

is not supported by the Bible or by any church historians in the first few centuries after the establishment of the church.

What Makes Mark's Gospel Unique?

Oftentimes, we summarize the styles of the Gospel by speaking of the audience for whom they are written. For example, Matthew is said to be the Gospel to the Jews because of its large quoting of the Old Testament, Luke is said to be to the Greeks because of its precise nature and length, John is said to be the Gospel to the thinking man because of its philosophical nature. In this bent, Mark is said to be written to the Romans because of its short, to the point style and its constant movement by using the word "immediately" and "and." Mark focuses on what Jesus does more than what Jesus says. For example, the gospel has eighteen miracles but only four parables. Mark's gospel is a good book to use as a summary of the life of Christ because over ninety percent of what Mark records is repeated in the Matthew and Luke.

Some Important Things to Remember

When studying the Book of Mark, always remember the bookends of 1:1 and 15:39. Mark's point is that Jesus is the Son of God. Everything else in the Book is to support that assertion. While many passages can be used as the key verse of the book, notice what 7:37 says, "He has done all things well." This is an excellent summary of the earthly life of Jesus.

Questions:

1. Why did Mark have a unique perspective to write this book?
2. Why is it good to study the background of Biblical authors?
3. Of the four gospels, which is your favorite account? Why?
4. Why do you think Mark wanted to emphasis the fact that Jesus is God's Son? What effect does that fact have on your life?

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Two:
Jesus, Man of
Greatness
Mark 1:1-45*

Power Over Unclean Spirits (1:23-28)

As Jesus was teaching in Capernaum, a man with an evil spirit cried out to him asking Jesus what his purpose was in being there. Demon possession was a phenomenon that occurred mainly in the days of Jesus’ ministry on earth and the apostles’ time as well. While at times there were some similarities to sicknesses and mental illness, demon possession was real and literal in the Biblical accounts. It was allowed by God primarily to show Christ’s and the apostles’ authority. There is very little evidence that demon possession occurs today. As Jesus told the spirit to come out of the man, the man convulsed, shrieked and fell to the ground. The spirit left the man and fled the presence of Christ. The people were amazed that even the demons obeyed Christ.

Power Over Sickness (1:29-45)

Jesus continued to show his power over the sicknesses and weaknesses of the human body. He healed Peter’s mother-in-law and many others in the region who were sick or demon possessed. While many people searched him out for his amazing powers, Jesus still found time to pray alone and to travel to various towns and synagogues in Galilee to preach the good news. He also healed a man who had the dreaded disease of leprosy. As word got out about the power and authority of Jesus, the people of the area thronged to see and hear him. It became very difficult for Jesus to enter into the towns or public places of the region.

Questions

1. What evidence do we have that Jesus is God’s Son?
2. Does demon possession occur today? Why or why not?
3. Why is it important that Jesus was able to do miracles?
4. What implications does the authority of Jesus have on your life?

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Three:
Jesus,
Greater Than Sin
Mark 2:1-28*

repentance.” Jesus showed through his life that truly, the gospel is for all.

Stretching Wineskins (2:18-22)

The disciples of John the Baptizer and of the Pharisees would often fast. One time they asked Jesus why his disciples did not fast. Jesus responded that his disciples were joyful because he was with them. Jesus used the metaphor of patching wineskins to explain his point. When a fresh skin was filled with wine, it would swell as the wine aged. Once the swelling was complete, it would stiffen and no longer be pliable to further growth. In the same way, Jesus was ushering in a new kingdom with new rules. No longer would fasting be a major spiritual work as it had been in the Old Testament Day of Atonement. Instead, the disciples of Jesus would be filled with joy. While there would be occasions when the disciples would fast and be persecuted, for the most part, the New Covenant is filled with rejoicing.

God Cares For His People (2:23-28)

As Jesus and his disciples were traveling on the Sabbath, they plucked grain from the fields to eat. This broke a tradition of the Pharisees. When Jesus was confronted over this, Jesus reminded them that he was Lord of the Sabbath. As David had broken tradition to feed himself, so it was permissible for the disciples to pluck and eat grain on the Sabbath. We must be careful that our traditions do not cause a stumbling block for those wishing to obey God.

Questions

1. What did the friends do to bring the lame man to Jesus? What are we doing to bring others to Jesus?
2. If all people need salvation, why do you think Jesus said only the sick need a doctor?
3. Have you ever fasted? Why or why not?

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Four:
Jesus,
Greater Than Satan
Mark 3:1-35*

others. Jesus did not want to be associated with the forces of the underworld. Jesus also gave these miraculous abilities to his twelve apostles.

The Evil Authorities Accusing Jesus (3:20-30)

Jesus and his apostles were so busy; they did not even have time to eat. When his family heard about this they tried to capture him and take him away because they thought he was crazy. The scribes accused Jesus of being Beelzebub, or Satan. Jesus explained how ludicrous this idea was because his work was destroying Satan’s kingdom and power. Jesus had bound Satan and was entering his house and taking the people who belonged to Satan. Nothing could stand in the way of Jesus accomplishing his will.

The Evil Ones ‘Helping’ Jesus (3:31-35)

Jesus’ brothers and mother came to get Jesus and were standing outside the house. When Jesus was told that his mother and brothers were there, he responded by looking around at those who were by him and saying, “Here are my mother and brothers.” Those who do the will of God are much closer to Jesus than just disciples. Jesus considers us family when we are faithful to him. The spiritual bonds that we have are much stronger and closer than any blood relations here on earth.

Questions

1. Sin takes you where you don’t want to go and takes you further than you want to go. Do you have any examples of this fact?
2. Why do you think the Pharisees were so opposed to Jesus and his teachings?
3. Why is it important that we never lose sight of the battle that is always raging between Jesus and Satan for the souls of this world?

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Five:
Jesus, Greater Than
the Storm
Mark 4:1-41*

disciples and the child's parents and came into the little girl's room. After sending everyone else out of the room, he knelt down beside the young child. He told the little girl to arise and then she came back to life. A great miracle was performed and many people were amazed at the power of Jesus.

Jesus Heals The Woman (5:25-34)

As Jesus was on his way to heal Jarius' daughter, the crowd massed around him. Suddenly Jesus stopped and began asking who had touched him. While the question seemed silly to many at the time, Jesus recognized that someone had contacted him who needed him. The woman who touched Jesus had suffered from a flow of blood for over twelve years. Spending all of her resources on doctors, she had become worse instead of better. The only hope she had was the healing power of Jesus. While she had been afraid and perhaps even embarrassed to approach Jesus, Jesus took the time to heal her and to get to know her as well.

A Lesson On Priorities

This is a classic chapter in the Book of Mark because of just how busy Jesus is throughout. From traveling across the Sea to find Legion, to traveling across again to meet Jarius, to being interrupted on the way by the woman with a flow of blood, Jesus was busy. But he never lost his sense of purpose. While he may have been pressed at times by the crowd or interrupted on the way by those needing help, he never lost sight of what he was sent here to do. Yes, we are busy but we must never lose our sense of purpose in seeking first the Kingdom of God.

Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus allowed the demons to go into the pigs when they left the man they were possessing?
2. Jarius and the woman seemed to only approach Jesus when everything else didn't work. Are you guilty of that today as well?

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Seven:
Jesus,
Greater Than Chaos
Mark 6:1-56*

3. According to the time you spent last week, what are your top three priorities?

4. According to your bank account last month, what are your top three priorities?

He Has Done All Things Well

A Study of Mark's Gospel

Lesson Seven: Jesus, Greater Than Chaos

(6:1-56)

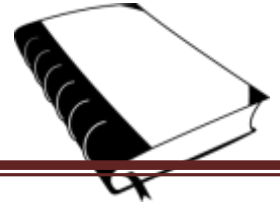
Some call it Murphy's Law, others just call it life. Whatever it's called, we can get so busy that it is difficult to remember our priorities. Rather than being who we are in spite of circumstances, perhaps we're shaped by our world so much that we are no longer ourselves. Notice how in this chapter, Jesus deals with rejection, hunger, grieving and protecting others: all while staying true to himself and his mission.

Only a Carpenter's Son (6:1-13)

As Jesus made his way home, many of the people he grew up with did not respect Jesus' teaching or his identity. Having known his family, they could not believe that Jesus was the Son of God even though his teaching and miracles proved it. Enduring the pain of this experience, Jesus continued to stay true to himself by teaching the Word of God to all who would listen. Later, Jesus called his apostles to him and told them each to go out two by two and put into practice the things they had seen Jesus do. While these men had the ability to do miracles, Jesus helped them to realize that they too, would be rejected. When they were, they were to shake off the dust from their feet and go on, just as Jesus had done.

John, the Baptizer Is Killed (6:14-29)

King Herod was fooled by his wife and daughter into killing John the Baptizer. The prophet who had foretold the coming of the Messiah was executed in a prison as a criminal. This result saddened Jesus



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greatly. Yet Jesus continued in his preaching and good works. It would not be long until Jesus would be executed as John the Baptizer was: an innocent man killed by an irresponsible king who wished only to please those who were around him.

Feeding 5,000 (6:30-44)

As the apostles reported back to Jesus, he brought them to a secluded place so that they could have time together to at least eat. But the crowds continued to come after Jesus and a difficult situation arose. Five thousand men (plus the women and children) were gathered to listen to Jesus but there was nowhere for these people to get food. Jesus, having compassion on the people, told the apostles to find something. Finding only five loaves of bread and two fish, the apostles knew that there was not enough food to feed everyone who was there. Jesus blessed the food they had and created enough to feed everyone and even have some left over.

Walking on Water (6:50)

When the people were fed, Jesus immediately made the apostles get into a boat and sent them to Bethsaida while he sent the multitudes away. Now when the boat was in the middle of the sea during the early morning hours, the men saw a figure like a ghost walking on the sea. They cried out in fear, but Jesus proclaimed, “It is I, do not fear.” Jesus then got in the boat with them and comforted them. As they arrived back at land; once again the crowds thronged around them. It seemed that everyone was bringing the sick and the hurting to be healed by Jesus.

Questions

1. In what ways do our families and close friends affect us spiritually?
2. Is it wrong to mourn when a Christian dies? Why or why not?
3. Why do we get so busy? What are the dangers in being busy?

Notes:

Next Week

Lesson Eight:

Jesus, Greater Than

Vain Religion

Mark 7:1-8:38

actually had more faith than they did. In the Age of the Church many more Gentiles have to come to faith in Christ than Jews. While the gospel came to the Jews first in fulfillment of prophecy, the gospel now is truly for all who will believe.

Seeking A Sign (8:1-26)

As Jesus fed four thousand with only seven loaves and a few fish, the Pharisees began to dispute with him. They demanded that Jesus call forth a sign from heaven to prove his identity as the Son of God. They refused to accept all of the many things they had seen and insisted on still more proof. Their problem was not a lack of proof but rather, a hardness of heart. Jesus warned his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. That is, to not be so influenced by preconceived spiritual notions that we cannot see the simple truth. The leaven of preconceived notions are the root of denominationalism today. When we take the pure word of God into our hearts, then we will produce pure fruit for God’s Kingdom.

Peter Rises And Falls (8:27-38)

One day Jesus asked his disciples “Who do men say that I am?” As they responded with the names of many prophets, Jesus asked them who they thought he was. Peter gave the good confession, “You are the Christ.” Then as Jesus warned them of what would soon happen concerning his death, Peter began to rebuke him. Jesus told Peter, “Get behind me Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God.” Even Peter had fell victim to trying to make Jesus fit his way of thinking rather than humbling himself and following Christ wherever he leads.

Questions

1. Why is it important that we have a heart right with God?
2. Why do you think the Gentiles were more open to the news of

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Nine:
Jesus,
Greater Than Us
Mark 9:1-50*

and with the scribes for their constant disputing. As Jesus talked to the father about faith, the father fell to his knees and cried out “Lord I believe, help my unbelief!” The boy was healed, the scribes were proven wrong and the disciples learned an important lesson about prayer and fasting. The problem of the time was not a lack of power on God’s part, but a lack of faith on man’s part.

Who Is The Greatest? (9:30-37)

As they were traveling, Jesus asked his disciples what they had been arguing about earlier. They were afraid to answer because they had been arguing about who was the greatest among them. This debate had raged among the disciples from the time they first met all the way until before Jesus’ death (John 13). Jesus reminded them that in the Kingdom greatness is accomplished through service. Jesus said, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.” He then used the illustration of a little child. We must have the trust, openness and desire to please others as a child does. The church has no room for big egos, but has a desperate need for humble servants.

Our Influence (9:38-50)

Jesus continued to speak of our influence as he spoke of how our causing another to stumble spiritually is like tying a millstone around our neck while being thrown into the sea. We must be very careful of our actions. If our hands, feet or eyes cause us to sin, it is more profitable that we cut them off than to enter into hell. Jesus is not approving of cutting off of our body parts here, but is instead teaching on priorities. We must live to go heaven through God’s grace and encourage others towards heaven as well. Heaven is too great to miss. That is why we must live as salt and light in this world.

Questions

1. Why was Peter rebuked by the voice from heaven during the Transfiguration?

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Ten:
Jesus, the Great
Teacher
Mark 10:1-52*

It is essential that the church today remember the importance of children. While some see children as an inconvenience because they are messy around the church building or they cry during worship services, we know that having children in worship today is a good indicator of the health of the church for the next generation. Even more than that, we remember that if Jesus loves the little children, we must love them as well. Work hard to be known as someone who loves children.

The Rich, Young Ruler (10:17-31)

As Jesus was traveling down the road, a young man came to him and knelt down before him. He asked, “Good teacher, what must I do that I may inherit eternal life?” Jesus mentioned the commandments but then, looking at his heart and loving him, told him that he needed to sell all that he had, give it to the poor and follow Jesus. The young man left sorrowful because he loved his possessions. Jesus used the occasion to tell his disciples that it is supremely difficult for those who love riches to enter into the Kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to make it to heaven. He reminded his listeners that no one who has left behind land, popularity or family for the sake of Jesus will go without reward. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

True Greatness (10:32-52)

As Jesus’ continued down the road, he began to tell the disciples again the manner in which he would soon die. The time was coming when he would be betrayed, scourged and crucified. But he would be raised from the dead. James and John came to him, asking if they could be given the choice positions in the coming Kingdom. They claimed they were willing to pay any sacrifice for those positions, but Jesus warned them greatly for what they were saying. Remember that in the Kingdom, we must serve in order to be considered great.

Questions

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*Next Week
Lesson Eleven:
Jesus,
Greater Than Fate
Mark 11:1-13:37*

withstood the Sadducees who tried to question Jesus concerning the resurrection. When a scribe asked Jesus what the greatest commandment was, Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. The second greatest is love your neighbor as yourself." Then Jesus used David's prophecy in 2 Samuel 23 to show the Jews that as the Son of David, he truly met the qualifications of the Messiah. Yet the Jewish authorities still rejected him. But many common people listened to him.

The Widow's Mite (12:38-44)

Jesus warned the people of the ruling authorities who used long, flowing robes to look religious, yet devoured widow's houses and lived their lives full of pretense. Then Jesus noticed a widow who threw in just two mites into the Temple treasury. Jesus was very impressed with her giving, not because of the monetary amount, but because it was all that she had. Jesus used her example to show what true faith in God looks like. It's not just flowing robes and eloquent words that were used by the Pharisees. It is instead a contrite heart following God.

A Final Prophecy (13:1-37)

The Disciples asked Jesus when the Temple would be destroyed and when the world would end. Jesus warned them that there would be many signs of the coming destruction of the Temple. Wars, earthquakes and famines would be seen all over the world. Disciples would be persecuted and many people would be hated for the cause of Christ. Jesus then warned that when they saw the armies of Rome approach they were to leave the city immediately. They were not to return to their house to get their possessions, nor were they to wait for anything because at that time the Temple and the city would be utterly destroyed. This prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70. Concerning the Second Coming of Christ, Jesus told his disciples that there would be no signs preceding it. It would come as a thief in the night. Therefore we must always be ready for Christ to return!

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Twelve:
Jesus, Greater Than
Our Weaknesses
Mark 14:1-72*

Questions

- 1. Like the fig tree, why is it vital that our fruit match our words?

- 2. What are the implications of the Greatest Commandment?

- 3. Why was Jesus so impressed by what the widow gave?

- 4. What signs will happen before Jesus returns?

He Has Done All Things Well

A Study of Mark's Gospel

Lesson 12: Jesus, Greater Than Our Weaknesses (14:1-72)

In this chapter we see how weak man is oftentimes. From denial, to rebellion, to pride, man has many shortcomings. But Christ overcomes all of them. His purpose will always be accomplished.

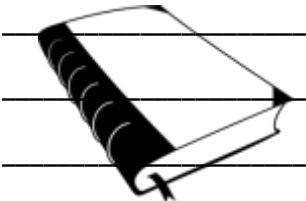
Jesus' Anointing (Mark 14:1-10)

The leaders outright rejected Jesus and his ministry. Judas was coldly self-calculating concerning how he could made a profit, but a woman come into the room and poured expensive perfume over the head of Jesus, anointing him. As we study this passage, perhaps we see ourselves and our response to Jesus. We should seek to always glorify him and do everything we can to serve him.

Peter's Pride (Mark 14:12-42, 66-72)

As Jesus gathered with his disciples in the upper room, they celebrated the Passover. As they were eating, Jesus taught them that the bread represented his body and the cup represented his blood of the new covenant which was shed for many. As Jesus identified his betrayer, Jesus told the apostles that they would soon all be made to stumble and scatter. Peter rebuked him

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saying, "Even if all are made to stumble, I will never do so." Jesus told him that before the rooster crowed twice in the morning, he will have denied him three times. But Peter insisted he would never deny Jesus. The other apostles insisted likewise. Later that night, Peter was in the courtyard and denied to a young servant girl that he had even seen Jesus. The servant girl kept asking and he continued to deny it. Later the crowd began to ask, and Peter cursed and said he did not know him. Then the rooster crowed and Peter realized what he had done and went out to weep bitterly.

Judas' Conspiracy (14:43-52)

As the only apostle from the same area as Jesus (Judea) and as the keeper of the money for the Apostles, Judas had many things going in his favor. But he let greed get in the way of his faith to Jesus. The apostle led the great multitude to Jesus in the garden and even kissed the Savior to fully identify him to the authorities. For thirty pieces of silver, or the price of a common slave, Judas handed over his friend and Messiah to those who would kill him. It is amazing what sin will cause us to do when it takes our heart.

The Trial of Jesus (Mark 14:53-72)

Wrong time (nighttime), wrong location (in the courtyard) and wrong evidence (false witnesses)--but none of these mistakes would deter the ones who insisted Christ be crucified. While all of these mistakes were explicitly condemned in the Law of Moses, these authorities were not concerned with doing things right or legally. In their hatred for the Son of God, they were willing to do anything to achieve victory over Jesus. But the victory of Satan would be short lived. As the long night continued and as the Jews desperately looked for anything remotely wrong with Jesus, the will of God was steadily being carried out.

"He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was despised and we did not esteem him...Yet he opened not his mouth; he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth." Isaiah 53

Notes:

*Next Week
Lesson Thirteen:
Jesus,
Greater Than Death
Mark 15:1-16:20*

2. What are the implications of the resurrection?
3. How seriously do we each take the Great Commission to take the gospel to every creature?
4. What are some things you have learned in our study of Mark's gospel?