



## Mark: Jesus the Servant

**Memory Verse:** Mark 10:43-45 "Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 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."

### Background

The Gospel of Mark is the 41st book of the Bible and the 2nd book in the New Testament. The author John, also called Mark, is mentioned several times in the New Testament. He was a missionary companion to Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25) as well as being an associate of Peter (1 Peter 5:13). Mark's mother's home was a meeting place for the early church in Jerusalem and the place Peter went to after his miraculous escape from prison (Acts 12). It is believed that Mark was also present at Gethsemane when Jesus was arrested, referring to himself when he wrote, "A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind." (Mark 14:51-52).

Mark was not one of Jesus' twelve disciples but the information for his book is believed to have come from Peter. Mark may have been a convert of Peter's as Peter calls him "my son" in 1 Peter 5:13. Scholars believe that Mark was with Peter in Rome soon before the apostle's death, recording Peter's recollections of Jesus. This would date the Gospel of Mark as being written in the early 60s AD. While Matthew's Gospel was written for a Jewish audience, Mark's Gospel seems to have been written for a Gentile audience living in the Roman world.

### The Short Story

Jesus, God's own Son, is a servant who suffered and died to make salvation available to all people.

### What's the Big Idea?

Although Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels, it is action packed. Mark focuses more on the actions of Jesus than the words of Jesus, omitting many of Jesus' discourses found in Matthew. Portrayed as King in the book of Matthew, Mark depicts Jesus as servant. Mark begins his book with a brief narrative of John the Baptist and Jesus' baptism and temptation by Satan. From there, Mark moves right into the miracles of Jesus. Mark writes about Jesus' service to others as He heals the sick, forgives sins, liberates the demon-possessed, raises the dead, and feeds the hungry. Throughout these miracles, both the power and the compassion of Jesus shine forth. According to Mark, the people responded to Jesus' works with awe and amazement. Some, however, responded with hostility. Just as in Matthew, the second half of Mark shows Jesus ministering more to the twelve disciples than to the masses as He begins to predict His death and show how the servant must suffer. "He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again." (Mark 8:35). Mark devotes that final third of his book to the last week of Christ, including His arrest, trial, and crucifixion. The book of Mark ends as Jesus, the servant now raised from the dead, is exalted as "...he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God." (16:19).

### So What? Why is this book so important? What was God's purpose for the book?

While Jesus served the people of His time in many ways, touching their lives with power and compassion, the Gospel of Mark shows that His greatest act of service was His death on the cross for all humanity. "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." (10:45). Jesus, the Son of God, served mankind with compassion, sacrifice, and humility and He calls us to follow His example. "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." (8:34). "...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all." (10:43-44).

*\*Material taken from various sources.*

## Teaching Text

**Memory Verse:** Mark 10:43-45 “Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 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.”

## Sermon-Based Discussion Questions

- If you were going to ask Jesus for one thing, what would it be? Why would you choose it?
- Why did James and John want to sit at Jesus’ right hand in glory? What did they really want?
- Why would Jesus ask them if they really understood what they were asking for?
- Why is it so hard to be a servant in the context of our society? What does a servant look like today?
- What **kind** of servant are we called to be in following Christ? Are you willing to be a “slave”?

## Practical Application

- Why do we seemly always want to be on top, the boss, the best, the...? What is the point of it?
- How hard is it to truly follow Christ in obedience, especially in suffering? What is the challenge?
- What is the dominating influence in our culture that seems to draw you away from being a servant?
- How hard is it to give up your strengths and talents, in exchange for being a “slave”?
- Where could you increase your service to the Lord? What would it look like? When do you start?

## Hitting the Highpoints

- 1:17 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”
- 10:14 “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them”
- 10:25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”
- 12:17 “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.”
- 14:38 “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. “

## Bonus Feature: The Commands of Christ from Mark

There are forty nine commands of Christ in the Gospels. This week we will look at those from the book of Mark. Here are a few: “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15) “If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.” (Mark 4:23) “Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:43) “And as he taught them, he said, “Is it not written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’” (Mark 11:17)

## Personal Takeaways and Notes

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