

## **NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY**

*(Comparing the Gospels of Matthew & Mark)*  
**New Testament Survey**

### **Discussion Group Questions:**

The Gospel accounts of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew and Mark probably were written around the same time, the early 50's AD. It is likely that Mark's account (from the recollections of his mentor, the Apostle Peter) was written first. It is thought that while Matthew wrote his gospel account in Israel for primarily a Jewish audience, Mark wrote from Peter's Spirit-filled memories, a gospel account for the primarily Roman audience where they were at the time. Later, around AD 60, Luke wrote his complimentary gospel account with both for supplementary information to his *eye witness* record for his Greek-influenced readers.

Matthew presents Jesus as the promised Messiah-King of Israel. Mark presents Jesus as the hard-working sacrificial, servant Savior of God. The differences in their accounts can be explained by the different audiences to which they were writing. The differences are not in conflict but complete the fuller picture of Christ for the reader, whether Jewish or Roman.

### **Examples for discussion**

*(Remember the primary audience of each as you discuss the following...)*

- Matthew's genealogy from Abraham to Jesus and nativity (*Matthew 1*); Mark has neither? Why?
- Matthew's detail of Jesus' baptism & temptation (*Matthew 3/4*); Mark's brief account (*Mark 1*)?
- Matthew's exhaustive record of the Kingdom Sermon on the Mount (*Matthew 5-7*); Mark – none?
- Other interesting differences: *Matthew 27:32 with Mark 15:21*, and *Matthew 26:56 with Mark 14:51-52*

### **Practical application lessons**

When you tell others your testimony (story of how Jesus became your Savior), how should you share it a bit differently depending upon who you are talking with? (A child instead of an adult?) A religious person instead of a very worldly person? Well educated people rather than those with little to no formal education? (*See 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 and discuss*)

Talk about what parts of your testimony it is alright to adapt for better communication and parts of what you say about the gospel which cannot be changed or omitted. How creative should you get in sharing your personal *gospel story* with others?

Consider the differences between Matthew and Mark – an older, former tax-collector, man who was an actual disciple of Jesus with a young man who had failed on the mission field but now was a ministry assistant of Apostle Peter. Talk about how God has made your life to be who you are to tell others about His Son in a way that works really well with certain people! What kind of people does your story tend to be most effective with in witnessing?