AN INTRODUCTION TO MARK'S GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION: WHY AND HOW SHOULD WE STUDY MARK'S GOSPEL?

| 1. UNDERSTAND | MARK'S PURPOSE | (1:1) |
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- a) Mark is writing Gospel
- b) Mark is not writing a biography
- c) Mark is historical, but he's not writing history

2. GRASP HIS METHOD

- a) Mark is not like Romans
- b) Mark is not like John (cp. John 20:30-31)
- c) Mark is not like Matthew or Luke (e.g. Luke 18:1)
- → The key questions to ask: Why? Why here?

Group work:

Mark 15:33-39. What is surprising about v38? Why is it there?

Mark 8:22-26. Why are these verses here?

3. PURSUE MARKS' BIG THEMES (INTRODUCED IN 1:1-15)

a) Theme 1: Jesus' identity (1:1)

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"the Christ" (1:1, 8:29)
"the Son of God" (1:1, 11, 9:7, 12:6, 13:32, (14:36), 15:39)
                  (3:11, 5:7, cf. 1:24 – demons)
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b) Theme 2: Jesus' mission (1:2-3)

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Malachi 3:1-3
Isaiah 40:1-5
Jesus mission
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c) Theme 3: Your response to the good news about Jesus (1:14-15)

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Being a disciple
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Summary: WHO? WHY? WHAT?

Group work:

From your reading of Mark jot down (some of) what we learn of each big theme and

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where in the Gospel it comes:
        WHO?
        WHY?
        WHAT?
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4. RECOGNISE MARK'S STRUCTURES

a) Two halves?

- (i) 1:1-8:30. WHO is Jesus?
- (ii) 8:31-16:8. WHY did Jesus come? WHAT does it mean to follow him?

Yes... but...

b) Sets of three

What? For example:

1:40-2:17 2:18-3:6

4:35-5:47

Why?

Group work:

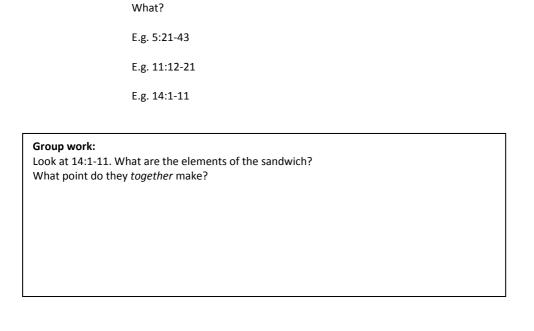
Look at the three incidents in 1:40:2:17. What does each have in common?

What is the different focus of each?

How might we read 1:40-45 differently if it weren't in this context?

c) Repeated words or phrases

7:14-23, What makes a man unclean? 8:31, 9:31, 10:32-34, What must happen? 1:38, 2:17, 10:45, What's the reason Jesus "came"?



Group work:

Look at Mark 11:17. Why the quote from Jeremiah 7:8-11? What's the point?

5. INVESTIGATE HIS USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

6. AN OUTLINE OF MARK'S GOSPEL

d) "Sandwiches"

Group work:

See separate sheet. Try to match up each summary statement to the section in Mark's gospel that it describes.