

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR MARK STUDY

MARK 1:1-15

Many scholars believe that Mark was the first gospel to be written. They believe that Matthew and Luke were based on Mark but with some things added and other things omitted. John's gospel was written years later which is why it is so different from the others. Mark was probably the first portrait of what we call the story of Jesus. Even though some of the epistles were written before Mark, it was necessary to record the actual story of Jesus. That is why the gospels tell the story of Jesus rather than commentary on the life and meaning of Jesus for the church that we have in the epistles. The story has the Old Testament as its background as the people of God were waiting for their Messiah who was promised to lead them out of the oppression of Rome and fulfill God's promises to them. Different factions within the Jewish community had different ideas concerning what He would do and how He would come, but they all assumed that He would deliver them from Roman oppression in the same way that Moses delivered their ancestors from the slavery in Egypt. Here are some things to ponder in this first passage in Mark.

1. Compare and contrast what the passage says about John the Baptist and Jesus.
2. Note some of the key words that are repeated in the passage. Also anything that seems to strike you as significant by way of observation.
3. Check some of the references or allusions to the Old Testament and see what light they throw on the passage. They have to be direct references or allusions to Old Testament passages. They could include symbols and images.
4. What truths about Jesus do you learn from the passage?