

**THE GOSPEL
ACCORDING TO
MARK**

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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL OF MARK

A. Purpose of the study:

1. The class is to study carefully the Gospel According to Mark.
2. To note particularly the grace and power exhibited by our Lord in Mark's account.
3. We should gain a greater vision of duty and devotion to the cause for which Christ gladly gave his life.

B. Who wrote the book?

1. The book is anonymous.
2. Mark is mentioned in early writings as its author.
3. Earliest reference is by Eusebius of Caesarea, "Father of Church History," (c.A.D.270–340) who quoted the lost work, "Exegesis of the Lord's Oracles," written by Papias, bishop of Hierapolis (c. A.D. 140) who, in turn, quoted "the Elder." "The Elder" is a name also used by Eusebius to refer to the apostle John.

a) "The Elder said this also: Mark, who became Peter's interpreter, wrote accurately, though not in order, all that he remembered of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had neither heard the Lord nor been one of his followers, but afterwards, as I said, he had followed Peter, who used to compose his discourses with a view to the needs of his hearers, but not as though he were drawing up a connected account of the Lord's sayings. So Mark made no mistake in thus recording some things just as he remembered them. For he was careful of this one thing, to omit none of the things he had heard and to make no untrue statements therein."

b) Some important points from Papias:

- (1) Behind Mark is the apostolic account and authority of Peter. 1 Pet.1: 12.
- (2) Mark did not follow a chronological sequence in his book.
- (3) Mark was careful to make an accurate account.

C. Some facts about John Mark.

1. He is mentioned eight times in the N.T.: four times in Acts, three in Paul's epistles, and once by Peter.
2. He was the son of a well-known woman, named Mary, in whose house prayer was being held. Acts 12: 12.
3. He was also a cousin to Barnabas. Col. 4: 10.
4. Peter called Mark his "son." 1 Peter 5:13. Probably means Peter converted Mark.
5. Mark went with Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem to Antioch. Acts 12: 25.
6. Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Acts 13:5,13.
7. Mark's leaving them did not please Paul.

a) Paul refused to take him along on the next journey. Acts 15:36-41.

(1) Paul "thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work." v.38.

(a) A "sharp contention" arose over this. v. 39

(b) However they did not allow it to hinder the work.

(c) Nor did it become a wedge of division in the church in Antioch. They did not attempt to line up brethren, pro and con, on this issue.

(d) Sowing discord among brethren is an "abomination" to God. Prov. 6: 16-19.

(e) Neither Barnabas nor Paul "gave over" to the other.

(2) The work of the Lord was not hindered; but rather increased. v.39-41.

(a) Barnabas took John Mark as his partner.

(b) Paul selected Silas.

(3) It is refreshing to note that Mark was later restored to Paul's confidence, and useful to him for the ministry. Phile. 24; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11.

CHAPTER 1

D. Lesson Setting

1. Time of events in this chapter: A.D. 27 and 28.
 - a) Our present calendar follows a system of dating that attempted to recognize the birth of Christ as its beginning point.
 - b) It was not until the sixth century A.D. that such a calendar was first adopted.

(1) Dionysius Exiguus, a learned monk, introduced the birth of Christ as the starting point of computation for the calendar.

(2) He made a wrong calculation and missed the year of the birth of Christ by at least four years; hence the personal ministry of Jesus began c. A.D. 27 when Jesus was 30 years old. Lk. 3:23.

2. Location of John the Baptist's ministry: "the wilderness of Judaea." Matt. 3: 1.

3. Mark contains no record of events of Christ's life until the ministry of John the Baptist.

E. Mark's Beginning Point: John The Baptist. 1:1-3.

1. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ" does not mean Mark is starting at the very point of origin of the gospel. Eph. 3:8-11.

a) The other three writers of the life of Christ mention other important events that preceded these, but this is the point at which Mark begins his narrative.

b) Though Mark does not mention the virgin birth, his language

here says be confidently believed Jesus to be God's Son.

2. "Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet," v.2, ASV, "in the prophets," KJV.

(1) There are two quotations here: Mal. 3:1 and Isa. 40:3.

(2) The essential part of the quotation is from Isaiah.

(3) "My messenger" shows the mission of John was from God, who sent him. John 1:6.

(4) John's task was to prepare the people for the coming of Christ. The language is similar to describing the practice of preparing a road for the coming of kings.

F. The Message and Mission of John The Baptist. 1:4-8.

1. John "preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins."

a) John was the first to preach baptism. That term means an immersion.

b) It was "baptism of repentance," that is, growing out of repentance. Cf. Matt. 3: 8.

(1) His audiences were Jews who were already believers in God, not in Christ.

(2) They were taught also to believe that Jesus would come after John. Acts 19:4.

2. "And there went out unto him all the country of Judaea, and all they of Jerusalem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." 1: 5.

a) John preached in "the wilderness" rather than in the populated cities.

b) There was great interest.

(1) "All" means great numbers were baptized.

(2) There were exceptions; however in refusing, they rejected the counsel of God against themselves. Lk. 7:29,30.

c) "Confess" means "to say the same thing, admission of a charge of their guilt."

3. The baptism of John and the baptism of the great commission in Acts 2:38 are both “unto” remission of sins. Goodspeed: “in order to have your sins forgiven.”

4. Some differences between John’s baptism and Christ’s baptism

a) John’s disciples’ belief differs: They believed “Christ will come” vs. Christ has come. Acts 19: 4.

b) Confession differs: Confessed their sins vs. now confess Christ Mark 1: 5; Rom. 10:8-10.

c) John’s baptism was temporary to prepare the way; vs. Christ’s baptism commanded till end of world Matt. 28:18-20.

d) John’s baptism, though from God, was in no name vs. baptism of the great commission in Jesus’ name. Acts 19: 5.

e) John’s baptism did not promise “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” as does baptism in the name of Christ. Acts 2:38. See also Acts 19: 1-4.

5. John the Baptist’s appearance and message. 1:5-15.

a) John caused a stir, because he was dressed in an ascetic fashion. Matt. 11: 7-11.

(1) “Camel’s hair.” A coarse cloth.

(2) “Leather girdle.”

b) John preached, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” Matt. 3:2.

(1) At least 84 preachers preached the kingdom was “at hand” before the death of Jesus.

(a) John the Baptist. Matt. 3:2.

(b) Jesus Christ. Matt. 4: 17.

(c) The twelve apostles. Matt. 10:5-7.

(d) Seventy others. Lk. 10: 1-11.

c) Widespread interest caused some to have mistaken idea about John.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN	THE BAPTISM OF THE GREAT COMMISSION
Believed Christ "Will Come." Acts 19:4.	Now Must Believe Christ "Has Come." Acts 19:4.
Confessed Their Sins. Mark 1:5	Confess Jesus Christ Is Lord. Rom.10: 8-10
John's Baptism Was Temporary. Mark 1:3; John 3:30.	To Continue Till The End Of The World. Matt.28:18-20.
Although Commanded Of God (Lk.7:29-30), It Was Not "In The Name Of The Lord Jesus." Acts 19:5.	Baptized "In The Name Of The Lord Jesus." Acts 19:5. Also "Into The Name" Of The Father, Son, And Holy Spirit. Matt.28:19-20.
Did Not Promise The Gift Of The Holy Spirit. John 7:39.	Promised "The Gift Of The Holy Spirit" To Those Baptized. Acts 2:38,39. Acts 19:4.

(1) Some thought he was the Messiah. Lk. 3:11-17.
Authorities in Jerusalem sent a committee to inquire if John were the Christ. John 1:19-27.

(2) He replied he was "a voice."

(3) Preachers today should take heed of this.

(4) Note John's humility. Though the greatest man who ever lived. Matt. 11:11. "There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." 1:7.

(5) John said, "I baptized you in water; but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit." 1:8.

(6) Jesus later said Spirit baptism was a promise John made to the apostles. Acts 1: 4-5.

d) Water baptism vs. Holy Spirit baptism

(a) Men administered John's baptism. Acts 1:5. Vs. Christ the only administrator of Holy Spirit baptism. John 1:33-34.

(b) John's baptism was performed in water Mark 1:4,5 vs. "Element" of Spirit baptism is the Holy Spirit. Matt. 3:11.

(c) There was a resurrection with water baptism. Rom. 6:3-5. Vs. No resurrection in Spirit baptism.

(d) Water baptism was a command to be obeyed vs. a promise to the apostles who were at John's baptism Acts 1:1-11; Lk. 24:46-49.

(e) Remission of sins promised at water baptism vs. Purpose of Spirit baptism was not to save, but to guide the apostles into all truth. John 16:13;14:26.

(f) Now there is only one baptism and it is water baptism in Jesus' name. Eph. 4:5. vs. ceasing of H. Sp. Baptism before Eph. 4: 4-6 was written in A. D. 62 or 63. "There is (present tense) one baptism."

(g) Water baptism is for all the world. Mk. 16:15-16. vs. only two cases specified in Bible of H. Sp. Baptism; therefore not for all. John 14:15-17.

HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM	WATER BAPTISM
Only Christ Could Administer Holy Spirit Baptism. John 1:33-34.	Administrators Were Men. Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:18-20.
"Element" Is The Holy Spirit. Matt. 3:11.	Element Is Water. Mark 1:4-5.
No Resurrection In This Baptism.	Not Only Immersion, But Also A Resurrection. Rom. 6:3-5.
A Promise To The Apostles. Acts 1:1-11.	Command To Be Obeyed. Acts 10:44-45.
Not To Save The Apostles. John 15:3. Did Not Save Cornelius. Acts 11:13-14.	Is "Unto The Remission of Sins" Acts 2:38. Belief + Baptism = Salvation. Mark 16:16. Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21.
Holy Spirit Baptism Ceased Before A.D. 63 When Paul Wrote Ephesians 4:5. "There Is (Present Tense) One Baptism."	Water Baptism Of The Great Commission Is To Continue Till The End Of The World. Matt. 28:18-20.
Only Two Cases (Apostles & Cornelius) Of Holy Spirit Baptism. Acts 2:1-4; Acts 10:44; 11:15,16.	Is For All The World Mark 16:15-16 The Book Of Acts Tells Of Baptism In Every Conversion Except One: Crispus, Acts 18:8, And Paul Baptized Crispus, 1 Cor.1:14.
CEASED BY A.D. 63	CONTINUE TILL END OF THE WORLD

(h) Water baptism is unto salvation vs. H. Sp. Baptism that did not save those who received it.

(i) Jesus said to the apostles: "Now ye are clean through the word" John 15:3. Did not say, "Soon you will be clean through Holy Spirit baptism."

(ii) Cornelius was told he would be saved by "words" Acts 11:13-14. He was not told, "You will be saved by Holy Spirit baptism."

G. Jesus Baptized by John. 1:9-11.

1. "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan" 1:9.

a) John did not convince Jesus he should be baptized. In fact, John refused to baptize him at first. "John would have hindered him, saying, 'I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?'" Matt. 3: 14.

b) Jesus said, "Suffer it now," that is, make an exception to your purpose of baptism this once. Matt. 3: 15.

c) "For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Matt. 3:15.

(1) Psalm 119: 172. God required it of Jesus, but not to have his sins forgiven. Jesus had no sins. Heb. 4:15.

(2) "He suffereth him." 1:14. John made the exception.

d) Jesus was not baptized for the purpose that any man on earth today claims is the purpose of his baptism.

(1) Jesus was not baptized "because of" remission (as some today mistakenly teach). Christ needed no remission.

(2) Nor was Jesus baptized "in order to the forgiveness of sins" as practiced by John, Jesus, and the apostles. Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, et.al.

e) Jesus was baptized "in the Jordan." (The margin reading of 1: 9 in ASV: "Gr. into").

(1) This could not have been said if baptism meant "sprinkling." For Jesus was not "sprinkled into the Jordan."

(2) Nor if it meant “to pour.” Neither was Jesus “poured into the Jordan.”

(3) But it can be said correctly: Jesus was “baptized (this is, immersed) into the Jordan.” 1:9; John 3:23.

f) After baptism, Jesus came “up out of the water.” 1:10.

(1) “The Spirit as a dove” descended on him. 1:10.

(2) See John 1:29-34.

(3) Now John had full proof that Jesus is the Messiah.

g) Some today mock at baptism; but it is associated here in such a way that all should take care to hold it in awe.

(1) Here is John the Baptist, the greatest man who ever lived.

(2) Jesus, the Son of God.

(3) The Holy Spirit.

(4) God.

(a) On this occasion, God acknowledged Jesus to be his Son orally for the first time.

(b) And he stated He was “well pleased” with Jesus’ baptism.

(5) How dare anyone today scoff at baptism!

H. Jesus Tempted of Satan 1:12-13

1. J. W. McGarvey points out that only seventy-eight days of Jesus’ public ministry are covered in Mark. If the forty days of the temptation are subtracted, then all other incidents embrace only thirty-eight days.

a) Read Matt. 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13.

b) Satan presented two of the three temptations with a sneering “if.”

c) All temptations come through the same avenues as these three came to Jesus. 1 John 2:15-17.

(1) “The lust of the flesh.”

(2) "The lust of the eyes."

(3) "The vainglory of life."

d) These apply to Jesus' temptations.

(1) Jesus after fasting forty days was hungry: the lust of the flesh. Matt.4:2-4.

(2) Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world: the lust of the eyes. Matt.4:8-11.

(3) Satan tempted Jesus through the vainglory of life, saying him, "Cast thyself down," and promised that angels "shall bear thee up." Matt.4:5-7.

e) Jesus resisted these by believing the Scriptures, which he quoted upon each approach of the Tempter.

I. CHRIST'S EARLY MINISTRY IN GALILEE. 1:14,15.

1. Mark does not mention many things that are found in the other accounts.

a) After Jesus' temptations, he returned to the place of John's baptism. John 1:19-4:42.

b) John pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God." John 1:29.

c) Gathering five followers, Jesus returned to Galilee.

d) There he attended the wedding feast in Cana. John 2.

e) Then he went to Jerusalem for Passover, and had his famous conversation with Nicodemus. John 3.

f) In Judaea he taught and baptized with such results that it aroused the envy of the Pharisees.

g) About this time, John the Baptist was cast into prison.

h) Jesus then started back through Samaria to Galilee. On the way, he met the woman at the well in Samaria. John 4.

i) Upon his return to Nazareth, he was rejected and went down to Capernaum, where Mark takes up the narrative.

2. He was in Galilee "preaching the gospel of God." 1:14-15.

a) Jesus preached, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." 1: 14-15.

(1) The time that was prophesied in Daniel 2: 44-45 was fulfilled in the first century.

(2) The kingdom came soon after the ministry of John. He preached it was already "at hand."

(a) Mark 9:1. The kingdom had to come to come during the lifetime of those who heard Jesus preach.

(b) The kingdom came in Acts 2. Peter called Pentecost "the beginning." Acts 11:15.

(3) As was true of John, so also Christ preached repentance.

(4) The order of repentance and belief required of those desiring to be baptized of John: first repentance, then belief of the gospel.

(a) Remember these were Jews who already believed in God before John commanded them to repent.

(b) Now they also were to believe the good news about the coming of Christ's kingdom. John 14:1-4.

3. The call of Peter, Andrew, James, and John. 1:16-20.

a) These disciples were partners in the fishing business. Luke 5: 7.

(1) Their father was also a partner, and had "hired servants." Mark 1:20.

(2) This indicates they were well to do.

b) Jesus was no stranger to these disciples.

(1) They had been with John the Baptist previously, and had seen Jesus at "Bethany beyond Jordan." John 1:28-42.

(2) See also the first four chapters of John.

(a) These had been baptized of John.

(b) They became followers of Jesus. John 1:40-42.

(c) Now they are to prepare to become “fishers of men.” 1:17.

(i) “Straightway” is one of Mark’s favorite words. Meaning, “immediately.”

(ii) They left their nets 1: 18.

(iii) No dilly-dallying.

4. A Miracle in the Synagogue in Capernaum. 1:23-28.

a) This city became Jesus’ adopted home after his rejection at Nazareth.

b) Matt. 4:13 says Capernaum “is by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali.”

c) Jesus often taught in the synagogues as on this occasion. 1:21

(1) Meaning of the word synagogue: “An assembly or place of assembly.”

(a) Most often in Scripture, it refers to a place of worship.

(b) But it also means an assembly. Lk.12:11; 21:12; Acts 9:2; 13:43.

(2) The synagogue originated with Jews while in Babylonian captivity.

(3) Could not return to Jerusalem. Also Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the temple of Solomon.

(4) Synagogues were used to encourage their faith while in captivity.

(a) Upon their return to their own land, synagogues were built in the cities of Israel.

(b) A Roman Centurion had built this one. Lk.7:1-5.

(c) Synagogues had their “rulers” with disciplinary powers. John 9:22,34,35.

d) A man in this assembly had an “unclean spirit.” 1:23-24.

(1) Demons will be discussed at greater length in 3:22-30.

(2) He cried, "Let us alone."

(3) Also, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God."

e) Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." 1:25.

(a) Forbade the demon to speak even the truth concerning him.

(b) That would have aligned him with the devil in the minds of some.

(c) Jesus did not want nor need the endorsement of demons.

(2) The demon obeyed the voice of Jesus, and came out of him.

(a) The demon was "tearing him, and crying with a loud voice." 1:26.

(b) Casting out the demon proved Jesus was greater in authority than the powers of Satan.

(c) The response of the audience: "All amazed...what is this? A new teaching! With authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." 1:27.

f) The fame of Jesus spread as the result of his miracles: "everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about." 1:28.

5. Other Miracles in Capernaum. 1:29-34.

a) At Peter's house. Mark calls Peter "Simon."

(1) This incident proves Peter was a married man.

(a) Peter's "mother-in-law."

(i) Catholics say, "Peter was the first pope."

(ii) But Popes not allowed to marry.

(iii) Later Peter's wife accompanied him as he preached the gospel. 1 Cor. 9:5.

(b) She lay sick of a fever. 1:30.

(i) Luke 4:38: "a great fever."

(ii) They told Jesus.

(c) Jesus "came and took her by the hand, and raised her up." 1:31.

(i) "Fever left her," says Mark.

(ii) But Luke uses one of Mark's favorite words, saying, "Immediately she rose up, and ministered unto them."

(a) The cure was instantaneous.

(b) She did not gradually convalesce.

b) Many others also healed. 1:32-34.

(1) "At even, when the sun did set."

(a) Sabbath ended at sunset.

(b) Does this suggest the kind of hold the traditions of men had on the people that they thought Jesus should not heal on the Sabbath?

(i) Later we shall see the restrictions the Jewish leaders had placed upon the Sabbath, so that they considered even a miracle of healing unlawful.

(ii) There is something egregiously wrong with any religion that forbids deeds of mercy.

(iii) There is something wrong when the traditions of men have a greater hold on people than the revealed will of God. Matt. 15:7-9.

(2) "He healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons..." 1:34.

(a) Purpose of miracles: John 20: 30-31; 3:2.

(b) This also showed the compassion of our Lord.

c) "A great while before day" Jesus prayed. 1:35-39.

(1) Though he had little sleep that night, he went to pray.
Why would Jesus pray?

(a) Not just to ask God for favors.

(b) But longed for communion with God.

(i) Like a homesick student away from home for the first time, telephones home "just to talk."

(ii) Do we long for this communion?

(2) Peter found him, "All are seeking thee."

(3) "Let us go elsewhere ... that I may preach there also, for to this end came I forth." 1:38.

6. Leaving Capernaum and Going to Other Cities in Galilee. 1:39.

a) Preached throughout all Galilee.

b) Cast out demons.

7. Healing a leper (1:40-45)

a) Leprosy was one of the most terrible diseases known.

(1) Victim disintegrates joint by joint.

(a) Leprosy was incurable.

(b) Often used to depict what sin does to the soul.

(2) The leprous man believed in the power of Jesus.

(a) But apparently he had some misgivings about Jesus' willingness to expend his powers on one so unworthy.

(b) He asked for cleanliness, rather than healing.

(i) Leprosy left one unclean, physically and ceremonially.

(ii) Lev. 13:45-46.

(c) Jesus, "being moved with compassion." 1: 41.

(d) "Touched him."

(i) The usual penalty: Cf. Num. 5:2; Lev. 11: 40.

(ii) A display of divine compassion.

(e) "Straightway the leprosy departed from him."

(f) "Go show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing." 1:44.

(i) "For" ASV,Gr. peri: "concerning thy cleansing."

(ii) Not "eis" "unto" as in the purpose of baptism in Acts 2:38.

(g) Instead of telling "no man," he "began to publish it much."

(i) Jesus' fame was spread abroad.

(ii) So much so that Jesus had to seek a "desert," that is, an uninhabited place.

(a) No deserts of sand in Israel.

(b) This would give an area large enough for multitudes to gather to hear and see Jesus.