NT SURVEY: GOSPELS/ACTS

WEEK 2: MARK

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE SURVEY SERIES

- We need to know our Bibles from front to back.
    - What implications does this have for my life?
    - What are the major themes in each book of the Bible?
    - How does each book fit within the overall framework of the Bible?
    - When I read each section of Scripture, what are commonly misread passages?
- Each year we will highlight each part of Scripture, both its importance and profitability (2 Tim 3:16-17).
- Specifically, this series will focus on the Gospels and the Book of Acts. These books primarily show us Jesus and how His church was established. They are narrative and they are history, but demonstrate important theological realities that are still true for the church today.
- Why are Matthew, Mark, and Luke so similar?
- Is everything that happens in Acts normative for today?
- If a friend asked you about what Mark teaches us about Jesus, could you help her?
- **Class Schedule:**
    - November 1: Matthew
    - **November 8: Mark**
    - November 15: Luke
    - November 22: John
    - November 29: Acts 1-7
    - December 6: Acts 8-12
    - December 13: Acts 13-28

INTRODUCTION TO MARK

- The gospel of Mark is not a biography in the modern sense of the term. It is a historical narrative concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ as the "good news" of salvation. His story constitutes the very heart of Christianity's unique message. Mark introduces Jesus Christ in His official and public career as the busy Servant of the Lord. His initial identification of Jesus as "the Son of God" (1:1) underlines the basic truth that His mighty ministry must be viewed in the light of His unique personality. The busy Servant of the Lord was in truth the Son of God. What He did proved who He was. What He wrought authenticated what He taught. Mark's gospel "presents the history of Christ as the working, manifestation, and influence of the God-man" (Lange, 3). [1]
- Mark describes the singular focus of Jesus Christ, to obey the Father through completing His ministry and mission. He does so even with the limitations of a human body. Although fully God and worthy of all power, glory, and worship, He served people with compassion and love, regardless of His physical needs.
- As our model, we find in the pages of Mark the type of followers we should strive to be. For His glory and the love and building up of the body of Christ.

Author and Date

- Unlike the epistles, the Gospels do not name their authors. The early church fathers unanimously affirmed that Mark wrote the second Gospel.
- Evangelical scholars have suggested dates for the writing of Mark's gospel ranging from A.D. 50 to 70. A date before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70 is required by the comment of Jesus in Mark 13:22 ("And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down.")
- Mark appears multiple times in the book of Acts, where his name is written as John (Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37)
- He was a cousin to Barnabas (Col. 4:10), and his mother's home was a meeting place for the early church (Acts 12:12).
- He was a companion of Paul and Barnabas on Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 12:25; 13:5), he deserted them along the way in Perga and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Paul later refused to take Mark with him on his second missionary journey, leading to the separation of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:38-40).

[1] D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Gospels and Acts*, vol. 1, An Introduction to the New Testament (Gabriel Publishing, 2003), 94.
[2] John MacArthur, The MacArthur Bible Commentary

- Mark later proved himself to Paul such that he instructed the Colossians to welcome him if he came (Col. 4:10). Paul identified Mark as a fellow worker (Philem. 24) and later asked Timothy to bring him to Paul because he was useful to Paul in his ministry (2 Tim. 4:11).
- Peter frequently visited Mark's home (Acts 12:12-17). It is very likely that Mark's relationship with Peter began there. It was such a deep and influential relationship that Peter called Mark his son (1 Pet. 5:13).

Background and Setting

- Mark seems to have written the gospel for Gentile believers, particularly Roman Christians, at the request of Roman Christians.
- Marks gospel was intended for non-Jewish readers seems evident from the fact that, in contrast to Mattthew, no mention is made of the Law or its connection with the New Covenant (cf. Mt. 5, 17-19; 10, 5, 19, 9), little is said about the fulfillment of prophecy, and the genealogy of Jesus was left out. Mark carefully explains Jewish customs and terms and translates Aramaic words and sentences whenever they are introduced (cf. 3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 14:36; 15:22) When mentioning Simon of Cyrene (15:21), Mark identifies him as the father of Rufus, a prominent member of the church at Rome (Rom. 16:21)[2].

Characteristics of this Gospel

Brief
Action
Vivid
Real
Theological
Interested in Gentiles

STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE

Prologue (1:1–13)
- A. Introduction (1:1)
- B. John the Baptist Prepares the Way (1:2–8)
- C. The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus (1:9–13)

Part I: The Authority of the Messiah (1:14–8:26)
- A. The Kingdom Authority of the Messiah (1:14–3:6)
- B. The Disciple-Family of the Messiah and those "Outside" (3:7–6:6a)
- C. The Expanding Mission of the Messiah (6:6b–8:26)

Part II: The Suffering Way of the Messiah (8:27–15:47)
- A. Revelation of the Messiah's Suffering (8:27–10:52)
- B. The Messiah Confronts Jerusalem (11:1–13:37)
- C. The Passion of the Messiah in Jerusalem (14:1–15:47)

Epilogue: The Resurrection Announced (16:1–8)

KEY PEOPLE IN MARK

- Jesus
- The 12
- Pilate
- Religious Leaders
- John the Baptist

THEME OF MARK

- Marks purpose for writing is found in the first verse, to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (1:1).
- Mark identifies Jesus as the suffering Servant of the Lord (10:45).
- He focuses on deeds, emphasizing the service and sacrifice of Jesus more than His teaching.
- The first eight chapters demonstrate that Jesus is the Christ based on His authoritative words and His miraculous deeds culminating in Peters declaration that Jesus is the Christ (8:29). The final eight chapters further declare He is the Christ on the basis of His sacrificial death and resurrection.
- In so declaring the record of Christ's authority, the miracles He performed, His sacrificial death and His resurrection, Mark lets the ministry of Christ produce its own witness that He is indeed the son of God and the Savior of the world.
- Mark's gospel is basically evangelistic, that the readers would become converts to the Christian faith.

---

[1] D. Edmond Hiebert, The Gospels and Acts, vol. 1, An Introduction to the New Testament (Gabriel Publishing, 2003), 94.
[2] John MacArthur, The MacArthur Bible Commentary (Thomas Nelson, n.d.)

UNIQUE TO MARK:

- Mark's gospel is not written from His own eyewitness account, but rather very likely from Peter's teachings and sermons (Justin Martyr, about A.D. 150, referred to the Gospel of Mark as "the memoirs of Peter", Irenaeus, writing about A.D. 185, called Mark "the disciple and interpreter of Peter", and recorded that the second Gospel consisted of what Peter preached about Christ.
- Mark discloses the humanity of Jesus Christ more clearly than the other Gospel.
    - Jesus's human emotions (1:41; 3:5; 6:34; 8:12; 9:36)
    - His human limitations (4:38; 11:12; 13:32).
- Mark is fast paced; he used the word translated "immediately" more than the other three Gospels combined (42 times). Marks use of "immediately" carries the meaning, "at once," "straightway," or "right away". He omits the long discourses found in the other gospels and mainly gives the point of Jesus' teaching. He also omits Jesus' genealogy and birth but begins with where His public ministry began.

A DAY WITH JESUS

A day in the life of our Lord and Savior (Mark 1:16-39)

- Jesus calls four of the 12 (Mark 1:16-20)
- Jesus enters the synagogue and teaches (Mark 1:21-22)
- Jesus casts out an unclean spirit (Mark 1:23-27)
- Jesus goes into the house of Simon and heals Simon's mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-30)
- "Evening came after the sun had set" (1:32), the whole city gathered at the door of Simons house, Jesus healed many who were ill and demon possessed (Mark 1:32-34)
- "And in the early morning, while it was still dark" (Mark 1:35), went by Himself to pray alone.
- While Jesus was praying alone, Simon searched for Him and found Him, Jesus leads them to go with Him to preach in the nearby towns (Mark 1:36-39).
- **Questions**
    - How would you describe Jesus after this brief account?
    - In light of our Lord's commands to us to put off the old man and put on the new man, to not be conformed to the world, to be transformed by the renewal of our minds, to love one another…, does the account of a day with Jesus affect your walk with Him?

SERVANTHOOD

A True Disciples Life, Mark 8:34-37

Self-denial, suffering, and obedience

- A true disciple must be willing to disown him/herself and give up everything for Jesus' sake, mortifying our sin, and fully submitting our desires, wills, goals and agendas to Christ as His slaves (Rom. 6:22;1 Cor. 7:22).
- A true disciple of Christ must be willing to endure persecution, rejection, hardship, and even death (John 15:18-21; cf. Matt. 10:24-25). Willing to pay any price for the eternal life given us (1 Pet. 4:12-14).
- A true disciple of Christ must pursue loyal continual, growing obedience to Him (John 14:15, 23)
    - Mortifying the sin in our lives (Rom. 6:11; Eph. 4:1-21)
    - Giving greater and greater control to the Holy Spirit through the Word (Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:16a; Rom. 12:1-2)
    - Loving one another as Christ loved (Phil. 2:3-4; 4:1-3; 1 Pet. 4:8-10)

PERSON OF CHRIST

- The Son of God (1:1)
- The Christ (8:29)
- The Son of Man (10:45)
- The suffering servant (10:45)

INTERPRETIVE CHALLENGE: WHAT TO DO WITH CHAPTER 16:9-20

- Whether Mark 16:9-20 is the original ending or not is a source of confusion among Biblical scholars for centuries.
- There are ancient manuscripts that indicate it is and ancient manuscripts that end Mark 16 at verse 8, and there are some manuscripts that contain a shorter ending.
- Some early church fathers such as Eusebius and Bible translator Jerome both stated that most of the Greek manuscripts available in their day didn't contain Mark 16:9-20. Still others (Irenaeus and Tatian) support the inclusion of Mark 16:9-10; and others (Clement, Origen, and Cyprian) seem unaware of the existence of the "long ending"

- Internal evidence seems to cast doubt regarding the authenticity of the long ending. The transition from verse 8 to verse 9 is awkward as the focus of verse 9 shifts to Mary Magdalene. Peter was the focus of verse 7 but was not mentioned again in verses 9-20. The vocabulary style and structure of the longer ending isn't consistent with the rest of the gospel. There are eighteen words in this section that are not used elsewhere in Mark. For example, the title "Lord Jesus" is used here (v19) but never used anywhere else in Marks account (cf. James R Edwards, The Gospel According to Mark, Pillar New Testament Commentary [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 498-991
- Most modern scholars do not believe the long and short endings are what Mark wrote and that he likely intended to end the Gospel at verse 8
- Acceptance of the conclusion that the long ending was not written by Mark leaves open two alternative positions: 1) that the gospel, terminating with verse 8, is incomplete; 2) that Mark intended to conclude the gospel with verse 8.
- Textual criticism – used by biblical scholars to analyze and compare ancient biblical manuscripts to determine the contents of the original autographs. This process not only examines external evidence (ancient manuscripts of the New Testament) but also internal evidence (does the text align with other texts in the scriptures, does the text follow the writer's style and use of words, does it contradict other texts…).
- Including ancient manuscripts (some only 25 to 50 years removed from the original autographs), writings from early church fathers, and ancient translations there are over 32,000 New Testament documents
- Because so many New Testament manuscripts have survived, biblical scholars are able to determine the original text with an extremely high degree of accuracy (cf. Archibald T. Roberston, An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament [Nashville: Broadman, 1925], 22).
- Such textual scrutiny gives believers today great confidence in the integrity of their Bibles, because it not only identifies what was original to the text but also exposes any errors or alterations.

[1]The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Mark 9-16, Moody Publishers, n.d.