

GOSPEL OF MARK SESSION 1

To what genre does the gospel belong? Mark call it Good News or 'euangelion'. The word occurs in Mark and in Paul's letters but hardly at all in the other gospels. There are parallels on the classical world in the inscriptions that have been found – the inscription about Augustus dating back to about 9BCE found in Priene in Asia Minor (.near Miletus)

In Greek culture it is a public proclamation of a significant event.

In Mark it is more than a proclamation of a fact - it is a call to a response in faith to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ as the risen Lord, which will change our lives.

WE will be looking at Mark as a finished work with a theological perspective on the person of Jesus Christ. It is not just a novel it is the crystallisation of a tradition handed down by a faith community that has come to be accepted by the Church as the inspired word of God.

How does Mark relate to Matthew and Luke? According to the two Source Theory

Matthew and Luke used as a written source the Gospel of Mark. Generally Matthew and Luke follow Mark. When they diverge they do not generally agree.

Where Matthew and Luke have material in common this is assumed to have come from a theoretical document called Q (from the German Quelle meaning source.)

History of views on Mark

- Irenaeus saw the Gospel of Mark as the mouthpiece of Peter.
- Mark got sidelined when Matthew, because it was regarded as a more complete account of the life of Jesus, was used in the Liturgy. Augustine believed that Mark followed in Matthew's footsteps and abridged Matthew's version.
- 19th Century saw a development in biblical criticism with the development of the two source hypothesis. G.E. Lessing suggested that to explain the similarities and discrepancies between Matthew, Mark and Luke there had to be a prior source in Aramaic. See the synoptic extract. It was noted that Matthew and Luke agreed when they followed Mark but when they deviated from Mark they did not agree. It was this that suggested Marcan priority.
- Quest for the Historical Jesus in Strauss and in A Schweitzer. They separated the Jesus of History from the Christ of Faith. They used form criticism to sort out what was genuine from what was legend etc. They tried to answer such questions as "Did Jesus really know that he was the Messiah?" Did Jesus know that he was going to suffer and did he experience pain and fear?
- Kahler challenged the historical intent of Mark and said that it had primarily a religious purpose not a historical one. It is the Christ of faith that we see not the Jesus of history. Hence Wrede and the Messianic secret, the silence that Jesus demanded was a device used by Mark to explain why Jesus was not accepted as Messiah in his own lifetime.

Form Criticism: Focuses on traditions with significant scholars in this tradition being Dibelius and Bultman. Bultman's categories were: miracle stories, legends (stories with no historical value and whose sole purpose was religious edification). He had a further category – apophthegms – used for terse pointed sayings and often for anecdotes with a narrative frame but where the narrative culminates in and is subservient to a specific saying. Bultman distinguishes three kinds: controversy dialogues, scholastic dialogues, and biographical apophthegma.

Words of Jesus (dominical sayings) divided into wisdom sayings, prophetic and apocalyptic sayings, legal sayings, community rules.

Who is the target audience for Mark? See Mark 7:1-13 See also the Apocalyptic Discourse in Mark 13.

Redaction Criticism: We will focus on Author Criticism that assumes that the writer of the Gospels creatively shaped the material that has been handed down orally to make a theological point and to stimulate a response in faith on the part of the reader. It will look at structure, changes in the tradition, literary devices to make theological points.

Mark 1:1 – 1:13

The prologue is the statement about the identity of Jesus Christ.

Christos - the anointed one

The only editorial use of scripture: combines Malachi and Isaiah

Malachi 3:1 – Look I shall send my messenger to clear the way before me

Isaiah 40:3 – A voice cries “Prepare in the desert a way for the Lord, make a straight highway for the Lord across the wastelands”.

“**Son of God**” 1:11, 9:7. He is identified as such by the demons: 5:7 and crucially by the Roman Centurion at the foot of the cross 15:19

The opening claims to be about Jesus Christ yet we start with John the Baptist. But John is himself focusing our attention on who Jesus Christ is for the person of faith.

John is equated with Elijah by his dress and food

Baptism of John: The phrase “He says the heavens torn apart” is an OT phrase that suggests direct communication between God and human beings and looks forward to the phrase “and the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two” (Mark 15:38) thus removing, in Mark's view,

the barrier in communication between God and humankind and allowing the centurion, a pagan, to recognise who Jesus truly is. See also Ezek 1:1 "As I was among the exiles by the river Cheber, heaven opened and I saw a vision from God".

The Testing of Jesus

Like Job the just man is tested by God and Jesus is seen in that light.

The OT parallel is with the fast of Moses in Deut 9:1

The wilderness is a reference to the testing of Israel during their wanderings before entry to the Promised Land. See Wisdom 2:12-20 "

Synoptic Presentation of Mark 1:40-43

<p>Καὶ ἰδοὺ, λεπρὸς προσελθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων· Κύριε, ἐὰν θέλης δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι. καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἤψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων· Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι· καὶ εὐθέως</p> <p>ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα.</p>	<p>Καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρὸς παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν καὶ γονυπετῶν καὶ λέγων αὐτῷ ὅτι, Ἐὰν θέλης δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι. καὶ σπλαγχνισθεὶς ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἤψατο καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι· καὶ εὐθὺς ἀπῆλθεν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα, καὶ ἐκαθαρίσθη.</p>	<p>Καὶ ἰδοὺ, άνηρ πλήρης λέπρας· ἰδὼν δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν πεσὼν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ἐδεήθη αὐτοῦ λέγων· Κύριε, ἐὰν θέλης δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι. καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἤψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων· Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι· καὶ εὐθέως</p> <p>ἡ λέπρα ἀπῆλθεν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ.</p>
<p>And behold, a leper came</p> <p>and worships</p> <p>him, saying: Lord, if you wish, I can be cleansed.</p> <p>And he stretched out his hand and touched him, saying: I wish it; be cleansed. And immediately his leprosy</p> <p>was cleansed.</p>	<p>And, calling out to him, there comes to him a leper</p> <p>and kneeling and</p> <p>saying to him: If you wish, I can be cleansed.</p> <p>And, moved with compassion, he stretched out his hand and touched him and says to him: I wish it; be cleansed. And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.</p>	<p>And behold, a man full of leprosy.</p> <p>But, upon seeing Jesus, he fell upon his face and requested</p> <p>him, saying: Lord, if you wish, I can be cleansed.</p> <p>And he stretched out his hand and touched him, saying: I wish it; be cleansed. And immediately the leprosy left him.</p>

Mark Session 2

1:14 – 8:26

1. Significance of geography in Mark: Galilee, Tyre, and Jerusalem.