

5.1 The Gospel of Mark

1. From the following list and with Matthew in mind, what are some conclusions that you can draw about the *Gospel* of Mark (about the **gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, 1.1**) as *gospel*?

a) Mark is the shortest Gospel. In comparison, there are *some notable omissions*: 1) there is no genealogy for Jesus or John the Baptist and no birth narrative. John and Jesus burst on the scene as adults. 2) There is no record of the Sermon on the Mount or the Lord's Prayer in the middle of the book. Even its largest kingdom teachings (4, parables and 13, prophecy) are much shorter than the other Gospels. 3) At the end, there are no resurrection appearances recorded and thus no Great Commission. The last time that Jesus appears in the story line presented by Mark is when He is on the cross.

b) Most of the content of Mark is in the other Gospels though a few things are unique to Mark such as the seed growing secretly (4.26-29).

c) Key words in the book are "and" and "immediately." The book almost immediately opens with the baptism of Jesus by John (1.1-9).

d) The Gospel contains explanations of Palestinian geography (the Jordan is a river, 1.5; the Mount of Olives overlooked the temple area, 13.3), customs (the Pharisees used to fast, 2.18; Q, do Matthew or Luke state this?), Aramaic expressions (3.17; 5.41; 7.34; 14.36; 15.34), Greek words by citing Latin (12.42; 15.16), and the narrator used Latin vocabulary (4.21; 13.14; 15.39, 44-45).

e) Based on the weak variant reading (16.9-20), the Gospel, therefore, ends at 16.8.
15.46-16.8: And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid. 16:1, When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴ And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back- it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶ And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸ And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

2. From the list above, what do we learn about the good news (gospel)? In this light, how are we to live, according to what kind of example?

3. How does 1.1 with 15.37 and the facts of the list above show us that Isaiah 53 underlies Mark 10.45 and grounds the conclusion that 10.45 teaches efficacious atonement?

4. Based on the weak variant reading (16.9-20), and that therefore, the Gospel ends at 16.8, how does the story line bring closure regarding the disciples? Contrast this ending (Mk. 15.46-16.8) with Matthew 28.16-20. Note the account, unique to Mark, of the flight of the young man (14.43-52) followed by 16.7. Consider how we, as readers, identify with the disciples, and Mark addresses us through them in his narration.

5. What, in 1.1-8, supports the conclusion that the beginning of the gospel (1.1) refers to the entire book of Mark (cf. Machen, *Introduction*, 203)? What do we learn from this fact about the purpose of the book? How does that purpose take on an apologetic tone (cf. Gundry, *Survey*, 127) when compared with the last view that we have of the main character (15.37; there are no resurrection appearances in the book)?