

THE Gospel of Mark

Four presentations by James Donaldson

The Gospel of Mark represents the oldest existing narrative about the life and work of Jesus, and owes its present form and structure to the work of an author Mark, who both collected some earlier materials circulating in the first century, both of an oral and written kind, before shaping it up into its present structure. Mark thus interprets and moulds the actions and words of Jesus to present his gospel to show that Jesus is both the anointed Messiah of God and one who is commissioned by God at his baptism to bring in the new age of the reign of God.

Yet Mark's writing is neither simple; nor is Mark's gospel objective. It is highly influenced by the aims of the author Mark himself, and its closeness to the tradition originally handed down is not actually known to modern scholars at all. Thus, the gospel of Mark is neither a biography of the life of Jesus of Nazareth, nor a historic account of the earthly days of Jesus.

The world into which Mark introduces his readers is thus one of religious conflicts with Jewish religious leaders who oppose him, misunderstandings about his identity; interpretations of his role as Messiah and serious uncertainties of his own chosen disciples about following him.

The reader follows this pattern of the mission of Jesus, through incomprehension, blindness, and opposition, until the unswerving mission of Jesus leads him to outright rejection, suffering and crucifixion.

From its previous position of being regarded as a simple and historical record of the life of Jesus, the Gospel of Mark is now a major focus of vigorous and creative debate and discussion.

It thus, presents the Auburn congregation together, with its gathered friends and neighbours, who support the monthly Morning Tea meetings, with a stimulating and refreshing opportunity to engage in a series of four presentations on this fascinating body of materials; during which questions and debate will be welcome and opinions shared. We shall be glad if you can come. Please join us

**Starting Thursday 4th of April and 11th April
May 9th and May 16th**