



## THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Adult Bible Study—Gravelbourg Church of Christ  
Autumn 2022

Mark's Gospel is the gospel of The Way. It is a way in which Jesus, the Lord, goes and it is a way to which he calls his followers.

Ernest Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*

### Session Six Recap: The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

Mark 8:31-33; 9:30-32; 10:32-34; 14:12-26

Death by crucifixion in 1st century Palestine was public and political. Crucifixion was reserved for state criminals, slaves, and deserters from the Roman army. We can assume, even though Mark did not report it, that Jesus would have been classified as an annoyance to the Roman state (that is, a state criminal).

The political rationale for a Roman public crucifixion was to thwart any future criminal activity against the state. Part of the maintenance of the Pax Romana ("Peace of Rome") was the policy of public humiliation of opposing forces. Such public expressions of persecution dishonored the individuals so punished and brought shame upon the individuals' families and communities.

#### Three Key Events of Hope

1. The tearing of the veil (Mark 15:38) symbolizes a new era in which sacred space would no longer be divided from the most holy place.
2. The confession of the Roman centurion (Mark 15:39) is the first time any human confesses Jesus as Son of God in Mark's narrative. With the veil torn, a non-Jew could see and confess precisely who Jesus was.
3. The presence of the women disciples (Mark 15:40) — some named, most unnamed — are examples of faithful, committed disciples from the beginning of Jesus' mission in Galilee.

#### Pondering

- What does Jesus' death say to you about sacrifice?
- Am I, as a Christian, expected to sacrifice as well?
- What do I sacrifice, if anything, in my Christian walk?

## Session Seven: The Resurrection of Jesus

Mark 15:42–16:8

Choose one of the other three Gospel accounts of the Resurrection (Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18) and read it silently.

- Who does each Gospel indicate was the first to get the news of Jesus' resurrection, and from whom?

### Mark's Story of the Resurrection

- Mark's account of the resurrection is brief.
- "He has risen" is one word in Greek.
- The command for the women to go tell the disciples the news is the first time that Jesus' followers are told to tell something about him.
- Note: Although Mark is believed to be the earliest gospel to be written, Paul's reference to Christ's resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 is the earliest resurrection account.

**If you had to tweet the story of the resurrection, what would you write (280-character limit)?**

### Mark's Missing Ending

The ending of Mark's Gospel has been viewed as unusual from ancient times to the present. But this is more about our assumptions about how Mark's story should end than it is about any fault of the author, whose purposes were clear. If Mark's original story ended at 16:8, as most scholars think it did, the story omitted a number of key events that other Gospels recorded. In Mark's account, there is no resurrected body (though it was implied by the empty tomb), no reunion with the disciples (though a promise of one is given), no grand commissioning of the disciples, and no ascension of Jesus' body into heaven. Readers have to turn to the other Gospels for these events. These apparent omissions do help to explain why some ancient scribes thought it necessary to write additional endings to Mark's story.

### Michael Bird, Evidence for the Resurrection (video excerpt):

Three Arguments for the Resurrection:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_