

Dear RV Family and Friends,

Thank you for joining us on this Re.Mark.Able journey. Our prayer for you is that you grow closer to God and become fully connected to Jesus because HE is truly remarkable. Due to having a guest preacher this week, we will take the next five days to focus on getting to know Mark and some background knowledge of his ministry. Please use the next five days to explore Mark, the person, and how God used yet another ordinary man for great work.

Re.Mark.Able Study
Week 2, Day 1

Prayer: Heavenly Father, please help me to open my heart and mind to what you have to tell me today. Help me to learn Your ways and how to live for you. Amen

Who is Mark?

John was his Jewish name.

Mark was his Roman/Latin surname (Act 12:12).

He was sometimes referred to as John Mark.

Mark's mom's name was Mary. It is believed that the disciples met in the Upper Room of Mark's mother's house in Jerusalem.

He was the cousin of Barnabas.

John Mark was a very close friend of Paul.

Simon Peter was the means of Mark's conversion and affectionately refers to him as "my son" in 1 Peter 5:13.

Who was Mark writing to?

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are referred to as 'The Gospels'. All four of these books of the Bible were written to a specific audience. All four are God inspired works written to reach a certain group. Mark was writing to a Roman audience. He did not start this book by explaining anything, he simply jumps right into the action. Mark understood that the Romans would not be interested in Jesus' background or where He came from, they would want to know what He DID. Few Old Testament scriptures are quoted and Jewish customs are explained; this is an indication that it was written for non believers.

If you were to write a book about your relationship with God, who would your audience be? What would the book mainly be about? Would it be uplifting and action packed or a rough draft that never makes it to print?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the amazing stories of Jesus Christ in the book of Mark. Please prepare my heart to hear from You in these amazing stories and relate them to my life in a way that I may be changed by Your Word.

What can we learn from John Mark?

We will begin today with the following verses:

Acts 13:5 (NIV)

5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John (Mark) was with them as their helper.

Acts 15:37-40 (NIV)

37 Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, **38** but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. **39** They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, **40** but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord.

Mark joined Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary trip (Acts 13:5). At some point Mark turned back. As a result, Mark's early reputation was one of not being able to carry through with the mission when things got difficult. Barnabas wanted to take Mark on a second trip but Paul did not want him to accompany them. (Acts 15:37-40)

Think of a time when you committed to doing something and did not follow through. The lack of follow through may have been due to the amount of time involved, an emergency may have arisen, or maybe you just didn't feel like honoring your commitment. How did you address your lack of follow through?

We do not know for sure why Mark did not fulfill his obligation on this first trip but we do know that in the end he did not let this situation keep him from growing in his relationship with God. Both men continued to further their relationship with the Father and to do the work He called them to do. We can learn a lot from Mark. Even though he did not fulfill this commitment, he stayed true to his belief in God and grew tremendously as a result.

What past failure or lack of commitment or lack of follow through do you need to let go of and move forward from? Think back to last week. Have you repented and walked away from that sin? Have you stepped into Him and stepped out of the sin?

Not only did both men continue their work for The Father, but they were later reunited in His work. We see great growth in the relationship between Paul and John Mark as they

were in prison together in Rome (Philemon 1:24, And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.)

Furthermore, Mark was also in prison with Peter (1 Peter 5:13). We can get great hope from Mark as we can read and find that he went from a very unreliable follower to one who was willing to die for the Message of the Messiah to be carried forth.

1 Peter 5:13 (NIV)

13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark.

Near the end of his life, Paul sent for Mark to once again help him in Rome. 2 Timothy 4:11
2 Timothy 4:11 (NIV) Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.

Prayer: Lord, help me to learn from Mark how to grow in my faith and service of You. Help me to learn from my mistakes and turn from them and into You. Help me to further Your Gospel to all who need to hear Your good news. Amen

Re.Mark.Able Study
Week 2, Day 3

What is Mark's purpose for writing this gospel?

Mark 10:45 is a great summary of the purpose for this writing. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Mark's Roman audience had little interest in Jesus' Jewish lineage but great interest in the story of a suffering servant. There are three main ways that Mark shows Jesus as being a servant that drew people to him.

The first way was His willingness to help others first. If we are to show the love of Jesus we are called to help others before we help ourselves. As a new school year is around the corner, I see bags of supplies at the stores ready for children whose parents will struggle to buy them. How many of us has purchased one of those bags or even one item for a child in need? Let's take it a step further and ask who would think to buy a bag for a child in need before buying our own children's supplies? In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus is putting the needs of others before Himself over and over. Mark is showing his non-believing audience exactly what they needed to see; Jesus sacrificing for a group of people who did not even know Him.

The next servant characteristic that is shown by Jesus is putting the practical needs of others before himself. This concept is easily demonstrated by a mother or father in that he or she would willingly give up their portion of a meal to make sure their child does not go

hungry. What is not so easy is when that person is not a family member or someone you don't know. Let's take it even further to helping someone you don't even like. How likely are you to help someone you dislike who is in need? Would you give up a meal to help someone in need? How about other needs such as comfort, clothing, encouragement or guidance? Are you willing to serve others by giving your time to those who need a listening ear or encouraging word?

The third servant characteristic Jesus showed was a willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice for others. He gave His life so that the very people who persecuted, denied and killed Him could have eternal life. What sacrifices do you willingly endure? Jesus died for us without complaint or hesitation. How willing are you to sacrifice for Him?

Jesus gave us multiple examples of how to serve others in all three of these ways. What are you willing to do to serve others? Make it a point to serve someone today who you would normally not serve. Show them the servant characteristics we are called display. (I am inclined to find a man or woman who has served or is currently serving our country as they are willing to sacrifice their lives so that we can openly serve and declare Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior without fear of persecution.)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son to live as an example on this earth as man and die on the cross so that through faith in You, I can spend eternity with You. Please help me to be a better servant and show Your love, kindness, and mercy to all I encounter. Help me to put others before myself and make my life a witness to others and help lead them to You. Amen

Re.Mark.Able Study
Week 2, Day 4

When did Mark write this gospel?

Mark was written shortly before or after Peter's death in A.D. 64 or 65.

Where was Mark when he wrote it? Rome, Italy

Where did Mark get his information? Peter was his main informant as Mark wrote down Peter's recollections.

*"We are told that this man, Mark, got his facts of the gospel from Peter. Others say that he got the explanation of the gospel from Paul" (McGee, *The Gospels Mark*, p.viii).*

How does Mark's style of writing differ from the other four Gospels?

What is your favorite book? Did you ever wonder if the author had a picture of someone just like you when they sat down to write that book? One of the most important parts of

writing any piece of literature is to know your audience. The authors of the four Gospels absolutely knew their target audience.

Matthew was written for the nation of Israel, the religious man. Written to a Jewish audience, a genealogy was needed to show that Jesus was the rightful heir to the throne. After his family history was established, Matthew was able to establish Jesus as the King of Kings. Matthew's audience needed proof established for them to accept the story he presented.

Mark was written to Romans. Mark knows that his audience will not care about where Jesus came from, they would just want to know what he could DO for them. Mark is a book written with action packed stories of what this servant did for others. Mark's purpose for writing this Gospel is spelled out in Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Luke is a sympathetic ministry of the Son of Man and records the Savior's birth. It was written by a Greek to a Greek audience who identified with the perfect Babe who grew up to be the perfect man.

John wrote to everyone because everyone needs to know God and the only way we can know Him is through Jesus Christ. John wrote about eternity and Jesus Christ of Nazareth as the Son of God. The object was to encourage readers to believe on this Savior and receive the gift of eternal life. The subject was the deity of Christ. In John 20:31, the purpose of this gospel is clearly stated as, "but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."

Prayer: Lord, thank you for sending your Son to take my place. I pray that I never forget the ultimate sacrifice made by Your Son. Please help me to take Your Message forward in every area of my life.

Re.Mark.Able Study

Week 2, Day 5

What other area does Mark focus on?

"As Mark presents his account of the gospel, he focuses less on what Jesus said and more on what Jesus did. He also focuses on the disciples, also known as "the twelve," and how they reacted to Jesus. More in Mark than in any other Gospel account, we hear Jesus' stinging rebukes toward his inner circle of followers for their lack of faith. Early Christians, reading Mark for the first time, would recognize that these bumbling, faithless men had become much different people, well known for their allegiance to Jesus. The readers would also be able to see themselves in the early lives of these men and take hope that they too

could, like the twelve, become more mature if they would stick with Jesus and follow his example. Such transformation would be necessary if the early readers were to impact the world that so very much needed to hear the gospel” (Tune, Reading the Bible Without Getting Lost, p. 130-131).

How long have you been a believer? Can the people from your past see a difference in you? Are you growing in Him and following His lead in your life?

Have you listened for the Holy Spirit this week?

What is He calling you to do?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, let me be transformed by You. Help me to grow every day in Your Word so that I can fulfill Your plan for me. Help me to look to You for leadership and guidance every moment of the day. Let others see You and the power of Your presence in my life. Let them see me grow and change through my relationship with You. Amen