

Mark: The Mysterious Messiah

Week 1: Overview and Chapter 1

In the space below, make a brief chapter outline of biography that someone might write about your favorite (or least favorite) historical figure. Assume the book is not going to be any longer than 250 pages, and lay out anywhere from 4 to 6 subjects for chapters to cover:

What does the Greek word *euangelion* (English “Gospel”) mean? What is its earliest context in the Bible, and why would the early Christians choose this word to name what they were proclaiming?

When does Jesus actually show up in the story? How old is He when He does show up? Where does he show up? What would this location and that name have signified to a first-century, Biblically-literate audience?

Are there any elements in Jesus's baptism and temptation that you remember but don't see in Mark? What mysteries does Mark leave unexplained here, and what questions might a first-century reader might have had as the story went on? (Remember that a Sunday meeting might have seen this whole Gospel read aloud.) To whom does the heavenly voice speak, and how many people hear?

What clues (if any) does Mark give at this point as to why John is in prison? What does Jesus proclaim as he travels? Where might the first-century audience have heard the phrase “repent and be faithful”? And before you assume you know what “fishers of men” means, take a look at Amos 4:1-2 and think about who might have nabbed John.