

## OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF MARK

### OVERVIEW

The Gospel of Mark offers the shortest account of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. There is an emphasis on the works of Jesus rather than on His extended discourses. There is a sense of urgency as the narrative moves quickly from one scene to another. Jesus is portrayed as the powerful, miracle-working Son of God and yet the fully human Suffering Servant who came to minister to others and offer His life as a sacrifice for sin on the cross. The target readers are the Gentile Christians in Rome who were facing the persecutions of the Emperor Nero. The geographic progression in the book from Galilee to Perea to Jerusalem helps to segment some of the content – with Jesus eventually setting His face to go to the cross. At the heart of the Gospel is a challenge regarding the heavy cost of cross-bearing and discipleship.

Key Verses: **Mark 1:1; 10:45**

*“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”*

*“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served,  
but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*

3 Key threads from these verses that we will be tracking thru the book:

- 1) The significance of the Incarnation – the Son of Man CAME as the SON OF GOD
  - Attested by the Father at His baptism – **1:11**
  - Attested by demons – **3:11; 5:7**
  - Attested by Jesus Himself – **13:32; 14:61**
  - Attested by the centurion – **15:39**
- 2) He came as a SERVANT – Most summaries of Mark revolve around this key theme, but they overlook the corresponding revelation of Jesus as the Son of God
- 3) He came for the purpose of REDEMPTION – Again some treatments of Mark divide the book according to the first two themes but overlook the overarching goal of redemption

All three of these threads are significant and must be viewed in balance.

### Big Idea:

The Authority and Mighty Works of the **Son of God** and the Dedication and Compassion of the **Suffering Servant** Support the Priority of His Redemptive Mission

**J. Sidlow Baxter:** We only need to read Mark two or three times, and his uppermost purpose captures us. He wants us to see **Jesus at work**. It is as though he says: “Look! What Jesus did proves who He was. What He wrought authenticates what He taught. The mighty works verify the startling words. Watch Him at work, and marvel at this supernatural Wonder-worker! That will convince you. . . Mark is the camera-man of the four Gospel-writers, giving us shot after shot of unforgettable scenes. . . the perfect balance is sustained throughout between human servanthood and Divine lordship. The lordship is on every page, yet everywhere the Lord is the SERVANT – of the Divine will and of human need; the authorized and empowered Sent-One (**ix. 37**), expeditious, swiftly executive, dominating every situation, yet unobtrusive, compassionate, and in all things obeisant to the supreme Will.

### Who Was Mark – the author of this Gospel?

**Wil Pounds:** John Mark, was not an apostle but the son of Mary, a woman of wealth and position in Jerusalem . His cousin was Barnabas, the discipler and encourager and early companion of the Apostle Paul . Mark was a close friend of the Apostle Peter and the interpreter for Peter. Most scholars agree that Mark received much of his information from the eyewitness of the Apostle Peter. With this authority as the source of information the Gospel was never challenged in its inclusion in the Canon. John Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on the First Missionary Journey, but dropped out and returned to Jerusalem. Therefore, Paul refused to take John Mark on the second journey. Ten to twelve years later we find him with Paul. In the end Paul will ask Timothy to pick up Mark and bring him along with him to Paul in Rome, for he has found him useful for ministry (**2 Tim. 4:11**). Mark would have been one of the last individuals to have seen Paul before he died.

### Date of Writing – there is much controversy here

**Dr. David Alan Black's** chronology based on church tradition (quotes from the church fathers -- Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, Clement, Eusebius, Jerome) proposes:

1. **Matthew** – written for Jewish believers before the dispersion under Herod Agrippa I (around AD 42).
2. **Luke** – written for Gentiles between AD 58–60.
3. **Mark** – written in Rome around AD 66–67, based on Peter's testimony.
4. **John** – written last, from Ephesus.

Modern critics have advocated for Mark being written first with both Matthew and Luke drawing on his work.

- About half of the verses from Matthew are found in Mark
- About ¼ of the verses from Luke are found in Mark
- Mark only has about 30 unique verses that are neither in Matthew or Luke

### Unique aspects of the Gospel of Mark:

#### Some we have already mentioned:

- Portrait of Jesus as the Divine Servant of God – emphasis on works
- Fast-moving narrative of events
- Wrote with all the graphic distinctiveness and vividness of an eyewitness – drawing on Peter's accounts – including many special details
- Distinctive Audience and Purpose

Mark wrote primarily for **Roman Gentile believers**, likely those suffering under Nero's persecution (AD 64–68).

- He explains Jewish customs (**Mark 7:2-4**). Explains what it means to eat bread with defiled hands = hands that have not been washed in ceremonial fashion; He identifies the place where the Mount of Olives is located = right beside the temple (**13:3**)
- He translates Aramaic expressions (**Mark 5:41; 7:34; 15:34**).
- He focuses on **action**, not lengthy discourse—something Romans valued.

His purpose was to **encourage persecuted believers** by showing that their Lord also suffered unjustly yet triumphed through obedience and resurrection

**Ray Stedman:** The Gospel of Mark is the **most translated book** in all the world. No other book appears in as many languages. Almost all Wycliffe translators, after they have reduced a language to writing, begin their translation of the Scriptures with this gospel. I am sure that the fact it is the shortest of the gospels has something to do with that decision! Bible translators are human beings like the rest of us, and no one wants to start with a gospel as long as Matthew or Luke. But it is also a fact that Mark is particularly suitable for introducing to the Scriptures people of all backgrounds, classes, and tribes. It is the one gospel of the four which is aimed at the **Gentile ear**.

Additional unique aspects:

- **Fast-paced, vivid style**
  - The word “*immediately*” or “*straightway*” (*euthys*) appears over 40 times (**Mark 6:31** – disciples did not even have time to eat)
  - Two-thirds of the verses begin with the simple connective “*and*”
  - He uses present-tense verbs even when describing past events, a literary device called the **historical present**, to make the story feel alive.
  - His descriptions are more graphic and emotional than the other Gospels—he mentions Jesus’ looks, gestures, and feelings (**Mark 3:5; 6:34; 10:21**)
    - His anger (**3:5**)
    - His sighing (**7:34; 8:12**)
    - His fatigue (**4:38**)
    - His hunger (**11:12**)
    - His distress (**14:33**)
    - His affection and compassion (**10:21**)
- Probably the most **chronological** of the gospels
- Look at **what is omitted** in Mark’s Gospel
  - No genealogy presented
  - No account of the birth of Christ or His early life (such as His presentation in the temple) – starts right in with the beginning of His ministry. Romans were not concerned with Jewish lineage or birth stories; they valued action and authority.
  - No extended teaching blocks like the Sermon on the Mount or Olivet Discourse
  - Omits many of the parables -- only a handful (e.g., the Sower, the Lamp, the Mustard Seed, the Wicked Tenants). Mark’s Roman audience would have been less familiar with Jewish customs and less interested in lengthy moral stories. He focuses instead on miracles that display divine power.
  - No mention of the Mosaic Law
  - Rarely quotes the Old Testament compared to Matthew, who quotes it over 60 times. Romans did not need proof that Jesus fulfilled Jewish prophecy; they needed to see His **authority and power** as the Son of God

KEY: Jesus’ **actions** reveal His **identity**.

- Mark's Emphasis on **Discipleship through Suffering**  
 Mark links Jesus' suffering with the call to follow Him in the same path. Each of the three predictions of His death (**Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34**) is followed by a teaching on **discipleship** (**Mark 8:34-38; 9:33-37; 10:35-45**). Mark shows that Christ's cross is not only **substitutionary**—He died in our place—but also **exemplary**—He models faithful endurance for His followers. *“If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.”* — **Mark 8:34**

## **OUTLINE – (only 16 chapters)**

If you divide the book simply in terms of **geography**, you have 3 sections:

- Jesus' ministry up north in the region of Galilee (**1:1 – 8:21**)
- Jesus' ministry from Caesarea Philippi through Perea as He journeys toward Jerusalem (**8:22 – 10:52**)  
 Clearly Peter's confession of Christ as the **Son of God** at Caesarea Philippi is the turning point.
- Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem – events of Passion Week (**11:1 – 16:8**)

I am taking a more **thematic approach** as we maintain focus on the 3 major threads of the Gospel that we identified earlier.

### **(1:1-13) FOREWORD: PREEMINENCE OF JESUS CHRIST AND PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY**

#### **I. (1:14 – 8:26) THE AUTHORITY AND MIGHTY WORKS OF THE SON OF GOD**

#### **(8:27 – 9:13) HINGE: REINFORCING THE IDENTITY AND MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST – THE SON OF GOD – THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

(we will see the chiasmic type of structure that characterizes this transitional section)

#### **II. (9:14 – 16:8) THE REDEMPITIVE MISSION OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

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### **(1:1-13) FOREWORD: PREEMINENCE OF JESUS CHRIST AND PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY**

Big Idea: A disciple can follow no greater master than Jesus Christ, the ultimate kingdom authority figure = The Servant King

We want to think thru this morning, what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. How are we embracing His kingdom agenda?

*“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”*

God has been silent for 400 years. But now He appears on the scene in climactic fashion. The fullness of times has come and God has sent His Son. This is epic.

Gospel story builds towards a climax with the confession of Peter that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

You have the ministry of the prophesied forerunner, John the Baptist –

*“Make ready the way of the Lord” –*

*“the one coming is mightier than I”*

You have the testimony by the Father to the identity of Jesus at His baptism (1:11).

*“You are my beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”*

Then you get a taste of Mark’s rapid pace as he just mentions the Temptation account with angels ministering to Jesus who successfully defeated Satan and demonstrated His sinlessness and His commitment to the Father’s plan of redemption

## **I. (1:14 – 8:26) THE AUTHORITY AND MIGHTY WORKS OF THE SON OF GOD**

The initial emphasis is on the **Authority of Jesus Christ** – a man of action accomplishing the will of His Father

### **A. (1:14-20) The Launching of His Public Preaching Ministry and His Program of Personal Tutelage**

- Core Ministry = *“preaching the gospel of God,”*
- Crisis Moment in History = *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;”*
- Call to Action = Repentance and Faith -- *“repent and believe in the gospel.”*  
Always linked together as two sides of the same coin; people who try separate them need to go back to this clear linkage established up front by Jesus  
There can be no genuine faith apart from genuine repentance  
Repenting involves turning from something, and believing involves embracing something else.
- Calling of Initial Disciples – (1:16-20) – **Discipleship** = important theme  
Main point is the authority of Jesus as seen in their immediate response  
What marks us as genuine disciples of Christ?

### **B. (1:21 – 2:12) The Priority of the Spiritual Ministry of Jesus Christ**

His authoritative teaching ministry must take priority over His healing miracles

**Vs. 21-22)** – made Capernaum His base of operations in Galilee

Look at the unusual response of the people – *They were amazed*

Why? Spoke with absolute conviction and authority – He commanded Obedience – a response from the heart – not just satisfying intellectual curiosity

His authority extended to casting out unclean spirits – look at their response = fearful because they knew who He was (*the Holy One of God* – Isaiah called God *the Holy One* about 30 times)

and darkness hates the Light – Demonic activity was especially prevalent during the earthly ministry of Jesus

A true follower of Jesus must pursue **Holiness**

(:27) Growing Amazement at the Manifest Authority of Jesus Christ

*“And they were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, ‘What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.’”*

(2:1-12) Only God has the authority to forgive sins – healing of the Paralytic

This section (which extends to 3:6) continues the theme of highlighting the **authority** of Jesus while introducing the new dynamic of the **mounting opposition** on the part of the religious leaders.

The forgiveness of sins = the greatest need of mankind – trumps all of God’s manifold blessings

**C. (2:13 – 3:6) The Authoritative Presence of the Promised Messiah Upsets the Status Quo – Leading to Confrontation and Controversy with the Established Religious Leaders**

A variety of incidents are recorded in this section that highlight the growing opposition from the religious leaders – they were offended by:

- His claim to forgive sins (that we saw in the last passage – 2:1-12)
- His fraternization with publicans and sinners (2:13-17)
- His neglect of various traditions such as fasting (2:18-22)
- His violation of their detailed Sabbath regulations (2:23 – 3:6)

These self righteous religious leaders were characterized by elitist attitudes, separatist prejudice and legalistic tradition. They felt especially challenged and threatened by Jesus manifesting authority that was outside of their control and comfort zone.

His illustration of the newness of His messianic age as reflected by not pouring new wine into old wineskins was especially convicting as the old forms of Judaism associated with the sacrifices and revolving around the temple were being replaced. There was no joy on the faces of these hard core traditionalists.

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Illustration: Once I was disciplining my younger son for some infraction. He must have been about 7. He had a friend over at the time. So I sent them both up to his bedroom with the firm admonition: “I don’t want to see you coming down those stairs until I release you from your timeout.” It wasn’t 5 minutes later that he and his friend proudly bounded back into the living room thru the front door. They had jumped out of his bedroom window which wasn’t that high above the backyard. “See,” my son happily cackled. “I didn’t come down the stairs.”

Application: That’s the Pharisees.

They were experts at obeying the micro-details of their invented rules, yet missing the heart of the Law entirely.

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#### **D. (3:7-35) 4 Challenges Jesus Faced Due to His Growing Popularity Amidst Growing Opposition — Balancing Ministering to the Multitudes and Personal Discipleship for Leadership Development**

When we study the short earthly ministry of Jesus, His rapid rise to popularity and fame is striking. Jesus had a mission that was targeted to reaching the masses; and yet that very mission created unique difficulties and challenges. Because the gospel message of repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ is a very personal message; it must be received **personally**; the new birth experience is not a widespread people movement but a one-on-one relationship with the living God. The **pathway to discipleship** involves an intimate fellowship and closeness with Jesus – it has nothing in common with a mob of people pressing to get close enough to Jesus for some type of isolated one-time magical touch that would solve their immediate needs.

- 1) (:7-12) Interaction with huge crowds and unclean spirits –  
Ministry popularity can attract people for the wrong reasons --  
These unclean spirits consistently testified that Jesus is *the Son of God* (vs. 11)  
but Jesus always silenced their voice
  
- 2) (:13-19) Interaction with His inner group of the 12 Apostles –  
Ministry popularity must not crowd out the priority of developing ongoing leadership  
The 2 complementary purposes of commissioning the 12: (vs. 14-15)
  - that they might spend time with Jesus – learning directly from Him
  - that they might be sent out to perform designated ministries
  
- 3) (:20-30) Interaction with various antagonists who tried to attribute His power to the devil  
Ministry popularity leads to all sorts of unjustified attacks  
Jesus responded: “*How can Satan cast out Satan*” (vs. 23)  
Leading Jesus to condemn blasphemy against the Holy Spirit
  
- 4) (:31-35) Interaction with Confused Family Members  
Ministry popularity creates conflict over maintaining spiritual priorities
  - (:31-32) close ties to physical family members
  - (:33-35) greater ties to spiritual family members

#### **E. (4:1-34) 4 Parables Unlocking the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God Regarding its Reception and Growth**

[Very similar to what we covered in Matthew’s gospel]

2 parables dealing with the reception of the kingdom of God

- Fundamental Parable of the Soils -- Response to the gospel depends on your heart condition – so we will see varied responses
  
- Parable of the Lamp – to the extent that you listen well you will be blessed with additional spiritual insight

2 parables dealing with the growth of the kingdom of God

- Parable of the Growing Seed -- The Mysterious Growth of the Kingdom Can Only Be Attributed to the Sovereign Work of God
- Parable of the Mustard Seed -- The Surprising Rapid Growth of the Kingdom Will Bring Blessing to All Nations – Especially When Viewed From Such Insignificant Beginnings – brings some abnormal growth as well

**F. (4:35-5:43) 4 Realms of the Dominion of the Lord Jesus Demonstrated**

- Dominion over the forces of nature -- Picture of a terrifying storm – Jesus able to calm the wind and the seas -- Our response to the Sovereign Savior should reflect the extent of His providential power and care
- Dominion over Demons
- Dominion over Disease
- Dominion over Death

A lot of these incidents are intended to drive home the compassion of Jesus – the reality of how much He cares for us in whatever difficulty we might be facing.

I like the following hymn:

*Does Jesus care when my heart is pained  
Too deeply for mirth or song,  
As the burdens press,  
And the cares distress,  
And the way grows weary and long?*

*O yes, He cares, I know He cares,  
His heart is touched with my grief;  
When the days are weary,  
The long night dreary,  
I know my Savior cares.*

*Does Jesus care when my way is dark  
With a nameless dread and fear?  
As the daylight fades  
Into deep night shades,  
Does He care enough to be near?*

*Does Jesus care when I've tried and failed  
To resist some temptation strong;  
When for my deep grief  
There is no relief,  
Though my tears flow all the night long?*

*Does Jesus care when I've said "goodbye"  
To the dearest on earth to me,  
And my sad heart aches  
Till it nearly breaks,  
Is it aught to Him? Does He see?*

**G. (6:1-6) 4 Sobering Insights Regarding the Inevitability and Pain of Rejection**

- Rejection hurts most when there is an expectation of positive acceptance
- Rejection takes offense because of moral and spiritual blindness despite overwhelming evidence  
The tragedy of Nazareth is not that they lacked evidence—it's that they lacked eyes to see what the evidence meant
- Familiarity breeds contempt – those who know you the best believe you the least (vs. 4)  
***“A prophet is not without honor except in his home town and among his own relatives and in his own household.”***  
More tragic than breeding contempt ... is breeding unbelief
- Rejection and unbelief deny other people the benefits of potential ministry (vs. 5-6)  
***“And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands upon a few sick people and healed them.  
And He wondered at their unbelief.”***

It has been said: “Jesus grew up in Nazareth, but Nazareth never grew up in their understanding of Jesus.”

**H. (6:7-56) 4 Lessons of Faith the Apostles in Training Needed to Master Regarding the Sufficiency of Jesus**

1. (:7-30) Trust in the Victorious Power of the Lord Jesus – Initial Training Mission vs. Opposition from Herod Antipas in the Beheading of John the Baptist
2. (:31-44) Trust in the All Sufficient Provision of the Lord Jesus – the Feeding of the 5000
3. (:45-52) Trust in the Calming Presence of the Lord Jesus = the Antidote to Fear and Anxiety – Abide in Jesus for apart from Him we can accomplish nothing
4. (:53-56) Authentic Faith is Very Different From Superficial Attraction for the Hope of Physical Benefit (being fed or healed)

**I. (7:1-23) The Authoritative Presence of the Promised Messiah Upsets the Status Quo – Leading to Confrontation and Controversy with the Established Religious Leaders**

- Hypocrites try to hide behind religious tradition to appear super spiritual -- [We talked about these Pharisees and scribes in an earlier lesson on the Jewish Identity Groups]
- Hypocrites disregard the clear commands of God by elevating tradition over the Word of God
- Defilement comes from within rather than from without

**J. (7:24-37) Foretaste of Gentile Faith – Outsiders Can Become Insiders – Jesus Graciously Extends His Healing Power to Desperate Gentiles – In Recognition of Remarkable Faith and Evoking Remarkable Testimony**

1. (:24-30) Region of Tyre – Healing of the Demon Possessed Daughter – Response to the Remarkable Faith of the Desperate Syrophenician Woman  
(7:28) *“even the dogs under the table feed on the children’s crumbs”*
2. (:31-37) Region of Decapolis – Healing of the Deaf and Dumb Man – Evoking the Remarkable Testimony of the Awesomeness of Jesus’ Saving Power  
(7:37) *“They were utterly astonished, saying ‘He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’”*

**K. (8:1-26) Examining Our Spiritual Vision – Our Eyes of Faith Need Clear Vision of the Power and Sufficiency of Our Savior**

Jesus answers the relevant questions about His Sufficiency to meet our needs:

1. Lack of Knowledge – Jesus does not know what I am going through  
*“In those days again, when there was a great multitude and they had nothing to eat, He called His disciples and said to them,” (vs. 1)*
2. Lack of Compassion – Jesus does not care about my personal situation  
*“I feel compassion for the multitude because they have remained with Me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and if I send them away hungry to their home, they will faint on the way; and some of them have come from a distance.” (vs. 2-3)*
3. Lack of Power and Sufficiency – Jesus cannot deliver and sustain me  
*“And His disciples answered Him, ‘Where will anyone be able to find enough to satisfy these men with bread here in a desolate place?’” (vs. 4)*

Jesus proceeds to feed the 4,000 with plenty left over

Look at how the disciples are often presented in a **negative light** in the Gospel of Mark – Worried that they did not have enough bread to eat – They missed the lesson on the sufficiency of Christ – so He has to gently rebuke them

*“Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a **hardened heart**? <sup>18</sup> “Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember”*

## **(8:27 – 9:13) HINGE: REINFORCING THE IDENTITY AND MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST – THE SON OF GOD – THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

**C. S. Lewis** – famous quote: **Who is Jesus? Liar, Lunatic or Lord?**

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God.

### **Only One Adequate Answer**

*“Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Thou art the Christ.’”*

Truncated version of Peter's confession; Matthew adds: *“the Son of the living God”*

For Mark, the concept of **Messiah** included His **deity**

1. Anointed Supreme King – Ultimate Political Leader -- **AUTHORITY**
2. Anointed Supreme Priest – Ultimate Religious Leader -- **SAVIOR**
  - The One Mediator between God and Man
  - Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek – stress on His eternity;
  - Superiority of His priesthood over the Levitical priests
  - Our Advocate before the Father – deals with our sin problem
3. Anointed Supreme Prophet – Ultimate Spokesman for God -- **John 1 - logos**

### Chiastic Structure

A1. **(8:27-30)** Clarity Regarding the Person of Jesus Christ – The True Identity of Jesus (Corroborated by His Authority and Mighty Works) Constitutes the Ultimate Litmus test for Spiritual Vision

B1. **(8:31-33)** Clarity Regarding the Mission of Jesus Christ – The Redemptive Mission of Jesus Christ Can Only Be Embraced By Relinquishing Human Autonomy and Submitting to Divine Lordship –

- Sacrificial Reality of the Slaughter of the Lamb of God
- Supernatural Resurrection of the Messiah as the Supreme Vindication

**C. (8:34-38) Challenge Regarding the Heavy Cost of Discipleship – Cross-Bearing Allegiance to His Person and Mission (Including Rejection and Suffering)**

### Universal Requirements for Discipleship:

1. Self Renunciation – Relinquish the throne – Surrender  
*“let him deny himself”*
2. Sacrifice -- Cross Bearing – Embrace rejection and suffering even to the point of death  
*“and take up his cross”*
3. Submissive Obedience – Commit to the Lordship of Christ  
*“and follow Me”*

B2. (9:1) Reassurance Regarding the Mission of Jesus Christ – The Heavy Cost of Discipleship Pales in Contrast to the Mighty Display of Power in the Coming Kingdom of God

**Skeptics** like **Bertrand Russell** reference this text as a key reason for not believing in Jesus – wrote an essay “Why I am Not a Christian”. They take the view that the reference is to the Second Coming which obviously has not happened yet.

### 2 good possible views:

- 1) The Transfiguration event which immediately follows in all of the Synoptic Gospels  
Most popular among our circles  
But the timing reference seems unusual – not much opportunity for any of them to die in the interim  
Ties more to the Person of Christ and His glory than the Mission of God’s kingdom agenda
- 2) The coming of the Holy Spirit in Power at Pentecost – leading to the impressive spread of the gospel

A2. (9:2-13) Reassurance Regarding the Person of Jesus Christ – The Son of Man Must Suffer in Order for the Son of God to be Seen in the Full Radiance of His Glory — Transfiguration

## **II. (9:14 – 16:8) THE REDEMPTIVE MISSION OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

### **A. (9:14-10:52) The Suffering Servant Characterizing Greatness in the Kingdom – Final Training of the Twelve**

Again the disciples are presented in a negative light regarding a lack of faith as they are unable to cast the demon out (9:14-29)

*“O unbelieving generation,  
how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?”*

Jesus continues to foretell His death and resurrection (9:30-32)

Greatness in the Kingdom must be measured from the perspective of the Cross (9:33-41)  
Disciples had been discussing which among them was the greatest (v. 34)

Also **10:35-45** – Arguing over seats of prominence in the kingdom

Illustration: “The Graduate School Rejection Letter”

A student applied to a competitive graduate program and received a **rejection letter** that said:

**“We are honored by your desire to share in our program, but you have not yet shared in the prerequisites.”**

That’s what Jesus said to James and John:

“You want the glory seat, but you haven’t yet drunk the cup.”

In the kingdom, **the path up always begins down.**

**B. (11:1-12:44) The Suffering Servant Confronting the Hypocrisy of Established Judaism**  
Cf. 7:1-23

After the Triumphal Entry and the Cleansing of the Temple, we see Jesus in the identical incidents that had been recorded by Matthew – answering various entrapment questions.

He ends up turning the tables on them and asking them How could David say “*The Lord said to my Lord*” -- **12:36**

He goes on to condemn the religious leaders for their hypocrisy (**12:38-40**)

*“And in His teaching He was saying: ‘Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and like respectful greetings in the market places,<sup>39</sup> and chief seats in the synagogues, and places of honor at banquets,<sup>40</sup> who devour widows’ houses, and for appearance’s sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation.”*

So the opposition has intensified to the point that they are actively plotting to kill Him and implementing those plans.

**C. (13:1-37) The Suffering Servant Commanding Vigilance in Anticipation of End Time Events -- Mt. Olivet Discourse – Day 3 of Passion Week – BE ON ALERT**

Israel (who had been asleep at the switch for Christ’s first coming) had better be on the alert for His second coming

We can’t afford to overlook Christ’s warnings or take His exhortations lightly.

What Jesus warns about goes far beyond just the immediate judgment of Rome destroying the temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD

7 Reasons to be on alert in anticipation of the end times:

- 1) (:1-2) Destruction -- Be on alert because judgment is coming
- 2) (:3-8) Deception and Discord -- Be on alert so you aren’t deceived regarding the timing and the signs of the end times
- 3) (:9-13) Danger -- Be on alert but not anxious in light of the coming danger in the end times
- 4) (:14-20) D-Day – Be on alert because the great tribulation will require urgent flight  
Abomination of Desolation followed by great tribulation
- 5) (:21-27) Deception – in the form of false messiahs and false prophets and true cosmic signs – Be on alert because you must distinguish the false from the true

- 6) (:28-31) Discernment of the times – Be on the alert because you must recognize the signs  
– Parable of the Fig Tree
- 7) (:32-37) Doorkeeper Parable – Be on the alert in light of the uncertainty of the precise timing of your day of accountability

**Summary (:37)** “*And what I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'*”

**D. (14:1-15:47) The Suffering Servant Completing His Redemptive Mission**

Significant events of the Anointing of Jesus by Mary, the celebration of the Passover, the institution of the Lord’s Supper, the prediction of Peter’s betrayal, the praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Betrayal by Judas, the Jewish and Roman trials, the Crucifixion and Burial

**E. (16:1-8) The Suffering Servant Consummating His Redemptive Victory – Our Approach to the Reality of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ Should Leave Us in a State of Awe and Amazement**

[Read the passage]

**Implications of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ:**

**Steven Lawson:**

- Validated the perfection of His sacrifice for our sins; completion of mission of redemption; provided just basis for forgiveness of sins  
Father had accepted His payment in full; propitiation
- Authenticated the claims of Jesus
- Guarantees that God is sovereign over all of men’s affairs and of all history  
Jesus had triumphed over death and sin and Satan;
- Guarantees there will be a final judgment because God has raised the Judge from the dead; greatest message for every believer and should strike terror into every unbeliever;
- Dominated the message of the early apostles

**Steven Lawson: What about the abrupt ending??** Matches the **abrupt beginning** where there is no buildup; no genealogy given; no record of the birth of Christ; He just appears on the scene very abruptly; this style has **unique impact** – so it is with the ending

Mark wants to close this gospel in a way that is consistent with how He has presented the glory and power of Jesus throughout his account – always triggering a response of **Shock and Awe**.

## WHY STUDY THIS BOOK?

- To flesh out the picture of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ from the unique perspective of the **Suffering Servant**.
- To highlight the **authority of Jesus** as the unique Son of God alongside His servant mentality in ministering to others.
- To capture the most **concise synopsis** of the rapid fire pace of the events of the life and ministry of Christ culminating in His mission of **Redemption**.

There is an emphasis on **Jesus moving towards the Cross**. From **Mark 8:31** onward Jesus and His disciples were “*on the way*” from Caesarea Philippi in the north through Galilee to Jerusalem in the south.

*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.*

36% of the book is devoted to the events of the Passion Week.

- To understand **discipleship** in the light of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Believers need encouragement to persevere when under persecution.
- To gain insight into **Jewish customs** as explained to a Roman audience (mostly made up of Gentiles).