



February - April 2023 | Trinity Church Golden Grove

The Gospel of Mark is like a Netflix series recounting the life of Jesus. Written by John Mark, who wrote his account from both Peter's sermons in the years after Jesus' resurrection and his own eye witness accounts, he compiles what scholars believe to be the earliest account of Jesus' life (Written in AD55), the shortest account (678 verses), the punchiest account (Mark says the word immediately over 40 times and begins with no birth account or genealogy, but opens right with Jesus and his ministry) and it's full of action (Mark records more stories about Jesus, than Jesus' teaching). And, perhaps most pointedly, the great drama of Mark's Gospel is people's blindness to Jesus' identity and mission and call. People see and hear, but just don't understand. As you can see, it's a great Gospel for 21st century Adeladians as we come face to face with the amazing character and nature of God, as he's revealing himself through Jesus, showing us what life with him will be like and how he alone can forgive sins and restore us back to God, in a short, snappy package.

If it were a Netflix series, I reckon it would be divided into 2 episodes:

Episode 1: Mark 1-8. These chapters are set in Galilee, as Jesus travels around, revealing God's kingdom through mighty acts and showing us who he truly is. For all the action and suspense, Mark shows us that Jesus is in control of all things, at all times. This episode ends with Peter saying, "You are the Messiah!" Mark 8:29.

Episode 2: Mark 9-16. Jesus now heads towards Jerusalem and the Cross. Along the way, he explains what life as one of his followers is like and how it's marked with suffering and obedience. Just as Episode 1 ended with a confession of who Jesus really is, so does episode 2 when the

Roman soldier says, when looking at Jesus on the Cross, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"
Mark 15:39.

In Mark's Gospel Jesus also like to call himself, "Son of Man". This title shows continuity with the Old Testament (Daniel 7:1, Psalm 8:4 and when God talks to Ezekiel the prophet) and, it shows us that Jesus the divine heavenly figure to come who identifies with humankind. What's more, this powerful miracle worker, is none other than the God in the flesh, come to die a lowly death, so that all humankind can wrestle with the claim of Mark 1:15, "The time has come," Jesus said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" All Jesus does and says is for this great purpose.

The Gospel of Mark is a great way to explore Jesus and what it means to follow him. My prayer is that we would come face to face with the Son of God over the course of these talks in a fresh way and be reminded about what it means to be his disciple as we follow Jesus, in Adelaide, in 2023.

Luke Dahlenburg

SERIES OUTLINE

#	Date	Talk Title	Passage	Preacher
1	5-Feb	The Beginning Of The Big News	Mark 1:1-28	Luke D
2	12-Feb	Misconceptions About The Big News	Mark 2:13-3:6	Luke D
3	19-Feb	Big News About The Kingdom of God	Mark 4:1-41	Luke D
4	26-Feb	Big News: Jesus Always Has Time	Mark 5:21-43	Micah B
5	5-Mar	Big News About Being A Faithful Witness	Mark 6:7-29	Luke D
6	12-Mar	Big News About Our Hearts	Mark 7:1-37	Luke D
7	19-Mar	Big News About Following Jesus	Mark 8:27-38	Luke D
8	26-Mar	Big News About Who Jesus Is	Mark 9:2-13	Peter L
9	2-Apr	Big News: It's Hard Sometimes	Mark 9:38-50	Luke D
10	7-Apr - Good Friday	Sad News	Mark 14:1-11; 15:6-39	Luke D
11	9-Apr - Easter Sunday	The Biggest News	Mark 16:1-20	Luke D
12	16-Apr - Kids In	Big News About Being Good	Mark 10:17-31	Luke D
13	23-Apr - Kids In	Big News About What's Important	Mark 12:18-34	Peter L

Trinity Kids: For Good Friday, it would be great to keep the kids in the service that morning and then to have our last Trinity Kids program on Easter Sunday.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Our Community Groups will work through each passage before Sunday's talk this year. Aim to have a social gathering with a meal and prayer for the first week of each term too. A good idea when looking at the passage prior to Sunday's talk is to get your group to outline the passage and look for the big idea after having read the verses.

We use the Swedish Method of Bible Study for our Community Groups. However, as we explore the Gospel of Mark, you may also like to use *Knowing The Bible: Mark, a 12-Week Study* ([Click for link](#)) with your group as well. It has helpful questions, comments and explanations to help you get the most out of your discussions.

TRINITY KIDS RESOURCES

<https://youtu.be/rVFQfPTJPq8> - **Dramatic Reading Of Mark's Gospel**

- You could show the weeks verses in the classroom from this video. It's a great rendition of Mark's Gospel, word-for-word from the NIV.

The Tell-It-Together Gospel: Mark - **All Ages Talk Ideas**

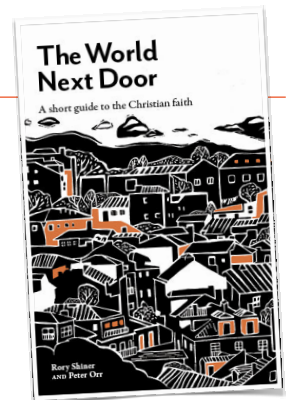
- Written especially to have kids and adults acting out Mark's Gospel it could be a great starting point for your All Ages talk if you are stuck.

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/mark> - **Video Over of Mark's Gospel**

EVANGELISTIC RESOURCES

The World Next Door by Rory Shiner & Peter Orr, 2021, Matthias Media

- Australian short book all about commending the Christian faith to an Australia culture. It uses Mark's Gospel quite a bit, and also works though the Apostles Creed. Really good if you have a friend curious about Jesus and have a had a few God conversations already.



Christianity Explored - Website & Videos



- Not just a short course, the CE website has heaps of videos and resources to help us talk about Jesus and answer people's questions. Plus, it uses Mark's Gospel as the foundation for the course.

TALK OVERVIEWS

Talk 1: The Beginning Of The Big News, Mark 1:1-28

We will see how Jesus is the long awaited big news that God is now announcing from the Old Testament (1:2-3) and how 1:1 reminds us of Genesis 1:1. These verses show how simple the

gospel is (1:14-15), how powerful and authoritative Jesus is (1:21-28) and that Jesus calling people to himself is the way into God's kingdom as he sets them on his mission (1:16-20). It really is the best news you could ever want to hear - in fact, Mark is setting up that the Old Testament (1:2-3), John the Baptist (1:7) and God himself (1:11) are all pointing to Jesus as the message and messenger who has this good news. (Just on demons, the point emphasised over and over in Mark's Gospel is the power of Jesus over them and later, how his death also destroyed them too, See Colossians 2:15) Mark is inviting us, boots and all, to come and explore who this Jesus is and what it means that in him is the good news of the Gospel and why we would want to repent and believe.

Talk 2: Misconceptions About The Big News, Mark 2:13-3:6

"This next section of Mark features a series of controversies. The same pattern is present in each one: (1) Jesus does something surprising, (2) the scribes challenge it, and (3) Jesus responds in a way that silences the scribes. These conflicts build to a climax in which Jesus turns the tables on them. In the final conflict, Jesus confronts them with a direct question and becomes angry because they refuse to answer. They respond with a plot to murder him. So, we see that Jesus continues to call and surprise those who follow him, but greatly annoy those who do not. Opinion is divided and people are asking all sorts of questions (Like today!) About who is this Jesus?"

Talk 3: Big News About The Kingdom of God, Mark 4:1-41

Jesus now teaches about the kingdom of God in parables. The big themes coming out are the importance of listening to Jesus and hearing him. There is no other gospel or way to God, apart from what Jesus reveals. Each story is confronting and seeks to undo our pre-conceived ideas of what God and his kingdom is like. It all climaxes in the storm on the water, when the disciples say, "Who is this?" In 4:41. If they had been listening to Jesus from the early verses, they would have their answer - the son of God who has authority. So, just as the seed can fall on to different paths, and there is a delay in the farmer's waiting for the crop, there is also great results. People will believe and respond to the gospel - sometimes, it just takes a storm for them to understand (Perhaps with the teaching in the parables that God's Word is powerful, they should have realised this by now?). Jesus power extends far and wide, as we have seen in the gospel so far (Teaching, sickness, nature, death, forgiveness and now storms). This is the kingdom Jesus is inviting us into.

Talk 4: Big News: Jesus Always Has Time, Mark 5:21-43

Two women - an old, unwell lady and a young, healthy girl, feature in this account. Both suffer and both are given an audience with Jesus. In the middle of life, and all that happens, the Son of God has time and gently reaches down to both women (the sick woman and then into death to pick up the little girl), and us, as he came from heaven to be the servant king.

Talk 5: Big News About Being A Faithful Witness, Mark 6:7-29

Two narratives about following Jesus – one met with success and the other death. Jesus sending of the disciples is unique to his time and place – certainly not a mission guide for today. But, his words of being accepted are just as true. While the disciples had success, it will not always be so – you may even lose your life for the kingdom. But, as Jesus did tell us – giving up our life will not harm one hair on our heads (Luke 21:17-18) or, in the case of John the Baptist, having our head removed. Being faithful is met with both success and opposition. It again poses the questions, are people seeing the real Jesus? Herod wasn't and only heaped on more rebellion and sin. But, no matter the reception, we are sent on the authority of Jesus, for his kingdom, to call people to repentance in faith in him.

Talk 6: Big News About Our Hearts, Mark 7:1-37

Jesus dialogues with the Pharisees here, pointing out that our hearts are actually the problem and that's what Jesus came for. The following two accounts seem out of place, but end with the pattern of how people are amazed at Jesus and what he's doing. Not only is Jesus interested in the heart, he values the body – taking a demon from the daughter and opening the ears of someone who can't hear. Jesus comes to undo the affects that sin have on us and how it wrapped itself around our hearts, needing to be cleaned and how it leaves us physically wrecked. A note of caution: both the heart and the body will still feel the affects of sin and groan (Romans 8) until the new creation.

Talk 7: Big News About Following Jesus, Mark 8:27-38

The hinge in the first episode of Mark's Gospel. Jesus opens by taking his followers, who am I? And then reminding them that to follow the messiah, as Peter rightly said, is costly. For Jesus – he gives up his life, but, belonging to God's kingdom is about following him. Just as Jesus experienced hostility, as we have seen, he prepares his disciples for this. He even reminds us that gaining the whole world, and losing our soul is a horrible outcome. Better to suffering with the king, than to attempt a life of pleasure now, to only suffer later.

Talk 8: Big News About Who Jesus Is, Mark 9:2-13

Transfiguration. A really unique and self-disclosing moment about the nature of Jesus. Lots of Old Testament links here – Exodus, Moses, Elijah. But, unlike those, Jesus is a better vision. Peter can see, Moses couldn't. The mountain in Exodus couldn't be approached – Jesus invited them up. So, we must be careful not to make Jesus out to be like Moses or just a man. He's on another level! Even Moses and Elijah talking to him show that he is the one the Old Testament is pointing to. This is why God urges them to listen to him and why it ends with the questions of the disciples. They are taking and searching and Jesus is glad to answer.

Talk 9: Big News: It's Hard Sometimes, Mark 9:38-50

Not only is following Jesus met with external pressure, but, we also feel the pressure of sinful hearts (9:42-48) and how we even cause others to sin and stumble and of competing agendas –

even in the church! (9:38-41). Little wonder Jesus emphasises that peace with each other and salt in us matters. That is, the gospel is about changing us inside and out. After all, cutting our hands off isn't going to solve the sin problem, but, his hyperbolic point is clear: it is better to take drastic action than end up in hell forever. Loosing a hand is better than eternal punishment.

Talk 10 & 11: Easter, Mark 14:1-11; 15:6-39 & Mark 16:1-20

I've not included a talk summary for these talks as it's the easter story from Mark 14-16.

I only mention a very brief summary of these final two talks here as Trinity Kids is taking a break for the school holidays.

Talk 12: Big News About Being Good, Mark 10:17-31

All about eternal life and the trickiness of thinking we could ever be good enough to earn it. Sadly, the stuff we hope can save us, often causes us to stumble, as the man raised when we walked away feeling sad upon hearing Jesus' words. Only God is good and only his standard of good will ultimately count.

Talk 13: Big News About What's Important, Mark 12:18-34

Our final talk is about the greatest commandment - loving God and then loving others. This is an easy concept, but hard to visualise today for most of us. Not only do we think we are good enough for God to accept us (Talk 12), we often imagine that our opinions and priorities in life are equal to God's and so, we deceive ourselves into thinking that our agenda is greatest.