**The Gospel of Mark**

**A Disciple’s Mirror**

***Reflections on Following Jesus***

From A Handbook on Cross-Bearing

Mark 1:1

***What is a “Gospel”?***

“Gospel” means “good news.” In the Bible, it refers to. . .

(1) The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for sinners (Romans 1:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:1-3),

(2) The proclamation of God’s latter days intervention to establish His Kingdom, save sinners and judge rebels (Isaiah 40:9-11; 52:7-10; Matthew 11:1-6; Mark 1:14, 15; Luke 4:42-44; 8:1), and

(3) A specific book of the Bible devoted to the life and ministry of Jesus, who is God’s Message (Word) incarnate (Mark 1:1). In a way, the whole Bible is Gospel.

***What is unique about Mark’s Gospel?***

It is action-oriented.

There are 18 miracles, but only 4 parables and one discourse.

“Immediately” used 36 times; no birth narrative, genealogy.

The writing style is simple, forceful, and direct.

Literally half of its verses begin with “and.”

Episodes are strung together with little transition.

There seems to be a showcasing of the disciples’ confusion and failure.

See 4:13; 6:52; 8:17, 21; 9:10, 18, 19, 30-40; 10:26-41; *etc.*

***What is Mark about?***

1:1–8:29 The identity of Jesus. Who is this man? He is Messiah!

Jesus chooses and trains disciples, all the while clarifying their misunderstandings and bearing with their folly. Peter leads their confession that Jesus is the Christ.

8:30–16:20 The mission of Jesus. What kind of Messiah is He?

Jesus heads straight for Jerusalem and His Cross, warning the disciples of what lay in store for Him, challenging them to follow Him and take up their own crosses.

*So Jesus is not the kind of Messiah who will rule with raw political power, but rather will lay down His life for His people.*

***What questions should we ask this book?***

Why does Jesus often ask people not to report His miracles?

Why does Jesus tell people not to tell anyone who He is?

Why are the disciples so slow to understand Jesus?

Why are the disciples preoccupied with who would be greatest?

How is it that One with such power, goodness, and authority is not believed, but rather, is rejected and crucified?

How is it that even after all of the disciples’ failures, Jesus does not abandon them, but invites them to join His mission?

***What questions will this book be asking us ?***

What clouds my understanding of Jesus and my obedience to Him?

Have I asked for and received the forgiveness of my sins?

Why do I argue with Jesus?

Am I preoccupied with whether people think I’m worthy or important?

What stops me from seeing and savoring God’s glory as it is revealed in His Son? Am I willing to let go of those things?

Am I taking up my cross daily and following Jesus?