THE QUESTION

Are Mark and John Mark the same person?

Asked by a THF member on May 18, 2026 · published November 9, 2026, updated November 11, 2026 · 6 numbered quotations · the 9 early Christian passages and 108 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/are-mark-and-john-mark-the-same-person

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

Most likely yes. Dionysius of Alexandria names a man in Acts called John whose surname was Mark, a helper of Barnabas and Paul. Early writers call the Gospel writer Mark Peter's son and interpreter. No passage here says outright that Peter's Mark is this John Mark, so that last link is our reading.

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POINT 1 OF 4

Acts gives one man two names

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Dionysius, a 3rd-century bishop, is sorting out men named John. He points to one in the Book of Acts whose surname was Mark, who went with Barnabas and Paul as their helper (Acts 12:25; 13:5). So John and Mark are two names for one man.

1 “Besides this, there is another John mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, whose surname was Mark. Barnabas and Paul took him with them as a companion, and it is also said of him, "And they had also John as their minister."”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Dionysius of Alexandria,** *Miscellaneous Fragments* 1 (c. 232–265 AD) **Source 7, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 4

The Paul and Barnabas split was over Mark

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

An early outline of Acts sums up the split between Paul and Barnabas in one line: it was because of Mark. Acts 15:37 names the man Barnabas wanted to take as John called Mark, so the outline uses the short name for the same man.

2 “The disagreement of Paul with Barnabas because of Mark.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Pamphilus,** *Exposition on the Acts of the Apostles* 1 (c. 250–309 AD) **Source 8, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
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POINT 3 OF 4

Peter called the Gospel writer Mark his son

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen says the second Gospel was written by Mark under Peter's teaching, and he points to Peter's letter (1 Peter 5:13), where Peter calls Mark his son. A fragment listed under Clement of Alexandria likewise moves from Peter's greeting from his son Marcus to Mark, Peter's follower, who wrote the Gospel.

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3 “The second Gospel written was the one according to Mark. Mark wrote it according to Peter's instruction. In his General Epistle, Peter acknowledged him as a son, saying, "The church that is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son."”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Commentary on Matthew* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 6, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

4 “Marcus, my son, sends you greetings. Mark, Peter's follower, wrote what is called the Gospel according to Mark while Peter was publicly preaching the Gospel at Rome before some of Caesar's equites and giving many testimonies about Christ.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Fragments* 1 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 4, page 4** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 4

The earliest writers make Mark Peter's interpreter

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Papias passes on what an elder said: Mark had not heard the Lord or followed him, but later went with Peter and wrote things down as he remembered them. Irenaeus, in the 2nd century, calls Mark Peter's disciple and interpreter. Neither gives Mark the name John.

5 “For he neither heard the Lord nor followed Him directly. But later, as I mentioned, he accompanied Peter, who adjusted his teachings to the needs of his listeners, without intending to provide a systematic account of the Lord’s sayings. Therefore, Mark did not err in writing some things as he remembered them.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Papias,** *Fragments* (c. 95–130 AD) **Source 1, page 4** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

6 “Matthew also wrote a Gospel in the Hebrew language while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, wrote down what Peter had preached.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book III* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 2, page 4** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- None of these passages says in plain words that the Mark who wrote the Gospel, Peter's son, is the John surnamed Mark whom Dionysius names from Acts.
- These passages do not quote the letters that call Mark the cousin of Barnabas or a useful helper to Paul.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 9 early Christian passages and 108 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–9, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 10–93, in Bible order), then 24 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *9 passages from 6 writers*

Papias, *c. 95–130 AD · source 1*

1 *Fragments* **Quote 5, page 3** “those who were with them, and he also asserts that he personally heard Aristion and the presbyter John. He frequently mentions them by name, and in his writings, he shares… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 2–3*

2 *Against Heresies: Book III* **Quote 6, page 3** “and Paul were preaching in Rome and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, wrote down what Peter had preached. Luke… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *Against Heresies: Book III* (1885 English; on point 4) “Wherefore also Mark, the interpreter and follower of Peter, does thus commence his Gospel narrative: “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 4–5*

4 *Fragments* 1 **Quote 4, page 3** “my son, sends you greetings. Mark, Peter's follower, wrote what is called the Gospel according to Mark while Peter was publicly preaching the Gospel at Rome before some of… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?* 5 (on point 3) “These things are written in the Gospel according to Mark… [continues online] **read ›**

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Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · source 6*

6 *Commentary on Matthew* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 3** “so does Mark my son. 1 Peter 5:13 And third, was that according to Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, which he composed for the converts from the Gentiles… [continues online] **read ›**

Dionysius of Alexandria, *c. 232–265 AD · source 7*

7 *Miscellaneous Fragments* 1 **Quote 1, page 2** “it is not written that he came with them into Asia… [continues online] **read ›**

Pamphilus, *c. 250–309 AD · sources 8–9*

8 *Exposition on the Acts of the Apostles* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 2, page 2** “dissension of Paul with Barnabas on account of Mark… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Exposition on the Acts of the Apostles* 1 (1885 English; on point 1) “the sending of Barnabas to the brethren in Antioch… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *84 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

10 **Leviticus 13:6** The priest shall look at him on the seventh day, the second time; and behold, if the plague is dim and the plague has not spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean, for it is a mark; and when he has washed his garments, he shall be clean. **read ›**

11 **Deuteronomy 6:5** And you shall love the Lord your God with all your mind, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. **read ›**

12 **1 Kings 18:34** And he said, “Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time. And he said, “Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time. **read ›**

13 **1 Chronicles 8:2** and Rapha the fifth. **read ›**

14 **1 Chronicles 12:11** Jethi the sixth, Eliab the seventh, (Septuagint 1 Chronicles 12:12 (1 Chronicles 12:11 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

15 **Nehemiah 10:37** And the firstfruits of our grain, and the fruit of every tree, of wine and of oil, we will bring to the priests, to the treasury of the house of God; and the tithe of our land to the Levites; and the Levites themselves will take the tithes in all the cities of our labor. (Septuagint 2 Esdras 20:38 (Nehemiah 10:37 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

16 **Proverbs 2:1** Son, if you receive the saying of my commandment and hide it with you, **read ›**

17 **Proverbs 2:3** for if you call upon wisdom, and give your voice to understanding, **read ›**

18 **Proverbs 2:4** and if you seek her like silver, and search her out like treasures, **read ›**

19 **Proverbs 6:14** A perverted heart devises evils; at all times such a man stirs up troubles for a city. **read ›**

20 **Proverbs 14:5** A faithful witness does not lie, but an unrighteous witness kindles falsehoods. **read ›**

21 **Proverbs 14:19** The evil will fall before the good, and the ungodly will wait at the doors of the righteous. **read ›**

22 **Proverbs 15:22** Those who do not honor councils put off their thoughts, but counsel remains in the hearts of those who take counsel. **read ›**

23 **Proverbs 15:24** The thoughts of the man of understanding are ways of life, that he may turn aside from Hades and be saved. **read ›**

24 **Proverbs 16:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

25 **Proverbs 16:2** All the works of the humble are manifest before God, but the ungodly will perish in an evil day. **read ›**

26 **Proverbs 16:9** All the works of the Lord are with righteousness, and the ungodly man is kept for the evil day. **read ›**

27 **Proverbs 16:12** An evildoer is an abomination to a king, for the throne of rule is prepared with righteousness. **read ›**

28 **Proverbs 16:19** Better is the meek in spirit with lowliness than he who divides spoils with the arrogant. **read ›**

29 **Proverbs 16:21** The wise and understanding they call worthless, but those who are sweet in speech will hear more. **read ›**

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30 **Proverbs 16:23** The heart of the wise will understand what comes from his own mouth, and on his lips he will carry good judgment. **read ›**

31 **Ecclesiastes 2:23** for all his days are days of pains, and his distraction is one of anger; even at night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity. **read ›**

32 **Ecclesiastes 9:17** The words of the wise are heard in quietness more than the cry of those in power in foolishness. **read ›**

33 **Ecclesiastes 9:18** Wisdom is better than weapons of war, and one sinner will destroy much goodness. **read ›**

34 **Ecclesiastes 10:12** The words of a wise man's mouth are grace, but the lips of a fool will swallow him up. **read ›**

35 **Tobit 12:20** And now give thanks to God, because I am going up to him who sent me; and write all that has been accomplished in a book." **read ›**

36 **Wisdom of Sirach 34:9** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

37 **Wisdom of Sirach 50:27** Jesus the son of Sirach of Jerusalem has engraved in this book instruction in understanding and knowledge, he who poured forth wisdom from his heart. **read ›**

38 **1 Maccabees 2:1** In those days Mattathias son of John, son of Simeon, a priest of the sons of Joarib, arose from Jerusalem and settled in Modein. **read ›**

39 **1 Maccabees 2:3** Simon, called Thassi; **read ›**

40 **1 Maccabees 2:4** Judas, called Maccabeus; **read ›**

41 **1 Maccabees 5:21** So Simon went into Galilee and fought many battles with the nations, and the nations were crushed before him. **read ›**

42 **1 Maccabees 5:55** Now in the days when Judas and Jonathan were in Gilead, and Simon his brother was in Galilee opposite Ptolemais, **read ›**

43 **1 Maccabees 6:14** Then he called Philip, one of his friends, and set him over all his kingdom. **read ›**

44 **1 Maccabees 9:35** And Jonathan sent his brother, a leader of the people, and asked his friends the Nabateans to let them leave their large baggage in the Nabateans' keeping. **read ›**

45 **1 Maccabees 9:38** And they remembered John their brother, and went up and hid under the cover of the mountain. **read ›**

46 **1 Maccabees 10:75** And he camped against Joppa, and the men of the city shut him out, because a garrison of Apollonius was in Joppa; and they fought against it. **read ›**

47 **1 Maccabees 11:59** And he made his brother Simon general from the Ladder of Tyre to the borders of Egypt. **read ›**

48 **1 Maccabees 11:64** He went to meet them, but left his brother Simon in the country. **read ›**

49 **1 Maccabees 12:47** He kept three thousand men with him, of whom he left two thousand in Galilee, while a thousand went with him. **read ›**

50 **1 Maccabees 13:53** Simon saw that John his son was a grown man, and he made him leader of all the forces, and John lived in Gazara. **read ›**

51 **1 Maccabees 14:5** With all his glory he took Joppa as a harbor and made an entrance to the islands of the sea. **read ›**

52 **1 Maccabees 14:19** And these were read before the assembly in Jerusalem. **read ›**

53 **1 Maccabees 15:22** He wrote the same things to King Demetrius and to Attalus, Ariarathes, and Arsaces, **read ›**

54 **1 Maccabees 15:24** And they wrote a copy of these to Simon the high priest. **read ›**

55 **1 Maccabees 16:1** John went up from Gazara and reported to Simon his father what Cendebeus was doing. **read ›**

56 **1 Maccabees 16:2** Simon called his two eldest sons, Judas and John, and said to them, "I and my brothers and my father's house have fought the enemies of Israel from our youth to this day, and it has prospered in our hands to deliver Israel many times. **read ›**

57 **1 Maccabees 16:9** At that time Judas, John's brother, was wounded; but John pursued them until he came to Kedron, which Cendebeus had built. **read ›**

58 **1 Maccabees 16:12** for he was the high priest's son-in-law. **read ›**

59 **1 Maccabees 16:19** He sent others to Gazara to do away with John, and he sent letters to the commanders of thousands to come to him, so that he might give them silver and gold and gifts. **read ›**

60 **1 Maccabees 16:21** But someone ran ahead and reported to John at Gazara that his father and his brothers had perished, and that "he has sent to kill you also." **read ›**

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61 **1 Maccabees 16:23** The rest of the acts of John, and his wars, and the brave deeds that he did, and the building of the walls that he built, and his achievements, **read ›**

62 **2 Maccabees 2:23** all this, set forth by Jason of Cyrene in five books, we will attempt to condense into a single work. **read ›**

63 **2 Maccabees 3:26** Two other young men also appeared to him, remarkable in strength, most beautiful in glory, and splendid in dress, who stood on either side of him and flogged him continually, laying many blows on him. **read ›**

64 **2 Maccabees 4:22** He was received magnificently by Jason and the city, and he entered with torchlight and shouting. Then after this he marched with his army into Phoenicia. **read ›**

65 **2 Maccabees 5:23** and at Gerizim, Andronicus; and besides these, Menelaus, who lorded it over the citizens worse than the others, having a hostile attitude toward his fellow citizens the Jews. **read ›**

66 **2 Maccabees 9:17** and besides all this, he would become a Jew and would go through every inhabited place proclaiming the power of God. **read ›**

67 **2 Maccabees 9:18** But when his sufferings did not in any way cease, for the just judgment of God had come upon him, he gave up hope for himself and wrote to the Jews the letter written below, which had the form of a plea. It read as follows: **read ›**

68 **2 Maccabees 10:12** For Ptolemy, who was called Macron, had taken the lead in showing justice to the Jews because of the wrong that had been done to them, and had tried to deal with them peacefully. **read ›**

69 **2 Maccabees 14:17** Simon the brother of Judas had engaged Nicanor, but had been checked for a short time because of the sudden dismay of the enemy. **read ›**

70 **2 Maccabees 14:38** For in the former times of separation he had been brought to trial for Judaism, and he had risked body and soul for Judaism with all earnestness. **read ›**

71 **Mark 1:1** The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. **read ›**

72 **Mark 1:14** Now after John was taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, **read ›**

73 **Mark 1:28** The report of him went out immediately throughout the surrounding region of Galilee. **read ›**

74 **Mark 1:36** Simon and those who were with him searched for him. **read ›**

75 **Mark 1:37** They found him and told him, “Everyone is looking for you.” **read ›**

76 **Mark 3:16** Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); **read ›**

77 **Mark 5:37** He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. **read ›**

78 **Mark 6:14** King Herod heard of him, for Jesus’ name had become known. He said, “John the Baptist has risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him.” **read ›**

79 **Mark 8:28** They answered, “John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” **read ›**

80 **Mark 9:5** Peter answered Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” **read ›**

81 **Mark 10:1** He rose from there and came to the borders of Judea by way of the region beyond the Jordan. Crowds gathered to him again, and, as was his custom, he taught them again. **read ›**

82 **Mark 16:7** But go, tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He goes before you into Galilee. There you will see him, as he said to you.’” **read ›**

83 **John 20:3** Therefore Peter and the other disciple went out, and they went toward the tomb. **read ›**

84 **John 21:24** This is the disciple who testifies about these things, and wrote these things. We know that his witness is true. **read ›**

85 **Acts 4:36** Joses, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), a Levite from Cyprus by birth, **read ›**

86 **Acts 8:1** Saul consented to his killing. That day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. **read ›**

87 **Acts 12:12** Thinking about that, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. **read ›**

88 **Acts 12:25** Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their service, also taking with them John who was called Mark. **read ›**

89 **Acts 15:37** Barnabas planned to take John, who was called Mark, with them also. **read ›**

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90 **Acts 15:39** Then the contention grew so sharp that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, **read ›**

91 **Colossians 4:10** Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, receive him. **read ›**

92 **2 Timothy 4:11** Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. **read ›**

93 **1 Peter 5:13** She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you. So does Mark, my son. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *24 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Ecclesiastes 5:2

Song of Solomon 3:6

Isaiah 65:5

Jeremiah 23:20 · 23:30

Daniel 10:16 · 10:18

Matthew 1:18 · 3:13 · 3:15 · 3:16 · 5:13 · 5:18 · 5:42 · 6:1 · 10:23 · 10:29 · 16:23 · 17:1

Mark 9:2

Luke 19:12

John 2:1 · 2:4 · 3:6

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Are Mark and John Mark the same person?” on May 18, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY