

Gospel of Mark (Fall 2023)



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Course Description

The Gospel of Mark calls itself “the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, Son of God” (Mark 1:1). This statement foreshadows the themes of the Gospel. The Gospel begins by connecting the appearance of the Son of God with the plan God had begun to implement in the Old Testament; it climaxes with a Roman centurion recognizing His identity (Mark 15:39). At the same time, stating that the book is “good news” entails a group of people who would hear (and then pass on) this news. Lastly, calling the book the “beginning” of the good news implies that the story does not end where the book does. Indeed, it is still playing out today.

Course Objectives

- 1) To learn what God has revealed in the Gospel of Mark about Himself, His Son, and His plans for the world.
- 2) To learn proper methods for interpreting narrative texts like the Gospel of Mark.
- 3) To identify how Jesus both used and confronted the worldview of those around Him.
- 4) To conform oneself more closely to the Christ to Whom the Gospel testifies.

Course Evaluation

QUIZZES (40%)

LESSON (30%)

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS (20%)

DISCUSSIONS (10%)

Course Schedule

Week 1	9/5	Syllabus, Introduction to Mark, Prologue (1:1–15)	
Week 2	9/12	Call of First Disciples (1:16–20), Jesus the Healer in Capernaum and Galilee (1:21–45)	
Week 3	9/19	Opposition from Religious Leaders (2:1–3:6) Wide Acceptance from the People (3:7–12)	
Week 4	9/26	Jesus Calls the Twelve (3:13–19), Opposition from Family (3:20–25), Parables Discourse (4:1–34)	<i>Lesson Topics Due</i>
Week 5	10/3	Jesus—Stronger than Fallen Creation (4:35–5:43)	
Week 6	10/10	Jesus Encounters Unbelief at Home (6:1–6a), The Disciples Step Up (6:6b–30)	
Week 7	10/17	Series of Miracles around Galilee (6:31–56)	
Week 8	10/24	Jesus or Tradition (7:1–23), Extended Mission into Gentile Areas (7:24–8:9), Opponents and Supporters Both Have a Lot to Learn (8:10–21)	Quiz 1

Week 9	10/31	First Healing of a Blind Man (8:22–26), Learning to Recognize Jesus (8:27–9:13)	
Week 10	11/7	Success and Failure in Exorcism (9:14–29) More Lessons on the Way to the Cross (9:30–50)	
Week 11	11/14	Revolutionary Values of the Kingdom (10:1–31), Following Jesus on the Way (10:32–45), Second Healing of a Blind Man (10:46–52)	Quiz 2
Week 12	11/21	Throwing Down the Gauntlet (11:1–25) Confrontation with the Jerusalem Establishment (11:27–12:44)	<i>Lesson Draft Due (Optional)</i>
Week 13	11/28	The Olivet Discourse (13:1–37), Setting the Scene for the Cross (14:1–11)	
Week 14	12/5	Last Hours with the Disciples (14:1–42), Arrest and Trials of Jesus (14:43–15:15)	<i>Written Lesson Due</i>
Week 15	12/12	The Gospel Enacted (15:16–16:8), Class Presentations	Quiz 3

Assignments Description

Weekly Discussions (10%)

I will post a discussion thread in Populi each week with a question relating to the week's material. Please post a response to the question before class on Tuesday and a response to one other student's post by 11:59 PM on Saturday. The initial post should be about 150 words. Responses do not have to be any certain length, but the points awarded will be commensurate with the apparent level of effort. (For example, "Great thought!" is a "C" comment at best, whereas substantial interaction would warrant more points.)

Lesson (30%)

Written (20%): The written manuscript should be roughly 2,000 words long. Please type this assignment in Times New Roman 12-point font, double spaced. Please cite at least 7 sources. Footnote formatting should follow the *SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd edition. The bibliography at the end of the paper should contain everything cited in the footnotes. Papers should address each of the following questions clearly:

- (1) How does this passage relate to the rest of the book?
- (2) What are the relevant features of the historical/cultural background?
- (3) What is the main idea of the passage?
- (4) How does the passage support this main idea?
- (5) How does this main idea affect our lives today?

Oral (10%): The oral presentation should be about 10 minutes. This will probably involve abridging the paper. The format for this presentation will be discussed closer to the due date, as how much class time can be devoted to this depends on factors that are hard to predict in advance.

Quizzes (40%)

There will be three quizzes during the semester. The quizzes will consist of multiple-choice, matching, and essay questions over the text and class discussions, as well as a series of memory verses. They are due at 11:59 PM on Saturday of the week designated in the table above.

Weekly Assignments (20%)

You are expected to read through Mark at least once during the semester (ideally, more than once, using a variety of translations). As you are reading, jot down observations/questions about the text that jump out at you. Beginning with Week 2, you should submit your observations/questions about the week's material to the appropriate dropbox in Populi by 5:00 P.M. Monday evening, as they will form a partial basis for our class discussion on Tuesday afternoon.

Policies and other information

Attendance (From the GLBC Catalogue)

Students are required to attend classes regularly. One unexcused absence for every credit hour in a given course may be permitted, i.e. per one-hour class. Two percent (2%) of the course grade per academic hour for each hour of classroom instruction missed may be deducted for each unexcused absence beyond the above.

Late Work (From the GLBC Catalogue)

Assignments for the term are listed in the syllabus supplied for each course. Every assignment so listed must be completed to pass the course. Late submission of assignments need not be accepted by the instructor. Extenuating circumstances and emergencies will be taken into consideration. If a late assignment is accepted, a grade reduction of 5% per instructional day may be assessed.

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