



THE
King's Church
Wisbech

BIBLE

READING GUIDE

Exploring the book of MARK

WELCOME

Thank you for downloading this resource. We hope it will be useful to you.

If you have never read the Bible before, or if you are only just getting started, then this is for you!

This guide is just that - a guide. It will help to explain some of the background to what you are reading and break down the meanings of some of the more complex words you may come across.

We will also map out a 16 day plan to help you read through one book of the Bible - the book of MARK in just 16 days - one chapter a day.

If you have any questions or want to find out more, please get in touch with us through our website kingswisbech.org.uk.

Let's get started...

LET'S GET A BIBLE

Before you can begin to read the Bible, you need to have a copy of it. You could go to a bookshop or an online retailer and buy a physical one, or you can make use of the internet that gives access to a number of different Bible translations for free.

On your mobile phone or tablet/ipad, go to your app store and search '**You Version Bible App**'. Download it on your phone. This app also includes free audio books of many of the translations available.

Or on your PC or Laptop you can go to <https://www.bible.com/bible/116/MRK.1.NLT> or you can use biblegateway.com

The Bible was not written in English. It was written in Greek and Hebrew. The English versions we have today are translations from the original texts. As a result we have a variety of different word-for-word translations as well as other versions that try to take the original meaning of what is being said, and put it into language we can understand today.

Some translations are very old, and used the contemporary language of their day, containing words we no longer use in English such as - thee, thou, mayst, ye - and so on. Personally I find these translations very difficult to understand.

It is better to use a translation that makes sense in today's English, as this will help us understand it better.

I would recommend reading the **New Living Translation (NLT)**, or the **New International Version (NIV)**.

If you really want to read the Bible in contemporary language, you may prefer **The Message (MSG)**.

All of these versions are available for free on the apps and websites mentioned above.

They may use slightly different words - but the meaning of what they are saying is the same.

WHY THE BOOK OF MARK?

The Bible is not a single book - it is actually a library of 66 books, all bound together in a single volume. It is very big and very long. It contains different types and styles of writing and was written by a collection of authors, all being directed by the Holy Spirit, over a span of hundreds of years. Some books are easier to understand than others.

Because of this, I would not recommend starting at the front. Rather, I would recommend starting with the book of Mark.

Mark is fast-paced and tells the story about Jesus' life from Mark's perspective. There are four books in the Bible that do this, and Mark is the shortest of the four, making it an ideal candidate for taking your first steps into reading the Bible.

Starting with Jesus is also ideal, because we understand the rest of the entire Bible by first understanding who Jesus is.

SOME COMMONLY USED WORDS EXPLAINED

gospel - a book in the Bible that tells the story of Jesus' life on earth.

messiah - the long-awaited saviour of the Jewish people.

prophet - someone who God revealed future events to and could foretell the future - a 'seer'.

repent - to turn away from sinful thoughts and behaviours.

sin - things done that are against God's way of doing things.

disciple - someone who follows Jesus' teachings, beliefs and way of life.

blasphemy - saying / teaching things that are against God's ways, usually in direct contradiction to God's character.

pharisee - a title given to someone who was a religious leader or teacher - an equivalent of a priest / vicar / pastor in today's church.

fasting - deliberately abstaining from food in order to pray and draw closer to God

sabbath - a Jewish religious practice observed once a week.

gentile - anyone who is not of the Jewish faith.

transfiguration - a pivotal event where Jesus's appearance temporarily changed, revealing his divine glory to his disciple

A lot of place names are also used such as Galilee, Nazareth, Capernaum, Bethany, Gethsemane etc. These are specific places, towns or regions in the Middle-East.

HOW TO USE CHAPTERS AND VERSES

When the Bible was originally written, there were no numbers scribbled all over the pages like you see in today's Bibles.

These numbers were added hundreds of years later to help us navigate our way around this massive text.

Each of the 66 books of the Bible has a name, for example 'Mark' or 'Psalms' or '1 Corinthians'.

When there is a number before the name of the book, this indicates that another book is also called the same name - often because it is written by the same person, or written to the same group of people. The number helps us identify which book we are talking about. In the case of Chrinthians, they are a collection of letters addressed to the church in Corinth.

Within each book you then see very large numbers. Each of these is a chapter number. Then the very small numbers you see in between sentences are the verses.

We would write them like this: **Mark 2:3**

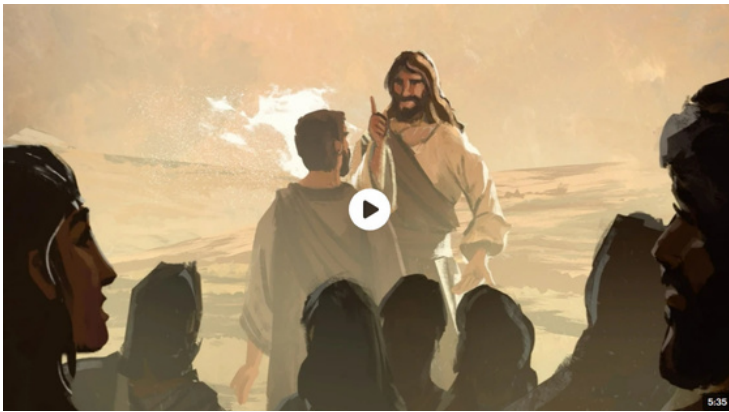
Which means: **the book of Mark, chapter 2, and verse 3 within chapter 2.**

If you are using the digital tools mentioned earlier, you can type in 'Mark 2:3' or use the navigation tools to help you get to exactly where you need to be.

INTRODUCING THE BOOK OF MARK

You might find this video helpful

<https://bibleproject.com/videos/gospel-mark/>



This book is one of the earliest accounts of the life of Jesus. It is believed to have been written by a Christian named Mark, also known as John Mark. He worked with Paul and was a close friend of Peter, one of Jesus' followers.

However, Mark didn't just randomly put the story together. He carefully structured it to share the story of Jesus. Right from the start, he tells us who Jesus is in the first line: "The beginning of the good news about Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God." This is the only time Mark directly states his opinion about Jesus. For the rest of the book, he shows us what Jesus did and said, as well as how different people reacted to him.

Mark organized the story of Jesus like a play with three parts. The first part takes place in Galilee, the second shows Jesus traveling, and the third is set in Jerusalem.

Each part focuses on a different theme. In the first part (chapters 1-8), people are amazed and curious about who Jesus is. In the second part (chapters 8-10), the disciples have a hard time understanding what it means for Jesus to be the Messiah. In the third part (chapters 11-16), we see how Jesus becomes the messianic King in a surprising way.

You might also find this video helpful

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HGHqu9-DtXk&t=1s>



PART 1 - PEOPLE ARE AMAZED AND CURIOUS ABOUT WHO JESUS IS

MARK 1:1- 8:26

In the beginning of the book of Mark, the writer talks about prophets Isaiah and Malachi, who said that God would send someone to prepare people for His arrival. This messenger is John the Baptist, and then Jesus comes on the scene.

When Jesus arrives, the heavens open, and God declares, "You are my beloved Son." Mark summarizes Jesus' mission: he travels around Galilee sharing the news that "God's Kingdom is near." Through Jesus, God is working to rescue the world and invites everyone to follow him.

Mark shares stories that show Jesus' power, like healing the sick and even forgiving sins, which surprises many. These actions lead to mixed reactions; while some follow him, others, including some leaders, reject him. A key theme in this part of Mark is the confusion surrounding Jesus, as even his closest followers struggle to understand who he truly is.

PART 2 - THE DISCIPLES HAVE A HARD TIME UNDERSTANDING JESUS IS THE MESSIAH

MARK 1:1- 8:26

In part two, Jesus asks his followers, "Who do you think I am?" Peter replies, "You are the Messiah!" but he believes the Messiah will be a strong leader who saves Israel from the Romans. Jesus sees the Messiah differently, as someone who will suffer and die to bring about God's kingdom.

The disciples are confused because they expect to gain power by following Jesus. Instead, He tells them that true discipleship means being willing to suffer and serve others. He emphasizes this by saying, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45).

In the middle of this, there's an important story where Jesus takes three disciples up a mountain. There, He shines with light, and God declares, "This is my beloved Son" (Mark 9:7). This moment shows that Jesus represents God's glory, and through His suffering and death, God will become King. The disciples are left confused as they come down from the mountain.

PART 3 - JESUS BECOMES THE MESSIANIC KING IN A SURPRISING WAY

MARK 11-16

In Part 3, Jesus enters Jerusalem for Passover, and people call him the Messiah. He goes to the temple and drives out those who are cheating the worshipers, starting a week of arguments with the leaders of Israel, who plan to have him killed. Jesus warns his disciples that Jerusalem will be destroyed soon, and they will face challenges like he does.

On the last night, Jesus has a Passover meal with his disciples, giving new meaning to the symbols of freedom from slavery to explain his upcoming death, which will save people from sin. He is then arrested and tried by the leaders and the Roman governor, Pilate, leading to his crucifixion.

After Jesus dies, a Roman soldier recognizes him as the Son of God. His body is placed in a tomb, and on the third day, two women discover that the tomb is empty. An angel tells them that Jesus has risen and to share this news. The women are afraid and run away, ending the story with their fear and confusion.

THE ENDING

MARK 16:9-20

Mark's Gospel has an interesting part at the end where Jesus talks to his disciples, but a note says this part isn't in the original text and is found in later copies. It's possible the original ending was lost or that Mark meant to stop suddenly.

The story shows that Jesus, who suffered and died but came back to life, is the Son of God. It highlights God's love and the surprising ways of His kingdom. The Gospel ends without a clear conclusion, making us wonder: Will we be scared like the disciples, or will we see Jesus as our King? Are we ready to share this good news? These are the questions Mark wants us to think about.

READING MARK IN 16 DAYS

This is just a suggested reading plan to get you started. Feel free to make it your own. You can read more or less than what is suggested. It is up to you.

The aim is to try to read one chapter a day, but if you miss a day or two here and there, don't worry. Just as long as you come back to it and carry on. Try not to leave a long gap between readings, otherwise you may lose the thread of the story (although hopefully the notes above will help).

Day 1 - Mark chapter 1
Day 2 - Mark Chapter 2
Day 3 - Mark Chapter 3
Day 4 - Mark Chapter 4
Day 5 - Mark Chapter 5
Day 6 - Mark Chapter 6
Day 7 - Mark Chapter 7
Day 8 - Mark Chapter 8
Day 9 - Mark Chapter 9
Day 10 - Mark Chapter 10
Day 11 - Mark Chapter 11
Day 12 - Mark Chapter 12
Day 13 - Mark Chapter 13
Day 14 - Mark Chapter 14
Day 15 - Mark Chapter 15
Day 16 - Mark Chapter 16

Next recommended read - the book of Acts.

THANK YOU

Thank you for downloading and using this resource. We pray it helps you.

If you have any questions about what you have read or would like to know more about faith in Jesus or our church, please contact us through our website [**www.kingswisbech.org.uk**](http://www.kingswisbech.org.uk) .