

**The Gospel of Mark**  
**WYB3655**  
May 9-13, 2022

**Professor:**

L. Ann Jervis  
[a.jervis@utoronto.ca](mailto:a.jervis@utoronto.ca)

**Course Identification:**

Course Number: WYB3655

An opportunity to read the entire Gospel of Mark communally. The class will provide space for historical, literary and theological questions.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will show a familiarity with the Gospel of Mark and with its distinctive presentation of Jesus. Students will show some knowledge of the purpose and central message of Mark

**Required Materials:**

All books are available at Crux Book Store at Wycliffe College.

- Moloney, F. J., Mark. Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004).
- Boring, M. E., Mark. A Commentary (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006)
- Another commentary of your choice from the list below.
- Readings on Quercus

**Pre-Class Assignment: Before May 9 (for first day of class)**

1. Have read through the Gospel of Mark twice. Using an English translation (I prefer you to use the New American Standard Bible), read as slowly as you can make yourself do so. As you come across puzzling, interesting, or arresting passages, consult two commentaries, one which you have chosen from the list below and the required commentary by M. E. Boring. Make notes for yourself.
2. On the basis of your reading of Mark, write a five page summary of the gospel, including comments on the following:
  - Who are the main characters in the narrative and how does Mark characterize them?
  - What do you think Mark wants his readers to understand about Jesus?
  - What are two puzzling aspects of Mark's narrative?
  - What for you is the most important feature of Mark's narrative?

This must be brought at 9 a.m. on the first day of class. (Worth 20%)

**Also Before May 9**

- Read Boring, Mark pp. 1-25. Be prepared to discuss with your classmates at the first class what you have read. (Bring your reading notes).
- Read Moloney, Mark: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist pp. 3-43. Be prepared to discuss with your classmates what you have read. (Bring your reading notes).
- Read, C. Meyers, *Binding the Strong Man. A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991 (pp. 39-87 (on Quercus). (Bring your reading notes).
- Prepare notes and observations on Mark 1:1-3:35. Keep in mind that you will be part of a group that presents in dramatic form some aspect of Mark 1:1-3:35. Bring these notes to class. They will be the basis of your group project on the first day.

Note: you will not be asked to hand in to the professor your reading notes, but they will be very helpful for your participation in your small group.

**Evaluation:**

1. *Pre-class Assignment* (as outlined above): 20%
2. *Reflection on presenting the Gospel in Class*: 70%

A dramatic commentary on the gospel will be worked out in small groups. The purpose of these dramatic commentaries is to present (in the form of a play, or in the form, for instance, of a still life with commentary, or whatever you dream up) to the rest of the class an interpretation of the content of an assigned portion of the gospel. Where possible, it is encouraged that the theme of the day, as reflected in the readings, will be evident in the presentation.

After each day's presentation, each participant will submit a three page reflection on: 1) her/his own opinions about the important passages and themes in the passage for the day; 2) how s/he thought the information from the readings and/or lecture could or should be incorporated into the presentation [here it is important to give evidence of having interacted with the assigned readings]; and 3) what s/he thought of the final product her/his group produced.

The ideal scenario is that students hand in these three page reflections the following day (except of course for the reflection concerning the last day of class). However, life being what it is, if this is not possible, they must all be handed in by the Friday of the week following the end of the course (May 20).

Each three page reflection is worth 14% (the total grade worth for all five being 70%).

3. *Class Participation*: 10% This grade acknowledges the importance of students' preparation for and participation in all aspects of the class.

**NOTE: Bring to class 1) Bible; 2) Boring commentary; 3) Moloney; and Course Packet.**

### **SCHEDULE**

#### **May 9 - Mark 1:1-3:35**

*Themes: Historical Context and History*

9:00-9:50 - Introduction and Small Group Discussion of readings (for readings see above under *Pre-class Assignment*)

10:00-10:50 - Lecture on Introductory Issues

11:00 -11:45 – Professor led discussion of aspects of Mark 1:1-3:35

11:45-12:00 – Beginning of small group discussion on the focus (choice of passages, theme/s or character/s) and manner of presenting Mark 1:1-3:35.

1:00-1:45 – Continuation of small group preparation

2:00-3:00 – Presentations and discussion.

#### **May 10 – Mark 4:1-8:21**

*Themes: Kingdom of God and Parables*

For today, have read:

- Mark 4:1-8:21 along with two commentaries: Boring's and the one you chose.
- Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom, Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* (SCM Press, 1976), pp. 1-14 and 194-205 (Course packet)
- Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988), pp. 1-27 (Course packet).
- Moloney, pp. 125-130

Same pattern as May 9, except focusing on Mark 4:1-8:21 throughout the day.

**May 11 – Mark 8:22-10:52**

*Theme: Christology*

For today, have read:

- Mark 8:22-10:52 along with the two commentaries
- Malbon, E., "The Christology of Mark's Gospel: Narrative Christology and the Markan Jesus," in *Who Do You Say That I Am?* Ed. by M. A. Powell and D. R. Bauer (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 199), pp. 33-48 (Course packet).
- Juel, D. H. *A Master of Surprise. Mark Interpreted*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), pp. 91-105 (Course packet).
- Moloney, pp. 130-158.

Same pattern as May 9, except focusing on Mark 8:22-10:52 throughout the day

**May 12 – Mark 11:1-13:37**

*Theme: Disciples*

For today, have read:

- Mark 11:1-13:37 along with the two commentaries
- Weeden, J. "The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel" in Telford, ed., *The Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), pp. 64-77 (Course packet).
- Tannehill, R. C., "The Disciples in Mark: the Function of a Narrative Role," in Telford, ed., *The Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), pp. 134-157 (Course packet).
- Moloney, pp. 159-181

**May 13 – Mark 14:1 – 16:8**

*Theme: Jesus' Death and Resurrection; The Ending of Mark*

For today, have read:

- Mark 14:1 – 16:8 along with the two commentaries

- Juel, D. H., “A Disquieting Silence: The Matter of the Ending,” in Gaventa and Miller, eds. *The Ending of Mark and the Ends of God* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005), pp. 1-14 (Course packet).
- Blount, B., “Is the Joke on Us? Mark’s Irony, Mark’s God and Mark’s Ending,” in Gaventa and Miller, eds. *The Ending of Mark and the Ends of God*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005) pp. 15-32 (Course packet).
- Black, C. C., “The Face is Familiar – I Just Can’t Place It,” in Gaventa and Miller, eds. *The Ending of Mark and the Ends of God* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005), pp. 33-49 (Course packet).
- Moloney, 96-113.

**Commentaries to Choose From:**

Black, C. C., Mark. Nashville: Abingdon, 2011.

Cranfield, C. E. B., The Gospel According to Saint Mark. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959.

Dowd, S. Reading Mark: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Second Gospel. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000.

Guelich, R. A. Mark 1 – 8:26 Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1989 and C. A. Evans, Mark 8:27-16:20 Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001.

Hooker, M. A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark. London: A & C Black, 1991.

Hurtado, L. Mark. NIBC 2. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989.

Lane, W. L. The Gospel of Mark. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

Moloney, F. J. The Gospel of Mark. A Commentary Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002.