

Introduction to NT Books

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II. Mark

A. The Authorship of Mark

1. External Evidence

- a. Papias asserted that Mark wrote Peter's preachment, but not always in chronological order.
- b. Irenaeus stated that "after the death of Peter and Paul, Mark delivered to us in writing things preached by Peter."
- c. Also Clement of Alexandria, Origin and Jerome suggested that Mark's Gospel received benefit from his association with Peter.
- d. The superscription "according to Mark" is found in some early MSS, causing questions such as why attribute the book to such a minor character?

2. Internal Evidence

- a. The author wrote a relative brief account of the life of Christ, perhaps indicating a younger man who did not have the time to reflect upon the Lord's ministry.
- b. This seems to correspond with the incident recorded in Mk. 14:51-52 of the young man fleeing naked—if not autobiographical why is it recorded?
- c. Since Mark was a convert of Peter and with him at Rome (I Pet. 5:13), his effort to evangelize Roman Gentiles fits the Roman audience of Mark.
- d. Reference to Rufus suggests a Roman origin or audience (Mk. 15:21).
- e. There is nothing in Scripture which undermines the Markan tradition.

B. The Date of Mark

1. Contrary to the documentary hypothesis that Mark wrote first and Matthew and Luke used his Gospel to develop theirs (evolutionary concept: simple to complex).
2. Mark probably wrote late in the 60's and finally received Paul's approval (Acts 13:13; 15:38-39; II Tim. 4:11).

C. The Purpose of Mark: To declare the "good news" that Jesus' redemption was for all, even the Gentiles.

D. The Characteristics of Mark

1. It is action-packed—εὐθέως found 42 times ("straightway").
2. It contains much about power. There is an emphasis on miracles and on the resurrection, suggesting that it was geared toward the Romans' inclination toward power.
3. It is Gentile in orientation and argumentation—only one quote from the OT (Mk. 11:17 cited Isa 56:7) and little about fulfilled prophecy. He explained Jewish customs (7:3-4).
4. It evinces the spirit of candor—the author gives a realistic account of the disciples' failings and the peoples' reaction to Christ.
5. He interpreted Aramaic words for his Gentile audience (5:41; 7:34; 15:22).

E. The Long Ending of Mark (16:9-20)

1. Arguments against the long ending.

- a. Some suggest that Mark ended the good news with "*for they were afraid*" (16:8).
- b. Others say Mark died before he finished it or lost the words!

2. Arguments for the long ending.
 - a. The Majority of MSS contain and the theology is orthodox.
 - b. Even the Codices **N** and B contain a space for the longer ending.