

2020 New Testament Reading Plan

Living Hope Fellowship, Chico

Directed Study, Week 5

Mark 1–7

Congratulations on finishing Matthew! Where Matthew took us four weeks, Mark will take just over two. Mark's gospel is certainly shorter but some mistakenly think it is simpler. Mark often gives more details on events he covers however. No doubt though, Mark's narrative keeps up a good pace, driving quickly to the cross. Mark foregoes any birth narrative and parachute drops us into the public ministry of Jesus.

Remember that this gospel stands alone. It is not dependent on Matthew nor does its author have the same emphases as other writers. Mark cites the Old Testament much fewer times than Matthew did for example. Mark is on his own mission, writing to a Roman audience about Jesus Christ as the premier slave (servant). This Christ serves others to the point of death. This is a notion most reprehensible to the Romans, namely that the Christian's hero came to serve and substitute himself for others.

Immediately

You may feel like giving Mark a bad grammar grade with his "run on" sentences. See how he keeps his narrative moving along quickly with the words "And immediately" or sometimes just "immediately." Mark isn't working with your English teacher's guidelines in view. He's writing in his style for his day. Pay attention to this key word. Mark not only moves us at a fast pace but shows the Servant's immediate and decisive obedience to his Father. Jesus is on a mission and he is unflinching in his dedication to do what he was sent for.

1. How many times can you find of "immediately" in these 7 chapters?

Jesus as Preacher

Take note of how Mark presents Jesus as an authoritative preacher & teacher. Look out for words like proclaiming, teaching, preaching.

2. In the first chapter, compare the preaching ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus. What are they telling people about?

3. How many different words for teaching/preaching can you find?

The Son of Man

Jesus isn't just a servant, he's the Son of Man with divine authority. See how Jesus expresses this to the consternation of his detractors in chapter 2:1-12.

4. What are two things Jesus claims about himself in this section?

Gentiles

5. Since Mark has a Roman audience in view, note how he presents the interactions of Gentiles with the Jewish Messiah (Jesus Christ). Are they mostly positive or negative?