

Fast facts about Mark:

- His full name is John Mark. John is from the Hebrew name *Johanan* (God is gracious) and Mark from the Roman name *Marcus*.
- Mark probably came from Jerusalem. His mother Mary is living there in Acts 12.
- Barnabas is Mark's cousin (Colossians 4:10).
- A reliable tradition says that Mark was a protege of Peter's. In 1 Peter 5:13, Peter calls Mark his [spiritual] son. The gospel of Mark likely consists of Peter's eyewitness accounts as relayed to Mark. His recollections come across as an action packed series of episodes with more of Jesus' miracles and less of His teaching than the other synoptic gospels.
- The gospel of Mark is considered the earliest gospel. Luke borrows from it and Matthew lifts entire passages. These other writers recognize the authenticity of the memories that Peter has told to Mark.
- Mark appears to be writing for a Roman audience. He uses more words derived from Latin than any other ancient Greek text.
- What is Mark's favorite word? Greek *Eutheos* or its variation *Euthus* appears 43 times in Mark, far more than any other gospel. It means **immediately** (or straightaway, etc.) and may reflect the events as remembered by the impulsive Peter.

A common way to characterize the four gospels is that Jesus is portrayed as:

- The Messiah in Matthew
- The suffering Servant in Mark
- The Son of Man in Luke
- The Son of God in John

As we study the gospel of Mark, look for fulfillment of these prophecies:

*Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice.* (Isaiah 42:1-3).

*Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name. He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified"* (Isaiah 49:1-3).

*Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted ...etc.* (Isaiah 52:13-53:12).

*Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch* (Zechariah 3:8).

## Questions:

1. Matthew and Luke begin with accounts of Jesus' birth and His genealogy. John reaches into eternity past. But they all tell of John the Baptist in varying levels of detail. Why is he so important to the gospel?
2. What is the significance of the dove descending on Jesus at His baptism? (also see Luke 4:18-19.)

3. What does it mean in verse 15 that the kingdom of God is at hand?
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What do the first disciples give up in order to follow Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. In verses 22 and 27, how does Jesus teach “with authority”? How would He be different than the scribes or other teachers?
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Who is the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah?
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Why did the people of Capernaum bring their sick to Jesus after sundown?
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Jesus establishes His authority mainly by two actions. What are they?
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Why do you think Jesus commands the leper to tell no one about his healing?