

The Evangelist John Mark



We owe a lot to this man who wrote the first book of Jesus

- Who was he?
- What can we learn from his life?
- What will we do about what we learn?

First up – a summary of Mark's Gospel...

- Mark 1:1 – This is the good news of Jesus
- Mark 16:15 – Go tell everyone the good news

So who was Mark?

- Acts 12:12 – John Mark is first introduced and named both in Hebrew and Roman.
- Context of the story – Paul and Barnabas had come down from Antioch in Syria to bring an offering to the church in Jerusalem
- Herod (Agrippa) had just killed James (John's brother) and thrown Peter into Prison
- But an angel released Peter and he went around to Mary's house where the Church was praying

Mary's House

- A big house in Jerusalem for a prayer meeting.
- Some think this may be the same place which the disciples had the last supper (Mk 14:14)
- It may also be the same room in which they were praying in Acts 1:13,14 after Jesus death
- It does make some sense that they would meet in the same place. Also helps with the real first mention of Mark that we find..

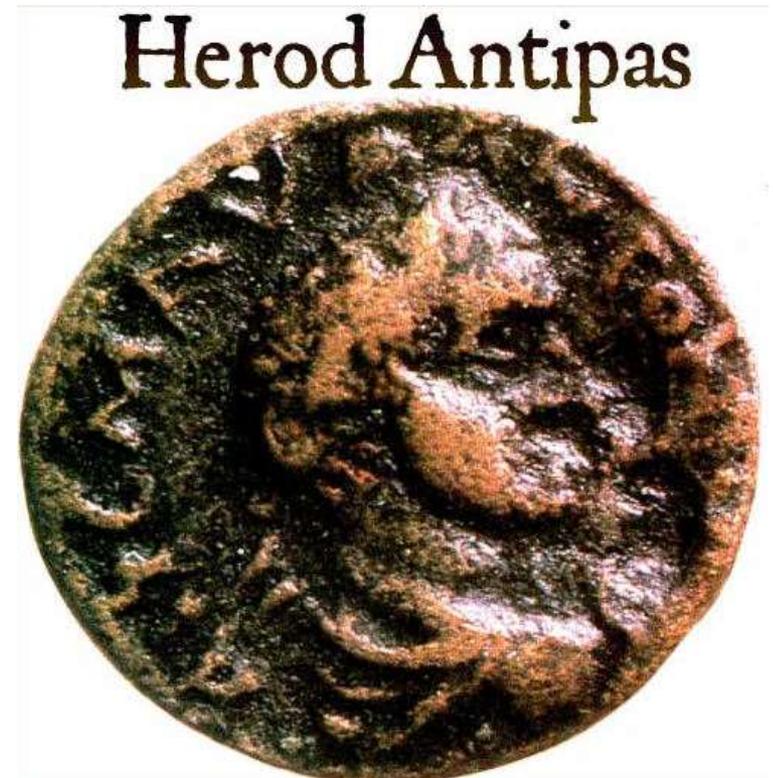
The Gospel according to Mark

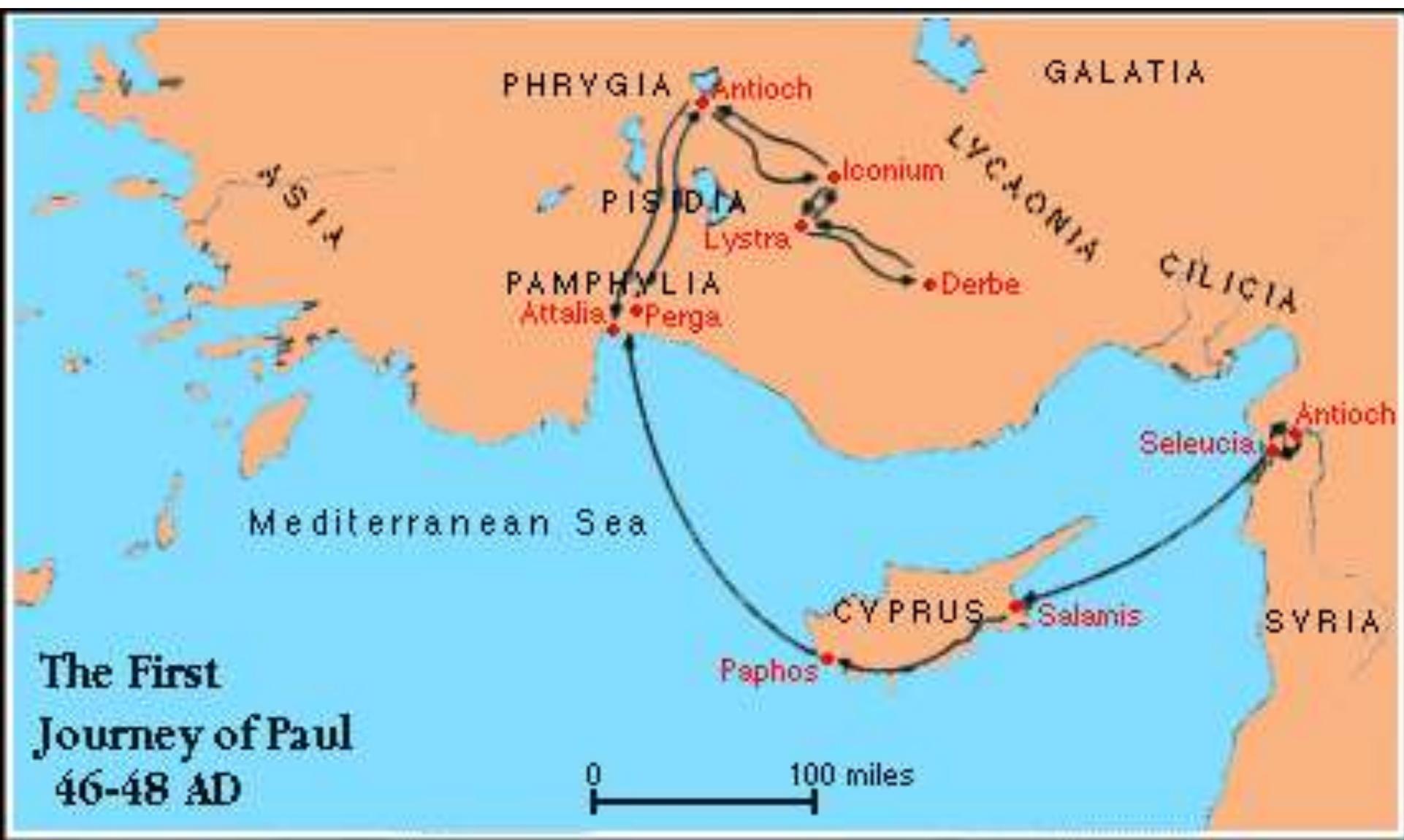
- Bishop Papias (c.AD 125) ascribed it to Mark the Evangelist, a companion and interpreter of the apostle Peter
- In Mark 14:51, 52 a quaint detail leads many to believe that the author was saying that he was actually there. Perhaps he had also observed the last supper?
- “Neaniskos” Νεανισκος – young man in his prime (under 40!) but probably around 20.

What else do we know?

- Back to Acts 12:25-13:5
- Barnabas and Paul head back to Antioch and take Mark with them
- While there the Holy Spirit sets aside the two for his work (spreading the gospel) and they take Mark with them as an assistant in AD 46
- The word *assistant* is a difficult word to translate, most think it has to do with teaching the new believers, and so supporting the 'evangelists'.

- Manaen – Isn't this interesting??
- Brought up with Herod Antipas – as a foster/step brother – the Vassal King of Judea who handed Jesus over to Pilate (Jesus called him “that fox”)
- Could be related to the Manaen who prophesied the greatness of Herod the Great as recorded by Josephus the Jewish historian





**The First
Journey of Paul
46-48 AD**

But Mark pulls out

- Acts 13:13. After they leave Cyprus to go to Perga in Pamphylia Mark goes back to Jerusalem and nothing is said about it until...
- Acts 15:37 reveals that Marks leaving for home caused a few problems and as Paul is about to head out on his next Journey, he refuses to take Mark with him. Barnabas sticks up for Mark and they go to Cyprus and Paul picks up Silas and heads off in the other direction around AD 49

So what was Marks Problem?

- People have speculated that he was..
 - Homesick
 - Worried about his mum
 - Didn't like Paul taking over from his cousin
 - Scared (2 Cor 11:26)
 - Wanted to Join Peter
 - Wasn't happy with the direction the preaching was going – i.e. that they were predominately reaching the Gentiles



HOME
SWEET
HOME





I CAN'T

KEEP

CALM

I MISS

MY MOM: '(

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This was the Big Issue

- Many in the new church struggled in coming to grips with the idea that Salvation was for people of all Nations. It is likely Mark was one of them
- Consider Peter and Cornelius ...Acts 10
- Paul had rebuked Barnabas about this (Gal 2:13)
- Acts 15 is about discussions about this
- Evidence of the Holy Spirit coming on Gentiles was that God had accepted them (baptism) and so the council rejected the idea that Christians had to become Jews to be saved

The Good news is for all



We don't know!

- What did Paul and Barnabas actually say?
- 15:39 says “it got so sharp” ...
- What did Mark feel?
- But somehow, this division, created multiplication and the church still grew
- 10 years later in AD 60 and Paul is talking about Mark with great affection (2 Tim 4:11, Col 4:10, Phil 24)..

What is more

- Mark writes the story of Jesus in Greek
- It is obviously directed at non Jewish readers as it explains Jewish Customs carefully
- The action point of his gospel is to go into *all* the world and speak to *every* creature baptising all who believe.
- And tradition asserts that he actually planted the church in Alexandria, which was to become a huge centre of Christianity in later centuries until he was martyred under Nero in AD 63

Learning from Mark

- The Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation for *all* who believe Romans 1:16
- Its not just about knowing that power, but embracing that power
- One bad decision is not the end
- 1 Thes 5:14 be patient with all men. Don't write anyone off to quick!
- Ask God to examine your thinking.