



# Mark

## “Young Lions”

*“Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. II Timothy 4:11*

Have you ever felt that you were not accepted because of your age or that you just didn’t “fit in?” Mark must have felt that way at times. All of us have heard of Mark, one of the four Evangelists and the author of one of the books of the Bible. But we have no direct quotes that he said and we know little about his personal life. Paul one time refused to let him go on a trip because he thought he was too immature. Later, Paul encouraged them to bring Mark along.

Some artists over the years have given symbolism to the four Gospel writers, but here again there is a difference as to which one symbolizes Mark. Because his book starts with John’s crying in the wilderness, and a lion roars in the wilderness, some say he is symbolized as a lion. Others say that Mark is symbolized as the ox because he portrays Christ the servant since his book essentially covers the work of Christ on this earth. Yet other source says Mark is the winged lion! Regardless of the symbolism people have attached to Mark, we know today that he was a very influential figure and wrote the book of Mark which tells the story of the work Christ did while on this earth from the time when John baptizes Christ until Christ’s death and ascension into Heaven.

Mark was important for his preaching and for writing about Christ. He was born, according to what sources tell us, to a woman named Mary, probably born in Jerusalem; but we know nothing about his father. He was a kinsman (some say cousin) of Barnabas, another person who went out to spread the Word of God with Paul after the crucifixion of Christ.

We also know that he knew Peter and, according to some sources, followed Peter around in the days before the death of Christ and recorded all he saw. According to I Peter 5:13, he probably learned about Christ at his mother’s house. Peter actually refers to him as a son, but most authorities think of this as an endearing term, not a physical son. Mark traveled with Paul on a journey, but something happened and it is three years before we hear of his traveling again. This time he accompanies only Barnabas. The Gospel tells us that Paul thought he was too young, didn’t have enough experience so he took someone else. Other times he is mentioned as being with both Paul and Barnabas and that Peter thought he was valuable to the ministry. Mark wrote for the Gentile Greek-speaking residents of the Roman Empire. Often in his writings he explains the Jewish traditions for the benefit of non-Jews.

We don’t know what Mark looked like. We don’t have any quotes from him. Actually we know very little about him personally, but we know he was a loyal follower of Christ and a young man that set out to record everything so we have the records today in the Bible. Because he said so little about himself, there are many stories about him that may or may not be true. Today many of us are like Mark in some ways. We have no direct quotes, but we have decided to follow Jesus and witness for him.

We can say his young ministry just happened, or we can say that he was chosen by God to reveal the truth to us. Just as some people today record information, we call it history, and we don’t know anything about them, but we do know that they were loyal in following the path they think they were meant to follow by God’s guidance. Oh, they will be remembered for a short time, but soon their significance will pass away for most of them, and their mark will only be a record for a while. They are the ones that lay a foundation for the rest of us to study and follow.

An old song goes “I have decided to follow Jesus; No turning back, no turning back.” That song is supposedly based on Luke 9:57 when a young man on the road approaches Christ and tells him that he will follow him. Christ responds with a very confusing answer for us today, but one that essentially says that the road will not be easy.

A quote from a poem by Robert Frost talks to me about our choice in life. It is called “The Road Not Taken.”

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I marked the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

The road we choose in life is often a difficult decision. Some people struggle for a long period of time before settling down, as they say, to what they really want to do on this earth. Others seem to have an easy choice. But whichever path we take, we need to learn to follow Christ and that will make the choice and the road much easier.

Prayer: Dear Lord, Please guide us from childhood through adulthood to follow You and to constantly seek Your will so that we may serve You and someday see You in the Heavenly home You have prepared for us who believe. Amen.

1. How old do we have to be to be a follower of Christ? Do we have to “be somebody?”
2. Can an older person deter a young child in leading the correct life? How?
3. How can we lead the young adult to find Christ and do His work on earth? Do we have to be in a certain position? Or, is it possible for every man or woman?

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