

An Insightful Introduction

“Case for Christ”, part 1, September 12th, 2021
Pastor Bob Johnson, Grace Point Church

Insights from Mark 1:1-8

Why include Mark’s Gospel? (Mark 1:1, 10:45, 15:39)
(Mat. 1:1, Mark 15:39, 16:19; Luke 1:1-4, 2:52, Jn 1:1-2, 20:30-31)

To help us decide ...

Who was Mark?

(Acts 12:12-16, 1 Peter 5:13, Mark 14:50-52)
(Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11, Philemon 24)

Someone who experienced ...

Three “Gospel Questions”:

1. What is the Good News?

(Mark 1:1, Mark 10:45)

The “what” is ...

2. How do I benefit from the Good News?

(Mark 1:2-7, John 1:26-29, Ephesians 2:8, Romans 10:9)

By **C** _____ and **R** _____
and humbly **R** _____ the help we need.

3. When did my Good News begin?

(Mark 1:8, John 14:15-17)

One **B** _____ many **F** _____

(1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, 12:13; Romans 8:9,
(Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30, 5:18; Galatians 5:16, 25)

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This Week's Discussion Guide:

Welcome to our first week of our 10 week study and discussion of the Gospel of Mark. Our last week meeting will be the week of Sunday, November 14th (the week before Thanksgiving :).

At GPC, we are big on small groups :). May our church family grow warmer together as we meet in small groups to develop friendships and encourage each other as we learn to walk with Jesus and apply God's truths to our everyday lives.

Getting Started:

Last Sunday morning, Bob shared a little background of the Gospel of Mark and a little bit of Mark himself. Context is always helpful as we start a new study together. Speaking of context, let's get to know each other a little better before we study some Scripture.

You might have learned something new about Mark last Sunday, what is something 'new' that we might not know about you? For example, where did you grow up and what did you like about it?
and/or ... Who was your favorite or craziest teacher in elementary school?

We learned that Peter helped Mark in his spiritual journey as Peter calls Mark "his son" in 1 Peter 5:13. We also learned that Mark grew up with a mom who was a Christ follower in the early church (Acts 12:12).

Whether you have been following Jesus for a long time or have just begun to follow Him or are still in the process of making that decision, we can all point to at least a general time when we first heard about the story of Jesus.

Let's share with each other when and where you first heard the story about Jesus and who helped you with your early understanding of God's love for you?

Since this is our first meeting, what are you looking forward to as we launch into this new small group season together?

Looking back to last Sunday:

Looking back at your notes from last Sunday, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, encouraged you, challenged you or confused you?

Digging Deeper:

1. In Mark 1:2-3, we read that John the Baptizer was encouraging those that came to listen to him to 'prepare the way of the Lord' which meant to 'prepare their hearts' for Jesus' presence and ministry.

As we spend some solitude time with God and His Word, and as we spend time together as a small group, and as we meet on Sunday mornings in a larger gathering, what are some specific ways we can 'prepare our hearts' before we open up God's Word and hope to receive what God has for us in these different settings?

2. In Mark 1:7-8, John the Baptizer shifts the focus away from himself and themselves and onto Jesus. John wanted to make sure the people understood the importance of dependence on Jesus and not just self-determination to improve one's self. Following John's example, we all have opportunities to point others to Jesus. How do the following verses help us know what this looks like?

1 Corinthians 9:19, 22-23

Matthew 5:9

John 13:35

2 Timothy 2:15

Reflecting on these and possibly other passages, what are some specific examples of how we can point others toward the Good News this fall?

3. What we will see in the week's ahead as we study Mark's gospel, is that some will 'bow the knee' and buy into who Jesus claimed to be and proved He was. And others, will 'back away' from Jesus as He claimed to be more than a man and have authority as the Son of God.

In Jesus' ministry, Jesus had a lot to say about who he is that can help us better understand him today. Let's look at the "I am" statements in John's gospel and reflect on them a bit. (John 6:35, 8:12, 10:7, 10:14, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1)

How would you use Jesus' "I am" statements to respond to someone who says Jesus was just a good teacher?

Which of the "I am" statements is most meaningful to you and why?

Praying Together:

One of the benefits of meeting together is praying for one another. Before we wrap up, let's each share one prayer request so that we can lift each other up in prayer.

Let's also pray that God would help us grow closer to Him and to each other during this fall small group season.