

The Book of Mark

Mark is a fast-moving portrayal of the life of Christ. It is the shortest of all the Gospels. Jesus is regarded as Yahweh's servant. He came to earth, not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45) As a servant, the Lord's works and actions are emphasized as opposed to His discourses and parables. Mark emphasizes the Lord's miracles.

The author: John Mark

1. It is believed that Mark was the young man in Mark 14:51 who was in the garden with Jesus and his disciples when the Jews came to arrest Jesus. He was wearing only a linen sheet at the time and when they attempted to grab him he slipped out of the sheet and escaped naked. (Not what I would have put in the book if I was writing it.)
2. He was the son of Mary, a prominent follower of Christ whose home was used for prayer by the early church in Acts 12:3-19 (see v. 12) Peter had been arrested and the church was at Mary's home praying for his release. God heard and sent an angel to release Peter. Upon his release Peter went to Mary's home to let them know that he was okay.
3. Mark was the nephew of Barnabas and accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey from Antioch. Mark left Barnabas and Paul about half way through the journey. Homesick I guess.
When Paul and Barnabas prepared to go on their second missionary journey, Barnabas wanted to take Mark along. Paul refused to take Mark with them. Paul and Barnabas split. Paul took Silas with him and Barnabas left with Mark,
4. About ten years later (Colossians 4:10) we again find Mark as one of the companions of Paul.
5. Just before his execution, Paul sent for Mark saying that he was useful to him. (II Timothy 4:11) This shows that one mistake need not end a friendship or a life of useful ministry for the Lord.
6. Mark was a close associate of Peter. It is believed that Peter was Mark's primary resource in writing the Book of Mark.

The Date: Mark is believed to have been written between 61 A.D. and 67 A.D.

Place and audience of Mark's writing: It is believed that Mark was in Rome when he wrote his gospel. The audience was primarily Roman, consequently, we observe little concerning Jewish law and customs.

The Theme and Purpose: The purpose of Mark is to demonstrate that Jesus came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Key Verse: Mark 10:45

Key Passages: Mark 10:43-45; 8:34-37

The Structure:

Mark 1-10 Christ the servant

Mark 11-16 Christ the sacrifice.