

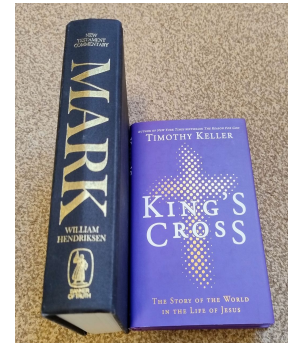
## 1. AUTHOR

Q. What do you know about *Mark*?

A. Historical records indicate that the disciple<sup>1</sup> John *Mark*<sup>2</sup> based his gospel on Peter's sermons in Rome<sup>3</sup>.

*Mark* may well have been the earliest gospel, having been written probably between 40 AD and 65 AD<sup>4</sup>.

A lot of the material is common to Matthew and Luke.



## 2. ONE KEY THEME – ‘THE GOOD NEWS OF WHY JESUS CAME’

*Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ESV*

## 3. KEY VERSE(S)?

*Mark 10:44-45 ... whoever would be great among you must be your servant, [Gk. diakonos]*

<sup>44</sup> *and whoever would be first among you must be slave [Gk. doulos] of all.*

<sup>45</sup> *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve,*

*and to give his life as a ransom for many.” ESV*

## 4. KEY GROUPS OF PEOPLE

1. Jesus Christ, Son of God 1:1

2. John the baptist

3. Disciples (12 + others)

4. Jews without faith

5. Gentiles with faith

## 5. TEXTUAL STRUCTURE OF MARK?

WILLIAM HENDRIKSEN <sup>4</sup>		CHRISTIANITY EXPLORED <sup>5</sup>		THE GOOD NEWS OF WHY JESUS CAME	
<i>‘THE WORK WHICH THOU GAVEST HIM TO DO’</i>		<i>‘JESUS’ IDENTITY &amp; MISSION’</i>			
1:1-1:13	<i>‘Its Beginning</i>	1:1-8:30	<i>‘Who is Jesus?’</i>	1:1-8:30	Who is Jesus?
1:14-10	<i>Its Progress</i>	8:31-10	<i>Why did Jesus come?’</i>	8:31-16	Why did Jesus come?
11-16	<i>Its Climax’</i>	11-16	<i>What does it mean to follow Jesus?’</i>		

## 6. ONE SHAPE – THEMATIC

Notice the vertical thematic stripes in *Mark*, as opposed to the horizontal stripes of *Matthew* → , in the table over./

1 Like Dr Luke, Mark was not an apostle, as Matthew and John were. He is perhaps the ‘naked’ ‘young man’ in 14:51-52.

2 As he is identified in Acts 12:12,25; 15:37.

3 For example: *Hypotyposesis, Ecclesiastical History*, Book 2, Chapter 15, Clement of Alexandria (150-215 AD): ‘They asked Mark, who was a follower of Peter and whose gospel is available, to leave behind with them, in writing, a record ...’

4 See W. Hendriksen, *NTC on Mark*, page 16, Banner of Truth, 1999 reprint. Date assumes Marcan priority. See footnote 3.

5 See *Christianity Explored Leader’s Guide*.

### 5. TEXTUAL STRUCTURE OF MATTHEW

Matthew is structured around Jesus’ five great discourses, or sermons. See table.

TYPE OF MATERIAL	FIVE DISCOURSES	CHAPTERS	THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM	CONTENT
Narrative		1-4	The King’s origins and identity	Genealogy, birth, Magi, flight to Egypt and return, baptism by John, temptation.
I Sermon	Sermon on the mount	5-7	The King’s subjects	Righteousness (key verse: 5:20), hypocrisy, Beatitudes, the ten commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, discipleship, worry.
Narrative		8-9	The King’s authority	Healings, exorcisms, and miracles.
II Sermon	Sending out the Twelve	10	The work of the kingdom	Kingdom (preaching to only Jews (10:5), The Twelve learn to rely on the Father and Spirit.
Narrative		11-12	Kingdom opposition	The current, ungodly, generation.
III Sermon	Kingdom parables	13	The nature of the kingdom	Agaritan <sup>1</sup> parables about what the kingdom of heaven is like (e.g. 13:31ff a mustard seed etc.).
Narrative		14-17	A Jewish and Gentile kingdom and church	Feeding of the 5,000, travel from Galilee to Judea via Gentile territory, feeding of the 4,000, Peter’s confession ‘rock’ (16:18), the transfiguration.
IV Sermon	Humility	18	Kingdom and church life	The church, humility, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
Narrative		19-23	Kingdom problems	Journey to Jerusalem. Marriage, wealth, the Jewish leaders’ hypocrisy (7 uses).
V Sermon	Apocalyptic discourse	24-25	Kingdom judgement	Destruction of Jerusalem, end times, second coming, and final judgment.

	JESUS FULFILS THE OT	JESUS' IDENTITY	JESUS' AUTHORITY	TRAINING THE DISCIPLES	FAITH & UNBELIEF	CONFLICT WITH OLD KINGDOM	THE NEW KINGDOM	JESUS' DEATH	DISCIPLES' FEAR, CONFUSION
<b>WHY WE MUST TAKE NOTICE OF JESUS</b>	1:1 – 15 •	•	•				•		
<b>THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS</b>	1:16 – 3:35 •	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
<b>WHAT IS THE NEW KINGDOM OF GOD LIKE?</b>	4:1 – 34 •			•	•		•		•
<b>FAITH, UNBELIEF, &amp; THE DISCIPLES' TRAINING</b>	4:35 – 8:21 •	•	•	•	•	•			•
<b>JESUS REVEALS HIS GLORY AS PETER HALF UNDERSTANDS</b>	8:22 – 9:13 •	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
<b>HOW THEN MUST WE LIVE?</b>	9:14 – 10:45		•	•	•		•	•	•
<b>THE SON OF DAVID, HIS WISDOM, HIS ENEMIES</b>	10:46 – 12:44 •	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
<b>THE END OF THE OLD KINGDOM: BE ALERT!</b>	13:1 – 36		•	•	•	•	•		•
<b>JESUS: OUR PASSOVER LAMB</b>	14:1-15:39 •	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>JESUS' DEATH, BURIAL &amp; EMPTY TOMB</b>	15:40 – 16:8 •	•	•	•	•		•	•	•
	18	32	17	21	31	21	22	13	21

## 7. GREAT EVENTS

Most sign-miracles are recorded in two or three gospels, the feeding of the 5,000 in all four. Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection are recorded in all four.

Mark gives particular *structural* significance to the three crossings of the Sea (Lake) of Galilee.

Passage	What happens?	Showing?
4:35 – 4:41	<i>Lake Crossing #1</i> (Read 4:41)	Fear x 2
5:1-20	Legion and the Gadareans	Fear x 2
5:21-42	A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman	Faith x 2
6:1-6a	A Prophet without Honour	Contempt
6:6b-13	The Twelve's First Practical Session	Faith
6:14-29	Herod's Phobia	Fear
6:30-44	The Feeding of the 5,000	Faith
6:31-52	<i>Lake Crossing #2</i> (Read 6:51-52)	Lack of understanding
6:53-56	People frantic to be healed	Faith?
7:1-23	The Pharisees' Hypocrisy	Hypocrisy
7:24-30	The (Gentile) Syro-Phoenician Woman	Faith
7:31-36	The Deaf-Mute Man: A Picture of the Disciples	Stubbornness?
8:1-13	The Feeding of the 4,000	Faith
8:14-21	<i>Lake Crossing #3</i> (Read 8:19-21)	Lack of understanding

## 8. MARK IN PRACTICE

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Mark 10:44-45 ... *whoever would be great among you must be your servant, [Gk. Diakonos] 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave [Gk. doulos] of all.*

**45a** *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve,*

**45b** *and to give his life as a ransom for many.” ESV*

**Q1.** How do we apply each part of the above text to ourselves?

Mark 10:44:

Mark 10:45a:

Mark 10:45b:

**Q2.** Read the account of the feeding of the 5,000 and establish who fed them?

Mark 6:34-44:

## 9. JESUS IN MARK?

**Q.** Where is Jesus in Mark?

**A.** Everywhere, as usual, but what is perhaps surprising about these verses?

1:12-13

7:27

10:47-48

1:23-24

8:27-28

11:20-21

6:3

8:31

14:27-30

## 10. AND NOWADAYS?

How should we react to Jesus' death and resurrection? Look up these (mixed!) examples:

15:17-18

| 15:39

| 16:8

15:31-32

| 15:43

## 11. APPENDIX – THE MARK 16 TEXTUAL VARIANTS

Ancient documents all suffer from what are known as 'textual variants', i.e. differences. Mark 16:9-20 exists in later manuscripts in many different forms, and is in competition with other shorter variants too. The shorter variants can be seen immediately to be inauthentic just by reading them, even in translation. For example, this rather pompous one occurs in some late manuscripts and is included in the NASB<sup>6</sup> translation:

*And they promptly reported all these instructions to Peter and his companions. And after that, Jesus himself sent out through them from east to west the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.*<sup>6</sup>

A longer version, in the *King James (Authorised) Version*, is loved by many, but has the problem that it might encourage Christians to *drink poison* and pick up *venomous snakes!*<sup>7</sup>:

*Mark 16:18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all ... NIV*

It seems wise to take advice from established textual scholars. The late Bruce Metzger<sup>8</sup> wrote:

*'The last twelve verses of the commonly received text of Mark are absent from the two oldest Greek manuscripts [2nd to 4th Century] ... from the Old Latin ..., the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, etc. ...*

*Clement of Alexandria [2nd-3rd Century] and Origen [3rd Century] show no knowledge of the existence of these verses; furthermore Eusebius [3rd and 4th Century] and Jerome [4th and 5th Century] attest that the passage was absent from almost all Greek copies of Mark known to them. The original form of the Eusebian sections (drawn up by Ammonius) makes no provision for numbering sections of the text after 16.8.'*

Advocates of some of the different longer endings argue that without something after Mark 16:8, the gospel would end just too suddenly; it ends with the word 'but'<sup>9</sup>. However, there are many Greek documents<sup>10</sup> that end with 'but', so that counter-argument is not really compelling.

*Mark 16:8b They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid. NIV*

Perhaps what Mark is doing by ending his gospel abruptly is issuing his readers with a challenge not to be *afraid* despite the rising Roman persecution of Christians? They were to keep on telling people about Jesus' resurrection.

In general, the subject of textual criticism is impenetrable to all but the most gifted amateurs. But it seems safest in several different ways not to consider Mark 16:9-20 to be part of scripture.

Just in case there should be any doubt, see William Hendriksen's commentary on Mark<sup>4</sup>. On page 682ff, he examines the internal evidence in 16:9-20—unfamiliar vocabulary, style etc. He concludes that it was definitely not written by Mark, and concludes that *'no sermon, doctrine or practice should be based solely upon its contents'*.

**In general, the modern Christian Bible reader has nothing to fear from the textual variants that are mentioned in the footnotes of most translations. No major teaching is at stake. The vast majority of variants are extremely minor. Furthermore, it would be impossible even for powerful nation states to destroy the Bible's manuscripts. God has protected his written word by scattering it throughout history and over vast geography. As time goes by, more and more ancient evidence comes to light; textual scholars do their work and get daily closer to what the original manuscripts said.**

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7 Sadly, there are many examples of people doing exactly this and dying.

8 *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Bruce M. Metzger, UBS, 1993.

9 Not in English, but in the original Koine Greek.

10 The word is 'γάρ' (gar). Daniel Wallace, *NT textual criticism* course, cites research and examples showing that ending with γάρ, whilst not common, is perfectly normal in Greek documents. It would seem odd in English, but not in Greek.