

On Your Mark
Lesson 1—Introduction & Mark 1:1-15

Mark, the gospel author, had a very close relationship with Peter, and it is generally believed that Mark's gospel is a collection of Peter's sermons. Early in his Christian life, Mark (also called John Mark) had accompanied Paul and Barnabas on the beginning of their first missionary journey. Unfortunately, he abandoned the trip early on and returned home. Eventually God restored Mark and he became a valued co-work of Paul (as well as Peter).

Mark wrote this gospel to a predominately Gentile, Roman audience. Because of this, the narrative is fast-paced and action-packed, as it were. Romans were "cut-to-the-chase" kind of thinkers and so Mark uses a quick paced style, emphasizing Jesus' powerful works even more than His preaching. The words "immediately" & "and" are found frequently throughout the book as Mark keeps the story moving along.

Please listen to Episode 1 of "On Your Mark."

Read together MARK 1:1-15

Discussion Questions (pick 1-2 to spend more time with):

1. What can we learn about the gospel story from the personal history of John Mark (his failure and restoration)?
2. The very first event that Mark records about Jesus is His baptism by John. Why do you think Mark started with this? Jesus had no sins to repent of or confess, so why is He baptized? (see Matthew 3:14-15)
3. Share with the group your baptism stories. How did you come to be baptized? (Note to leaders, this is a great opportunity for those who may be in your group who haven't experienced baptism by immersion).
4. Jesus is baptized and immediately the Father speaks, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." What would it mean to you to hear God say that to you?
5. Why is Jesus tempted? Why would the Spirit lead him into the wilderness?
6. How is the gospel "good news"?