

Introduction - "The Over-looked" gospel or The Rodney Dangerfield Gospel

- The ancient church saw Mark as a "reader's digest" version / **an abridged version of Matthew**, a view which is specifically stated later by Augustine
- Since the rise of the modern historical-grammatical approach to biblical interpretation (circa 19th century), the Gospel of Mark has taken on new significance as it is **viewed as the first written Gospel**

What are the Gospels

- Good news accounts of Jesus' life for the purpose of evangelism (cf. John 20:30-31)
- The Gospels are not modern biographies or histories
- They are theological writings used to introduce Jesus to different audiences and bring them to faith in Him

Author's credentials

Written by John Mark (i.e., Mark), relying on Peter's testimony

- According to William Lane - there's an "unbroken tradition" that identifies **Mark the Evangelist, with John Mark, and John Mark as the cousin of Barnabas**
 - Authorship first mentioned by Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (Asia Minor) **circa 130 A.D.**
- Not one of the 12 disciples/apostles but was **probably part of the 72 disciples**
- Mother was Mary (Acts 12:12) – church originally met in her home
- Cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10)
- Associated with Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25)
 - Deserted Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:39)
 - Later reconciled with Paul – called him useful to his ministry (2 Timothy 4)
- Supported Peter while he was imprisoned in Rome (1 Peter 5:13) - Peter calls Mark his son
 - **Without Peter's association, it is unlikely that it would have been included in the Bible canon**
 - New Testament is composed of books that were written **by apostles or close associates**
- **Later evangelized & established churches in Egypt –bishop of Alexandria, and later martyred there**

When, where and to whom was the Gospel of Mark written

- Early church writings indicate **Gospel of Mark was written in Rome, near the end of Peter's life**
 - There is a strong push by liberal theologians to place authorship far later in time,
 - Ignoring or distrust of early church fathers/historians' writings
 - Ultimately this discredits the eye-witness reports of the gospel
- Early church tradition is unanimous that Peter died during the latter part of Nero's reign (54 to 68 A.D.)
- **Generally, estimate the Gospel of Mark was written ~65 AD**
 - May have been written as early as 40 to 45 AD
- Prior to the writing of Mark, oral accounts of Jesus' life were passed down through the church
 - This was OK for the church in Jerusalem / Judea – problematic for the outlying churches

Mark's gospel was **probably written primarily to Christian Romans and Gentiles**

- Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 195) asserts Romans asked Mark to record Peter's sermons
- Mark's explanation of Jewish customs
- Translation of Hebrew or Aramaic phrases to Greek
- Some suggest that **gospel was written to Christians undergoing persecution**
 - Mark's emphasizes **Jesus as the suffering Son of God**, and the emphasis on suffering discipleship (Mark 8:31 – 9:1; 13:3 – 13)

- Especially helpful during time of Emperor Nero
 - Emperor Nero set fire to Rome in 64 A.D. – blamed Christians for the fire resulting in gruesome torturing (Tacitus – Annals 15.44)

Writing Style

- Shortest and most “compact” of the four Gospels
 - **Takes Matthew 9 chapters to get to where Mark chapter 1 starts – call of the disciples**
 - Unadorned though vivid style
 - Common ordinary spoken vocabulary of the day
 - More **intensely written** rather than flowing narrative
 - **Fast paced and with urgency**
 - **Focused, directed**
 - **Repetitive word – “Immediately”**
- Mark focus almost entirely in Jesus
 - Only two side stories on John the Baptist – Chapter 1 and Chapter 6
- Shows Jesus as a man of action
 - We learn more about Jesus through what he does vice what he says
- Shows Jesus’ human side
 - Sorrow (14:34)
 - Anger (11:15-17)
 - Amazement (6:6)
 - Fatigue (4:38)
- Recognized as a **skilled literary artist and theologian**
 - **Use of irony** – master of the unexpected
 - Example Chapter 7 – Scribes and Sanhedrin are combating with Jesus whereas a Syrophoenician Gentile woman of no reputation is commended for her faith (7:29)
 - Jesus’ family and his disciples slowly perceive his mission (with difficulty) yet blind Bartimaeus (ch 10) and a gentile centurion (ch 15) intuitively respond to Jesus

Some References

- **The Gospel according to Mark** – James R. Edwards – The Pillar New Testament Commentary
- **Enduring Word Bible Commentary** by David Guzik:
<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/mark-1/>
- **Bible.Org - Bob Deffinbaugh – Our God Reigns: A Study of the Gospel of Mark – Bible.org**
<https://bible.org/node/20342>
- **Free Bible Commentary by Dr. Bob Utley:**
http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/new_testament_studies/VOL02/VOL02A_01.html
- **BibleRef.Com:** <https://www.bibleref.com/Mark/>
 - Sister site of www.gotquestions.org
- **The Bible Knowledge Commentary** – Walvoord & Zuck
- **The Blue Letter Bible:** <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>
 - Good source for Strong’s concordance and free commentaries

Mark Chapter 1:1-3 Intro Statement & Messenger Prepares the Way

Mark starts of establishing the reason for his letter/book

V1: The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

- **The beginning**
 - The coming of Jesus was just the beginning of the “Gospel” or the Good News
 - Mirrors Genesis 1 – reminds us of God’s activity at the beginning of creation
- **Gospel** – Good News, or Good Tidings
 - the good news of salvation through Jesus
- **Jesus:** means Jehovah is salvation; form of the OT name of Joshua
- **Christ:** a title meaning anointed – Christ (Greek), Messiah (Hebrew)
 - the Messiah - a royal figure who was expected to set up his kingdom on earth – save his people
- **The Son of God** – Mark clearly states Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of mankind, God incarnate
- **Verse 1 Is The Key statement of the Gospel** – ties together all three aspects of Jesus
 1. The Gospel (good news) is **Jesus** – a genuine, historical person who walked the earth with men
 2. The Gospel (good news) is **of the Christ** – the Messiah, the promised, anointed Savior
 3. The Gospel (good news) is **of the Son of God** – not just a man but God with us

The **gospel** which Jesus proclaims is in fact the **gospel about himself**

- For Mark – the gospel is the story of salvation in Jesus Christ

Interesting point – Mark emphasizes Jesus the Christ, the Son of God three different times

- Beginning of the book, making the statement, “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God
- Middle of the book (Chapter 8), Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God
- End of the book, the Centurion confesses, surely this must have been the Son of God

V2 & V3: As it is written in Isaiah the prophet ...

- **Malachi 3:1** Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me
 - Prophecy speaks of purifying sons of Levi & judgement on Israel unless they repent
 - This verse is only quoted in Mark, not used in the other gospels
- **Isaiah 40:3** A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; ...
 - Speaks of comfort for the people of God, Good news of coming of God to be their Shepard
 - Key verse used in all four gospels
- **Mark is tying together a number of key themes**
 - Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah
 - Fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy
 - He is also God (per Malachi and Isaiah)
 - He is coming to bring peace of salvation

Mark 1:4-8 John the Baptist’s ministry – Fulfillment of Prophecy of Isaiah

V4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance ...

- **Wilderness** – a place of repentance God’s grace and provision and God delivers his people
- **Baptism:** symbol of moral and spiritual regeneration
 - Tie to ritual washings before worship
 - an outward sign of repentance and a desire to change their life
 - recognition that the people’s sins would be forgiven
- Baptism was already practiced in the Jewish community in the form of ceremonial immersions **but typically it was only among Gentiles who wished to become Jews**. For a Jew in John’s day to submit to baptism was essentially to say, “I confess that I am as far away from God as a Gentile and I need to get right with Him.” This was a real work of the Holy Spirit. (Enduring Word Website)

V6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist ...

- Picture of Elijah (1 Kings 1:8) ; picture of a prophet (Zechariah 13:4, Matthew 11:7-9)
 - Prophet's main job – proclaim God's word and call to repentance.
- Why eat Locust and Wild Honey?
 - Was not a food that the rich ate – e.g., kings or religious leaders
 - Dependence on God for food (Ps 81:16)
 - **Object Lesson** or Picture of Judgement and Restoration (Joel 2:12-29)
 - Honey associated with God's provision and blessing; locust associated with judgement
 - May be a picture Israel's repentance and returning to the LORD, God's promised of restoration and outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:12 - 29)

V7 And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals ...

- Key point – John preached the coming of Jesus, did not magnify himself
 - Loosing of sandals and washing of feet were duties of slaves – gentile slaves

V8 I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

- John's baptism was symbolic – Jesus would provide the true gift of the Holy Spirit
- "Extraordinary declaration, for in the OT the bestowal of the Spirit belongs exclusively to God. John's declaration transfers the bestowal of the Spirit to Jesus, once again indicating that, as the Greater One, Jesus will come in power and at the prerogative of God.

Mark 1:9 – 13 The Baptism of Jesus & The Temptation of Jesus

- Note the word "IMMEDIATELY" – first of ~40x that Mark uses this word (9x in chapter 1 alone)
- Jesus was not baptized because He needed cleansing from sin; He was sinless, as John himself understood (Matthew 3:14). Instead, Jesus was baptized in keeping with His entire mission on earth: to do the will of the Father and to identify with sinful man.
- Three key things occurred during Jesus' baptism announcing him in power as the Son of God.
 - Heavens were torn open - same word used at the crucifixion (Mark 15:38)
 - Spirit descended on him like a dove - clean animal, representing peace and rest (Gen. 8, Ps 55)
 - God spoke - marking Jesus as His chosen one
 - **You are my beloved Son** - Allusion to Psalm 2:7 (The Reign of the LORD's anointed)
 - Makes Jesus' God's representative - allowing him to speak & act with authority
 - **With you I am well pleased** - Allusion to Isaiah 42:1 (Isaiah's "servant songs")

V12 The Spirit immediately drove him out

- Forcibly (not leading) driving Jesus into the wilderness for his testing
- Similar OT image – the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:21) is driven into the desert
- The image - Jesus is driven into the desert to defeat God's adversary, Satan

V13 ... he was in the wilderness for forty days tempted by Satan ...

- Jesus was identified with sinners in His baptism. Here He was also identified with sinners in their temptations (Hebrews 4:15)
- Jesus matched the wanderings and temptations that Israel and we endure

V 13 ... And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

- Transforms hostile wilderness of wild animals into peaceable kingdom (Is 11:6-9)
- Mark also shows Jesus' authority, not only over the wild animals but over the Angel as they served Him
- **Jesus is not abandoned by God** in the wilderness - angels minister to him after his trial has ended

Mark 1:14 – 20 Jesus begins his ministry – calls the First Disciples

- **Mark shows the transition** – the proclaiming the gospel doesn't start until John is imprisoned
- Also shows that even in a time of adversity and suffering (i.e., John's imprisonment), God will continue to operate – the good news will still be proclaimed

V15 The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel

- A one sentence summary of everything that Jesus preached – **the Gospel in a nutshell**
 - All the Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled – the Messiah is here
 - God's representative (v11) is here – Jesus the Son of God, Immanuel
 - **Repent** – turn away from your old way and sins
 - **Believe** in the gospel - the good news of salvation

Mark 1:14 – 20 Jesus begins his ministry – calls the First Disciples

- Shows Jesus as a different Rabbi
 - Unusual for the time – he calls his disciples to follow him (typically other way around)
 - Jesus speaks with authority – follow me - see that in the response of the men
 - The men leave everything **“immediately”**
 - **Follow me** – unusual; disciples did not follow a rabbi but studied God's word/Torah
- I will make you become – not immediate, but a gradual process of training and transformation

Mark 1:21 – 28 Jesus Heals a Man with an Unclean Spirit

V21: ... immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching ...

- Jewish synagogues, according to rabbinic documents, were assembly halls or auditoriums where the Torah was read and explained. Often teaching fell to the congregation or visiting guest
- Jesus teaches with authority – same word used for representatives and emissaries (i.e. kings)
- Note – congregation's reaction is recorded by Mark – amazement
 - Content of Jesus' teaching is not recorded – congregation's reaction is the focus

Mark chooses this encounter at the synagogue in Capernaum, a head-to-head confrontation between God and evil, to showcase Jesus' first public appearance

V24: “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?

- Unclean spirit cries out – not a quiet whimper; same term used:
 - Fall of Jericho, Gideon shout, Israel brings Ark in battle with Philistines
 - Joel 3:16 – when God speaks (roars like a lion)
- Note plural with “us” – could be a host within the man or statement that represents Satan's dominion
- **What have you to do with us** – translation of a Jewish idiom: “What (is it) to us and you”
 - Indicates that the two parties have nothing to do with each other – leave us alone
- Title “Holy One” here is significant, coming from an unclean spirit.
 - Jesus, as the Holy One of God, who bears God's Spirit and is the expression of holiness, comes to deal with uncleanness and unholiness.
- Jesus's rebuke – Be Silent and come out of him
 - No need for invoking a “magical” phrase, etc as was common in Jesus' day
 - Jesus' full authority shown over the demonic world – no contest
- Result – the congregation recognizes Jesus' authority in two ways
 - Authority in teaching God's word – a true representative of God
 - Authority over the spiritual world – able to defeat demons and restore the man
 - Word spreads rapidly throughout the area

Mark 1:29 – Mark 3:6

Introduction

In the first part of chapter one:

1. There is no mention of the childhood of Jesus, His lineage, the miracles of his birth, and John the Baptist. No mention of the shepherds, the magi, the escape into Egypt, his early life, his first Passover. No mention of the first cleansing of the temple at the Passover, his first miracle of changing water into wine, the discussion with the Samaritan women.
2. Jesus is declared to be the Son of God by:
 - a. Mark, vs one
 - b. John the Baptist (indirectly) vs 7-8
 - c. God, vs 11
 - d. Demons, vs 24
3. Simon (later Peter), Andrew, James and John called by Jesus to be His disciple
4. Begins to declare His authority over:
 - a. Teaching the scriptures, vs 22,27
 - b. Demons, (casting them out) vs 25-26
5. From vs 1:21 – 1:38 Mark gives us “a day in the life of Jesus”
 - a. Went to Capernaum and taught in the synagogue
 - b. Cast out a demon from a demon possessed man
 - c. Goes Peter’s mother-in-law’s house for the sabbath meal.
 - d. Heals Peter’s mother-in-law
 - e. After sunset, heals all the sick and demon possessed.
 - f. Very early in the morning of the next day goes to a solitary place to pray.
6. Mark 2 includes four stories of Jesus declaring His authority. To this point, He has revealed His authority over demons (Mark 1:23–26, 32), physical disease (Mark 1:29–34, 40–42), and traditional teachers who timidly interpret Scripture according to the teachings of past rabbis (Mark 1:21–22). In this chapter, Jesus shows He has authority over sin, public opinion, manmade tradition, and the Sabbath.

The Healing of Peter’s mother-in-law

Question: In verses 1;29-34 Jesus heals Peters mother-in-law. What do we learn from this encounter?

- a. Peter was married.
- b. Christ gave to his disciples a private and familiar illustration of his grace. It was personal.
- c. The healing of one woman gave occasion to many miracles, so that they came to him in great numbers, from every direction, to implore his assistance.
- d. There were at least four of Christ’s followers in the house, yet the mother of the wife of one of them lay sick of a fever. Grace does not prevent suffering in the body; there will still be physical diseases even though in the soul there is spiritual health.

Verses 1;32 -34 *“And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.*

Question: This is not the first time Jesus commanded the demons not to speak. We saw this back in verse 25. Why would Jesus not permit them to speak?

- a. a general reason, because the time of the full revelation was not yet come

- b. that he refused to have, as heralds and witnesses of his divinity, those whose praise could have no other effect than to soil and injure his character.

Mark 1:40-45, The Healing of the Leper

Background:

1. "Leprosy" various skin diseases
2. Leviticus 13-14 give the statutes and law concerning various skin ailments.
3. Lev. 13:45-46 describe conditions of an "unclean" person.
 - a. Wear torn clothes
 - b. Keep hair unkept
 - c. Cover the lower part of their face
 - d. Cry out "unclean"
 - e. Live alone, outside the camp (**important point here**)
4. This condition would have created:
 - a. a sense of worthlessness and despair
 - b. Would have separates the sufferer from all contact with humanity.

The individual is outside the fellowship. They are excluded from participating in worship. In Jesus' time, they could not enter the Temple. This is an illustration, a physical reminder of God's rejection of sin and His holiness.

Question What do you think of the statement "If you are willing"? How do you interpret it?

2 options for interpretation:

1. Lack of faith:
2. Submission to God's plan

Mark 1: 44 -45 Jesus' command to the Leper

Question: Why does Jesus tell the man not to say anything and to go to the priest and offer sacrifice?

1. It was to be a witness to the priests, for they would be astonished when this man appeared to them and asked for the sacrifices Moses had commanded in the book of Leviticus.
2. Telling the leper to maintain silence: He did not intend for the miracle to be forgotten or buried but was for the priest as a testimony to them. This would render them inexcusable if they refused to receive Christ as the minister of God and would take away any occasion for slander, since Christ did not neglect a single point to the law. *"I have not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it"* Matthew 5:17
3. In verse 45 we get another reason why: He did not wish the miracle to be made known so soon because He might have more abundant opportunity and freedom for teaching. Look back to verse 38: *"Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."*

Mark 2:23 – Mark 3:6 The Sabbath

Background:

Overview:

1. Exodus 20: 10 Commandments: The sabbath commandment is number 4 and is found in verses 8–11. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.
2. the Hebrew word *sabat*, which means "to rest or stop or cease from work."
3. "Keep it holy," means set it aside from all other days as special.

The sabbath is a weekly reminder of two things.

1. One is that all true blessing comes from his grace, not our labor.
2. that we hallow him and honor him and keep the day holy if we seek the fullness of his blessing by giving our special attention to him on that day.
God's rest was not for recuperation, but for exultation.

Question: So, what have the Pharisees made the sabbath into?

A system of rules and regulations that must be followed in an attempt to earn their way into heaven. It was supposed to be a rest from their "labors" and they have turned it into more "work".

Question: How then is Jesus Lord of the Sabbath?

Eph 2:8,9 "For by grace you have been saved, not as a result of works"

Matt 11:28-30 "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Mark 2:27-28

Question: Who were the Herodians?

1. One of 3 groups that held power over the people. Political power
2. Most scholars believe that they were a political party that supported King Herod Antipas, (4 B.C. to A.D. 39).
3. The Herodians favored submitting to the Herods, (Rome) for political expediency.
4. In conflict with the Pharisees, who desired Jewish independence
5. Also Mark 12:13, Matthew 22:16

Despite the fierce hatred towards the Herodians, this aversion is counteracted by their hatred and fury against Christ. They not only enter into a conspiracy with foreigners, but insinuate themselves into the good graces of those with whom, on other occasions, they would never have any association with.

Resources

Calvin's Commentary: Verse by verse Commentary of Mark:

<https://www.truthaccordingtoscripture.com/commentaries/index.php#.Y8PfwC1h2X1>

Spurgeon's Expositions: <https://www.truthaccordingtoscripture.com/commentaries/index.php#.Y8PfwC1h2X1>

Ray Stedman sermons on Mark: Bible.org

MacArthur sermons on Mark: Bible.org

Various Articles on The Sabbath: Gotquestions.org

What does Mark1,2 mean?: Bible reverence.com

John Piper: Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep It Holy: Desiringgod.org

Various Articles on the Sabbath: <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/lord-sabbath>

Week 3 Mark 3:7 4:20

Review

Last week: Healing of Peter's mother in law began healing ministry, which soon drew large crowds, esp after healing the leper, and forced Jesus to minister in the wilderness

Healing of the Leper – how being a leper made one unclean and therefore not allowed to enter the Temple where God dwells points to Jesus being willing to touch an unclean person and redeem him by making him clean, and the leper's disobedience by telling everyone what Jesus did

Sabbath – what is it (4th commandment to set aside and keep the Sabbath day holy), who is it for (us to rest and to honor God), how the religious leaders corrupted it. Pharisees conspire with Herodians, traditionally at odds with one another, except to oppose Jesus

3:6: The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him. This clear note of rejection is seen as the conclusion of the initial phase of Jesus' Galilean ministry according to Mark. We'll see next that Jesus will select the 12 disciples, that the scribes from Jerusalem have been dispatched to investigate, and the additional teaching ministry added to healings and miracles

Idumea – Greek translation of Edom, where Esau settled. They refused the Israelites request to travel through during the exodus, though Israel was forbidden to retaliate (Deut 23:7 "you shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother). Later King Saul fought them, and David conquered them. Idumea was later conquered by Arabs, and many fled to Judea where they were forced to convert to Judaism by the Maccabees. They were considered part Jewish at best. The Herod family were of Edomite descent.

Tyre and Sidon, the region of Phoenicia in OT times was called Caanaan. Sea-faring people conquered the land in 1200 BC. Jezebel, who married Ahab, was the daughter of the Phoenician ruler Ethbaal. The Assyrians, Babylonians, and Greeks all invaded this region but Tyre and Sidon survived and remained prosperous throughout Greek and Roman rule. They were considered by Jews to be Pagans, although a sizeable Jewish population may have been present there.

Simon – given name Peter – Greek equivalent of Aramaic Cephas (stone, rock)

James – Son of Zebedee, and brother John. Nicknamed Boanerges (sons of thunder)

Andrew – Peter's brother

Philip

Bartholomew – not a proper name, but a patronymic meaning "son of Talmi"

Matthew (Levi)

Thomas

James – Son of Alphaeus. Unknown apart from apostolic lists. Possibly Matthew's brother

Thaddaeus – in Luke/Acts his place is taken by Judas, son of James. Thaddaeus may be preferred name

Simon – the Cananaean (Aramaic for "to be zealous")

Judas Iscariot

Here is a story-telling technique called interpolation, intercalation, dovetailing, or sandwiching – when a story is begun, suspended by a seemingly different story, then resuming with the original story. Here the story starts with Jesus' family coming to restrain him, then with Jesus' dialogue with the Scribes, then family arriving to take him away

Sandwiching – Jesus opposition – madness by family, blasphemy by scribes

Contrasting two groups – natural family on the outside, true family surrounding him on the inside

Why does Jesus speak in parables?

Parables Do we have a role in the between the sowing and harvesting?

4:11-12 – these two verses seem to interrupt vv. 10 and 13. Why? Some scholars think Mark inserted his own commentary here.

(1) Mark 4:1-34 To Whom Is the Kingdom Revealed?**Emphasis in Chapter 4**

- Hearing/listen – used 12 times: v3, v9 thru 21 and v33
- Word – used 9 times v14 thru 20 and v33
- Second time Mark records Jesus speaking in parables
 - Speaks to the crowds (4:2) and religious leaders (3:23)
 - Typically, will not speak to his disciples in parables – if He does, he'll explain

Recap From Last Week – Purpose of the Parables

^{4:10} And when he was alone, **those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.** ¹¹ And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, ¹² so that “they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.”

- Jesus’ reference is to the commissioning/sending of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:9, 10)
 - Chapters 1–4 explain Israel’s consistent and persistent sin
 - Chapter 5 provides a story – shows Israel as God’s beloved vineyard
 - The owner has done everything to allow for a fruitful harvest, but harvests wild grapes
 - So the owner has the right to tear down the vineyard and let it go fallow
 - Chapter 6 – Commissioning of Isaiah – Jesus focuses on Isaiah 69-10
- Why did Jesus say this - let’s take a look at who’s in the crowd
 - Those who came for healing (John 6:2)
 - Those who were sign seekers (John 6:2)
 - Political revolution – wanted to make him king (John 6:15)
 - Food – looking for Jesus to meet their felt needs (John 6:26)
 - Those who wanted to accuse Jesus – Scribes, Pharisees, Herodians, Religious (Mark 3:2)
- For the most part, the people had not come to hear/accept the Gospel message
 - But, Jesus’ primary purpose, as he stated, was to preach the Gospel message (Mark 1:38)
 - Jesus is focusing on **making disciples and transforming lives (bearing fruit)**
- Thus, Jesus is speaking in parables as the people did not accept him as the Messiah
 - had not acted on the truth that was already given to them

¹³ And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand **all the parables?**”

- Gospel of Mark includes this statement – Matthew and Luke do not. Seems to be a key point to Mark
 - Failure to understand this parable means failure to understand parables in general
 - Understanding is gained by the disciple’s example – approaching Jesus for an answer
 - Understanding the parables is based on hearing - accepting who Jesus Christ is

²⁰ But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who **hear the word** and **accept** it and **bear fruit,**”

- Parables have a two-fold purpose: to reveal the truth to those who wanted to know it and to conceal the truth from those who were indifferent.

A Lamp Under a Basket

²¹ ... “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? ²² For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”

- Lamps in scripture often a metaphor for
 - God (2 Sam 22:29); Torah/God’s Word (Ps 119:105); Messiah (2 Kings 8:19; Ps 132:17)

- Will it be put under a basket, or blanket – (i.e.) Hidden?
 - Rhetorical question – would the truth of God and the Gospel remain hidden?
 - Answer – no. There will come a time where the Gospel will be boldly preached to everyone
 - When a lamp is elevated, it provides light to all

²⁴ ... “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. ²⁵ For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, what he has will be taken away.”

- Your response to the Gospel and God’s word will be measured to you
 - If you seek it out – more insight and growth (fruit) will occur
 - If you ignore it – the gift of the message will be lost to you – will be taken away
 - The message will be like the parables – an interesting story that has not meaning to your life

The Parable of the Seed Growing – Kingdom Parable **MARK 4:26-29**

- Parable unique to the Gospel of Mark – not found in the other gospels
- Compares growth of the kingdom of God to seed scattered on the ground
 - Slowly, imperceptible, the seed sprouts and grows, despite the farmers efforts or understanding
 - Once sown, the word of God/gospel set in motion a process that leads to a harvest

The Parable of the Mustard Seed – Kingdom Parable **MARK 4:30-32**

- John’s sermon – Kingdom will grow to be all encompassing (12/11 and 12/18)
- Smallest seed, something you don’t notice on the ground, but grows into a plant that you can’t overlook
 - Jesus’ ministry – ignored and considered insignificant from Jewish leader’s perspective, but eventually grows into something amazing

³³ With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able **to hear it**. ³⁴ He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately **to his own disciples he explained everything**.

- Parables enlighten or obscure depending on the ability to hear
- Those who hear – pursue Jesus as a disciple - find them enlightening, and even more will be given to them
- Those who listen with indifference will find the parables obscuring unless they pursue fellowship with Jesus

Mark 4:35 thru Mark 6:6 - Who Then Is This

Jesus Calms a Storm **MARK 4:35 – 41**

- v35 When evening had come, they go across to the other side
 - Sailing in the dark – very challenging / generally avoided in the ancient world
 - Other side – land of the Gentiles; country of the Gerasenes and the Decapolis
 - “the other side” or “far country” – terms used by Rabbis for Gentile lands; depraved people
- v36 they took him with them in the boat, just as he was – immediate departure; the experts were at the wheel
 - Looks like it’s going to be a short trip – took him as he was (i.e., no further provisions) – Gilligan’s Island
- V37 great windstorm arose ...
 - Storms were not unusual – this one was not normal (same Greek phrase used for hurricanes)
- Some Interesting Contrasts and Points to Note
 - Seasoned fishermen were terrified, fearing for their life
 - Jesus asleep (picture of Jonah 1:4-6); only place it’s recorded in scriptures where Jesus slept
 - Disciples rebuke Jesus - harsh, verbal attack recorded in Mark
 - Luke 8:24 Master, Master, we are perishing (Matthew includes similar wording)

- Jesus' response
 - v39 ... rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" – wind ceased / immediate calm
 - "rebuked" – same word Jesus uses for rebuking evil spirits (Mk 1:25, 3:12)
 - "Peace, Be Still" – conveys a sense that the winds are "muzzled"
 - v40 ... Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith? = why are you faithless cowards?
- Disciples' response
 - v41 ... they were filled with great fear – looks like they were more afraid of Jesus than the storm
 - v41 ... "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" – **only God commands the elements** (Psalm 107: 23-32)
- **Question** – why did Jesus say "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"
 - Jesus is responding to the disciple's statement - Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing
 - Still see him as a Rabbi, healer, great prophet rather than the Messiah, the Son of God
 - When the storm hit, they didn't believe Jesus cared
 - Application - When the storms of life sweep over us,
 - Do we begin to doubt that God cares?
 - Do we wonder if God's asleep unaware that perishing?
 - Or do we believe that Jesus is in the boat with us and in control of life's storms?

Jesus Heals a Man with a Demon

MARK 5:1 – 20

Note – the narrative is filled with visual pictures and ironic statements all used to better explain the Gospel story

Jesus and the Disciples hit the trifecta of uncleanness

- the demon is referred to as an "unclean spirit"
- this is most definitely the land of the gentiles – an "unclean people"
- they are in an unclean place – near the tombs;

What do we see in this picture of the demonic man? (v3 thru 5)

- Sin and Satan robbed the man of sanity and self-control; It enslaved him
- It fills him with fears, screaming and tormenting him; he was violent and dangerous
- An outcast living in the tombs, robbed him of the joys of home and friends

What else do we see in this picture – we see the world attempt to fix the man's problems (v3, 4)

- They restrain him; shun and isolate him – that was the world's solution
- But in the end, the world is unable to change him

The battle was over before it started – Jesus was the immediate victor (v6 thru 10)

- the demons knew who Jesus was and were terrified of Him – (v7) Jesus, Son of the Most High God
- they were surprised at his coming - (v7) What have you to do with me?
- they asked for mercy – but they shown none to the possessed man
- they knew what their ultimate destiny was - (v7) I adjure you by God, do not torment me

What do we see in the response from the town's people

- They feared Jesus more than the demon possessed man – they begged him to leave
- The world just doesn't understand - Jesus miraculously transform the man into a new creation

What do we see in Jesus' actions

- By his plan – Jesus came to a distant plan to save a lost soul
- By his word, he can defeat a legion of demons
- By his word, he can heal a demonic man and bring peace and sanity – a new disciple sitting at His feet

In contrast – what are the man’s actions

- He begs Jesus that he might come with him – he’s the only one in the narrative that wants to be with Jesus
- The wording literally means he wanted to become Jesus’ disciple

Surprising actions from Jesus

- He forbids the man to come with him – unfortunately a Gentile disciple wouldn’t work at this point in time
- Tells the man to go home and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you
 - Unusual, as Jesus typically tells people in the Gospel of Mark, not to say anything

Note – this is not the end of the story

- Jesus will return to this region, specifically the Decapolis – Mark 7:31 – 37
- In the future, the Decapolis embraces Christianity
 - At least 4 cities are noted as being havens for Christians after the fall of Jerusalem
 - We will read of one key city, commended by God in the book of Revelation – Philadelphia

Jesus Heals a Woman and Jairus's Daughter Mark 5:21-43 (Matt 9:18-26 Luke 8:40-56)

- Common aspects of the Woman and Jairus’ daughter
 - Both are called “daughters” by Jesus
 - In both accounts Jesus comes into contact with uncleanness – which is similar to the previous story
 - Both accounts – desperate people turn to Jesus
- Contrasts between Jairus and the woman
 - Jairus is a ruler – key person in society; religious
 - Jairus is identified by his high position and by his name
 - The woman is an outcast, unclean – a nobody / don’t even know her name
 - The woman is identified by her shame
- Key point – Jesus views both at the same level
 - People in pain needing his help, in crisis – no plan B, no doctors can help, turning to Jesus as a last resort
 - Neither could offer Jesus anything – only fall at his feet and cling to Him
 - Neither would have known Jesus other than thru this crisis (Jairus probably Jesus enemy)
 - Both people need faith to be healed
- Ruler of the Synagogue – “Jairus” means “God Enlightens”
 - Falls at Jesus’ feet pleading – very unlike a religious ruler who is seeking to destroy Jesus (Mark 3:6)
 - Jesus’ response – immediately goes with Jairus
- With no time to spare in order to save Jairus’ daughter ... ; Jesus spares some time
 - A desperate woman in great need is in the crowd - touch even his garments, I will be made well (v28)
 - V29 “flow of blood” condition literally means “whip, lash, scourge, or torment”
 - Combination of physical suffering, and shame
 - (v26) Suffered much from many, exhausted all her wealth, gained nothing – has gotten worse
 - Clearly, the woman’s prospects are no better than Jairus’ daughter
 - The woman was considered “unclean” – unable to worship in the temple; banished from society
- Jesus’s response is amazing
 - The woman being in public and touching a Rabbi required a serious punishment
 - immediately turned about in the crowd and said, “Who touched my garments?”
 - Jesus’ response show both immediate reaction (time wise)
 - immediate reaction (determined) – he did it with a purpose in mind (i.e., not a reflex reaction)

- Disciples response – thought Jesus was crazy; ridiculed Jesus
 - Ironically – the disciples show they are more out of touch with Jesus than the woman
- Woman’s response – model of trust and faith
 - fell down before him and told him the whole truth
- Jesus shows – he’s not content to dispatch a miracle; he’s much more interested in interacting with the person
 - Discipleship is not about getting out needs met
 - Discipleship is about encountering and interacting with Jesus – being known by Him and following Him
- Jesus’ tender response
 - **Daughter**, your faith has made you well – “well” can be translated “healed” or “saved”
 - go in peace, and be healed of your disease – a blessing / benediction
- In contrast, Jairus is feeling anything but peace and blessing
 - Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the **Teacher** any further
 - Jairus had a choice – walk away in sorry or focus on Jesus
 - Do not fear, only believe – don’t let fear control you, just believe me
 - Same choice for us all – **do we focus on our circumstances** or **do we focus on Jesus**
 - Same choice that the woman had – she focused on Jesus
 - Her faith saved her – Jairus needs to have the same faith that she had
- Jesus tells the mourners that the girl is asleep (the girl was dead – this is figurative wording)
 - The mourning changes to reproach and mocking (better translation)
- Jesus’ response
 - Dismisses the mourners – comfort/protect girl and parents; and to dismiss idle bystanders
 - Shows compassion to the parents and child – horrific for her to wake up in midst of a ridiculing crowd and among a large group of strangers
 - Tenderly talks to the girl, takes her by the hand – all to comfort the girl and parents
 - Ensures her needs are met – feed her (something he doesn’t need to do – the parents can do)
 - Tell no one – idle bystanders who rebuked Jesus do not need to know Kingdom details
 - Contrast to the woman whom he called out in public
 - Jesus isn’t telling them to keep the raising of Jairus’ daughter a secret – not possible
 - Those that scorned details don’t need to know the how or why
 - Bystanders are like the crowds of people – only interested in the spectacle not in Jesus
 - The kingdom benefits are for those who display faith - Jairus, his family and the disciples

What can we learn about divine delays in our life?

- God delayed to build faith
 - Not man’s ability or strength
 - Only thru God’s power to show only His glory
 - Another good example - John 11 (Lazarus)
 - Many times, we’re in a hurry for a solution to minimize our pain (understandable)
 - God’s more focused for long term solutions for His glory
 - Perhaps we need to change our prayers
 - Thy will be done
 - Make my feet like hinds feet
- If it’s people’s desperation that can be drawn to faith
- Who do we seek out during evangelism?

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

MARK 6:1 – 6

6 He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ²And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. ⁴And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.” ⁵And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶And he marveled because of their unbelief.

And he went about among the villages teaching.

- Nazareth – essentially a Gentile “hick” town. Only claim to fame – Jesus grew up here.
- (v2-3) Where did this **man** get this information? Is not this the carpenter, son of Mary ...
 - People are amazed at Jesus’ teaching – but reject him as they focused on who they thought Jesus was
 - he was not “learned” – taught by an acknowledged Rabbi
 - he was the man they knew growing up - Jesus as a teen/young man
- (v5) And he could do no might work there
 - Not that God was unable to do a might work in Nazareth – it wasn’t worth it
- (v6) Horrible commentary on Nazareth – Jesus **marveled** because of their unbelief
 - **Not only were unbelievers, but they were unbelievers who’s unbelief amazed Jesus**
- **Faith is a Key theme for the narratives found in Mark 4:35 – 6:6**
 - The disciples are rebuked for their lack of faith on the boat, during the storm
 - The woman was commended for her faith
 - Jairus was encouraged to have faith
 - Nazareth amazed Jesus for their lack of faith

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

MARK 6:7-13

⁷And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts— ⁹but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. ¹⁰And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. ¹¹And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” ¹²So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. ¹³And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

- (v7) Apostles were to do the same work as Jesus – preach the Gospel, heal the sick, free people from demons
- (v8) No staff or provisions – total dependance on God’s provision
 - If the preacher doesn’t trust God, how can he tell others to trust God ?
- (v11) Shake the dust off you fee
 - In that day, if Jewish people had to go in or through a Gentile city, as they left they would shake the dust off their feet. It was a gesture that said, “We don’t want to take anything from this Gentile city with us.”
 - Essentially, Jesus told them to regard a Jewish city that rejects their message as if it were a Gentile city.
- (v13) Apostles were successful representatives of Jesus

Mark 6:14 – Mark 7:37

1. The Murder of the Greatest Prophet: Mark 6:14-29

- A. only narrative in Mark “not (in some sense or other) a story about Jesus”.
- B. Context:
 - a. Occurs after Jesus had sent out the 12 disciples delegating His power over demons, disease and death.
 - b. After the third and “final sweep” through Galilee
 - c. Jesus’ name becomes well known, because everything the disciples were doing, all the preaching, all the healing, all the deliverance was being done in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - d. John the Baptist
 - i. Arrested (Mark 1:14) soon after the temptation of Jesus (Luke 3:19-20)
 - ii. In Prison for over a year
- C. It is a preview of the murder of Jesus
 - a. Even though the murder of both Jesus and John the Baptist were carried out by Herod/Romans, the Jewish authority stood by and let it happen.
 - b. Later, this same Herod presides over the death of Jesus. He locked up both John and Jesus.
- D. Who is this “Herod”? also known as “*Herod Antipas*”
 - a. Also known as a “tetrarch”, or “a ruler of a fourth of a region”. These regional rulers were really serfs under Caesar, doing Caesar’s bidding. Whatever power they had was minimal.
 - b. His father is “*Herod the Great*”
 - i. A descendant of Esau.
 - ii. At his death, his “kingdom” was divided up into 4 parts to his 4 sons– “tetrarch”.
 - iii. He slaughtered all the male infants 2 years old or younger in Bethlehem
 - iv. When he died, Mary and Joseph returned to find rulership split into 4 parts.
 - v. Had 5 wife’s:
 - 1. First wife: “Doris”, who had 2 sons. *Herod the Great* had them all executed.
 - 2. Second wife: “Miriam”, had 2 sons and one daughter – Herodias. He had this wife and the 2 sons executed, leaving only the daughter- Herodias.
 - 3. Third wife: another “Miriam”, had a son *Herod Philip* who eventually married Herodias (above), his niece (the daughter of assassinated brother). Now his wife AND niece.
 - 4. Fourth wife gave birth to a number of sons, one is *Herod Antipas*, the Herod in our story.
 - c. *Herod Antipas* goes to Rome, visits his brother Philip, falls in love with Herodias, steals his wife and goes back to Galilee. It is an illegitimate marriage; she should have remained the wife of his brother Philip.
 - d. *Herod Antipas* was already married to the daughter of the King of Nabatean Arabia (King Aretas)
 - e. Through political intrigue in Rome, both Herodias and Antipas are later exiled, lose it all and eventually die in exile.
 - f. *Herod Antipas* reigned 42 years, through the entire life of Jesus. A petty ruler for Rome over the realm of Galilee.. Like all of the Herods, paranoid about his power. “And if indeed this is John the Baptist risen from the dead and he has the power to conquer death, then Herod is in some serious trouble - serious trouble.” (MacArthur)
- E. “The party”
 - a. Jews hated pagan celebrations, basically ignored birthdays.
 - b. Romans made a huge issue out of birthdays. Were an excuse for lecherous, lewd partying.
 - c. Invited “leading men of Galilee”. “They would include prominent Jews. It would include those who are identified in Mark 3:6 as Herodians, people who wanted to be associated with Herod.

- d. “These Jews then become guilty by complicity in the execution of this prophet, as their forefathers had the prophets of the past, as their nation would, the prophet of all prophets, the prophet over all prophets, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (MacArthur)
 - e. This is a male event.
 - f. verse 22 - when the daughter of Herodias herself (Salome) came in and danced
 - i. a low point morally
 - ii. Solo dances by woman in those days were very sensual, usually done by prostitutes.
 - iii. She was probably 15-16, a princess
 - iv. Herod had no concern for the purity of his own daughter.
 - v. Her mother had no concern, to let her daughter dance like this is a shame.
- F. Herod’s Fear
- a. He is in terror, he’s panicked,. He has beheaded a man, who’s now alive and “he must be coming after me”.
 - b. **Herod was afraid of John!**
 - i. Stated in the imperfect tense indicating he was in a continual state of fear!
 - ii. Also feared Herodias.
 - iii. **Jones** writes this "is an illustration of the supremacy of character. It is a testimony to the essential greatness of John. The king and his prisoner seemed to have changed places. It is not the prisoner who fears the king, it is the king who fears the prisoner."
- G. Herod’s folly: The oath:
- a. “I’ll give you half my kingdom,” and then turns it into an oath in verse 23 -
 - b. Truth of the matter is he didn’t have anything to give.
 - c. Then pride enters in: **MacArthur** – “Herod’s motivation for keeping his promise had nothing to do with personal integrity and everything to do with keeping up appearances. In the ancient Near East, promises made with an oath were regarded as especially binding and inviolable (cf. Matt. 5:33). Having made such a promise in the presence of his dinner guests—many of whom were political supporters and military dignities—Herod could not go back on his word without losing face.”
- H. Questions:
- a. Why is this account included?
 - b. Which of these parties has sunk deepest in sin? Did Herod have any conscience at all?
 - c. What can we learn from this story?
 - i. We see, the amazing power of truth over the conscience.
 - ii. We see, how far people may go in religion, and yet miss salvation by yielding to one master-sin.
 - iii. We see, how boldly a faithful minister of God ought to rebuke sin.
 - iv. We see, how bitterly people hate a reprove, when they are determined to keep their sins.
 - v. We see, how much sin may sometimes follow from feasting and reveling.
 - vi. We see, how little reward some of God’s best servants receive in this world. (precepts)

2. The Creator Provides: The Feeding of the Five Thousand; Mark 6:30-44

- a. Begins with the desire to go to a seclude place and rest,
 - i. He understands our need for “rest”. (Matt 11:28)
 - ii. Mark 4:38, So physically weary that He fell asleep in a boat, in the middle of a storm.
- b. In verses 32-34 we see:
 - i. A move from the Lord’s provision of rest, to the provision of truth. The provision of rest takes a backseat to the truth.
 - ii. We see His “shepherd's heart. “

1. Luke 9:11, says He was welcoming them. This is the heart of God to welcome people and their complex spiritual needs, to meet them with the truth.
 2. Vs 34: He felt compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd." Numbers 27:17, 1 Kings 22:17, Second Chronicles 18:16, Ezekiel 34:5,
 3. In Matthew 14:14 the word "compassion", uses a verb *splanchnizomai*. That speaks of *splanchnon*, which is the word for your internal organs. He felt it in his gut. He felt the pain where you feel pain and anxiety.
- c. How important is this miracle?
- i. Another powerful display of Jesus' power and authority, the apex of His display of power.
 - ii. Biggest public miracle done yet and drawing closer to the end of his public ministry.
 - iii. Only 2 miracles recorded by all four gospels: the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the feeding of the 5 thousand.
 - iv. Points to the fact that He is, in fact, the incarnation of Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord who provides.
 - v. Parallels the feeding of the multitudes of Israel in the wilderness, when the manna came down from heaven. He was drawing a deliberate picture of who he was for these disciples. John 6:41: "I am the bread come down from heaven,"
- d. Matthew, Mark and Luke all say "five thousand men". The word is "*andres*". It's the distinct word for males, NOT "mankind". Matthew adds, "Besides women and children." Possibly an additional 5,000 women and who knows how many children.
- e. Miracle takes place very likely near Bethsaida Julias. In Luke 10:13, Jesus pronounces judgment on Bethsaida. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes."
- f. First "rest", then "truth", then "healing", and now the provision for food.
- i. His grace is open to everyone...everyone is feed.
 - ii. The feeding of physical food → will provide them spiritual food.
 - iii. Willingness to give physical rest → ability to give spiritual rest.
 - iv. Willingness to heal → willingness and His power to give spiritual healing.
- g. Why would Jesus respond in verse 37. 'You give them something to eat.'? (Matthew 14:16) What had they just been able to do? (6:13) Cast out demons, heal the sick, raise the dead. He had told them He had delegated His power to them.
- h. "Five loaves and two fish." The word "loaves" is the word for a biscuit. Similar to a cracker, made from barley seed. The fish were probably pickled, similar to a sardine.
- i. The word "satisfied," *chortazō*, better translated "glutted". We get the word "gluttony" from it In Revelation 19:21 the word is translated "gorged."
- j. Twelve full baskets are picked up. "basket" (*kophinos*) refers to a little traveling food bag or basket. 12 seems to be an important number.
- i. twelve tribes of Israel
 - ii. Jesus chose twelve disciples
 - iii. twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - iv. previous section there was a dying girl who was twelve years old,
 - v. and a woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years
 - vi. This is a reminder to these disciples that Jesus was the Promised One
- k. Why are there twelve baskets left? Because there are how many apostles? Twelve.

3. Jesus Walks on Water: Mark 6:45-56

- a. At this point, the Kingdom is in one little boat.
- b. That night they went from confusion to confession. That night they went from wondering to worshipping.
- c. There are three scenes here.

- i. First, our Lord's protection for the twelve
 - 1. Verse 45, "Immediately"
 - a. "Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side to Bethsaida." Why?
 - b. John 6: 15 "Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him King by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself".
 - c. Could they have been susceptible to the influence of the crowd? to the crowd's passion and zeal? So, He made them go. Matthew 14:22, uses the word *anagkazō* : to force, to insist, to demand.
 - ii. second, our Lord's intercession with the Father
 - iii. thirdly, our Lord's compassion for the crowds
- d. verse 47. "Evening" would have been between 6:00 to 9:00. Matthew 14:24 "They're a long distance from land." John says, "They're three or four miles out into the middle of the lake." John says in 6:18 and 19, is because of a fierce opposing wind.
- e. "fourth watch of the night", between 3:00 to 6:00 in the morning. Potentially, 9 hours. Their straining at the oars. They're trying to survive.
- f. Why the delay?

4. Scripture-Twisting Tradition: Mark 7:1-13

- a. The confrontation;
 - i. Very prestigious group, Pharisees and some of the scribes from Jerusalem
 - ii. The word for hand is literally the word "fist"
 - iii. The only kind of ceremonial washing in the Old Testament was with regard to priests in the book of Leviticus.
 - iv. The rigid custom among the Jews was to wash in this way: The hands had to be held out, palms up, hands cupped slightly, and water poured over them. Then the fist of one hand was used to scrub the other, and then the other fist would scrub the first hand. Finally, the hands again were held out, with palms down, and water was poured over them a second time to finish the cleansing.
 - v. This is tradition - not about Scripture. They had made tradition superior to the scriptures.
 - vi. Matthew 23:1-4 "...⁴They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.
 - vii. Talmud: "The words of the scribes are more lovely than the words of the law." "It is a greater crime to transgress the words of the school of Rabbi Hillel than the words of the Scripture." "My son, attend to the words of the scribes more than the words of the law."
 - viii. **Warren Wiersbe**, "*we must constantly beware lest **tradition** take the place of **truth**. It does us good to examine our church traditions in the light of God's Word and to be courageous enough to make changes*"
- b. The condemnation, verses 6 to 9. He said to them, quoting Isaiah 29:13
 - i. Key point in this passage is about "worship". verse 7. "In vain do they worship me." Vain worship - vain meaning empty, useless, pointless, lifeless, hypocritical worship.
 - ii. God does not accept worship, even worship in His name directed at Him, done wrongly. It's a serious problem to worship the wrong god, and it's a serious problem, to worship the right God in the wrong way. The Jews had turned this into an art form.
 - iii. What is worship? (stedman)
 - 1. First, worship must be genuine. It must be something you do inside of you which is deep and real. Worship must be from the heart.
 - a. Deuteronomy chapter 6
 - b. Matthew 22:37
 - c. Isaiah 1: 10-14,18

2. Second, worship is therefore individual. In a sense, we cannot have public worship. We can participate in a service together corporately, but worship is only what is going on inside of you.
 3. Third, worship must be according to truth.
- c. What happens when tradition begins to gain sway?
 - i. First, it begins with leaving the command of God.
 - ii. the second step, holding fast the tradition of men, the substitute.
 - iii. The third step, is to deny and injure both God and man.
 - d. He gives us an example:
 - i. Begins with Exodus 20:12: "Honor your father and mother," **scripture**.
 - ii. But **tradition** allowed for "Corban". "Corban" devoted to God BUT was a deferred gift. Pledged but not yielded. Kept and managed and done with a they wished with the idea that "once I go then it all goes to God". (what's left).
 - e. What about us? Empty ceremony, superficial worship, thoughtless praise, errant doctrine, love of error, indifferent prayer, phony ritual?
 - i. They mark hypocrites, and the doom of hypocrites is pronounced in Matthew 23. "Judgment will come upon those who offer their lip but not their heart, who draw near with their mouth while their heart is far away,"
 - ii. Tradition externalizes religion, makes it outward instead of inward. As long as we are fulfilling the prescribed outward form, we think we are acceptable before God.

5. The Inside Story on Defilement: Mark:14-23

- a. **William Barclay** wrote "Although it may not seem so now, this passage, when it was first spoken, was well-nigh the most revolutionary passage in the New Testament."
 - i. Under the Mosaic law, there were certain meats that they were forbidden to eat, one of those being swine, or pig. Under the law it was forbidden. It was considered unclean; it was forbidden.
- b. "defile" from "*koinoō*", found 5x in this passage. "to be dirty, unclean, impure, corrupt, defiled.
- c. A biblical truth: that what defiles is on the inside, not the outside. Jeremiah 17:9, James 1:14, 1 Samuel 16:7
- d. How is this compare to our society?
- e. Why then all the rules and regulations found in Leviticus?
 - i. It never was to be that and that alone, but they were to be symbolic of the heart issues.
 - ii. The symbolic kinds of cleansings were to be like pictures in a picture book before a child reads words. They were like symbols and images and visions and shadows of the spiritual reality. Hebrews 8:5
- f. Ezekiel 36:25-26, Proverbs 23:7:

6. Food from the Master's Table: Mark 7:24-30

- a. Why did Jesus go to Tyre and Sidon?
 - i. He was illustrating in terms of race what he had just said in terms of food. All foods are clean, and all peoples are clean, in the sense of being accepted by God.
- b. Why did he treat this woman rather harshly?" Matthew says that when she first asked him to heal her daughter, he would not even answer her.
 - i. the answer is in Matthew's account, where we are told that she first addressed him in this way: "O thou Son of David, come and heal my daughter." "Son of David" is a Jewish term for the Jewish Messiah. She was coming to him on the ground that he was a Jew, and she was a Gentile. That is why he said to her, "The children first must be fed,"
- c. Jesus is the savior of the world: John 4:42, 1 John 4:14, Psalm 87:4

- d. Jesus came to the Jews. John 4:22, Matthew 10:5-6 “go to the lost sheep of Israel”
- e. Salvation is to the Jew first and then to the Gentiles Romans 1:16
- f. The woman:
 - i. Not only a gentile, but a Canaanite. (Matthew)
 - ii. For her to come to Jesus would, in the minds of the Jews, be a discredit to Jesus for even allowing a woman like that in His presence.
 - iii. She is now doing what 1 Thessalonians 1:9 says, “They turned from idols to the living God.”
 - iv. She has great faith. Mathew 15:28, Jesus says, “You have great faith.”
- g. Jesus makes reference to her as a dog. There’s two words in the Greek for dog. One used in Matthew 7:6 that means a big dog, big cur, wild scavenger dogs, would attack sheep, were ferocious, vicious, hated animals. The second word for “dog”, the word that Jesus used. Refers to the household pet that's under the table. Most of the Jewish homes had one. "It isn't right to take the children's bread and to throw it to the little puppies under that table."
- h. But her responds: “Yes, Lord but even the dogs under the table feed on the children’s crumbs.” They would eat with “bread” and the final piece of bread, you would take it and use it to wipe off as a napkin. You'd use it to wipe off your hands. And then, you'd toss it under the table to the waiting dog.

Week 6: Mark 8:1 – 9:13

Review

- Murder of John the Baptist (6:14-29)
- Feeding of the 5000 (6:30-44)
- Jesus walks on water (6:45-56)
- Traditions of men versus commandments of God (7:1-13)
- What defiles a person (6:14-23)

Chapter 8

Relational structure to chapters 6 and 7:

Ch 6:31-44	Feeding of the Multitude	Ch 8:1-9
Ch. 6:45-56	Crossing the sea and landing	Ch 8:10
Ch: 7:1-23	Conflict with the Pharisees	Ch 8:11-13
Ch 7:24-30	Conversation about bread	Ch 8:14-21
Ch 7:31-36	Healing	Ch 8:22-26
Ch 7:37	Confessions of faith	Ch 8:27-30

8:1-10: **Feeding of the 4000**

- Back at Sea of Galilee (Lake Gennesaret), likely on eastern shore with a mix of Jewish and gentile population.
 - o Many have interpreted the feeding of the 5000 as the nourishment of Israel (location was on western side of Lake with a Jewish population). The feeding of the 4000 was nourishment for the Gentiles (location in gentile land, eastern side of lake)
- Some scholars estimate Capernaum's population between 600-1500. Sepphoris, one of Galilee's two largest cities estimated at 15,000
 - o Villages would not have enough food to feed such a large number of people
- the crowd has been with Jesus for three days. Compare Exodus 19:10: "the Lord said to Moses, 'Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments and be ready for the third day'."
- Much of the crowd may have lived far away, with no food for the journey home
- Jesus had compassion on the crowd, for they sought nourishment from Jesus' words. He wanted to provide for their physical needs.
- Compare previous discussion re. teaching versus miracles (actions). Feeding of 5000: sheep without a shepherd, Jesus met their spiritual needs. Feeding of 4000: After 3 days together, nothing to eat. Jesus met their physical needs
- Feeding of the 5,000: disciples tell Jesus of the crowd's needs (6:35-36). Feeding of the 4000: Jesus tells the disciples of the crowd's needs (8:2-3).
- Both feedings involve disciples

- Feeding of the people necessary prerequisite to their understanding of who He is
- 6:41 Jesus he blessed the bread (Jewish custom), 8:7 He gave thanks. The offering of praise and thanksgiving acknowledges that the multiplied food is the gracious provision of God.
- Possible meanings of numbers: 4000 = represents gentiles from 4 corners of the world? 7 loaves = 7 gentile leaders of the Hellenistic church in Jerusalem (Acts 6:1-7)?! Maybe Mark intended this for the gentile church, or perhaps the passage simply stresses gentile presence and participation...

8:11-13: The Request for a Sign

- Jesus and disciples returned to the western side of the Lake
- Continued engagement with Pharisees from Jerusalem in 3:22-30, 7:1-13. First they accuse Jesus of being Beelzebul, then they criticize His disciples for not following their traditions, now they demand proof of His authority.
- Asking for a sign and testing Jesus was not the problem, it was required in Deut. 13:2-6, 18:18-22 of prophets sent by God. Their request was legitimate.
- "Sign from Heaven" would specifically demonstrate that God is with Him
- Jesus knew their hearts of hostility, and the demand for a sign is an expression of unbelief.
- Do people today require signs that Jesus is Lord, and that the Gospel is true?

8:14-21: The Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod

- In both Jewish and Hellenistic circles, leaven was a common metaphor for corruption
- Pharisees used religious power to corrupt, Herod used political power to corrupt
- Disciples ignore what Jesus says, they're worried about being hungry
- Contrast and irony of disciples worried over lack of bread after Jesus fed 5000 and then 4000
- Point being made that disciples still don't know who Jesus is

8:22-26: Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

- Jesus did not normally isolate those who He performed miracles on (except Jairus's daughter, the deaf/mute man)
- What purpose does spit and laying on hands serve?
- Why did Jesus ask "do you see anything?"
- Isaiah 35:5-6 – the blind will see, deaf will hear, the speechless will sing for joy
- Note the order of miracles of healing deaf, mute, and blind:
 - Jesus heals the deaf/mute man (7:31-37)
 - Jesus rebukes the disciples by asking "having eyes do you not see? Having ears do you not hear?" (8:18)
 - Jesus heals the blind man (8:22-26)
 - These events lead to the recognition of who Jesus is in 8:27-30

8:27-30: Peter Confesses Jesus as the Messiah

- Jesus and disciples travel to Caesaria Philippi.
 - About 25 miles north of Bethsaida, at the foot of Mount Hermon
 - Located in region called Bashan, which means "place of the serpent"
 - Residence of Herod Philip

- Area given to Herod the Great by Caesar Augustus
- Herod built a temple in honor of the emperor consecrated to the Greek god Pan
- Here Jesus questions His disciples about who people (and they) say He is
 - The response indicates that His true identity is veiled from the people. That He is Moses or Elijah suggests people thought Jesus is simply a prophet or an eschatological realization rather than Messiah or Son of God
 - Peter answers that He is the Messiah
- Messiah means “the one anointed by God”
 - Implies divine election and special endowment of power
 - Royal, priestly, prophetic roles, had divine protection
 - Ruler from David’s line
 - Later assumed role of deliverance of Israel
 - Lack of understanding of the full scope of Jesus’ role of Messiah
 - Concludes first section of Mark (who is Jesus?) and Jesus’ ministry in Galilee

8:31-9:1: Jesus Fortells His Death and Resurrection

- A new section of Mark’s gospel begin here, asking “what it means to be the Messiah”
- Jesus will begin his journey to Jerusalem with the disciples
- Three times Jesus foretells His rejection, suffering, death and resurrection (9:31, 10:33)
- “Son of Man” (v 31) occurs 14 times in this gospel
 - Occurs first in Dan 7:13, in glory. Then in Mk 8:31 as humiliation, then Mk 8:31 in glory
 - Son of Man as suffering/humiliated prophesied in Is. 52:13-53:12
- Peter REBUKES Jesus – REBUKE is what Jesus did to the demons...
- Peter’s reaction is understandable. But together with the presence of the other disciples, Jesus needed to make a strong REBUKE to Peter
- The rebuke by Peter is challenging God's plan of salvation and the victory over evil, and is therefore of SATAN

Requirements for following Jesus (8:34)

- Where did the crowd come from? Its presence shows that these teachings are for ALL
- Mark likely has in mind the persecuted church when compiling these sayings
- Suffering is not only Jesus’ burden, but His disciples’, the church in Roman Empire, and possibly us
- We should not be detached observers, but grow in faith and knowledge and be willing to suffer
- Our nature is to cling to our ways and life. We don’t want to be an object of contempt. But better to have approval from Jesus than people

9:2-8: The Transfiguration

- Defined as a change of form or appearance
- An experience of Jesus similar to his baptism (Mt. 3:13-17, Mk 1:9-11, Lk. 3:21)
- Moses and Elijah representing the OT Law and the Prophets witnessing to the Messiah and being fulfilled and superseded by Him

- Each had a vision of the glory of God on a mountain: Moses on Sinai (Ex 24:15), Elijah on Horeb (1 Ki 19:8)
- Law of Moses and the coming of Elijah are mentioned together in the last verses of the OT (Mal. 4:4-6)
- Transfiguration looks back to the OT and shows how Christ fulfills it
- Signifies who the Jesus the Messiah is – Son of God
- Likely took place on Mount Hermon, but possibly on Mount Tabor
 - o Mount Hermon: the place where, per the Book of 1 Enoch, the sons of God descended to earth to take as wives the daughters of men (Gen 6:1-4).

9:9-13: **The Coming of Elijah**

- Malachi 4:5: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.”
- Disciples wonder what comes between the resurrection and parousia
- Passage suggests disciples don’t understand what it means to be the Messiah
- John the Baptist’s preaching of repentance echoes Mal 4:6. Therefore the return of Elijah is fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist
- As Elijah was troubled by an evil queen and weak king, so was John the Baptist

Who Is Jesus – What We Know (Mark 1:1 thru 4:20)

Why Mark was written

- Not meant to be a historical document to capture the events as they occurred
 - Mark compiled the gospel based on a series of sermons by Peter
- It's a document arranged to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to us (the reader)
 - We need to read the events and understand /apply them to our lives – produce fruit
 - We'll either **become a disciple** or **one of the crowd** or **religious leaders** in Jesus' day
- Mark only captures a fraction of what Jesus did or said
 - John 21:25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written

What Has Mark Shown Us – Who Is Jesus

(*) Key miracles performed to be performed by the Messiah

- Luke 7:22 ... the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, leper are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them

(**) Key miracles performed to show he was God

• Opening Statement

- 1:1 The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

• Jesus identified the rightful representative of God at his baptism – Jesus' authority

- 1:4-9 Baptized by John – culmination of the OT prophets preparing the way for the Christ/Messiah
- 1:10 Heavens are torn open – there is now a connection between earth and heaven (Jesus)
- 1:10 Anointed by the Spirit, Holy Spirit pictured as a dove descends on Jesus
- 1:11 God the Father's voice pronounces Jesus as his Son

• Jesus identified As God at the Transfiguration

- 9:3 and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.
- 9:4 and there appeared Elijah and Moses talking to Jesus
- 9:7 (God the Father says) "This is my beloved Son; listen to him."

• Jesus is also our perfect human representative, succeeding where Israel failed

- 1:12-13 Jesus successfully overcomes 40 days of temptation

• Jesus' Mission on Earth

- 1:15 The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel (*)
- 1:17 Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men (Disciples)
- 5:19 (Legion/Gentile) Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you ...

• Teaches with Authority

- 1:22 Taught them as one who had authority and not as the scribes

Who Is Jesus – What We Know (Mark 1:1 thru 4:20)

- **Power to heal sicknesses – produces immediate results**
 - 1:31 Heals Peter's Mother-in-law
 - 1:34 Heals many who were sick with various diseases in Capernaum
 - 3:10 He heals many (and all who came)
 - 5:29 Woman with a discharge of blood for twelve years
 - 6:5 laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them
 - 6:56 (Healing in Gennesaret – touch his garment) And as many as touched it were made well
- **Authority over unclean spirits / demons**
 - 1:25 Casting out Unclean Spirit in Synagogue in Capernaum
 - 1:34 Casting out many demons in Capernaum – crowds outside Peter's house
 - 3:11 Casting out demons on the shore of Sea of Galilee
 - 5:7-13 Casting out a legion of demons in the country of the Gerasenes (**)
 - 5:29 Casts out demon (from afar) from Syrophenician Woman's daughter
- **Power to cleanse leprosy (*)**
 - 1:41 Touched and healed the leper
- **Power to make the lame to walk (*)**
 - 2:11 ... rise and pick up your bed and go home ...
- **Power Over Nature and Elements (**)**
 - 4:39-40 Jesus rebukes the storm/calms the sea; ... and there was a great calm ...
 - 6:48-51 Jesus walks on the water
- **Power to Raise the Dead (*)**
 - 5:35-42 Raised Jairus' Daughter – Ruler of Synagogue
- **Feeds the Multitude (**)**
 - 6:35-44 Jesus feeds Five Thousand with five loaves and two fish – 12 baskets remained
 - 8:1-10 Jesus feeds four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fish – 7 baskets remained
- **Power to restore senses – sight, hearing and speech (*)**
 - 7:31-36 Jesus heals deaf / speech impeded man in region of Decapolis
 - 8:22-26 Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

Jesus' Teaching and Statements

- **General Responses**
 - 3:22 New wine is for fresh wineskins
 - 3:35 For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."
- **Jesus' Emotions**
 - 6:5 he marveled because of their unbelief
 - 6:34 he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd

Who Is Jesus – What We Know (Mark 1:1 thru 4:20)

- **Spoke in Parables**

- 3:23-27 How can Satan cast out Satan – a kingdom divided against itself can not stand
- 4:1-9 Parable of the Sower
- 4:10-25 Purpose of Parables / Lamp Under A Basket
- 4:26-34 Kingdom Parables – Seed Growing and Mustard Seed
- 4:33-34 With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

- **Attacked Man's Traditions and Laws**

- 2:18 Fasting - Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them
- 3:1-5 Healing on Sabbath - Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm
- 7:1-12 (v8) You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.”
- 7:14-22 What defiles a person

What Did Jesus Say About Himself

- **Power to forgive sins**

- 2:10 But that you may know that the **Son of Man** has authority on earth to forgive sins

- **Save Sinners**

- 2:17 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners

- **Lord of the Sabbath**

- 2:27-28 The Sabbath was made for man So the **Son of Man** is lord even of the Sabbath.

- **Will Be Rejected, Crucified, and Rise from Dead**

- 8:31-32 And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he said this plainly.
- 9:9 (the Transfiguration) ... tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead

- **Coming in Glory**

- 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Who Is Jesus – What We Know (Mark 1:1 thru 4:20)

Response from Those Who Met Jesus

• Great crowds followed Jesus

- 1:33 And the whole city (Capernaum) was gathered together at (Simon's) door
- 1:40 Jesus could no longer openly enter a town ... people were coming to him from every quarter
- 2:1 And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door
- 3:7 Crowds from Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, Tyre, and Sidon
- 4:1 Crowds near the sea of Galilee – preaching from a boat
- 5:15-17 ... they were afraid ... begged Jesus to depart from their region

• People Said of Him

- 1:27 What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him
- 2:12 they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"
- 5:40 (Jairus' Daughter is asleep) ... and they laughed at him
- 5:42 (Jairus' Daughter raised from dead) ... and they were immediately overcome with amazement
- 6:2 (about his teaching) "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him?"
- 6:2 (about his miracles) "How are such mighty works done by his hands?"
- 6:3 "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?"
- 6:3 And they took offense at him.
- 7:37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

• Demons

- 1:24 "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God."
- 3:11 ... fell down and cried out "You are the Son of God"
- 5:6 Jesus, Son of the Most High God – I adjure you by God, do not torment me

• Pharisees, Scribes, Religious Leaders

- 2:7 Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming
- 2:16 Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?
- 2:18 Why don't you and your disciples fast?
- 2:24 Why do you work on the Sabbath (pluck heads of grain)
- 3:1 Watched Jesus so they could accuse Him
- 3:6 Pharisees held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him
- 3:22 He is possessed by Beelzebul – by prince of demons he casts out demons
- 3:30 they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."
- 8:11 began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him

• Jesus' Family

- 3:20 they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

Who Is Jesus – What We Know (Mark 1:1 thru 4:20)

- **Disciples / Apostles**

- 4:41 Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?
- 6:51-52 (Jesus walking on the water) And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened
- 8:29 Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.”
- 8:33 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him (for Jesus explained his rejection, death and rise after three days)

Class Notes Mark 9:14 thru 10:16

Recap and Transition – Mark 8:11 thru 9:13

- Key point #1 (Mark 8:11-13) **Pharisees are arguing with Jesus, seeking a sign from heaven to test him**
 - “seeking” is the same word used in Mark 1:13 for Satan’s tempting of Jesus (testing)
 - **“Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.”**
 - Demanding something from God we/man/Pharisees define as acceptable, to prove Himself to us
 - Signs were not the way to test if a person was from God (Deut. 13:1-5) as a false prophet teaching rebellion from God could give a “sign of wonder” (God would allow this to test his people)
 - Later on, Jesus refers to this generation as **“adulterous and sinful”** (Mark 8:38)
- Key point #2 (Mark 8:14-21) **“Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”**
 - The leaven of the Pharisees and Herod is most certainly concerned with their evil views affecting us
 - Leaven created by leaving dough out to ferment (sour dough) – more specifically decays or “rots”
 - A picture of corruption (i.e., sin) that spreads quickly in our lives and in our hearts
 - Pharisees in Mark: focused on man’s traditions/laws rather than God’s law
 - Separatist – avoiding sinners and gentiles to keep their hearts pure
 - Tradition makers and keepers – focusing on the religious laws of men and legalism
 - Sabbath keepers – equating breaking sabbath as punishable by death
 - Herod in Mark: worldly, violent, superstitious, focused on self and power
 - Was happy to listen to God’s word but did not understand it or follow it
 - Jesus accuses the disciples - “having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear?”
 - Same issue Jesus had with the crowds and religious leaders – Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:10-12, Isaiah 6)
 - The disciples struggle to understand who Jesus is – attempting to use their own reasoning to understand
 - We see the illustration of this with the healing of a blind man at Bethsaida (8:22-26)
- Key point #3 (Mark 8:27-30) – **Peter declares Jesus to be the Christ (the Messiah)**
 - Peter connects the dots, both from Jesus’ miracles and teaching
 - Jesus explains “plainly” that he “must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again”
 - Plainly – **boldly or confidently** declaring as fact
 - Peter rebukes Jesus - this is not the Messiah Israel expects - the religious leaders nor the disciples
 - Jesus rebukes Peter for **setting his mind on the things of man vice things of God**
- Key point #4 (Mark 9:1-8) – **Jesus’ transfiguration**
 - Gives the three disciples a glimpse of Jesus in his glory
 - God the Father spoke – **“This is my beloved Son; listen to him.”**
 - Allusion to Psalm 2:7 (The Reign of the LORD’s anointed) – similar statement made at Jesus’ baptism
 - Allusion to Deut 18:15: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me (Moses) from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen
 - Disciples still don’t get it
 - v9: Jesus says to them - tell no one what they had seen, **until the Son of Man had risen from the dead**
 - v10: So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning **what this rising from the dead might mean**
 - v11: Change of subject – disciples ask “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?”
 - Malachi’s great and terrible day of the LORD (Mal 4:5-6); Messiah’s glorious reign on earth
 - Disciples are still focused on the wrong picture of the Messiah and Jesus’ ministry

Class Notes Mark 9:14 thru 10:16

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Unclean Spirit Mark 9:14-29

- Interesting picture – Jesus comes down the mountain post transfiguration to be greeted with a crowd of stiff-necked Israelites
 - Moses coming down Mt. Sinai and confronting Israel with the golden calf (Exodus 32)
 - Even Jesus went through life's mountain top highs to the valleys of frustration ...
- ¹⁴And when they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes arguing with them.
 - Seems to indicate that the scribes were probably criticizing the disciples for their inability to help the boy
 - Probably arguing that the disciples teaching is not supported with God's authority
 - Interesting point – the “godly” scribes did nothing to help the boy or the father
 - A mute/deaf spirit would be problematic for Jewish exorcists as they believed they needed to know it's name to cast it out
- ¹⁹And he answered them, “O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?”
 - So ... who was Jesus calling a faithless generation?
 - Most probably directed at the scribes – they're there to accuse and discredit Jesus and the disciples
 - Probably directed at the crowd – no indication that they're siding with or supporting the disciples
 - Maybe disappointed with the disciples - Matthew's account (17:20) Jesus highlights that the disciples had little faith
 - Probably not directed at the father
 - Jesus' statement sounds similar to God's Old Testament laments against an unbelieving Israel (Num 14:27; Deut 32:5, 20)
- ²⁰And they brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy ...
 - “This indicates how the presence of God can produce storm and stress before anything constructive is accomplished (Eduard Schweizer)
- (v21-24) ²¹And Jesus asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” ... ²⁴Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!”
 - Seems like a strange discussion Jesus has with the Father – the boy is convulsing on the ground and Jesus starts a casual discussion with the Father. Stressing situation – why doesn't Jesus immediately act?
 - All things are possible for one who believes - Similar encouragement the woman who bled and Jairus (Mark 5:34, 36)
 - I believe, help my unbelief
 - Help my unbelief can only say by faith. “While men have no faith, they are unconscious of their unbelief; but, as soon as they get a little faith, then they begin to be conscious of the greatness of their unbelief.” (Spurgeon)
- ²⁶... the boy was like a corpse – most said, “He is dead.” ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.
 - The first challenge to the father's faith – did Jesus make things worse? Is his son dead?
 - Faith is about trusting in Jesus' promise – not the immediate consequences
 - Wording in Greek (lit): “raised him, and he was resurrected” – similar to Mark 5:41 where Jesus raised Jairus' daughter
 - Provides the disciples with an object lesson of what it means to rise from the dead (Mark 9:10)
- “Why could we not cast it out?” ²⁹And he said to them, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”
 - Things don't always happen immediately
 - Prayer – drawing closer to Jesus and showing dependency on Him; little prayer = little faith = little results
- Observation - without Jesus, they could not cast out the demon
 - Seems this is a common for the disciples – they most often get into trouble when Jesus is not with them

Jesus Again Foretells Death, Resurrection Mark 9:30-32

- First teaching event after God the Father's statement at the transfiguration to “Listen To Him” (Mark 9:7)
- Interesting Wording: Son of man is going to be “**betrayed**” or “**delivered**” – can be translated either way
 - Betrayed – someone close to Jesus with a desire to do harm, will hand over Jesus (i.e., Judas)
 - Delivered – someone voluntarily / purposely will hand over Jesus (i.e., God)
 - Generalized – delivered “**into the hands of men**” - indicating all mankind will be responsible
- (v32) But they did not understand the saying
 - See Mark 8:33 – Jesus' rebuke of Peter for setting his mind on things of man rather than things of God
 - “did not understand” could be translated “the meaning escaped them”. See Luke 9:45
- (v32) They were afraid to ask him - Ironic – Jesus' hand-picked disciples were afraid and did not understand

Class Notes Mark 9:14 thru 10:16

Who Is the Greatest? Mark 9:33-37

- It seems that this was the favorite debating topic among the disciples. They all counted on Jesus to take over the world as King Messiah, and the debate was about who was most worthy to be Jesus' chief associate. (Enduring Word)
 - Ironic (again) – in light of Jesus' two statements, that the Messiah would be humiliated and killed
- Jesus, knowing their thoughts, asks the embarrassing question – what were you discussing
 - Challenging having God as your Rabbi – nothing is missed by him
 - Note – no one volunteered an answer – they kept silent
- Really, this is an extension of Jesus' teaching from Mark 8:34-38
 - Peter is rebuked for setting his mind on the things of Man rather than things of God)
 - Mark 8:34 let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me
- (v35) and servant of all
 - "Servant" – Greek word use is for one who waits on tables. It refers to personal devotion as opposed to a slave or for hire
 - Contrasting viewpoint – Greek world considered service as demeaning and undignified
 - Plato – "How can a man be happy when he has to serve someone?"
 - Jesus' view – service grows out of God's concept of love;
 - greatness is available to every believer, not reserved for the gifted or privileged; presents itself to every believer in the common and simple tasks of serving others (Pillar commentary)
- (v37) "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me ..."
 - A child - someone who is young, vulnerable and needy; no rank in society – no authority
 - Below women and servants; no different from a slave (see Galatians 4:1-3)
 - Receiving one - taking in someone and caring – i.e., discipling
 - Directly opposite of world thinking (setting your mind on the things of man)
 - You take in people that can help you – important people; someone who can build up your organization and contribute

Anyone Not Against Us Is for Us Mark 9:38-41

- We tried to stop him – i.e., we were unsuccessful
 - Unsuccessful at stopping this man who was successfully casting out demons in Jesus' name
 - Disciples were unsuccessful at casting out demons in Jesus' name
- He was not following us
 - Issue was not that the man was successfully casting out demons
 - Issue was not that the man didn't recognize who was Jesus or follow Jesus
 - Issue was the man was not following us (i.e., disciples) – not following our example or wanted to be our disciple
 - If the disciples were deciding who was a follower of Christ and who was not based on casting out demons – they would have been in trouble (see Mark 9:28)
- Jesus' response – leave the man alone ... as well as anyone like him you may encounter. Someone who is casting out demons in my (Jesus') name is not going to speak against me
 - Anyone acting in Jesus' name is empowered by God, and cannot disregard the spirit within him
 - Matches what Paul was saying in 1 Corinthians 12:3
 - ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.
 - Similar argument Jesus used with the scribes when they accused Him of casting out demons in the name of Beelzebul
 - Ultimately, being called into Jesus' service is not an entitlement of privilege and exclusion. Jesus's call is for discipling the young and weak, being a servant all in the body of Christ
- For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward
 - Same concept that Jesus explained to the disciples when he sent them out (Mark 5:7-13)
 - (5:10) Minister in the towns that receive you – give you a place to stay
 - (5:11) Those that do not receive you, and do not listen to you ... shake off the dust ...
- Putting together the dots - part of the leaven of Herod / Pharisees – **jealousy in other people's ministry**

Class Notes Mark 9:14 thru 10:16

Temptations to Sin Mark 9:42-50

- These two sayings (v42b-47; v50-51) are sayings that Jesus uses in various applications throughout the gospels
- Jesus returns to his illustration of a child, using these sayings to highlight the serious issue of causing someone to stumble
 - Stumbling – destroying the faith of a young believer or causing a believer to fall away from God
 - Not that Jesus is advocating killing or maiming oneself – Mark 7:14-22 clearly states where sin comes from – the heart
 - That is, sin does not come from outside a person like an eye, hand or foot – it's a heart issue
 - Jewish law also forbids bodily mutilation (Deut. 14:1, 23:1, 1 Kings 8:28, Zech. 13:6)
- Ultimately, my concern towards other believers should be greater (illustratively) than I value of myself
- Key – points
 - I should be helping my brothers/sisters in Christ to avoid sin
 - I should not hinder or cause them to stumble
 - I should be very concerned with dealing with sin in my life
 - I should be aware that my stumbling with sin can cause others to stumble
 - **1 Corinthians 8:7-13**: eating food offered to idols – abstain if it causes our weaker brother to stumble/sin
- (v49-50) Jesus concludes his teaching on the disciple's position and ministry in his kingdom (v33-48)
 - So, what is salt? It is that season that is distinct, bringing out the flavor in food
 - Likewise, what is the distinct attribute of a disciple – what Jesus has just taught, servanthood and humility
 - Humility is the salt that distinguishes us from other people (Pharisees, Herodians, Scribes, Gentiles/world)
 - Facilitates growth in those who are weak
 - Facilitates harmony and unity with our brothers (Philippians 1:27 – 2:2)
 - The fruit of servanthood is care of the weak and vulnerable
 - Receiving a child
 - Not hindering a child one that believes
 - Humility – what can my strength do for someone's weakness
 - Opposite of servanthood is to hinder others and to cause others to stumble
 - Humility and failure – God can orchestrate some failure along the way to humble you
 - We need to be humbled in order to properly do God's work
 - Sometimes God brings failure in our lives to make it abundantly clear that we need God ...
 - the disciples could not cast out the demon without Jesus
 - Nebuchadnezzar was given power and greatness in order to glory God and care for the oppressed (Daniel 4:27); he was humbled until he recognized this fact
 - Disciples are thinking in grand terms
 - They're thinking that they're going to be leaders like the Pharisees and Herodians
 - Instead, you should be preoccupied with the weak – those that need your strength not focusing on those who can add to your strength, position, power
- So, am I a faithful disciple of Jesus? Do I work to impress the people or to minister to the weak

Class Notes Mark 9:14 thru 10:16

Teaching About Divorce Mark 10:1-12

- Interesting to note – this section on divorce follows right after Mark 9:50b
 - Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”
- V2: “Test” - same word used for testing, tempting, seeking – intention is to discredit or prove wrong
 - word used in Mark 1:13 (Satan’s temptation of Jesus in wilderness) and
 - Mark 8:11 (Pharisees seeking a sign from heaven)
- Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife – was one of the top discussions of the Pharisees during Jesus’ day
 - Jesus is attacking the Pharisees – seems they pursued the letter of the law and utilized this loop-hole “often”
- The Pharisees were looking to trap Jesus – snare him is a “legal loop hole” they believe they found in the law
 - Jesus is now in the region where John the Baptist was ministering/baptizing
 - John the Baptist met his death due to his preaching against divorce
 - Obviously, the Pharisees hoped to leverage this to trap Jesus
 - Become embroiled in the Pharisees on-going argument
 - two schools of thought (1) a man could only divorce due to adultery or (2) could divorce due to any “indecency” (e.g. spoiled dinner or is no longer attractive to the husband)
 - Jesus would fear for his life and avoid a proper answer; or
 - Jesus would preach against divorce and end up in jail (or worse) like John the Baptist
- Jesus attacks the test head on, knowing what the Pharisees would claim
 - (v3) “What did Moses **command you?**”
 - (v4) Response - “Moses **allowed** a man to write a certificate of divorce
 - Pharisees pointed to Deuteronomy 24 as the basis for their arguments
 - The certificate of divorce ensured the rights of the woman, allowing her to remarry
 - (v5) Jesus’ response – your hardness of heart caused Moses to write this **command** (Deuteronomy 24)
 - Deuteronomy 24:1-4

24 “When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house...
 - **(side note) the point to Deuteronomy 24** was not to permit the use of a certificate of divorce; it was to issue a command against couples remarrying if their second marriage ended in divorce.
 - The Pharisees were using Deuteronomy 24 as a loop hole for divorcing your wife for “some indecency”
 - Jesus uses a specific Hebrew word – adultery – if a person divorces and remarries
 - It’s a specific sin between one married person and another
 - The Hebrew word translated “indecent” has a wide breadth to it
 - In the NT, the term “porneia” is used
 - a broad term that is intended to cover many sexual sins (thus avoiding listing out all the heinous sexual sins that a person could do / too many sexual sins to be listed)
 - In the OT, the term is used similarly
 - Also used for general indecent things (i.e. Deut 23:13-14 – human waste/excrement)
 - Note – the word indicates its an act by us that offends God
 - Man should avoid these “indecencies” as these are auctions on our part that offends God
 - Pharisees stretched the term to encompass more than a sexual sin
- Jesus goes back to Genesis 2 for the basis of his answer (not Deut) – what was God’s intention from the start
 - Divorce is not God’s ideal; divorce is permitted – not commanded

Class Notes Mark 9:14 thru 10:16

Let the Children Come to Me Mark 10:13-16

13 And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 15 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." 16 And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

- Setting – Parents are bringing their children to Jesus to be blessed
 - Not a unique event – praying blessing was common, especially for Religious leaders, Priests, and Rabbis
 - These events were probably the ones that Jesus enjoyed the most – interacting with children and blessing them
- Noteworthy – disciples were upset by this event; they rebuked the parents
 - Disciples haven't learned – still looking at the importance of people rather than ministering to people
 - The disciples ignored children, as they were
 - Without position
 - Possessions
 - Power
 - Learning
 - Wisdom
 - Not key to their understanding of Jesus' ministry
- They didn't have anything to offer to Jesus
 - They weren't important
- Jesus points out - these are the kind of people that will gain entrance into heaven
 - Nothing to offer – not by works or lineage
 - Humble
 - Dependent on God
 - Responding in faith like a child responds to an adult or parent
- Looks like the disciples failed their pop quiz
 - Chapter 9 – receive this child and you receive me; hinder this child and it would be better that a millstone be hung on his neck ...
 - Disciples did not get it.

Class Notes: Mark 10:17 – 11:19

Review (9:14 – 10:16)

- Jesus heals boy with unclean spirit. Disciples could not exorcise the spirit and the scribes argued with them. Jesus lamented “O faithless generation, how long am I to bear with you?” They could not cast out the demon, who caused the boy to be mute, without Jesus. Jesus stated that this kind of demon could only be cast out by prayer.
- Jesus foretells His death and resurrection for the second time while passing through Galilee. The disciples still did not understand this, and were afraid to ask Him, even though they were His hand-picked disciples!
- The disciples argued about who is the greatest. Jesus replied that whoever would be first, he must be last and be servant of all.
- The disciples report to Jesus that somebody was casting out Demons in His name even though he was not “WITH US.” Jesus replied that “whoever is not against us is for us.” This suggests that the disciples were not heeding the warning of Jesus to beware of the “leaven of Herod and the Pharisees”, which was divisive and jealous of other peoples’ ministry.
- Warning against temptation to sin: Find the source and remove it. And woe to those who cause others to sin!
- Pharisees attempt to trap Jesus with the question of whether it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife. Jesus concludes that husband and wife become one flesh, God joined them together, man should not separate. Divorce is permitted, not commanded.
- Jesus rebuked the disciples for stopping children from being brought to Him. “The Kingdom of Heaven belong to such as these.”

Jesus and the disciples traveled through Galilee to Capernaum. From there they went south to Judea and the Transjordan.

The Rich Man – Mark 10:17-31

- Follows 10:13-16 where entrance into the Kingdom is defined as the gift of God bestowed upon those who acknowledge their helplessness in relationship to the Kingdom (like little children)
- Rich man’s approach signals a deep respect for Jesus, and shows Him the deference reserved for revered teachers of the Law in Jewish culture.

- Wealth was considered being favored by God in Jewish culture. Being wealthy offered a way to help the poor. Becoming wealthy entailed doing good works.
- Jesus qualifies the adjective “good” as only attributable to God. Jesus is possibly teaching that no one is good but God, and that inheriting eternal life is not contingent upon being good or achieving goodness or performing good actions (see v27).
- Jesus responds with action-based obedience of the commandments (Decalogue) / (murder, adultery, steal, honor, bear false witness, defraud)

“Do not defraud” (v 19) - possibly speaking of coveting? Coveting is a thought, not action-based like the other commandments listed by Jesus

- Jesus invites him to self-sacrifice and experience the demands of a disciple of God, to renounce his own achievement and rely on the work of Jesus. Selling everything makes him vulnerable and dependent on God
- Rich man replied that he has kept these commandments since youth. Based on Jesus’ teaching on the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7), the rich man could not have completely kept these commandments, and nobody but Jesus could/can.
- The rich man was not willing to sacrifice what he loved for eternal life. He would not love the Lord your God with all his heart, soul, mind, strength.

Takeaways: - The man refused the call to self-denial in order to follow Jesus (8:34-38; 9:33-37)

- Rich man sought “piety of achievement,” contrary to Jesus’ message to “receive the Kingdom”

- compare verse 4:19: ‘the cares of the world and the lure of wealth and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing.’

- The disciples’ bewilderment at Jesus comparison of camel through the eye of a needle is used by Jesus to teach that salvation is only possible with God

Jesus Foretells His Death Again (10:32-34)

- Jesus’ teaching above that bewildered the disciples precedes third major prophecy of the passion, which sharpens the demand to follow Jesus on the way to the cross
- Third time (8:31, 9:31, 10:33-34) Jesus explains his death and resurrection, but this time in more detail. Each of the three times Jesus explained this, it was to the twelve disciples alone.
- Jerusalem is named as destination for Jesus’ mission for the first time

- Includes Jesus being delivered to the Romans, and mocked, spit upon, and scourged, details not in previous two prophecies

The Request of James and John (10:35-45)

- James and John seem to regard Jesus as the eschatological Lord who goes to Jerusalem to restore the glory of the fallen throne of David
- “The cup that I drink” - In Scripture and in Jewish culture the cup is sometimes an image of blessing but more often of judgment. The cup that Jesus would drink is vicarious, but not for the disciples
- Baptism for John the Baptist was similar to a purification ritual, specifically repentance in anticipation of the Messiah’s arrival. Jesus uses the word to depict the suffering and death into which he was soon to be “plunged.”
- James and John demonstrated courage and loyalty, but they still lacked understanding
- Again they failed to learn the teaching of becoming last, and a servant (9:35) before becoming first and great
- (v. 45) Despite numerous teachings, Jesus showed that as the Messiah, He is a suffering Servant

Jesus Heals Bartimaeus (10:46-52)

- Arrival in Jericho, about five miles west of the Jordan River and eighteen miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jericho had badly deteriorated by the first century, but extending southward the new city built by Herod as the site for his magnificent winter palace was renowned for its singular beauty and fertility.
- Healing takes place right before entering Jerusalem. The previous healing of a blind person happens right before Peter confesses Jesus as Messiah, and the Transfiguration
- Differences in what specifically “Son of David” refers to in here. Likely candidate is “a respectful form of address colored by the vivid Davidic associations of Jerusalem but informed by the convictions that Jesus was the instrument of God for bringing healing and blessing to the land.”
- Bartimaeus was blind, by the roadside, and a beggar. Yet he had faith in Jesus and follows in Mark’s model of true discipleship. Contrast the rich man, who “had it all” and would not follow Jesus.
- Last of the healing miracles in the Gospel of Mark

End of Section Two in Gospel of Mark

Section Two: What does it mean for Jesus to be the Messiah?

- Messiah: Suffering servant, came to serve, not to be served, physical embodiment of God's own glory, will suffer for sins of God's people, Son of God (first pointed out by the Roman Soldier after Jesus' death)
- Made His life an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:10). Offered Himself as a guilt-offering (Lev. 5:14-6:7; 7:1-7; Num. 5:5-8)

Section Three: How Jesus Becomes the Messianic King

The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (11:1-11)

- Jesus fulfills prophecy of Zechariah 9:9
- Entry marked the end of "Messianic hiddenness"
- "The colt on which no one has ever sat": Ancient provision that an animal devoted to a sacred purpose must be one that had not been put to ordinary use (Num. 19:2; Deut. 21:3; 1 Sam. 6:7)
- The pilgrims shout references to Hallel Psalms (psalms of praise). Cf. Ps 113-118, esp. 118:26
- Triumphal entry places Jesus firmly in contention for the title "King of the Jews"
- Pilgrims and Jesus' followers disperse upon entering Jerusalem

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree (11:12-14)

- Victor of Antioch, wrote the oldest existing commentary on Mark, suggested this passage symbolizes the terrible fate that inevitably awaited Jerusalem in 70 AD
- Notice A-B-A structure of 11:12-21 (fig tree – cleansing of the Temple – fig tree)
- Leaves of the tree masked the fact that it did not bear fruit
- Compare Jeremiah 8:13

Jesus Cleanses the Temple (11:15-19)

- On Mount of Olives (considered part of Temple precincts for ritual purposes), there were four markets that sold ritually pure objects for sacrifice. Markets were controlled by Sanhedrin, not the High Priest. Flagrantly violating the divinely announced purpose of the Temple, Jesus was understandably enraged (cf. Isa. 56:7)
- Location of expulsion would have been the Court of Gentiles. That Jesus did this likely for the making possible of worship by Gentiles at the feast of Passover, and would not be lost on Mark's audience
- Such an action by Jesus would warrant verse 18
- What Antiochus had done by blatant idolatry (sacrifice a pig on the altar), the Jewish leaders themselves have allowed to happen under the pressure of commercial interests. Temple worship had lost its true focus, and must again be purified.

Mark 11:20 – Mark 12:37

I. The Cursing of the Fig Tree, (also Matthew 21:18-22)

- a. Second day of the Passion week, Monday or Tuesday, depending on the scholar
- b. Jesus' last miracle in Mark (prior to the resurrection) brings death not life!
- c. only other miracle performed after: healing of servant in the garden, Luke 22:50-51
- d. A "living parable"
- e. Difficult passage to understand

Question: Was it reasonable to curse the tree for being fruitless when, as Mark expressly says, "it was not the season for figs"?

- i. Only destructive miracle Jesus performs
- ii. On the surface seems like petty anger on Christ's part, spawned by His selfish appetite.
- iii. In reality, it was unrealistic to expect figs at that time of year, which He would have.
- f. Some say: "The doom pronounced and carried into effect was unjust, (the season for figs had not yet come), Jesus was looking for something that was reasonable to expect."
- g. In answer to this objection,
 - i. Remember, trees have no consciousness, and no capacity for sentient suffering
 - ii. Vindictive vs a judicial proceeding;
 1. the latter having no element of personal irritation or ill feeling.
 2. HERE IS A SYMBOL OF "JUDGMENT IN THE HOUSE OF God."
 - a. It must not be forgotten that the Lord Jesus was and is the Judge, this symbolical action was a picture of his judicial function
 - b. NO sooner has Jesus claimed His kingdom, than He performs His first and only miracle of judgment.
 - c. It would have been a false and cruel kindness never to work any miracle except of compassion, and thus to suggest the inference that He could never strike, whereas indeed, before that generation passed away, He would break His enemies in pieces like a potter's vessel.
 - d. He came not to destroy men's lives but to save them. This shows He neither indifferent nor powerless against barren and false pretensions, He did this only once, and only upon an insentient tree.
- h. What about the fig tree?
 - i. Probably occurring in the first days of April
 - ii. End of March leaves would appear
 - iii. Coincident to this, or before, a crop of small knobs called *taqsh* appear
 - iv. Early forerunners of true figs, about the size of almonds
 - v. Eaten by peasants and others when hungry
 - vi. Appear as a harbinger of fully formed true figs 6 weeks later
 - vii. Another "fig tree" in scripture: Luke 13:6-9
 1. In this parable a landowner came three years in succession expecting fruit from a fig tree on his property. Year after year it proves, he told the man in charge of his vineyard to cut it down because it was using up the ground to no good purpose.
 2. In both these parables, it appears that the fig tree represents the city of Jerusalem, unresponsive to Jesus as he came to it with the message of God, and thereby incurring destruction.
 3. This living parable in Mark picks up where Luke 13 ends.
- i. To understand, context is everything
 - i. **Grassmick** : "This section has a "sandwich" structure. The account of Jesus' judgment on the fig tree is divided by the account of His cleansing the temple precincts.
 - ii. **Akin** - the presence of the leaves would indicate this tree would have fruit on it, if not full figs. However, the tree was barren. It bore no fruit. Its leaves promised one thing but it had not

produced. It was a *hypocritical* fig tree. The leaves, the outward appearance, said —come here I have fruit that will satisfy and meet your needs.

j. How do we interpret this?

- i. **Brian Bell** - This was a sermon in action. Like the fig tree, Israel flourished with the “leaves” of ritual religion but lacked the “fruit” of righteousness God demanded. Both episodes (FIG TREE CURSING AND TEMPLE CLEANSING) signify God’s impending judgment on Israel for religious hypocrisy
- ii. Retribution fell upon it not for its lack of fruit, but for ostentatious, much-professing fruitlessness. It points with dread significance to the condition of God's own people, not in the want of fruit, but in the show of luxuriant foliage, in its expectation. Israel only put forth leaves, and made professions which were not fulfilled. And the permanent warning of the miracle is not for heathen men and races, but for Christians who have a name to live, and who are called to bear fruit unto God.

Question: How should we respond?

II. The Cleansing of the Temple

- a. His entrance into the Temple grounds will constitute His first "official act" as their King. Would expect Him to head straight for the **Antonia Fortress** as a conquering king. Instead, He confronts the corruption taking place in the Temple.
- b. Two occasions Jesus clears the temple—one at the beginning of his public ministry, and the other at the end of it, four days before his death
- c. The temple has become a fruitless pretense of worship. Judaism is spiritually bankrupt. The whole system and the nation with it engulfed in that system is cursed by God.
- d. OT: prophets used the fig tree and the vine as symbols of the nation of Israel
 - i. Jeremiah compared the sinful nation to rotten figs (Jer. 29:17),
 - ii. Hosea wrote that, even though Israel was like “the first fruits of the fig tree,” their roots had dried up and they bore no fruit (Hos. 9:10, 16).
 - iii. During Joel’s time, an invasion of locusts was ruining the nation, what God called “My vine” and “My fig tree” (Joel 1:7).
 - iv. A common description of prosperity in Israel was to dwell under one’s fig tree in peace and plenty (1 Kings 4:25; Micah 4:4).
- e. NT:
 - i. Jesus had wept over the city of Jerusalem because Israel had an outward show of “religion” but had produced no fruit. Their worship was like this fig tree—nothing but leaves.
 - ii. Jesus told the hypocritical religious leaders, “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it” (Matt. 21:43).
- f. What was happening in the temple?
 - i. The temple is a series of layers rising up to the top of Mount Moriah. At the very top is the naos, the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place, surrounded by a wall. Only the high priest enters once a year.
 - ii. Lower than the naos. First is the Court of the Priest where they offer the sacrifice, then the Court of the Israelites, then the Court of the Women, then the massive, massive Court of the Nations, or Court of the Gentiles, which is where He would be this time. That would hold hundreds of thousands of people.
 - iii. The *desecration* of the temple.
 1. money was exchanged—foreign money, with the images, the superscription, the symbols, which denoted heathenism, for the shekels of the sanctuary;
 2. and doves and other victims, used for sacrifice and offerings, were openly bought and sold. Turning the sacred precincts to purposes of gain was a heinous offense against the majesty of the Lord of the temple.
 3. vessels used for common purposes were carried through the courts;

- iv. the *violation* of the temple. The traffic which took place was distinguished by injustice and fraud: "Ye have made it a den of robbers."
- v. **Gentiles were excluded from worship**
- g. What do we see here?
 - i. Righteous anger
 - 1. The temple charged exorbitant rates for the sacrificial animals, and for the exchange of secular money for temple money, the poor would be excluded from worship.
 - 2. This justifies Jesus' accusation that they were turning God's house into a den of thieves (Matthew 21:13) and is a suitable explanation for His anger.
 - 3. A religious establishment that turned the act of worship into a device for wringing money out of the devout deserved God's wrath.
 - ii. The power and judgment of God

Question: What is the "take away" from this encounter?

III. Jesus' teaching on Prayer Mark 11:20-27

- a. Jesus uses this incident to talk to about faith, not judgment or fruit or more directly to the issue of hypocrisy
- b. He addresses the need for genuine faith in the application of faith in believing prayer.
- c. What a broad promise for prayer!!

Question: Is this prayer a justification of the "name it and claim it" mentality? The prosperity gospel.

- a. Have faith IN God, not have the faith OF God.
 - i. The object of our faith is God
 - ii. Not in faith itself, we don't conjure up some "feelings" that will make God answer our prayers. Akin adds "**An important point of clarification:** True and believing prayer is not attempting to get God to change His will to fit our plans. It is a passionate pursuit to see God's plans accomplished in us! Prayer is not conjuring God up like some —genie in a bottle, obligated to grant us whatever we wish.
 - 1. Read Matt 6:9-10; Mark 14:36; John 14:13-14; 15:7; 16:23-24; and 1 John 5:14-15 before you draw such a foolish and erroneous theological conclusion.
- b. James Smith in *Handfuls of Purpose*
 - iii. The Nature of Faith, Heb. 11:1
 - iv. The Object of Faith, "God."
 - v. The Ground of Faith. What the "Scriptures hath said," John 7:38
 - vi. The Need of Faith, Heb. 11:6
 - vii. The Example of Faith, Mark 14:16
 - viii. The Results of Faith, Heb. 11.
- c. One hindrance to the prayers of faith that contain great spiritual power, is the presence of angry and uncharitable feelings. These must all be put away if we would hope for a favorable answer from God.
 - ix. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Ps. 66:18).
 - x. "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Prov. 4:23 TNIV).
- d. This "mountain" that Jesus refers to:
 - xi. The mount on which the temple stands?
 - xii. The system of sacrifices that the fails in salvation?
 - xiii. The hypocrisy of the scribes and pharisees?
 - xiv. Salvation that can only come through faith in God. As a camel through the eye of a needle.

IV. The Authority of Jesus Questioned Mark 11:27-33

- a. The cleansing of the temple precipitates the confrontation.
- b. Authority: *exousia*. means "freedom to act," "liberty to act." To have authority is essentially to have the right to act, to exercise your will, to exercise force, to determine, to decide.

- c. Chief Priests: (**archiereus** from **arche** = leader idea of rank + **hiereus** = priest) refers to the priests that were chief over other priests. refers to all the ruling priests, the upper echelons of the priestly class, especially those who served on the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court (Lk 9:22, Mk 8:31)
- d. Scribes: (**grammateus** from **grapho** = to write), were recognized experts in the law of Moses and in traditional laws and regulations. (Mt 2.4). Most sources consider the **lawyers** (nomikos - meaning one skilled in the Mosaic law) to be scribes specialized in the jurisprudence of the Law of Moses. Today, the term "**scribes**" tends to be thought of as a professional copyist. "experts in the law" comes closer to the actual meaning. Finally the scribes in Lk 5:17 (nomdidaskalos) were teachers of the Jewish law who were equal to the lawyers and scribes.
- e. Elders: (**presbuteros** the comparative form of **présbus** = an old man or an ambassador) referred to men who were older or more senior and deserving of a sense of venerability
- f. Appears this is the first time in the Synoptics that **the chief priests** combine with **the scribes** against Jesus.
- g. They see Jesus teaches with authority, cast out demons with authority and heals with authority. He does only what God can do! But they are not satisfied.

Question: Why did the religious leaders want to destroy Jesus?

- h. He exposed their Hypocrisy - Threat to their Popularity and More Powerful – look at his miracles - More Profound – look at his teaching – taught with authority Afraid – saw Jesus as a prophet of God – Matt. 22:46 - Threat to their Pocketbook.

Question: What do we make of Jesus response that “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things”?

- i. Jesus is saying “I’m through communicating with you.” That’s what that is. “I’m done. I’m done. I have said all I am going to say; you’re not entitled to any further information.” He would not cast His pearls before swine to have the truth again trampled. (MacAthur)

V. The Parable of the Vineyard or the Tenants Mark 12:1-12(Matthew 21:33-46; Luke 20:9-19)

- a. There are 6 main characters in this parable:
 - i. the landowner—God,
 - ii. the vineyard—Israel,
 - iii. the tenants/farmers—the Jewish religious leadership,
 - iv. the landowner’s servants—the prophets who remained obedient and preached God’s word to the people of Israel,
 - v. the son—Jesus,
 - vi. the other tenants—the Gentiles.
- b. The imagery used is similar to Isaiah’s parable of the vineyard found in Isaiah chapter 5.
- c. Jesus is not only reminding the religious establishment what they were like, but He was putting in their minds a question: how could they claim obedience as God’s people and still reject His messengers?
- d. But the tenants see an opportunity here; they believe that if they kill the son they will then receive his inheritance. The law at the time provided that if there were no heirs then the property would pass to those in possession (possession is nine tenths of the law). This amounts to conspiracy to commit murder by the Jewish leadership, and it is prophetic in the sense that Jesus is now telling them what they are going to do to Him (see Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 28:16).
- e. Because of their disobedience they will be left out of the kingdom of heaven (individually and as a people); that they have let their opportunity for the time being slip away to be given to the Gentiles (see Mt 21:41, “other tenants”).

Question: What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the cornerstone?

- f. Refers to the **stone** which the stonemasons examined and rejected in Psalm 118:22+. This rejected stone would be the **chief cornerstone** or "capstone". A stone at the top of the wall binding the whole

together and consummating the work. **Cornerstone** refers to the large stone placed in the foundation at the main corner of a building. By uniting two intersecting walls, a **cornerstone** helped align the whole building and tie it together. A **cornerstone** could also refer to the top or final stone of a building (capstone)

- g. The church today: Ephesians 2:19-20 “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*,”

VI. **Paying Taxes to Caesar** Mark 12:13-17

- a. the **Pharisees**, the **Herodians**, and the **Sadducees**—held positions of authority and power over the people.
 - i. The **Herodians** held political power, that supported King Herod Antipas, (Roman Empire's ruler over the Jews from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39).
 - ii. This support compromised Jewish independence in the minds of the Pharisees, making it difficult for the **Herodians** and Pharisees to unite and agree on anything. **But one thing did unite them—opposing Jesus.**
- b. The Pharisees: the most religious, most concerned with the Law of God, most devoted to Israel.
- c. The Herodians: the least religious, most concerned with the Law of Rome, most devoted to Caesar, were intensely political.
- d. Essentially, the Pharisees hated the Herodians; they’d sold their soul. They were sycophants to Rome. The Pharisees despised them.
- e. Background - The Romans had ruled over Jerusalem since 63 B.C. There had been a gradual increase in taxes, funding the Roman Empire. Rebellion, earlier in this century :“no tribute to the Romans.” Believed taxation was basically slavery.
 - i. There were three taxes which were collected
 - ii. Ground Tax: Made up of 10% of all the grain and 20% of all the wine and fruit produced.
 - iii. Income Tax: 1% of a man’s income.
 - iv. Poll Tax: A flat tax of one denarius (a day’s wage) was paid by all men from 14 to 65 years of age and on all women between the ages of 12 to 65. (they paid a head or poll tax collected when a census was taken)
 - v. Only emperors had the power and authority to mint coins in silver and gold. And all such coins minted by the emperor bore the sacred image of the emperor engraved on one side and some other identifying description – inscription on the other side.
 - vi. Because they contained a “graven image” the Jews would not carry them. Idols
 - vii. They would pay the Roman tax in the equivalency in their own Hebrew coinage.
- f. they next attempted to bring Jesus into collision with the civil authorities.

Question: What can we conclude from Jesus’ response?

- g. His response:
 - i. God has ordained civil authority. That is a common grace.
 - ii. The big issue: **to give God what you HIm.** You owe Him the same thing those Pharisees owed Him. You don’t owe Him hypocrisy; you don’t owe Him phony religion. What do you owe God? “To love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.”

VII. **Marriage and the Resurrection** Mark 12:18-37

- a. The attack now from the Sadducees.
 - i. Very powerful, very wealthy, very influential, aristocratic
 - ii. They think that they can accomplish what the Pharisees couldn’t pull off.
 - iii. They denied the resurrection, angels and the spiritual realm. When you die, no existence.

- iv. In applying the internal justice of the land, they were the cruelest in matters of the law. Josephus himself, the historian, tells us they were more savage than the other Jews
 - v. Refused to accept anything but the Law of Moses
 - vi. They refused to accept the oral tradition, or the scribal tradition of the Pharisees. They were guardians of the pure faith of the Pentateuch, interpreted the Law of Moses literally and were severely meticulous in matters of purity.
- b. If they're scriptural literalists, how can they deny that the resurrection is in the Old Testament?" They held to the singular supremacy of the Pentateuch. References to the resurrection primarily found in the Psalms and forward.
- c. Was their goal to discredit Jesus by catching Him in a dilemma? No, by making Him look stupid. They want to make Him look like a fool.
- d. This is an absurd scenario, highly hypothetical.
- e. Jesus explains to the Sadducees where they are mistaken. We learn:
- i. The whole complex of sex, reproduction, birth, family ceases to exist.
 - ii. There will be a resurrection.
 - iii. There will be no marriage relationship as we know it in this life.
 - iv. In some sense we will become like the angels - no procreation, no death
- f. Still many unanswered questions.
- i. Do children grow up in heaven?
 - ii. What about the saints with the Lord who do not yet have their resurrection bodies?
 - iii. What is a spiritual body?
 - iv. And of course, through the ages bereaved hearts have asked, "Shall we know each other over there?"

VIII. **The Greatest Commandment:** Mark 12:28-34

- a. Presumably this **arguing** refers to the "Resurrection Question" the Sadducees had posed to Jesus to trap Him
- b. This interaction with a religious leader seems different from the previous 3, if we read only Mark's version.
 - i. [Mt 22:34](#) makes it clear that that the scribe (lawyer) "asked Him a questions, **testing**
 - ii. Mark's Gospel implies he was truly interested in the theological question.
 - iii. **Hiebert** says "The sequel shows that he did not ask his question with a malicious motive, but rather intended to "test" Jesus' skill in answering this much debated question.
 - iv. **MacDonald** adds "It was an honest question, and, in some ways, life's most basic question. He was really asking for a concise statement of the chief aim of man's existence."
- c. Akin : " 613 commandments in the first 5 books of the Bible, the Torah."
- d. MacArthur: " Knowing that they could not possibly keep all 613 laws, they focused on keeping the heavy or more important ones. They hoped vainly that doing so would satisfy God. Unable to keep even those few laws, they focused instead on keeping their man-made traditions (cf. [Mark 7:5-13](#)), which were less difficult to observe. The scribe therefore asked Jesus what single commandment was the most important to God."
- e. His search for salvation
- f. The words: Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD" come from the **Shema**
 - i. found in [Deuteronomy 6:4](#), [Josh 22:5](#)
 - ii. spoken daily in the Jewish tradition
- g. **Akin** proposes a series of questions helps evaluate our "love life" when it comes to rightly loving God and
 - i. Is the Lord the all-consuming passion of my life?
 - ii. Do I have a deep, intense and abiding affection for my Lord?
 - iii. Am I loyal to my God with an exclusive love?
 - iv. Do I resist and even oppose anything or anyone that seeks to do my Lord harm?
 - v. Am I zealous to, with grace, defend my Lord's name and honor?
 - vi. Do I enjoy spending time with my Lord?

- vii. Do I do things that please my Lord and increase His joy?
 - viii. Do I brag on my Lord to others?
 - ix. Do I tell my Lord that I love him?
 - x. Do I talk with my Lord as much as I can?
- h. The statement “love your neighbor as yourself” is not a command to love yourself, it assumes we already do.
- i. It is natural and normal to love yourself—it is our default position. There is no lack of self-love in our world.
 - ii. there is a healthy kind of self-love that is cognizant of the truth that we are the objects both of the “creating” and “redeeming” love of our God. To hate myself is actually an offense to God and calls into question His wisdom and goodness
 - iii. there is certainly a mysterious paradox in all this, for the same Jesus who tells us to love ourselves also tells us to deny ourselves and die to ourselves ([Mark 8:34](#)). In other words the more I truly love myself the more I will deny myself and love others.
- i. **Not Far from the Kingdom** –
- i. there is something more important than all the technicalities of law-keeping, than all the sacrifices and ceremonies.
 - ii. What really matters is the condition of the heart, one’s relationship to God, the quality of relationships within the community and with those in need. Love, not legalism or ceremonialism, is the way of God’s kingdom.

Class Notes Mark 13:32 – 14:31

Review of Mark 12:38-13:31

- Beware of the scribes: They did not practice the great commandments
- The widow's offering: Others gave much, she gave everything
- Destruction of the Temple Foretold
- Signs of the end of the age: referring to past events, foretelling future events. Being watchful and faithful is the focus
- The abomination of desolation: Speaking of future event, compared with past event
- The coming of the Son of Man: Tribulation, Day of the Lord
- Lesson of the fig tree: The signs will be noticed, but the actual time is not known

No one knows the day or the hour – Mark 13:32-37

The beginning of ch. 13 relates how Jesus foretold the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem:

The Jews revolted against the Romans in AD 66-70. As an eyewitness, Josephus (he began as a rebel leader, then switched allegiance to the Roman side of the conflict) recorded the events culminating in the siege of Jerusalem commanded by Roman general Titus. The Romans first crushed the revolt in outlying areas, and people fled into Jerusalem. Josephus described the terror thus: "No pity was shown on account of age or out of respect for anyone's dignity – children and elderly, lay people and priests alike were slain. The battle surged ahead and surrounded everybody, including both those who begged for mercy and those who resisted. The flames spread out to a great distance and its noise mixed with the groans of the perishing; and such was the height of the ridge and the magnitude of the burning that one would have imagined the whole city was aflame" (Wars, 6.5.1). Thus was Jesus' prophecy regarding the destruction of the temple fulfilled (13:2)

The conversation shifts to the description of the end times (eschaton). Before His return, there will be signs, i.e. false Messiahs, abomination of desolation, tribulations (famine, wars, earthquakes, etc.).

Eschatological passages of God's return: Amos 8:3,9,13, 9:11; Mic. 4:6, 5:9, 7:11; Zeph. 1:9, 3:11,16; Obad. 8; Joel 3:18; Zech 9:16

"But about that day or hour no one knows...nor the Son..." If Jesus is fully God, why didn't he know when His return would be? This has been debated over the centuries as Christology developed. However, Mark's purpose is not about developing Christology in this passage, it is about the fact that Jesus will return, and that time is unknown and therefore we should be vigilant and prepared.

“Beware, keep alert” (v33-34) - ancient writings, including Jewish writings (cf. Proverbs 7:19-20) told stories/parables of kings or householders going away and returning to find spouse or servants faithful or unfaithful. Mark’s audience would likely be familiar with Jesus’ description.

The doorkeeper is specifically mentioned. Doorkeepers had a prominent role. They held the master’s keys, kept out unwanted visitors, checked other servants leaving the premises. Such people had an important responsibility.

“Keep awake, for you do not know when the master will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn” (v35-37)

Note that these times are when it is dark. Travelling on roads by night were often dangerous, some infested with robbers. People would not expect the master to travel at night when it was unnecessary. Thus a servant could be caught off guard if the master returned at night. Falling asleep at their post could lead to punishment.

Jesus stressed that they should be vigilant (keep awake!). Christ’s disciples are to be like doorkeepers, always remaining alert and vigilant for their Master’s return. Even believers do not have in themselves sufficient resources to be alert to spiritual dangers that can so easily surprise them.

As Christ’s disciples, what are we doing to be vigilant? What aren’t we doing?

The Passion Narrative (Ch. 14:1 – 15:47)

This section brings together motifs and themes developed throughout the Mark’s gospel:

Conflict with Jewish and royal authorities (Ch. 2:1-3, 5), who sought His death (3:6, 11:18, 12:12)

Capital offense of blasphemy, provided legal basis for condemnation by the Sanhedrin (2:7, 14:63)

Judas as the one who betrayed Him (3:19)

Proclamation of His death (8:31; 9:12,31; 10:33)

Jesus had prepared His followers to find in the prophetic Scriptures the key to understanding His sufferings in fulfillment of the sovereign will of God. Such Scriptures include Prophecy of the Servant of the Lord (Isa. 53:4-12), and Psalms of the suffering and victorious righteous one 22 and 69

The Plot to Kill Jesus (14:1-2)

“Two days before the Passover” (v. 1): This section has no chronological link to the previous sections. Jesus had been in Jerusalem for weeks prior to the Passover festival.

“The chief priests and scribes”: Jerusalem’s population would swell to 50,000-200,000 people in that day during the Passover festival (one rabbinical account stated that there were approx. 1,200,000 lambs, implying a Passover festival of 12 million participants!). Demonstrations and riots were often expected. The Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus quietly to avoid attention and perhaps violence, and to do so before the festival.

Matt. 26:57 details how those who had seized Jesus brought Him to Caiaphas the high priest, and John 11:47-53 details that it was he who pronounced the decisive word.

Unfortunately, this behavior of the priests was not isolated. There are other accounts of hostility by the chief priests exploiting their powers against others, found in Josephus, Dead Sea Scrolls, and other rabbinical writings.

Jesus Anointed at Bethany (14:3-9)

One of four anointing stories in the gospels. Matthew, Mark, John set theirs in Bethany at Passover time, while Luke (7:36) is set in Galilee and differs substantially (i.e. refers to Simon as Pharisee). Due to the difference in details of the anointing, it is likely that there were separate occasions.

(14:3) Bethany: A village on the Mount of Olives, approx. 2 miles from Jerusalem. Last station on the pilgrim road from Jericho to Jerusalem. Throughout His stay in Jerusalem, Jesus appears to have lodged here (v11:11).

Simon the Leper – introduced as if he is well-known, but only mentioned in Scripture within this narrative. It is possible that Jesus healed him from his leprosy, and that this meal was offered in gratitude.

Kings (2 Kings 9:6), priests, and others had to be anointed for service. Anointing with olive oil on an important guest’s head was customary, but this woman’s action was extreme. Nard (spikenard) is a pleasant-smelling oil from the root of the nard plant native to the mountains of northern India. People used semi-transparent alabaster jars for expensive ointments, sealing it in would preserve its fragrance. Pliny the Elder (Natural History XIII. iii. 19) remarked that “the best ointment is preserved in alabaster.” Once the jar is broken open, the ointment would need to be used immediately.

This woman’s actions expressed pure devotion to Jesus and undoubtedly thanksgiving. In association with the banquet anointing suggested joy and festivity but Jesus found the significance of this act to be far more profound.

(14:4) Her anointing of Jesus represents a major sacrifice and indicates the depth of her love, but given the great numbers of landless or tenant-farming peasants, some people present think the worth of the perfume could have been put to better use.

(14:6-7) Jesus' reply probably contains an allusion to Deut. 15:11, which in context urges generosity to the poor, who will always be in the land. He does not play down giving to the poor; rather he plays up what follows.

(14:8) The woman had not likely intended the anointing for burial as Jesus said, but Jesus understood the significance of this woman's action.

Comparison with 12:41?

The Betrayal by Judas (14:10-11)

The above story of the anointing is an interpolation between the plot to kill Jesus and the betrayal by Judas. Note the contrast between chief priests and scribes who would use money given to the temple to pay Judas to betray Jesus, and the love and devotion to anoint Jesus with an extremely expensive oil. The beautiful thing done to Him, and the betrayal by one of his own chosen disciples. A betrayal by a disciple would shame the teacher, and would be seen as an especially heinous violation of trust. Mark only provides the bare facts, and no motive is mentioned here of Judas' decision.

Compare John 11:57: "Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest Him."

The verb "betray" verb used here is better translated as "hand over." Luke's account uses a different verb that is better translated "betray."

The Last Hours with the Disciples (14:12-42)

The Passover with the Disciples (14:12-21)

(v12): The first day of Unleavened Bread – By this period of time the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th – 21st days of the month of Nisan (April/May)), which immediately followed the Passover (14th of the month Nisan and continuing into the early hours of the 15th, between sunset and midnight, (cf. Exod. 12:16-20, 48; Num. 9:2-14; Deut. 16:1)) had been included in the Passover itself.

The Passover was always marked by excitement and the high hope that it would be fulfilled by God's intervention once more. It was observed as "a night of watching unto the Lord" (Exod. 12:42) in the conviction that "in that night they were redeemed and in that night they will be redeemed in the future."

Passover meal, the Last Supper, or both?

All three synoptic Gospels have the meal with the disciples on Nisan 15, while John's Gospel has it on Nisan 14, the eve of the sacrifice of the Passover lambs (John 13:1; 19:14). According to R.T. France, this is an unresolved debate that is extremely complex. However, Mark is not concerned with this debate, but he does indicate that the Last Supper was the Passover meal. He provides only the facts that are relevant to his narrative. This is mentioned here for those motivated individuals who wish to further pursue the scholarship that is ongoing if you are not already!

(v.13-16) It is clear that Jesus was aware that his arrest was imminent, and because the Passover meal must be celebrated within the city of Jerusalem per Jewish custom, He ensured that the preparations were made just as the two disciples found them (cf. Ch. 11:1-7) in order that these last hours with His disciples would not be hindered.

For a house to have an "upper room," the owner would have to be "well-to-do" and would likely reside in the part of Jerusalem known as the Upper City, near the temple, rather than the Lower City, downwind of Jerusalem's sewage.

(v.18-20) The solemnity of the meal was broken when Jesus announced that "Truly I tell you (Amen), one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." This declaration is set within the context of Psalm 41:9, "even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me." Note another contrast, Jesus sharing his meal as a friend who is the person who would betray Him.

While the treachery of Judas' action is inexcusable, Jesus points out that this must pass as it was written of Him and as part of the divine plan. Also note that Judas is not quoted here as asking "is it I?" and that he isn't mentioned leaving the room shortly after as mentioned in John's Gospel.

The Institution of the Lord's Supper (14:22-26)

(v.22) Jesus and the disciples likely followed the tradition of the Passover meal, the liturgy spoken in Aramaic (see below)

Jesus had broke the silence that was traditionally observed during the passing of the bread when He explained the significance of the bread in the context of the new covenant.

By saying "Take, this is my body," He is pledging His personal presence with them that was to be recalled whenever they broke bread together. The essential action which accompanied this word was not the breaking of the bread, but its distribution.

(v.23) Jesus' words during the breaking of bread would have been separate from the giving of the cup (see below).

Covenants were ratified by the blood of sacrifice, and Jesus' mention of the "blood of the covenant" evokes Exodus 24:8. God had redeemed His people from Egypt by the blood of the Passover lamb, "on behalf of the many" probably alludes to Isaiah 53:12.

(v.24) The Jewish people would be alarmed at Jesus' declaration "this is my blood of the covenant," because Jewish law and custom were revolted by the idea of drinking any creature's blood, especially human blood. Yet the reference to the covenant established in Jesus' blood contains an allusion to Exodus 24:6-8, where the old covenant at Sinai was ratified by the sprinkling of sacrificial blood, and serves to set the whole of Jesus' messianic action in the light of covenant renewal.

Compare Jeremiah 31:31-33 where God promises to establish a new covenant with His people in the last days.

(v. 25) The reference "I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine" is a declaration to submit to the will of God in vicarious suffering, and that it was irrevocable.

"That day when I drink it new" - where newness is the mark of the redeemed world and the time of ultimate redemption. It envisions the Parousia and the triumph of the Son of Man (Ch. 13:24-27; 32; cf. 1 Cor. 11:26). Jesus clearly affirmed His vindication and the establishment of an uninterrupted fellowship between the redeemed community and its Redeemer through the experience of messianic salvation.

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial (14:26-31)

(v.27) - Jesus quoted Zechariah 13:7, which was not likely thought of as messianic, however writings in the Dead Sea Scrolls do interpret this verse as a future occurrence. However, Zech. 13:1 prophesies that "on that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness."

(v. 28) - The Jewish people would also not expect a migration to Galilee, God's people in the eschaton would expect to gather in Jerusalem (Joel 2:32).

(v. 29-31) In his indignation, Peter seems to have ignored Jesus' statement that He would "go before you to Galilee." Compare v.8:32. Peter was brave in that he accepts Jesus' fate for himself, but still serves to heighten the completeness of their failure in the impending hour of crisis (Matt. 26:35 reports that all the disciples said the same as Peter).

Mark, alone among the gospels, reports Jesus saying, "before the rooster crows twice."

The Passover Meal Tradition

(from William Lane's *The Gospel of Mark* commentary, 1974)

The meal was framed within a liturgy whose core was the Passover prayer of the family head and the recitation of the Hallel Psalms (Ps. 113-118). When those participating had taken their places, the head of the house began the celebration by pronouncing a blessing, first of the festival and then of the wine. Then the paschal company drank the first cup of wine. After this the food was brought in, consisting of unleavened bread, bitter herbs, greens, stewed fruit and roast lamb. The son then asked why this night, with its special customs and food, was distinguished from all other nights. The family head responded by recalling the biblical account of the redemption from Egypt. This instruction led naturally into the praise of God for the salvation he had provided and the anticipation of future redemption: "So may the Lord, our God, and the God of our fathers, cause us to enjoy the feasts that come in peace, glad of heart at the upbuilding of your city and rejoicing in your service...and we shall thank you with a new song for our redemption." The new song was the first part of the ancient Hallel (Ps. 113-115), after which a second cup of wine was drunk. Then the head of the house took bread and pronounced over it the blessing of "the Lord our God, Sovereign of the world, who has caused bread to come forth out of the earth." Those present identified themselves with the blessing by saying "Amen." He then broke the bread in pieces and handed it to those who were at the table, passed to each person present hand-to-hand, who ate it with bitter herbs and stewed fruit. The distribution normally took place in silence. Only then did the meal really begin with the eating of the roasted lamb, and this was not to extend beyond midnight. Following the main meal (cf. 1 Cor. 11:25), the head of the household rose again from his reclining position and exhorted those present to "speak praises to our God, to whom belongs what we have eaten," to which those present replied, "Praised be our God for the food we mixed with water, and with his eyes on the cup pronounced the prayer of thanksgiving. The head of the family blessed the third cup with a prayer of thanksgiving on behalf of all, with the concluding words: "May the All-merciful One make us worthy of the days of the Messiah and of the life of the world to come. He brings the salvation of his king. He shows the covenant-faithfulness to his Anointed, to David and to his seed forever. He makes peace in his heavenly places. May he secure peace for us and for all Israel. And say you, Amen." There followed the singing of the second part of the Hallel (Ps. 116-118) and the drinking of the fourth cup, which concluded the Passover.

Each of the elements at the table was introduced in the context of Israel's experience in bondage. The bitter herbs served to recall the bitterness of slavery, the stewed fruit, which possessed the consistency and color of clay, evoked the making of bricks as slaves, while the paschal lamb provided the reminder of God's gracious "passing over" of Israel in the plague of death that came to Egypt.

Mark 14:32 – Mark 15:15

1. Review: Jesus Predicts Peters Denial: Mark 14:22-31

- a. "Will fall away": (to give offense, be made to stumble): **Skandalizo** is derived from **skandalon**: refers a baited trap which springs up and shuts at the touch of a careless animal. A stumbling block that causes one to trip and fall. In the present context "to fall away from Jesus", in essence, by their actions all 11 "deny" allegiance to Jesus.
- b. They would be caught and overwhelmed by what would happen to Him that very night. It would stagger their faith and shake their confidence in Him as the Messiah. It would challenge their loyalty to Him.
- c. In Matthew 26:31 gives the timing: "... fall away... **this night.**"
- d. **ALL**, "One" will betray Him, now that all the rest will desert Him! Prophecy substantiates that Jesus is God, He is omniscient and has perfect foreknowledge, for this prophecy would prove true within only a few hours!
- e. **I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered** –
 - i. Jesus is quoting Zechariah 13:7+ and depicts Himself as the **Shepherd** and the disciples as **the sheep**. Prophesied 500 years before this happened!
- f. Probably applied to the scattering of the disciples (Matt. 26:56; Mark 14:50); probably intended to be a picture, a type, of the Diaspora that began in 70 A.D. with the destruction of the Temple.
- g. While this prophecy is sad to read, the fact that it would be fulfilled to the letter should serve to encourage not only the disciples (after the fact, after they return to Jesus) but every disciple of every age.
- h. **"But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee"**: 3 predictions:
 - i. Jesus will be raised from the dead.
 - ii. The disciples will survive Jesus' arrest, trial and crucifixion.
 - iii. The disciples will be restored to fellowship after failure and will be united again with their Master in Galilee.
- i. Peter's impulsive bravado: verse 31 *"Even if all fall away, I will not"*
 - i. Genuine love for Christ behind his protest
 - ii. Elevated himself above the other disciples.
 - iii. It exhibits, not mere self-sufficiency and overweening self-reliance, but an arrogant estimate of his own strength in comparison with others, particularly with his brethren.
 - iv. Jesus reveals a deeper knowledge of Peter than Peter had of himself.
 - v. Jesus basically calls Peter's declaration a lie! Jesus predicts Peter's denial and even gives the timing of His denial!
 - vi. While all 11 would desert Jesus, Jesus makes it clear that Peter will not only desert Him but also deny Him! Jesus did not use the usual verb for deny (*arneomai*), but chose a very strong verb (*aparneomai*) that signifies utter and complete denial!
 - vii. **Peter kept saying insistently - Insistently** (*ekperissos*) means excessively, vehemently, emphatically. It gives us a vivid picture of Peter going beyond normal limits to rule out that he would ever deny Jesus.
- j. The Jewish people in that day divided the night into four parts:
 1. Evening, from six to nine
 2. Midnight, nine to twelve
 3. The Cock crow, twelve to three
 4. The Morning, three to six

2. Downward steps of Peter's fall—James Smith in Handfuls of Purpose

- a. Self-confidence, Mark 14:29.
 - i. The "I" here is very self-assertive, comparing himself with the others he believes himself more trustworthy than any. (Prov. 28:26), (1 Cor. 10:12).
 - ii. **Rod Mattoon - Overconfidence** says....
 1. I don't need to pray about it.
 2. I don't need to read the Bible each day or study God's Word.
 3. I don't need God's help.
 4. I don't need godly counsel.
 5. I'll do it my way. I don't need anyone's help or advice.

- 6. I don't need my husband, my wife, or my parents.
- 7. I don't need to give 100% or do my best. I'll just get by!
- b. Proud Boasting, Mark 14:31.
- c. Unwatchfulness, Mark 14:37.
- d. Cowardliness/Ashamedness, Mark 14:50-54.
- e. Ungodly Company, Mark 14:54.
- f. Denying the Lord Mark 14:71.
- g. Recklessness,
- h. Weeping/ Repentance, Mark 14:72.
- i. **THOUGHT** - Although we would all like to think we are different; the truth is we are all a lot like Peter and the rest of the disciples. We would have denied and departed rather than risk death! We all make all types of claims and promises to God but we cannot keep.

3. **In the Garden of Gethsemane:** Mark 14:32-42

- a. "**Gethsemane** means "oil or olive press", It was a place where olives from the neighborhood were crushed for their oil. So too, the Son of God would be crushed here. Jesus would be pressed hard by thoughts of the impending crucifixion.
- b. We don't know exactly time, but very likely it was close to midnight. The Jewish regulations called for the Passover meal to be consumed before midnight. In facing His struggle, He separated Himself from the three, knowing He must tread the winepress alone (Isa. 63:3)."
- c. "But why a **Garden**? Human history began in a **Garden** (Gen. 2:7-25) and so did human sin (Gen. 3). For the redeemed, the whole story will climax in a "garden city" where there will be no sin (Rev. 21:1-22:7). But between the **Garden** where man failed and the **Garden** where God reigns is Gethsemane, the **Garden** where Jesus accepted the cup from the Father's hand."
- d. He is addressing Peter, James and John who accompanied Jesus into the actual olive grove. The verb *paralambano* which has the prefix "para-" which means by His side and would have been a mark of special favor and privilege. The three would be able to share the agony of soul already upon Jesus, or at least to give him some human compassion and sympathy.
- e. The other 8 disciples apparently remained at the entrance or gate leading into the garden.
- f. Jesus commanded them to "**Sit** here!" Sadly, they fell asleep (how one could fall asleep in light of what Jesus said at the Last Supper is nearly incomprehensible).

The following chart is from Rod Mattoon -

The Garden of Eden	The Garden of Gethsemane
All was delightful.	All was dreadful & despicable.
Adam parleyed with Satan.	The Last Adam, Jesus, prays with the Father.
Adam disobeyed and sinned.	The Savior suffered and obeyed.
Adam is conquered by sin.	Jesus conquered His own will.
Adam took fruit from Eve's hand.	Christ took the cup from His Father's hand.
God sought for Adam.	The Last Adam sought God His Father.
The Self-indulgence of Adam ruined us.	The agonies of the Second Adam restored us.
Adam's attitude, "My will be done."	Jesus' attitude was, "Thy will be done."

- g. Luke 22:24+ describes Jesus as "**being in agony**": **agonia** (from **agón** = contest) gives prominence to the pain and labor of the conflict, in this case, a spiritual conflict as Satan pressed Jesus harder than ever.
- h. **And began to be very distressed and troubled** -
- i. This was not physical fear, but the pressure upon His sinless soul of the sin of the world, together with His knowledge of what bearing it involved.
 - ii. **Ironside** – “His holy soul shrank from the awfulness of being made sin upon the tree. It was not death, but the divine anger against sin, the imputation to Him of all our iniquities that filled His soul with horror. There was no conflict of wills.”
- i. **“Keep watch”** is a command in the *“present imperative”* calling for them to continually be on the alert and to maintain an attitude of vigilance. The second verb Jesus chose means to wake up, stay awake. And what did the trio do? They fell asleep three times instead of staying awake and alert.
- j. Jesus’ intimate, intense request for the cup to be removed
- i. **“Abba, Father”**—the bilingual form of address, used only here in the Gospels, (Mark 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6), “Abba” is Aramaic, while “Father” is Greek. Abba: an everyday Jewish family term, used in the intimacy of the family, seldom used with reference to God and then always with modifiers which denoted the distance between man and God. His use of the term, which may mean “my father” or “our father,” thus conveyed a sense of intimacy in relation to God.
 1. First, to call God Father is to speak of him as the absolutely sovereign God of creation.
 2. Second, to call God "Father" is to use covenant language. In all of God’s covenants, the people are "sons" or "children" by their adoption into the covenant.
 3. Third, for us to call God "Father"; to acknowledge a close personal relationship with him; it is a family term. It is fair to say that in Jesus’ time the word was colloquial but respectful, even in human families; but it was not a childish expression like "daddy."
 4. Here indeed is trust, a trust which we must also have in that God whom Jesus taught us to know as Father.
 - ii. **All things are possible for You** - This statement is found only in Mark’s account
 1. Nothing is outside of the power, and privilege, of God. Yet, God never acts contrary to His character, purpose, or Word. Clearly, Jesus was not asking the Father to violate His redemptive plan. It was an inquiry into whether or not redemption might be accomplished through some other means. Not a sign of weakness, it was the expected response of one whose pure, sinless character recoiled at the thought of bearing man’s sin and guilt, and suffering God’s wrathful judgment. If He had not reacted that way, it would raise questions about His absolute holiness.
 - iii. **Remove this cup from Me**
 1. The "cup": spiritual suffering as He bore the sins of the world and the mysterious separation of the eternal fellowship that sin would produce with His Father. He was not asking for the physical suffering to be removed. Ultimately the **cup** speaks of God's holy, righteous wrath against sin. Jesus was holy and so He recoils at the thought of the reality that He Who knew no sin would be made sin on our behalf.
 2. In the Old Testament, the cup was often used as a metaphor for the wrath of God (cf. Pss. 11:6; 75:8; Isa.51:17, 22; Jer.25:15–17; 49:12; Lam.4:21; Ezek.23:31–33; Hab. 2:16; Zech. 12:2). On the cross, Jesus would drink the cup of divine wrath against sin (John 18:11).
 - iv. If you want to learn how to pray, use Jesus as your model.
 1. “not my will, but Your will.” Learning to submit to God is a lifelong process.
 2. **Could you not keep watch for one hour?** - This passage suggests that Jesus prayed for an extended period, which is attested by the fact that He returned three times to find sleeping saints.
 3. Yet aren’t we like Peter? How difficult is it for us to pray for one hour when we’re worried and exhausted, when our energy and motivation are at low levels?

- v. And He found them sleeping and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep?"
 - 1. All three were asleep, but Jesus singles out Peter. This is the first use of the name Simon in Mark since 3:16.
 - 2. "The use of "Simon" here, reminded Peter of the meaning of his name. He was not acting like a stone (petros). Peter was singled out for the rebuke because that very night Peter had singled himself out as the one most confident of his own sufficiency. The question, "Simon, sleepest thou?" is full of pained reproach. Peter was supposed to be the leader of his group. he knew that leadership required extra responsibility. Peter should have kept the others awake, along with himself
 - 3. In Luke 22:45+ the reason for their weariness was compounded by sorrow and despair
- 4. **Peter—just like us**—failed in later temptation because he failed to watch and pray. The spiritual battle is often won or lost before the crisis comes.
 - i. **Keep watching and praying**
 - 1. **the order is important** - (1) Watch (2) Pray. The commands to watch and pray precede the warning about temptation. Don't wait until the temptation comes to begin to watch and pray. Then you are ready to deal with the temptation and much more likely to come through the testing time victoriously.
 - 2. Regardless of their prayers, the test would come; the purpose of their praying would be that they would not "enter into temptation" in the sense of being overcome by it.
 - ii. Jesus then returned to pray a third time. Jesus asked His Father three times to remove the cup of suffering. After the third wave of temptation ended, the submissive Son of God emerged triumphant from the battle, fully settled in His resolve to trust Himself to the Father's will. The tempter had been vanquished, and Jesus remained in perfect step with His heavenly Father. Now that His final temptation was over, Jesus was ready to endure the cross.
 - i. **The hour has come** - Jesus knows the moment of His betrayal is at hand and He is fully prepared after His communion with His Father. "The Master's time of weakness is past; He is prepared to face the worst" (Bruce). Jesus had foreseen his "hour" for long and now he faces it bravely.
- 5. **Jesus is arrested: Mark 14:43-52**
 - a. The arrest of Christ was not made by two or three common officers of justice.
 - b. A "great multitude"; some of the members of the Sanhedrim were included. Levitical police of the temple were at the front. (cf. John 18:3, 12).
 - c. This force was armed with swords and clubs— "small swords," the regular hand weapons of the Roman soldiers, while the clubs, "objects made of wood," , were the regular weapons of the temple police."
 - d. Leading them was Judas.
 - i. underlines the exact fulfillment of Jesus' announcement in verses 18–20.
 - ii. He profaned the Passover. The Passover was the most sacred season of the entire year; and this very evening was the most sacred of the Passover week.
 - iii. He invaded the sanctuary of Jesus' devotions. Gethsemane was a favorite place of Jesus and Judas would have known that.
 - iv. But the worst, was the sign he had agreed to make Jesus known to His enemies. He cried out "Master, Master!" and kissed Him repeatedly or fervently: as the word signifies.
 - 1. The Greek word **kataphileō** (kissed) is an intensified verb meaning to show continual affection or to kiss fervently (cf. Luke 7:38, 45; 15:20; Acts 20:37). The implication is that Judas prolonged his dramatic show of false affection for Jesus, making it last long enough for the soldiers to identify their target.
 - 2. The kiss was the sign of discipleship. In the East, students used to kiss their rabbis; most likely occurred between Christ and His disciples. It was common in the culture of the times for a disciple to kiss his master when greeting him.
 - e. In Matt 26:50, Jesus receives him with the word "friend"
 - f. Simon draws his sword: verse 47
 - i. This aggressive action reflects Peter's his self-confidence and his love for Jesus. Reveals his rashness; to make good his claim that he would not fail Jesus, but he did not stop to consider the

risks or the futility of his action. Mark doesn't record Jesus' rebuke (Matt. 26:52) or His explanation for the necessity of the arrest (Matt. 26:53; John 18:11).

6. Escaping with only the sheet on his back: vs 51

- a. Who was he? Many think this was Mark (otherwise who would know about and write about such an incident)
 - i. This incident has little or no bearing on the story. Yet it was not trivial to Mark.
 - ii. "Having a linen cloth"— a fine and very costly cloth, so called because it was woven at Scinde, India, only the very wealthy could afford it. We know that Mark and his mother were wealthy.
- b. Why is it included?
 - i. Daniel Hill: "The incident is included to show the speed in which the disciples and any other followers of the Lord fled the scene, abandoning the Lord Jesus to the Temple guard."
 - ii. Human interest adds testimony to the truthfulness and authenticity of the entire book.
 - iii. His lack of identity also invites readers to examine their own readiness to abandon Jesus.
- c. **Akin** – "And so again, as it was in the Garden of Eden, our nakedness is exposed as we desert the God who loves us and has graced us so abundantly with His kindness and good gift."

7. Jesus before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin

- a. Came before the "chief priests, elders and teachers of the law"
 - i. chief priests "included former holders of the high priestly office, ... the commander of the Temple Guard, the steward of the Temple, and the three Temple treasurers.
 - ii. The "elders" represented the most influential lay families in Jerusalem, and seem to have been primarily wealthy landowners.
 - iii. The chief priests and the elders constituted the old ruling class in Jerusalem, with Sadducean leanings, who still held the balance of power in the Sanhedrin.
 - iv. The third group, the representatives of the scribes, consisted primarily of lawyers drawn from the middle classes who tended to be Pharisaic in their convictions.
- b. Jesus is taken before the high priest **Caiaphas**
 - i. had ordered His arrest.
 - ii. John records Jesus before **Annas** who still wielded influence with his son-in-law **Caiaphas** and both apparently resided in the same palace...
 - iii. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people. (John 18:12-14)
- c. As you read about the trials of Jesus, realize that they were merely a "formality" because in the eyes of the Jews Jesus in their minds was already considered guilty and condemned to die on the Cross.
- d. So not only was the entire process a series of "mock" trials, there were as many as seven "illegalities" involved in these trials from the perspective of Jewish law"
 1. No trial was to be held during feast time.
 2. Each member of the court was to vote individually to convict or acquit, but Jesus was convicted by acclamation.
 3. If the death penalty was given, a night must pass before the sentence was carried out; however, only a few hours passed before Jesus was placed on the Cross.
 4. The Jews had no authority to execute anyone.
 5. No trial was to be held at night, but this trial was held before dawn.
 6. The accused was to be given counsel or representation, but Jesus had none.
 7. The accused was not to be asked self-incriminating questions, but Jesus was asked if He was the Christ.
- ii. In addition: Usually the Sanhedrin met in a hall on the west side of the temple enclosure. However now they met in Caiaphas' house or palace (Luke 22:54).
- e. "All" the Sanhedrin may mean all 71 members or, only those needed for a quorum, at least 23. Joseph of Arimathaea (didn't consent to the death of Jesus (Luke 23:51)), and Nicodemus (sympathetic to Jesus) were probably not present.
- f. **Many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony was not consistent : verse 56**
 - i. It is the middle of the night (between 12 and 6 AM) suggests these witnesses had been pre-arranged, ready and waiting to roll (out of bed) when needed, and yet...

- ii. They could not even do a good job lying! They had not colluded, to get the story straight.
- iii. Jewish law required two agreeing witnesses to establish a charge (Deut. 19:15) Consequently their inconsistent testimonies were useless (Nu 35:30; Dt. 17:6)
- g. Caiaphas asks Jesus if he is the Messiah: verse 61
 - i. The Lord's silence was that of integrity, innocence, and majestic tranquility. He refused to give these proceedings any appearance of legitimacy. Moreover, the Lord knew the words of Isaiah 53:7+, which prophesied of the Messiah, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth." The silence of Jesus was in stark contrast to the lies that reverberated throughout the court.
 - ii. Can you imagine the frustration of the priests, scribes and pharisees who conspired to kill Jesus, who now had Him in their grasp and were seeing Him slip through their fingers because they couldn't find 2 witnesses to agree.
 - iii. For Jesus to refuse to answer would be tantamount to a denial. Matthew records that the high priest put Jesus under a solemn oath. Jesus knew that Caiaphas was hoping to trap Him in a statement the council would regard as blasphemous. So, Jesus answered knowing full well the use that would be made of his confession and claim."
 - iv. Note: in the Gospel of Mark the two most complete christological confessions from humans, comes from the mouths of those most directly responsible for Jesus' death: the high priest in Mk 14:61 and the centurion at the cross in Mk 15:39"
 - v. The time for the "Messianic Secret" has now come to an end. This is the first time in Mark's Gospel that He openly declared He is the Messiah
 - vi. However, He does not stop there. Jesus weds Daniel 7:13-14 with Psalm 110:1 in identifying Himself as the Messiah and God's Son (see Mark 12:35-37).
- h. Caiaphas' hypocritical response: ripping his robes: verse 63
 - i. Caiaphas receives the exact answer he sought and reacted with self-righteous, melodramatic horror! He would have much rather been jumping with evil glee, but had to contain himself!
 - ii. tearing his clothes, a symbol of righteous indignation. The Jews typically tore their garments as an expression of immense grief (cf. Gen. 37:29; Lev. 10:6; Job 1:20; Acts 14:14). According to Leviticus 21:10, the high priest was forbidden to tear his clothes, though the Talmud allowed it in cases when God was blasphemed.
 - iii. The high priest and members of the Sanhedrin should have recognized the Messiah because they knew the Scriptures thoroughly. Their job was to point people to God, but they were more concerned about preserving their reputations and holding on to their authority.
 - iv. The sentence Caiaphas called for was illegal because Jesus was not guilty of blasphemy. The Lord's words were absolutely true. He was the Messiah, the Son of God. In reality, the high priest and the other members of the council were the blasphemers
 - v. **D A Carson** comments "The Jews take elaborate precautions to avoid ritual contamination in order to eat the Passover, at the very same time they are busy manipulating the judicial system to secure the death of him who alone is the true Passover!" (The Gospel According to John - Pillar).

8. Jesus' first beating, verse 65

- a. Isaiah 50:6 I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. Isaiah 52:14 - "The literal rendering is terrible: 'So marred from the form of man was His aspect that His appearance was not that of a son of man'—ie. not human—the effect of the brutalities described in Matt. 26:67, 68; 27:27–30."
- b. **Beat** (buffet, harshly treat) (**kolaphizo** from **kolaphos** = the knuckles or a closed fist and **kolapto** = to strike) means to beat or strike with the fist. To strike with clenched hand. Figuratively it means to cause harm, treat roughly or harshly. Used 5x in NT - Matt. 26:67; Mk. 14:65; 1 Co. 4:11; 2 Co. 12:7; 1 Pet. 2:20
- c. For the Jews, the act of spitting constituted the most detestable form of personal insult (cf. Num. 12:14; Deut. 25:9)
- d. Evidently they blindfolded Jesus and challenged Him to identify His assailants because of a belief that Messiah did not need to see but could judge by smell (Isa. 11:2–4). The true Messiah could judge such

matters without the benefit of sight (cf. Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 93b). But Jesus refused to submit to their test and remained silent (cf. Isa. 53:7; 1 Peter 2:23).

- e. These officers are not Roman but Jewish, presumably the Temple police.
- f. Once more our Lord remained silent in partial fulfillment of Isaiah 53:&
- g. Fulfills the prophesy of Mark 10:33-34 The Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. They will **mock Him** and **spit on Him**, and **scourge Him** and **kill Him**, and three days later He will rise again.

9. Peter Disowns Jesus: Mark 14:66-72

- a. "Peter's first problem was that he followed Him at a distance (Mark 14:54). When we distance ourselves from Jesus, it is hard to make a proper stand for Him at the critical time."
- b. Uncertain of Peter's motives were for entering the high priest's courtyard. Perhaps he could rescue Jesus? He acted foolishly and put himself into temptation. He had already deserted and fled, so he knew his own weakness and vulnerability. He tried to hide his identity, and this would lead him to deny Jesus. Do we do the same?
- c. His denials become progressive
 - i. First denial: He was challenged to tell the truth, but he lied. The word to **deny** is the exact opposite of to **confess**. We are to confess Christ (Ro 10:9-10+) and to deny self (Lk 9:23+) also uses arneomai), here Peter does essentially just the opposite, denying Christ in order to preserve self!
 - ii. Second denial:
 - 1. "He's on the spot, in front of others. Here is his chance to "man up", regain his courage, and take a stand for Jesus for whom he had expressed undying loyalty."
 - 2. **Denied** is in the imperfect tense which pictures him denying the accusation over and over. "an extensive and repeated denial, not a one-time slip of the tongue."
 - iii. Third denial:
 - 1. With the repeated accusations, he resorts to a stronger "defense" even being willing to call down a curse upon himself if he is lying! Both **curse** and **swear** are present tense which depicts Peter as continually cursing and swearing. Now he claims he does not know Jesus who he refers to as **this Man**. It is a direct denial of Jesus Himself!
- d. "**To weep**" (klaiō) means to mourn, to weep, to lament or to wail with emphasis on external expression of grief. The picture is of one lamenting with sobs or wailing aloud, associated with what took place when someone died.
- e. "Peter could repent of his sin, and that is the real test of a genuine believer."
- f. "The denial of Peter in the courtyard coincided with the confession of Christ before His accusers. The perfect Servant witnessed a good confession in contrast to the denial of an imperfect one."

10. Jesus before Pilate: Mark 15:1-15

- a. Early in the morning = "when it was day" (Lk 22:66). A legal sentence (in this case the death sentence) could be pronounced only in the daytime, probably before 6 AM because daybreak was about 5
- b. The working day of a Roman official began at the earliest hour of daylight. Legal trials in the Roman forum were customarily held shortly after sunrise.
- c. Praetorium: (John 18:28: religious leaders led Jesus into the Praetorium) describes the headquarters of the commanding officer of a Roman military camp, a position directly below the rank of consul. The Romans accommodated themselves with such buildings by seizing and appropriating the palaces of conquered royalty of the local area. The Praetorium was also the location of Pilate's judgment seat (Mt 27:19, Jn 19:13) likely located in Fort Antonia just north of the temple.
- d. The Jews hated the Romans and undoubtedly hated Pilate, so this action demonstrates the degree of their intense hatred of Jesus Christ.
- e. They didn't enter into the Praetorium so they wouldn't be defiled. MacArthur: "the chief priests and scribes sanctimoniously refused to enter a Gentile residence for fear of becoming ceremonially unclean, yet they had no compunction about lying in order to murder the Son of God (cf. Ex. 20:13, 16)."
- f. The Jews brought Christ to Pilate because they were forbidden by law to put Him to death themselves.
- g. Pilate had the legal freedom to conduct a trial as informally and with as little set procedure as he wished.

- i. **First**, since Pilate was governor of Judea, and this was to be a capital offense, he was the proper person to conduct the trial of Christ.
 - ii. **Second**, he was quite correct in initially declining to hear the case, since the first charge was so vague (see John 18:30).
 - iii. **Third**, he acted in accordance with Roman law when there was an indictment for treason leveled against Christ (Luke 23:2), and he questioned Christ privately concerning this matter, deciding He was innocent.
 - iv. Pilate had the legal authority to release Christ. Instead, he went back to the Jews, some saying he acted illegally. However, remember that under Roman law a non-citizen, such as Christ, had **no legal rights** to begin with, then Pilate could not have acted illegally. He had every legal authority to continue or not, as formally or informally as he pleased.
- h. Three possible courses were open before the Pilate.
- i. The 1st: “evasion and delay”. Pilate sought to shift upon Herod (Luke 23:6) the decision for or against Jesus. But no, Jesus came back Pilate, evasion had failed.
 - ii. 2nd: to act upon the logic of his own admission of the faultlessness of Jesus
 - iii. 3rd: in deliberate violation of conscience, to condemn Jesus. He chose the latter course. Why?
 - 1. Because it seemed to accord with his present interests. Siding with Jesus may threaten his precarious favor with Caesar, (sacrifice of his worldly prospects). Enmity with the Jews might mean the sacrifice of his governorship.
 - i. **Pilate** was a historical figure as documented by the Limestone block discovered in 1961 with Pilate's tribute in Latin to Tiberius. the inscription reads:

To the Divine Augusti [this] Tiberieum...Pontius Pilat...prefect of Judea...has dedicated [this]

11. **Barabbas** means “son of the father.” Here the lawbreaking son of a human father was being offered to the people in the place of the sinless Son of the divine Father.
- a. Aware of Jesus’ popularity from just a few days earlier (Mark 11:8–10), the governor was confident the crowd would never choose Barabbas. When the multitude selected Jesus, there would be nothing the Jewish council could do. He could preserve justice and at the same time garner favor with the people.
 - b. In some manuscripts of Matthew 27:16–17, Barabbas is referred to as “Jesus Barabbas” (meaning “Jesus, son of Abba [Father]”). If Barabbas was also called “Jesus,” that would make Pilate’s offer to the crowd even more spiritually loaded. The choice was between Jesus, the Son of the Father; and Jesus, the Son of God. But many manuscripts do not contain the name “Jesus Barabbas”.
 - c. The release of a Jewish prisoner was customary before the feast of Passover (Mark 15:6). The clemency granted was an act of goodwill toward the Jews. The choice Pilate set before them could not have been more clear-cut: a high-profile killer and rabble-rouser who was unquestionably guilty, or a teacher and miracle-worker who was demonstrably innocent. The crowd chose Barabbas to be released.
 - d. Pilate knew that the Sanhedrin’s motives were out of envy, (v. 10). If the people went with his option he could release an innocent man and stick it to the Sanhedrin as well.
 - i. **“Envy”**: (**phthonos**) describes pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of excellence or happiness. It means not just wanting what another person has, but also resenting that person for having it. It is an attitude of ill-will that leads to division and strife and even murder.
 - e. Pilate seems to have been surprised at the crowd’s insistence that Barabbas be set free instead of Jesus. The governor stated that the charges against Jesus were baseless (Luke 23:14) and appealed to the crowd three times to choose sensibly (verses 18–22).
 - f. **“Released”**: (**apoluo**) is used here as a legal term meaning to set a prisoner free, Pilate would be granting Jesus’ acquittal, pardoning Him and setting Him free. The verb *apoluo* is a key verb in every Gospel account of Jesus’ trial before Pilate, the 19 uses in 17 verses referring either to **release** of Jesus **release** of a prisoner which eventually would be Barabbas.
 - g. **“Scourged”**: (**phragelloo**: related to Latin *flagellum*) meant to beat severely with a multi-stranded whip whose strands had bits of metal and/or bone knotted into their ends.
 - i. This was the most severe level of Roman beatings and preceded execution. BDAG states, “flog, scourge, a punishment inflicted on slaves and provincials after a sentence of death had been pronounced on them. So in the case of Jesus before the crucifixion.” Victims of flagellation often collapsed and died from the flogging.

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

Jesus Is Mocked Mark 15:16-20

- Compare to Jesus affliction before the Jewish Sanhedrin (Mark 14:65)
 - Physical and verbal attacks - Sanhedrin focused on attacking Jesus' divinity
 - Similar here – physical and verbal attacks but Romans (Gentiles) focus on attacking Jesus' royal status
 - V18 Hail King of the Jews – parody of Caesar's salute "Ave Caesar, victor, imperator"
- They mock him as king; give him a crown, robe, staff
 - crown of thorns on his head - the soldiers were unwittingly symbolizing God's curse on humanity (Gen 3:18) being placed on Jesus.
 - the original curse given to Adam now laid on Jesus' head
 - The Reed represented a false staff of power
 - They take Jesus' staff (authority and power) and hit him with it
- Interesting comparison to how they will react to Jesus when they see Him in glory as their Judge

V16: they called together the whole battalion

- Battalion /company / cohort – amounted to 1/10 of Roman Legion, or about 600 men
- These were elite soldiers who were the personal guard of Pilate

⁶I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. Isaiah's suffering servant (Isaiah 50:6)

The Crucifixion Mark 15:21-32

- The picture of Jesus' crucifixion shows that all people were involved
 - Romans and Jewish leaders; "common" people including Roman and Jewish guards
 - even the crowds condemned Jesus to his death
 - all knowingly crucified him / unknowingly condemned him
 - No one helped Jesus avoid the cross
 - Even the innocent bystander helped Jesus to his death

²⁷for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel (Acts 4:27)

We all are guilty of sending Jesus to his death on the cross

(V21) "compelled a passerby" - potentially due to the loss during the scourging, Jesus is unable to carry his own cross

- "compelled" – forced; same Greek word used to force slaves and animals to work
 - Simon of Cyrene drafted to carry the cross
 - Cyrene – located on north coast of Africa
- Mark also includes Simon's son's names – Alexander and Rufus
 - Unusual for Mark to include personal names - seems like they may be known to the readers of the Gospel of Mark, and included as eye witnesses to Jesus' crucifixion
 - Rufus was a member of the church in Rome in the mid-fifties (Rom 16:13)

¹³Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.

- Seems that Simon of Cyrene was the 1st person to literally fulfill Jesus' command (Mark 8:34)

³⁴... "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

- (v23) wine mixed with myrrh – perhaps given as a charitable service by the women
 - A primitive narcotic offered to deaden the pain of crucifixion
 - **Key Point** - Jesus was consciously willing to drink the full cup of God’s wrath for our sake
 - **Key Point** - shows Jesus was lucid on the cross
 - What he said is noteworthy, not the ramblings of a drugged person
- (v25) Crucifixion occurred at the “third hour” or 9 am (Jews start of the day occurred at sunrise, or 6 am)
- (v26) Inscription on the cross - King of the Jews; man’s rejection of Jesus as our King
 - Pilate’s accusation – see verses 2, 9, and 12
- (v27) 27 And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left.
 - Probably common thieves
 - Same wording as James and John asked of Jesus to sit on his right and left (Mark 10:37)
 - ... because he poured out his soul to death and **was numbered with the transgressors**; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12
- (v29-32) crowd and Chief Priest mock Jesus on the cross
 - ⁷All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; (Ps 22:7)
 - ²⁵I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they wag their heads. (Ps 109:25)
- (v29) “derided him” or “hurled insults”
 - Literally in the Greek – blasphemy - Which means to speak evil against God
 - (v31) Chief Priests / Scribes are guilty of what they condemned Jesus for doing (Mark 14:64)
- (v31) Chief Priests and Scribes show they do not know the true meaning of salvation or faith
 - **Key Point** - They do not understand what faith is
 - demanding a sign that proves to them what salvation is (Mark 8:11-13)
- (v32) The taunt to “come down from the cross”
 - Same temptation that Jesus faced in Gethsemane – to avoid the cup of suffering
 - Similar to Satan’s temptation Jesus endured in the wilderness
 - Jesus’ focus is to do the will of God rather than His own will
 - They wanted Jesus to come down from the cross and save his life, but staying on the cross saved our lives

“At Gethsemane, Jesus made the costly decision, which he now fulfills, to do the will of God rather than his own will. In this haunting picture of Jesus, fastened to a cross and assailed in mockery, we see “proof of the amazing difference between God’s way and everything which men consider their goal or conceive of as being God’s way.”

Summary of the crowd’s mocking of Jesus

1. The mocking was virtually unanimous
 - He bore the wrath of Men and of God alone
2. The mocking was intense and angry
 - The wrath of men is being poured out upon the sinless Savior
3. The mocked the essence of what Jesus claimed and taught concerning Himself
 - Mocked for being the King of the Jews; King of Israel; Son of God; For Saving Others; and for Trusting in God
4. The mocking is the same temptation that Jesus experienced in the wilderness
 - If you are the Son of God (Matthew 4:3, 6)
 - the temptation is for Jesus to act in a way that men would expect the Son of God to act
5. The mocking was a temptation is for Jesus to save himself rather than save mankind

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

The Death of Jesus Mark 15:33-41

- Note – Jesus remains silent throughout - says one statement during each stage of his trials
 - **To the Sanhedrin:** ⁶² And Jesus said, “I am (*the Christ, the Son of the Blessed*), and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” (Mark 14:62)
 - **To Pilate:** ² ... “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” (Mark 15:2)
 - **To God the Father:** ³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34)
- (v24-32) We saw Man’s wrath hurled at Jesus; (v33-41) now we see God’s full wrath being placed on Jesus
- (v33) Darkness occurred from Noon (6th hour) thru Jesus’ death at 3:00 pm (9th hour)
 - Not natural – solar eclipses do not occur when the moon is full as it is during Passover
 - Not a dust storm – these do not occur during the wet season when Passover occurs
 - “Darkness” – can mean night/darkness, blindness, or ignorance of divine things/ungodliness. Same word used
 - (Genesis 1:2) “ ... and darkness was over the face of the deep...”
 - (Exodus 10:12) “... that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt.”
 - Imagery parallels the 9th curse (darkness) and 10th curse (death of first born) on Egypt
 - Imagery parallels the Day of the Lord - Joel 2:10; Amos 8:9-10; Zeph 1:15.
- (v34) Jesus cries out - My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
 - Jesus is quoting from Psalm 22:1 - unfortunately, the religious don’t recognize the quote
 - Some (bystanders) thought he was calling for Elijah; Elijah (Aram. Eli) – God (Aram. Eloi)
 - Belief that God would not condemn the righteous was the center of Jewish thought
 - Elijah had been taken bodily into heaven without dying (2 Kings 2:11) – common belief was that Elijah would return in times of crisis to protect and rescue the righteous
 - As always, they mistake God’s voice for something else
 - Why did Jesus quote Psalm 22?
 - Note - Jesus did not ask “why” as a question – wasn’t surprised by the agony/pain of the cross
 - His statement was an indication of the horror of abandonment
 - it shows that God really poured out his wrath on Jesus (forsaken)
 - Highlights the fulfillment of the prophesy of Ps 22
 - Both the horror and punishment on Christ
 - As well as the **triumph** of the promise of God that he would not despise Jesus
- (v36) Sour wine refers to a cheap vinegar wine. It was the drink of slaves and soldiers
 - Ironic – Jesus, who could give living water, was thirsty;
 - shows how God separated himself from Jesus
 - ²¹ They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink. (Psalm 69:21)
- (v37) Key Point - Jesus’ life was not taken from Him; He voluntarily gave it up (John 10:17-18)
 - Normally a crucified person suffered extreme exhaustion for a long period of time (two or three days) and then lapse into a coma before dying
 - Jesus was fully conscious to the end – His death came voluntarily and suddenly (accounts for Pilate’s surprise)
- Jesus died at 3:00 pm, at the time of the afternoon sacrifice, of the Passover lamb
- (v38) “... curtain of the temple was torn ...
 - Ripped from the top to bottom – could not have been ripped this way by a human (would have been from bottom to top due to the height of the curtain)

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

- It could refer to the inner curtain separating the holy of holies from the holy place or it could refer to the outer curtain at the entrance of the temple court
 - Some believe the inner curtain was ripped as a different term (kalumma) is used for the outer curtain
 - Also indicates Jesus' death ended the need for repeated sacrifices for sins, thus opening a new and living way of free and direct access to God (Heb 10:19-22)
 - Others argue the outer curtain as more likely because of the public nature of this sign
 - Only the priests who ministered in the Holy Place – would have observed the torn inner curtain. All Israel's men could observe the torn outer curtain
 - Would show that access to God was available to all people without the need of priests
- **Key Point** - the rending of the veil signified the end of the Old Covenant, under which people had to keep their distance from God, and the commencement of the New Covenant, under which men and women may draw near, through the shed blood of Jesus (note Hebrews 9; 10:19-24).
- (v39) The Centurion's confession contrasts the mocking Jesus endured up to this point
 - His confession also strengthens the truth of the torn curtain
- Ironic – a gentile Soldier was the first to recognize that Jesus was the Son of God
 - Summarized the Gospel of Mark (1:1)
 - The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God
 - First person to confess that Jesus was "the Son of God"
 - Peter was the first one to confess that Jesus was the Christ (8:29)
 - Centurion's response evoked by the way Jesus died
- Unlike the Jewish religious leaders (etc) – the Gentile soldier displayed true faith
 - He saw and believed; did not demand additional signs or confirmation
- Bill Anthes comment – scriptures generally show Centurion's in a positive light
- (v40, 41) "... Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome."
 - Three devoted women stayed with Mary, Jesus' mother nearby (see John 19:25)
 - Commended for their service through Jesus' ministry
 - Only angels (Mark 1:13) and women (Mark 15:41) are said to have "ministered" to Jesus
 - Commended for staying to the bitter end, rather than fleeing like the rest of the disciples
 - While these are not the most visible / noteworthy followers, they are among his most faithful followers
 - These three women are probably well known by the early church
 - identified by Mark as eyewitnesses of Jesus' crucifixion
 - these same women would be witnesses to Jesus' resurrection (Mark 16)
- (v40) "... looking on from a distance ..." – interesting wording; indicates "detached observation". Note the contrast that Mark is showing through his use of "watching"
 - Jesus commanded the disciples that "watching" was a virtue of discipleship
 - the Centurion's watching and being convicted that Jesus was the Son of God
 - Joseph of Arimathea was looking for the kingdom of God, took action to provide Jesus with a proper burial
 - the women were not convicted of anything - instead, were consumed with sorrow, anxiousness and fearful

Jesus Is Buried Mark 15:42-47

- (v43) ... a respected member of the council ... - means honorable, reputable as well as powerful member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, and a model disciple
 - Waiting for the Kingdom of God – literally expecting it now that Jesus is dead

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

- His devotion, requires courage and comes with a cost
- Adheres to scripture (Deuteronomy 21:22-23)

²²“And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.

- Asking for the body of Jesus was indeed a bold move on the part of Joseph, for it clearly and openly identified him with a man who had just been condemned and executed, namely, Jesus.
 - His faith is exemplary, especially for someone who was a member of the council that handed Jesus over for crucifixion (cf. Mark 15:43, Luke 23:51).
 - He did this because he sought to give Jesus an honorable burial
 - Also did not want to violate what was in scriptures – Deuteronomy 21:23
- This was a great undertaking for Joseph
 - Jesus died at 3:00 pm; sunset and sabbath occurred at 6:00
 - Joseph lived 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem
 - (v42) indicates evening had come, probably around 4:00 pm when he made his request
 - (v43) “took courage”
 - to make his request of Pilate for the body of a convicted criminal
 - to reveal his personal loyalties to the counsel and religious leadership (as disciple of Jesus)
 - to become ceremonial unclean handling a dead body, thus unable to participate in Passover or sabbath
- (v45) “... granted the corpse to Joseph ...”; literally, gave as a gift – without requiring a fee
 - Exceptional response from Pilate which probably highlights his belief in Jesus’ innocence
- (v45) Testimony that Jesus was truly dead – i.e., did not “swooned” and revived in the cold tomb
 - Joseph of Arimathea
 - Roman Centurion – important to Gentile readers (an authority recognized he was dead)
 - Pilate – giving permission for burial
 - Historical testimony – no record of anyone surviving crucifixion
 - Gospel of Mark – referring to Jesus’ body as a corpse
- Mark shows a final picture in chapter 15 – Jesus is savior of both Jews and Gentiles
 - (v43-46) Leader from the top Jewish council is a disciple of Jesus
 - (v39) Roman leader/soldier recognizes through faith that Jesus is the Son of God
- (v47) Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.
 - These are same women who watched from a distance when Jesus died
 - These women will be the first who hear of Jesus rising from the dead (Mark 16)

The Resurrection Mark 16:1-8

- (v1) Jesus’ body is to be anointed per Jewish custom
 - Not as Egyptians do through embalming, but as an act of devotion to a loved one
 - Note – Jesus was already anointed for burial prior to his death in Bethany (Mark 14:3-9)
 - “The women fail to do belatedly what was in fact done by another woman prematurely. Her action was a prophetic sign of Jesus’ death; theirs is made impossible because of his resurrection.”

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

- (v1) Mark lists the names of the women for a third time as witnesses to Jesus' death, burial and now resurrection
 - Remarkable, as these are women; typically in Jewish religious matters, women are not highly regarded, but when it comes to spiritual matters, God highly regards them
 - Side comment - if the resurrection was fabricated, using women as eye witnesses was no way to go about it. Judaism did not accept the testimony of women.
- (v2) ... very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen ...
 - Here, it is qualified as arriving just after sunrise, or ~ 6 am
 - Thus, they needed to purchase the spices and journeyed very early (i.e. starting 3 or 4 AM)
 - This act while done out of devotion and love, showed that they too (including the disciples) did not understand what Jesus meant when he said he would rise three days later after being crucified (Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:34)
- (v3) ... Who will roll away the stone for us ... - as the men were in hiding (John 20:19)
 - Expect they were hoping to find workers nearby to roll away the stone
 - Ultimately, God solves their problem in a most unexpected way
- (v4,5) The stone is rolled away – no human involvement; obviously an act of God
 - Young man dressed in white – obviously an angel, especially due to women's response
 - Humans are not involved in Jesus' resurrection – only involved as witnesses
 - Note – the stone was rolled away – not to let Jesus out (see John 20:19); but to proclaim to those who came that Jesus was risen from the dead
- (v6,7) Stay calm, Confirmation and Direction
 - Do not be alarmed – typical greeting from angelic beings
 - You seek Jesus – he has risen; see with your own eyes
 - Literally “has been raised”; by God/Holy Spirit
 - Acts 3:15, Romans 4:24, **8:11**, 10:9, **1 Peter 1:21**, etc
 - Go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee
 - Reminder of what Jesus told them just before he was arrested
 - Encouragement to Peter specifically – not that he was no longer a disciple, but he required the most encouragement as he denied Jesus the worst
 - Showing that Jesus was alive and would continue to lead His followers in the future

²⁷ And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ ²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” ²⁹ Peter said to him, “Even though they all fall away, I will not.” ³⁰ And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” (Mark 14:27-30)
- (v8) Ignoring the angel's direction ... they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid ...
 - ⁸ And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.
 - Certainly, terrifying meeting an angelic being – but missed the key directive
 - Contrast to Centurion and Joseph's display of faith, they lost their courage and fled
 - “Fled” from the tomb – same word used for the disciples who fled Gethsemane
- Note Mark's point – throughout the gospel, Jesus has pushed back on providing signs and miracles to evoke faith from people (example Pharisees in Mark 8:11-13, etc)
 - Here the greatest sign – an angel stating that Jesus was raised from the dead – causes these women to flee in fear
 - They were directed to spread the good news of Jesus' rising from the dead, but instead they fled in fear

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

Preface to Mark 16:9-20: Do these verses belong in our Bible?

(Taken from Enduring Word)

1. In many Bibles, this last portion of the Gospel of Mark is footnoted in some way, indicating that it did not exist in the earliest Greek manuscripts of the gospel of Mark. This troubles some Christians regarding the reliability of God's Word. They wonder if this passage belongs in our Bible.
2. The argument *against* including Mark 16:9-20 in our Bibles.
 - a. The two oldest existing Greek manuscripts (dated from 325 and 340 A.D.) do not contain this section and neither do about 100 other ancient manuscripts translated into other languages. A few ancient manuscripts put asterisks next to Mark 16:9-20 to indicate that it is an addition to the original text.
 - b. According to their writings, almost all the Greek manuscripts known to Eusebius (who died in 339) and Jerome (who died in 419) did not have these verses.
 - c. In a few other manuscripts there are two other endings – one shorter, one with some additions.
 - d. About one-third of the vocabulary is totally different from the rest of the Gospel of Mark and there is a very awkward grammatical transition between Mark 16:8 and 16:9.
 - e. Most contemporary scholars reject these verses as original.
3. The argument *for* including Mark 16:9-20 in our Bibles.
 - a. Many very early Christian writers refer to this passage in their writings. This shows that the early Christians knew about this passage in the Gospel of Mark and accepted it as genuine.
 - Papias refers to Mark 16:18. He wrote around A.D. 100.
 - Justin Martyr's first *Apology* quoted Mark 16:20 (A.D. 151).
 - Irenaus in *Against Heresies* quoted Mark 16:13 and remarked on it (A.D. 180).
 - Hippolytus in *Peri Charismaton* quoted Mark 16:18 and 19. In his homily on the heresy of Noetus, he refers to Mark 16:19. He wrote while he was Bishop of Portus (A.D. 190-227).
 - Vicentius, Bishop of Thibari, quoted from 2 of the verses in the 7th Council of Carthage held under Cyprian (A.D. 256). Augustine, a century and a half later, in his reply, recited the words again.
 - The apocryphal *Acts of Pilate* contains Mark 16:15-18 (thought to be written in the somewhere around A.D. 200).
 - The *Apostolic Constitutions* clearly allude to 16:15 in two places and quote Mark 16:16 outright (thought to be written somewhere in the late third century or the early fourth century).
 - b. The overwhelming majority of ancient manuscripts *do* include this passage.
4. Thoughts on the problem of including or not including this passage.
 - a. It is highly unlikely that the Gospel of Mark ended so abruptly at Mark 16:8, with the women simply being afraid but seeing no concrete evidence of the resurrected Jesus, only of an empty tomb. However, it is possible that the original ending of Mark's gospel was lost rather early.
 - Noted Greek scholar A.T. Robertson wrote, "It is difficult to believe that Mark ended his Gospel with verse 8 unless he was interrupted. A leaf or column may have been torn off at the end of the papyrus roll."
 - b. But importantly, the earliest testimony we presently have, from writers like Irenaeus and others, argues that the earliest Christians accepted Mark 16:9-20 as genuine.**

Class Notes Mark 15:16 thru 16:20

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene, Two Disciples, and the Apostles Mark 16:9-14

- (v10) Seems grief has overtaken the disciples – even with eye witness accounts they failed to believe what Jesus had previously told them – that he would rise again
- Mark records (now) three testimonies of increasing authority
 - Mary Magdalene; Two disciples (presumably two men); Jesus’s appearance
- (v14) Jesus rebukes the disciples for refusing to believe the testimony of eyewitnesses to His resurrection

The Great Commission Mark 16:15-20

- (v15) Jesus commands them in words similar to Matthew 28:19 – the Great Commission
 - Key is the gospel is to be proclaimed to all the world and all of creation
 - Universal proclamation for all people – Jews and Gentiles
- (v16) Emphasis is on belief and disbelief
 - “A superficial reading of Mark 16:15-16 would suggest that sinners must be baptized to be saved, but this misinterpretation disappears when you note that the emphasis is on believing. If a person does not believe, he is condemned, even if he has been baptized.” (Wiersbe)
- (v17, 18) Jesus gave His disciples a promise of divine power and protection to proclaim the gospel in Jesus’ name
 - Many of these promises match what the apostles demonstrated as they proclaimed the gospel (casting out demons, healing, speaking in tongues, Paul being bitten by a snake, etc.)
 - Many of these promises match the protection God gave to the children of Israel and His prophets in the Old Testament (Moses picking up snakes as sign to Pharaoh, Moses/Elisha making waters/stews safe to consume, prophets healing, etc).
 - These statements were intended as an encouragement to preach the gospel where there was danger
 - These statements were not intended to be a test of salvation or a measure of our faith
- (v19,20) “... was taken up into heaven ... “: It was important that Jesus leave this earth in His bodily presence, Jesus had to ascend – so that confidence would be put in the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit, not in the geographical presence of Jesus.