1-8**

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

Observe - What does the passage say?

Interpret - What does the passage mean?

What message or idea is Matthew trying to communicate? What is the main idea?

Respond - What does the passage mean for me?

**May 23 - Sunday Sermon - Week 3**

**Title:**

**Passage:**

**Sermon Notes:**

How am I being invited to respond to this message in the days and weeks ahead?

## **May 24 - Read Mark 3:7-19**

Just a reminder as we start week three - feel free to take things at your own pace if the amount of information coming on a daily basis is overwhelming. It's ok to dwell on one passage for several days if that is most beneficial.

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

How does this passage further the narrative of Mark's Gospel?

## **May 25 - Manuscript**

As always, read the text and make note of any observations you have. Pay special attention to repetition, key words, people, comparisons, connecting words/phrases, and questions that come up when reading. After studying the text extensively, move towards interpretation and response.

### **Mark 3:22-30**

And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons." And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house. "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

Observe - What does the passage say?

Interpret - What does the passage mean?

What message or idea is Mark trying to communicate? What is the main idea?

Respond - What does the passage mean for me?

**May 26 - Matthew 12:22-32**

Read Matthew 12:22-30, a different account of the passage from yesterday. When you've had a chance to reflect a bit, respond to the following:

1. What observations have you made about these verses?
2. What questions come up when reading these verses?
3. Are there concepts or ideas that are accentuated by the differences between the Matthew and Mark accounts?

**May 27 - Read Mark 3:20-35**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

What message do these stories convey about Jesus' ministry?

## May 28 - Context - Demons & Supernatural Beings

It's a bit creepy to read through the Gospel accounts of Jesus' interactions with people who were filled with unclean spirits because we typically assume this means they were possessed. If we have a better understanding of how people in Biblical times understood the supernatural realm, specifically Satan and unclean spirits, it will help us make more sense of Jesus' interactions with them and how they fit in to the bigger picture of his ministry.

[Click here](https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/satan-demons/) to view a Bible Project video on Satan & demons, or navigate to this address:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/satan-demons/>

This video primarily discusses supernatural beings from an Old Testament perspective, but that perspective dictated how people in the New Testament understood the spiritual world.

You could spend hours researching this topic, but to simplify, here's an excerpt from the Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels that offers a bit more insight into a New Testament perspective:

Josephus believed that people could be possessed or 'overtaken' by demons causing frenzy, suffocation, and strangling. Philo believed that invisible living beings hovered in the air, and that evil spirits among them could be breathed in, or might take over, fill, or descend into a person, causing disastrous pestilences. In harmony with beliefs of that day, the Gospels depict demons causing convulsions, loud screaming, a change of voice or character, chaotic and unpredictable behavior, preternatural strength and an indifference to pain. Notably, a disturbance is caused by and in the sufferer when confronted by Jesus.

G.H. Twelftree  
Demon, Devil, Satan  
Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels

**May 30 - Sunday Sermon - Week 4**

**Title:**

**Passage:**

**Sermon Notes:**

How am I being invited to respond to this message in the days and weeks ahead?

## **May 31 - Recap & Review**

Having spent more than three weeks closely studying the Gospel of Mark and related topics, you may be getting caught up in the minutiae of it all. The contextual studies, parallel passages, and short readings are all meant to give us a deeper understanding of the culture and themes that would have been almost second-nature for the original audience, but they can also be a disservice in trying to understand the larger themes.

Because of that, take today to review, note any progressions you've seen in the text so far, and any larger themes that seem to be jumping out. How have you noticed Mark grouping themes? To what end?

Also, consider rewatching The Bible Project videos from May 10 by [clicking here](#) or navigating to this address:

<https://bibleproject.com/learn/mark/>

**Notes:**

## June 1 - Parables

This week has a heavy emphasis on parables, and because of that we figured it would be good to offer a bit more information about parables themselves, reasons for using parables, and strategies for approaching them in scripture.

For a wonderful article about the purpose of parables in Jesus' ministry, [click here](#) or navigate to this address:

<https://bibleproject.com/blog/are-the-parables-of-jesus-confusing-on-purpose/>

For a video lesson that talks more about the strategies for and challenges of reading Jesus' parables, [click here](#) or navigate to this link:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/how-to-read-the-bible-the-parables-of-jesus/>

## **June 2 - Read Mark 4:1-20**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

How does the location of this well-known parable in the chronology of Mark's Gospel help us better understand the meaning?



### **June 3 - Manuscript**

Read the text and make note of any observations you have. Pay special attention to repetition, key words, people, comparisons, connecting words/phrases, and questions that come up when reading. After studying the text extensively, move towards interpretation and response.

#### **Matthew 13:24-30**

Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?' "An enemy did this,' he replied. "The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' "No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

Observe - What does the passage say?

Interpret - What does the passage mean?

How is this parable similar to others from this week? How is it different?  
What message is Jesus trying to communicate?

Respond - What does the passage mean for me?

**June 4 - Read Mark 4:21-41**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

How do these parables and the story help us make more sense of Jesus' ministry?

**June 6 - Sunday Sermon - Week 5**

**Title:**

**Passage:**

**Sermon Notes:**

How am I being invited to respond to this message in the days and weeks ahead?



## **June 8 - Read Mark 5:1-20**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

Are there any similarities between this story and other stories of Jesus' healing?  
Differences?

## **June 9 - Manuscript**

Read the text and make note of any observations you have. Pay special attention to repetition, key words, people, comparisons, connecting words/phrases, and questions that come up when reading. After studying the text extensively, move towards interpretation and response.

### **John 9:1-12**

1 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud 7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. 8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." 10 So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." 12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

Observe - What does the passage say?

Interpret - What does the passage mean?

Are there themes in John's account that are similar to those from previous stories of Jesus healing others?

Respond - What does the passage mean for me?

## **June 10 - Read Mark 5:21-43**

Before reading, take a moment to reflect back on what's been read and discussed so far - what will be helpful for you to remember as you read today?

After reading, feel free to use this space for any notes, observations, questions, doodles, or anything else that might be helpful for you as we continue through the text.

Are there any similarities between this story and other stories of Jesus' healing?  
Differences?

## **June 11 - Holiness**

In contrast to the narrative from the past few days, we wanted to use this resource to bring a bit more context to the cultural implications of Jesus' actions and how his ministry challenged many preconceptions.

[Click here](#) for a Bible Project video on holiness, or navigate to this address:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/holiness/>

How does this video help you better understand Jesus' actions and what Mark has been communicating thus far in his Gospel?

Stay tuned for Volume 2 - coming in June!