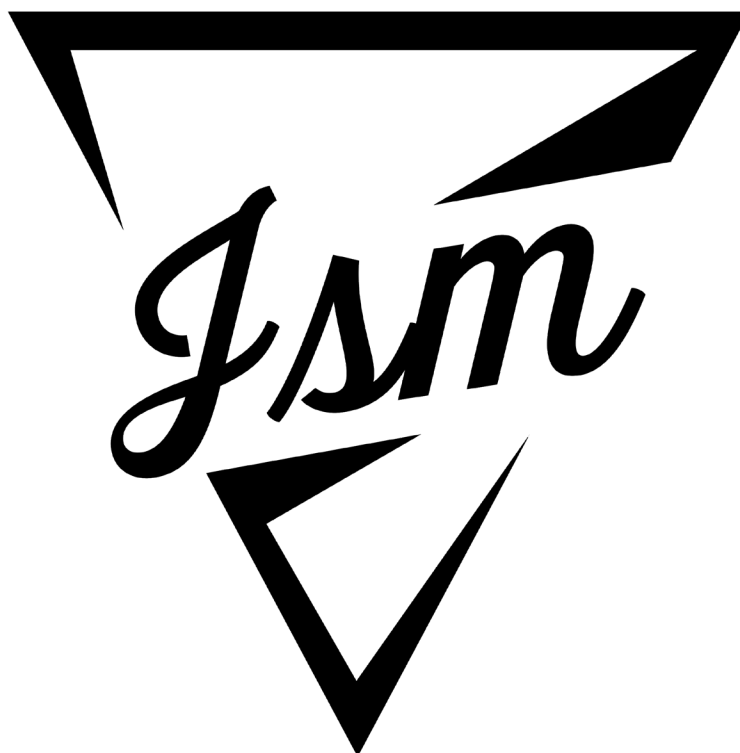


GOSPEL OF MARK

JOURNEY STUDENT MINISTRIES

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE



PROCESS

1 PRAY

Ask God to speak through His Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand the text and apply it to your life!

2 READ THE TEXT

Read through the text slowly and carefully. Pay attention to the details, notice the people, places, language and overall themes in the scripture.

3 TALK IT OVER/WRITE IT DOWN

What stands out to you? What makes you think? What questions do you have after reading the text?

4 READ A DIFFERENT TRANSLATION

Read the passage a second time, but in a different translation. Sometimes it can be helpful to utilize a paraphrase translation, like the Message Translation, because it can help us understand the heart of the passage instead of just logical side.

5 CONTEXT, CONTEXT, CONTEXT

Who is the author? Who was his intended audience? When was the book written? What is the book about? What is happening in the verses before and after those you are reading? Who are the key players in the text? What cultural influences might be impactful to the text?

6 CONSULT THE COMMENTARY

Read the experts. Many theologians have dedicated their life's work to studying the bible. Glean from their learning and insights. Learn from the historical and literary critical analysis of the text. This can be the key to shed light of the texts that confuse us or that we might be prone to misinterpret and abuse.

7 DISCUSS THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPALS

What timeless principles are taught in this passage? The meaning of a passage will be applied differently at different times and in different places, but the underlying truths of Scripture will be applicable in some way at all times and places. Before we can apply a passage, we must understand its theological principals.

8 APPLY THE TEXT

How do you feel God speaking to you through this passage? What area of your life is the passage speaking to? What did you learn, and how does it impact your understanding of who God is and who you are? How can you live in light of that?

PRAY

The Lords Prayer -
Matthew 6:9-13

but deliver us from
evil,
for thine is the
kingdom and the
power
and the glory,
forever. Amen.

Our Father, who art
in heaven,
hallowed be thy
name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in
heaven.

Give us this day our
daily bread
and forgive us
our debts and we
forgive
our debtors,
and lead us not
into temptation,

#youbelonghere

READ THE TEXT

Mark 4:21-41 NIV

21 He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? 22 For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.” 24 “Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. 25 Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.” 26 He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. 27 Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. 28 All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. 29 As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.” 30 Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. 32 Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.” 33 With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. 34 He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. 35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. 40 He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” 41 They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

READ A DIFFERENT TRANSLATION

Mark 4:21-41 The Message

21-22 Jesus went on: “Does anyone bring a lamp home and put it under a bucket or beneath the bed? Don’t you put it up on a table or on the mantel? We’re not keeping secrets, we’re telling them; we’re not hiding things, we’re bringing them out into the open. 23 “Are you listening to this? Really listening? 24-25 “Listen carefully to what I am saying—and be wary of the shrewd advice that tells you how to get ahead in the world on your own. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity. Stinginess impoverishes.” 26-29 Then Jesus said, “God’s kingdom is like seed thrown on a field by a man who then goes to bed and forgets about it. The seed sprouts and grows—he has no idea how it happens. The earth does it all without his help: first a green stem of grass, then a bud, then the ripened grain. When the grain is fully formed, he reaps—harvest time! 30-32 “How can we picture God’s kingdom? What kind of story can we use? It’s like an acorn. When it lands on the ground it is quite small as seeds go, yet once it is planted it grows into a huge oak tree with thick branches. Eagles nest in it.” 33-34 With many stories like these, he presented his message to them, fitting the stories to their experience and maturity. He was never without a story when he spoke. When he was alone with his disciples, he went over everything, sorting out the tangles, untying the knots. 35-38 Late that day he said to them, “Let’s go across to the other side.” They took him in the boat as he was. Other boats came along. A huge storm came up. Waves poured into the boat, threatening to sink it. And Jesus was in the stern, head on a pillow, sleeping! They roused him, saying, “Teacher, is it nothing to you that we’re going down?” 39-40 Awake now, he told the wind to pipe down and said to the sea, “Quiet! Settle down!” The wind ran out of breath; the sea became smooth as glass. Jesus reprimanded the disciples: “Why are you such cowards? Don’t you have any faith at all?” 41 They were in absolute awe, staggered. “Who is this, anyway?” they asked. “Wind and sea at his beck and call!”

CONTEXT, CONTEXT, CONTEXT

Context determines
meaning

Every passage of scripture was God's word to other people before it became God's word to us. In order to properly and fully understand a text we must determine what the original author intended to communicate to their original audience. If we come up with an application that would have been foreign to the original audience, there is a very strong possibility that we did not interpret the passage correctly. Once we are confident that we understand what the text meant to its original hearers, we then need to determine the width of the chasm between us and them. In other words, what are the differences in language, time, culture, geography, setting and situation? All of these must be taken into account before application can be made. Once the width of the chasm has been measured, we can then attempt to build the bridge over the chasm by finding the commonalities between the original audience and ourselves. Finally, we can then find application for ourselves in our time and situation.

The Gospel According to Mark

Author: Unknown

- Like the other 3 Gospels, the Gospel of Mark nowhere identifies its author.
- Church tradition attributes this book to John Mark.
- John Mark was not an apostle, but early writings talk of John Mark as a faithful interpreter of the testimony of the apostle Peter.

Date Written: Unknown

- Nowhere in the Gospel is any specific information given by which it could be dated.
- Historical and textual analysis brings many theologians to believe the book was composed around the year A.D. 65. Making it the first of the Gospels to be written.

Audience and location: Greek Gentiles in Rome

- Church tradition and literary analysis hold that Mark wrote his Gospel in Rome
- Mark rarely quotes the OT, and he explains Jewish customs unfamiliar to his readers.
- Primary audience would have been unfamiliar with the Jewish ethos of Jesus.

Narrative Structure: Mark falls naturally into two halves, the first concerning Jesus' ministry in Galilee (1:1–8:26), and the second his journey to Jerusalem and his passion there (8:27–16:8).

CONSULT THE COMMENTARY

Pillar New Testament Commentary

Edwards, J. R. (2002). *The Gospel according to Mark*. Grand Rapids, MI;

Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos.

Jesus is hidden in order to be manifested. Concealment intends disclosure. The kingdom of God—and the parables that witness to it—are like a piece of embroidery: one side is a mass of knots and tangles, while the other is a finished pattern. So, too, is the figure of Jesus. To outsiders he is a homespun rabbi without the credentials of a rabbinic school, a Galilean upstart. How might one detect in the ordinary threads of such a life the emerging pattern of the kingdom of God? Only by hearing. The point is repeated to redundancy in vv. 23–24, where the command to hear occurs in Greek three times in two verses. The explanation of the parable of the sower warned against allowing life to become leached by the demands and attractions of the world, leaving no soil in which to nourish the seeds of life. “Consider carefully what you hear,” says Jesus,

for you are like a prisoner whose one chance of escape depends on hearing and solving a riddle. As in the parable of the sower, the entryway into the kingdom of God is through hearing.

The degree to which one hears the parables, the extent to which one allows the kingdom to break upon oneself, will determine the measure of one’s understanding. Those who hear, those who knock until the door is opened, will find the kingdom disclosed to them. But those of hurried search, whose knock at the door of life is tentative or brief, will find a once joyous invitation to enter the kingdom to have faded into a mirage of disbelief.

Apart from sowing, the only human activity in this parable is waiting in faith, confident of a harvest to come (see Jas 5:7). The coming of the kingdom of God is likened to a process of growth but a process strangely independent of human activity. Despite inauspicious beginnings and the absence of human involvement, the seed contains within itself fruit-bearing potential. The seed, like the gospel, prospers of itself, and once sown sets in motion a process that leads to harvest.

COMMENTARY CONTINUED

Pillar New Testament Commentary

Edwards, J. R. (2002). *The Gospel according to Mark*. Grand Rapids, MI;

Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos.

The parable of the mustard seed is similar in meaning to the parable of the growing seed, although the point of the mustard seed lies in contrast rather than in growth. The mustard seed, which is an annual and proliferates anew each spring, is not actually the tiniest of seeds, but it stood for something proverbially small in Palestine (Matt 17:20). Microscopic though it is, the mustard seed produces a large shrub in which birds may nest. As with the preceding parable, the advent of the kingdom is not something humanity brings about but something God gives. The greater point, however, is that the kingdom of God arises from obscurity and insignificance. That which no one would imagine—or if one did would seem utterly impossible—will in time loom inescapably before us. God’s reign will not only be more real than the world can imagine, but it will also be larger and more encompassing. But as in the previous parable, the emphasis lies on its small, obscure beginnings. It

is now hidden and easily overlooked. Had Jesus desired to emphasize the power and glory of the kingdom of God he could have told a parable about a cedar, which was a symbol of might (Ps 80:10; 9:10; Zech 11:2) and splendor.

Ironically, the only place in the Gospels that we hear of Jesus sleeping is during a storm. The scene depicts his complete trust in God in the midst of adversity, like the farmer in the preceding parables (4:3–9, 27) who trusts God’s providential working over all obstacles and adversities.

The grateful change is effected not by prayer or incantation, but by the authoritative word of Jesus, just as God produced order from chaos in the beginning (Gen 1:2).

The Greek word for “ ‘Be still!’ ” *pephimōso*, carries the sense of “muzzled.” It occurs in the second person singular, as though Jesus were addressing a personal being. Its unusual perfect passive imperative form indicates that the condition shall persist

Jesus does not reproach the disciples for their lack of knowledge, however, but for their fear, the Greek word for which means “losing heart” or “cowardice” (see 6:50–51). The real threat to faith comes not from lack of knowledge but from doubt and fear.

THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPALS

Timeless truths of
Scripture

A series of 18 thin, parallel horizontal black lines, stacked vertically, intended for writing.

APPLY THE TEXT

What is God's invitation
to you in this passage?



A series of 18 horizontal lines, evenly spaced, intended for writing a response to the question above.

