

# The Gospel of Mark (Introduction): Who is this?

Basic Question of Christianity (4:41)

Basic Question of Discipleship (9:24)

*Hermeneutics—How we read and understand the Bible*

## **1. Context is King (MEL-ek=Hebrew for “king”)**

*Who originally wrote the book?*

The Church Fathers, pastors in the early church in first centuries after the disciples note that Mark, a close companion of Peter, is the author. (1 Peter 5:13)

Most have argued this is the same John Mark of Acts 12; 15; Philemon 24; and 2 Timothy 4:11.

*Who were the intended readers?*

The Church Fathers maintained that they asked Mark to write an account based on Peter’s preaching.

*What was the historical setting at the time?*

No mention in the entire New Testament about the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

The Church Fathers say Matthew and Luke were written first followed by Mark (based on Peter’s preaching) and also John. (The late 50s is a good estimate for the time of Mark’s writing.)

*What style is used? What about the characters?*

In reading through Mark’s Gospel, we note not just its brevity, but also greater detail in many instances, which coincides well with the historical claims. Mark writes from the preaching of Peter and doesn’t depend on Matthew, Luke, or any other source.

Jesus: A man of authority, power, to be feared, divine, human, and strange.

Disciples: Not models of discipleship.

Minor Characters: Portrayed Positively

Enemies: Jewish leaders, unclean spirits, His family, and perhaps His disciples

Mark is fast-moving. By verse 15 we have encountered John the Baptizer, Jesus’ Baptism and temptation, and the beginning of Jesus’ ministry.

No Chronology is used early in Mark’s Gospel

Urgency early in Mark’s Gospel (“Immediately” εὐθὺς)

What is the Markan Secret?

Jesus wants only those who believe in Him as the Son of God to speak for Him.

Jesus is Israel, God’s chosen people, reduced to one person. And this Israel (Jesus) will get it right.

## **2. Scripture interprets Scripture.**

If a passage is unclear go to a related passage, which is clear for assistance.

## **3. Synchronic (at one time) vs. Diachronic (through time)**

Elements outside the text don’t form the meaning of it unless the text brings that in itself

In other words when we study Mark, we only consider Mark unless Mark quotes the OT.