

Daily Reading **Notes**

Mark 1-8





| Week | Passage | |
|------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Mark 1:1-13 | The King has come! |
| 2 | Mark 1:14-45 | The Works of the King |
| 3 | Mark 2:1-3:6 | The Conflict of the Kingdom |
| 4 | Mark 3:7-35 | The Kingdom that Divides |
| 5 | Mark 4:1-34 | The Mystery of the Kingdom |
| 6 | Mark 4:35-6:6 | The Kingdom Breaks In |
| 7 | Mark 6:7-56 | The King and His Future |
| 8 | Mark 7:1-37 | The Reversals of the Kingdom |
| 9 | Mark 8:1-26 | Growing Awareness |
| 10 | Mark 8:27-8:38 | Following the Suffering King |

We want to encourage each other to be on mission to our non-Christian friends, family and contacts.

Who are you on mission to?

Make a list and start praying for them (and yourself).

Pray for three friends, once a week, for one minute (3-1-1).

List the names of your family and friends here:

How to use this book:

1. Personal Reading

- Use this guide to help you read your Bible every day.
- Scribble down your thoughts and questions each day, and remember to pray and ask God to speak to you by His Spirit, through His Word.

2. Growth Groups

- Take this guide with you to your growth group each week so you can write down prayer points that come from the study that week and prayer requests from the members of your group.
- Let your group know who you are on mission to.

3. Church

- Keep this guide with your Bible and bring it with you to church.
- Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided.



INTRODUCTION:

MARK 1 - 8 WHO IS THIS MAN?

Early Christian tradition tells us that this gospel was written by John Mark, a citizen of Jerusalem (Acts 12:12) who was later a colleague of Paul, Barnabas (Acts 12:25) and Peter (1 Peter 5:13). Papias, an historian, who wrote between 95 - 120 AD, tells us that Mark was the “interpreter” of Peter. By this he meant that Mark recorded the substance of Peter’s sermons concerning Jesus, most likely from Rome during the mid 60’s AD.

Who is this man? That’s the question with which Mark confronts his readers in these opening eight chapters. Mark puts his premise before his readers in the opening words, asserting that Jesus is not just the long-awaited Jewish Messiah, but the very Son of God. When Peter dramatically reaches this conclusion at the hinge point of the gospel in chapter 8, a new question is posed: “What will it mean to follow Him?”. In this sense, the gospel of Mark served as an evangelistic tract and handbook for those newly converted.

“Mark” is the shortest gospel and there’s good evidence that his was also the first, serving as the core document for both Matthew’s and Luke’s gospels. Mark wrote in Greek for a Gentile audience most likely in Rome, as shown by Mark’s need to explain Jewish traditions and terms, his use of Roman words and their system of time along with the testimony of early witnesses that both Peter and Mark were together in Rome during this period. Since only around 15% of the population could read, and fewer still could afford their own scroll, it is likely that Mark was designed to be read aloud, possibly in a single sitting while the church was gathered together. Mark wrote concisely yet vividly. When read aloud we can appreciate his skilful build-up and release of tension, revealing threads in the narrative that we might otherwise have missed. While he points out much of Jesus’ power as a teacher, he does not major on Jesus’ actual teaching but writes rather of eager crowds, stunning miracles and terse confrontations. Mark’s approach allows us to feel the revolutionary and often disconcerting impact Jesus had on those around Him. Questions abound in this gospel – over 100 of them.

Many are directed at Jesus, but even more are asked by Him, including the crucial one: “Who do people say I am?” It is likely that Mark wrote to invoke a response to that most important of questions.

His persuasive, provocative writing style and dramatic portrayal of Jesus leaves little room for the reader to miss his point. His Gentile audience in Rome would no doubt have been drawn into the story and forced to draw a conclusion. If they agreed with their countryman who declared at the foot of the cross, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” (15:39), they would then need to determine what to do with Him. The same challenge remains for all who read Mark today.

SUGGESTED READING

***“God’s Big Picture”* by Vaughan Roberts**

Sixty-six books written by forty people over nearly 2,000 years in two languages and several different genres. A worldwide best-seller published in countless sizes and bindings, translations and languages. Sworn by in court, fought over by religious people, quoted in arguments. The Bible is clearly no ordinary book. How can you begin to read and understand it as a whole? In this excellent overview, Vaughan Roberts gives you the big picture - showing how the different parts of the Bible fit together under the theme of the kingdom of God. He provides both the encouragement and the tools to help you read the Bible with confidence and understanding. And he points you to the Bible’s supreme subject, Jesus Christ, and the salvation God offers through him.

***“Goldsworthy Trilogy”* by Graeme Goldsworthy**

Combining three books in one, ‘The Goldsworthy Trilogy’ offers a comprehensive guide to understanding the gospel throughout the whole of Scripture. Hugely popular, this collection is being released in this special format and will be an essential guide to be used again and again for those who seek to understand the Bible in the light of who Jesus is. Straightforward in his approach, Goldsworthy looks at how the Bible can only be understood through the eyes of the gospel. He studies the Old Testament and its application for today, Israel’s wisdom literature and its role in the Christian life, and the purpose and contemporary relevance of the book of Revelation. This trilogy follows the Bible chronologically to give the reader a complete overview of evangelical biblical interpretation forming an essential one-stop reference that will last a lifetime.

DAY 2

Read Mark 1:1-11

As the first prophet to emerge in Israel after hundreds of years of prophetic silence, John is a famous figure in Jewish history.

1. What do you learn about John in verses 1-8? What is the significance of his dress and strange diet? (See 2 Kings 1:8 and compare to Malachi 4:5)

2. Verse 4 links John to the quotation from Isaiah in verse 2 and 3. What does this link suggest about John and about Jesus?

Prayer: John is an outstanding example of humble service. He played his part in preparing for the coming king. Pray that we, as a church, and you, as an individual, can emulate his example.

DAY 3

Read Isaiah 40:1-11

Isaiah, who wrote around 730 B.C., looks ahead prophetically to the year 538 B.C. when Israel, who've been punished by God and exiled in Babylon, will be pardoned and allowed to return home.

1. What four great truths does God announce to His people?

2. “The glory of the Lord will be revealed and all the people will see it together.” How is this fulfilled in the events of the New Testament?

Prayer: Although Israel returned from exile in 538 B.C., spiritually they were still in prison. Pray that God will bring many of our friends in Baranduda/Wodonga/Yackandandah out of their spiritual exile.

DAY 4

Read Mark 1:8-13

1. Having been identified as the “Son of God”, Jesus is sent or “driven” into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit. Judging by verses 12 and 13, what is the purpose behind the Spirit’s action?

b. Exodus 3:1-4

c. Hosea 2:14,15

Prayer: Pray for Australia and for the western world in general as it steadily turns its back on Jesus. Plead with God that the experience of desolation that comes with His absence might be the means by which He brings revival.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

2. How is Jesus' teaching described in this episode? In what way(s) do you think it was new?

Prayer: While we cannot compare with Jesus in His gospel proclamation, pray that the news we bring to friends and family will be powerful, radical and refreshingly new.

DAY 4

Read Mark 1:29-34

While we may have questions about evil spirits, the gospel writers clearly distinguished between illness and demonic activity.

1. Jesus said that in Him the kingdom has "come near". What insight do the events of this passage give about what the kingdom of God will be like when it comes in fullness?

2. Jesus did not let the demons speak because they knew who He was. Why was this a reason to silence them?

Prayer: When we pray that God's kingdom will come soon, do you find yourself anxious for those who haven't yet responded to its news? Now is a good time to pray for both.

DAY 5

Read Mark 1:35-45

1. What do you learn about Jesus' priorities in this passage?

2. If Jesus chooses preaching over healing, how do you explain His response to the leper in verse 41? He cannot be angry with the leper so why might He be "indignant"?

Prayer: While others may be content to waste their time in life, it is essential that the Christian be clear minded about the things that matter. Ask God to give you such a mind.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

2. In verses 21 and 22, what is Jesus saying about Himself (see Hosea 2:19)? What's the new thing Jesus has brought and what might the "old wine skins" be?

Prayer: It's easy for accepted practices or traditions to constrain the growth of the kingdom. Pray that as you get older, clarity about the gospel will keep you from this pitfall.

DAY 4

Read Mark 2:23-27

Jesus' activity on the Sabbath day was a matter for great controversy and there is good evidence that on occasions He intentionally and lovingly provoked it!

1. In the illustration of verses 25 and 26, Jesus is not condoning high handed breaking of the law. Instead, what principles is He inviting His opponents to choose between?

2. What dramatic claim(s) does Jesus make in His conclusion to this episode?

Prayer: At times in the Christian life we'll need to weigh the value of two or more truths, each of which may suggest diametrically opposite actions. Pray that God will make you a good student of the Word so you can be wise.

DAY 5

Read Mark 3:1-6

To appreciate the seriousness of Mark 3:6 we need some background. The Herodians were sympathetic to Roman rule; the Pharisees were not. These two parties were bitter enemies.

1. What ingredients in this account add to the tension? What observations suggest that opposition to Jesus is growing?

2. Jesus' anger in verse 5 is highly significant for all who wish to please God. Judging by verse what is the cause of His anger?

Prayer: In all His interactions, the wisdom of Jesus is breathtaking. But do not miss the reason. It is because He knows the Scriptures and the God who stands behind them. Pray that God will make us more like Jesus.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

2. Consider Jesus' words in verses 33-35. What is implied by these words about His natural family? What is implied about all Christians?

Prayer: Humanly speaking, there are often particular obstacles to us reaching our families with the gospel. However, these are no problem for God. Pray for your family and their relationship with God.

DAY 5

Read Mark 3:20-35

To understand this passage properly, we need to understand the context in which it was written. Despite the powerful testimony of the Spirit to Jesus, given through His miracles, His unbelieving opponents have attributed these miracles to the power of Satan. The term "Beelzebub" in verse 22 effectively means "Satan".

1. In verse 27, who is the "strongman" and who is the one who "plunders his house"? Summarise the answer Jesus brings to His opponents' charge.

2. In verse 29, Jesus implies that His opponents may be guilty of an unforgivable sin. What kind of sin could possibly be too much for Jesus to forgive? How might a person commit such a sin today?

Prayer: Give thanks to God that because of Jesus, Satan's house is being plundered. Pray that this happens increasingly among us and that God might use us increasingly in this work.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS



WEEK 5 - MARK 4:1-34

DAY 1

Read Mark 4:1-12

It is often thought that Jesus told parables to make it easier for His listeners to understand. While this is true of some parables, it is not true for all.

1. If you had only heard what the crowds heard in verses 3-9, what would you have concluded and what would you have done?

2. What do you think the “secret of the kingdom” is? What surprising answer do verses 10-12 give as to why Jesus spoke in parables?

Prayer: Give thanks to God that in the Scriptures, illuminated by His Spirit, He has spoken a clear and understandable word to us so that we can know salvation.

DAY 3

Read Mark 4:21-25

1. What are the hidden things that are meant to be disclosed? Consider your answer then check how verse 11 might have a bearing.

2. “Consider carefully ... whoever has will be given more”. More of what? Consider verse 20. How does this help you answer Question 1 above?

Prayer: Pray that as we listen to God’s Word week by week, we’ll hold it fast, adding to our knowledge of God and so grow in Him.

DAY 4

Read Mark 4:26-29

1. Remembering that the seed is the word of God, what is being taught about the growth of the Word in verses 27-29?

2. Notice the way Jesus introduces this parable in verse 26. What action could you take if you are to be more effective in growing the kingdom?

Prayer: In 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul urges Timothy to do his best to be a “worker” who rightly handles the word of truth. Pray that God will enable you to develop in this so that you can play your part in growing the kingdom.

DAY 5

Read Mark 4:30-34

1. Notice the comment in verse 30. What does this parable teach about the nature of the kingdom of God? How does this truth encourage you?

2. Jesus addressed the crowds in parables but spoke plainly to His disciples. What response do you think He was seeking from those outsiders? What does this suggest about a key mark of spiritual receptivity?

Prayer: Pray that God will grant His people a reverent love for His Word, a desire to grow in their knowledge of it and in their willingness to serve others in it.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

Prayer: Is there a Christian friend or family member whose faith in Jesus needs strengthening? Consider how you might encourage them and pray for them now.

DAY 5

Read Mark 6:1-6

This is Jesus' home town, but there is no evidence that He ever returned.

1. How do you account for the cold reaction in Nazareth? What does this tell us about faith and its obstacles?

2. Mark says that Jesus "could not do any miracles there." This statement begs a question: was Jesus unable to do so, or did He choose not to? How would you justify your answer?

Prayer: Ask that God would expand our view of Jesus so that we will revere Him more deeply and serve Him more fervently.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS



WEEK 7 - MARK 6:7-56

DAY 1

Read Mark 6:7-13

1. Jesus' disciples are sent out to represent Him in continuing His ministry. Among the instructions given to them, which apply to us and which don't? How could you determine this?

2. It's astonishing that ordinary disciples of Jesus were able to do just what He did. What reason does Mark seem to give for this?

Prayer: Those who preach the gospel do so with the authority of Jesus. Pray that we will trust Him in carrying out the work given to us.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DAY 2

Read Mark 7:1-13

The “Corban” law was apparently a way of dedicating something to God while allowing the owner to continue somehow to benefit from it. Jesus was incensed!

1. Consider some common Christian traditions. In what way(s) are they a help or a hindrance?

Tithing

The quiet time

Dedication plaques on church pews

Set numbers of songs during services

Any others?

2. Hopefully none of the above serve to set aside the commands of God. Consider the command in verse 10. Is there anything that has caused you to set this command aside?

Prayer: Both churches and families can develop traditions that are unhelpful. Ask God to help you evaluate your family traditions and change them if necessary.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

2. In the Bible yeast was a symbol for a pervasive influence – sometimes good, but usually bad (1 Corinthians 5:6-9). What is the “yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod” (verse 15 compared to Mark 3:6)?

Prayer: Bad teaching always has a corrosive impact. Pray for those who teach among us (Growth Group leaders, Creche/Kids Church and Youth leaders, preachers and parents). Pray that they’ll be diligent to develop in the role entrusted to them.

DAY 5

Read Mark 8:22-26

1. A two-part miracle! Did Jesus get it wrong? No. Consider the passage from yesterday (verses 17 and 18). How does the healing experience of this blind man illustrate the situation of the disciples?

2. Sin leaves its blinding and deadening mark in the heart of every disciple of Christ. In what ways have you become aware of this mark in your own life? Is there a lesson that you need to learn?

Prayer: Thank God for his gentle patience and mercy with us! Pray that we will be willing to repent and be ready to extend similar patience towards others.

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DAY 4

Read Mark 8:31-38

There was a subtle point in verse 33. Did you notice that it was when “Jesus turned and looked at His disciples...” that He rebuked Peter?

1. Why was/is it so important for disciples of Jesus to understand His suffering? What does the nature of His messiahship mean for us?

2. Verse 35 requires some thought:

a. What does Jesus mean, “Whoever wants to save their life...”?

b. What does Jesus mean, “Whoever loses their life for me...”?

Prayer: Your answers to Question 2 above may provide areas where you need to take action to repent. Ask God to empower you to do this today.

PRAYER POINTS AND NOTES