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LIFE-STUDY OF MARK

A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

THE LORD'S MOVE IN GALILEE AND JUDEA

The Gospel of John is mainly a record of the Lord's move in Judea and of His profound words spoken there. Mark, on the contrary, is a record mainly of the Lord's ministry in Galilee. Mark does not record much of the Lord's move or teaching in Judea.

If we would have a history of the Lord's life and ministry on earth, we need to learn how to put together the Gospels of John and Mark. When these Gospels are put together, we can see the Lord's move in the regions of Galilee and Judea. Judea was a highly respected province, and the city of Jerusalem was located there. But the province of Galilee was looked down upon and despised. The Lord's move in Galilee covered a longer period of time than His move in Judea. We need to see that the [2] record in the Gospel of Mark is a record primarily of the Lord's move not in Judea but in Galilee.

In the first chapter of the Gospel of John, we have a record of profound matters related to Christ's incarnation. Verses 1 and 14 reveal that in the beginning was the Word, that the Word was with God and was God, and that the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. According to John 1:14, the disciples also saw the Lord's glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father. In the first chapter of his Gospel, John goes on to say that the law was given through Moses, but grace and reality came through Jesus Christ (v. 17). In verse 18 John says, "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." Furthermore, John tells us that in the Word was life, and the life was the light of men (v. 4). All these matters are very profound.

THE SLAVE-SAVIOR

In contrast to the profound matters revealed in the Gospel of John, in Mark's Gospel we see the Lord as the Slave-Savior. In the Gospel of Mark we do not have the God-Savior, as in John; the King-Savior, as in Matthew; or the Man-Savior, as in Luke. The Gospel of Mark presents a particular aspect of Christ, the aspect of the Slave-Savior. In John we have God; in Matthew, the King; in Luke, the man; and in Mark, the Slave. We would hardly expect to hear excellent, profound, marvelous things about a slave. There is a sense in which it is not easy to speak on the Gospel of Mark.

In the Gospel of Mark we have a vivid record of the Lord's humanity as a Slave. The last chapters of Mark are especially long and detailed. The reason is that Mark's purpose is to provide a detailed record to show the beauty of the Lord as a Slave in His human virtues.

A RECORD OF THE LORD'S ACTS AND A DESCRIPTION OF HIS HUMAN VIRTUES

A key to understanding the Gospel of Mark is that in this Gospel we see much more of the Lord's acts than of His words. Mark does not record very much of the Lord's teaching. For example, he does not include the message the Lord gave on the mountain (Matt. 5—7). Neither does Mark include the lengthy prophecies and many of the parables found in Matthew and Luke. For the most part, Mark gives us a detailed record of the Lord's acts. He includes many small points in order to present a portrait of the beauty and excellence of the humanity of Christ as the Slave-Savior. If we see this, we will love the Gospel of Mark.

The secret to understanding the Gospel of Mark is to see that this book describes in a vivid, detailed way the excellent and marvelous human virtues of the Lord Jesus. Actually, it is quite difficult to speak on this Gospel. More than twenty messages would be needed to cover what is revealed only in the first three chapters, because the record of the Lord's humanity in this Gospel is so vivid and detailed. How marvelous is the picture of the virtues of the Lord's humanity in the Gospel of Mark! We need a particular kind of utterance from the Lord to speak of these matters. Throughout the years I have become accustomed to speaking on the all-inclusive Christ, the church, and the compound, processed, indwelling Spirit. But when we come to the Gospel of Mark, I sense the need for a different kind of utterance, and I look to the Lord for it.

THE WRITER OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK

The writer of this Gospel was Mark, who was also called John (Acts 12:25), the son of one of the Marys (who was close to the apostle Peter in the church at Jerusalem, v. 12). He was also the cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10). He accompanied Barnabas and Saul in their ministry (Acts 12:25) and joined Paul in the first journey of his ministry to the Gentiles (13:5). However, Mark left Paul and turned back at Perga (v. 13). Due to the fact that he had turned back, he was rejected by Paul in his second journey. Mark then joined Barnabas in his work, at which time Barnabas separated himself from Paul (15:36-40). However, Mark was close to Paul in his later years (Col. 4:10 ; Philem. 24) and useful to him for his

ministry until Paul's martyrdom (2 Tim. 4:11). He was close to Peter, probably continually, since Peter considered him his son (1 Pet. 5:13).

FEATURES OF MARK'S GOSPEL

From the early days of the church Mark's Gospel has been considered a written account of the oral presentation of Peter, who accompanied the Savior in His gospel service from its beginning (1:16-18) to its end (14:54, 66-72). The record is according to historical sequence and gives more details of historical facts than the other Gospels do. The entire Gospel is summarized in Peter's word in Acts 10:36-42.

Concerning the Gospel of Mark we need to keep three matters in mind: first, that this Gospel is a written account of Peter's presentation of the history of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; second, that this Gospel was written according to historical sequence; and third, that this Gospel gives more details of historical facts than the other Gospels do. The Gospel of Mark may actually be regarded as the Gospel of Peter. Peter presented the story of the Lord Jesus orally to Mark, and Mark put this story into writing. This Gospel also gives us a biography of the Lord according to historical sequence. The record in Matthew, on the contrary, gives us a record according to doctrine. If we would know the actual incidents of the Lord's life according to historical sequence, we need the Gospel of Mark. Furthermore, Mark gives more details of historical facts than the other Gospels do. As we have already pointed out, Mark pays much more attention to the Lord's action than to His speaking. This fits Mark's purpose in portraying the Lord as a Slave. A slave is one who works, not one who talks a great deal. Therefore, Mark presents the details of the Lord's actions.

John presents the God-Savior, emphasizing the Savior's deity in His humanity. Matthew presents the King-Savior; Mark, the Slave-Savior; and Luke, the Man-Savior. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are synoptic in portraying the Savior's humanity in different aspects, with His deity. Since Mark presents the Savior as a slave, he does not tell His genealogy and status, because the ancestry of a slave is not worthy of note. Mark also does not intend to impress us with the Slave's wonderful words (as Matthew does with His marvelous teachings and parables concerning the heavenly kingdom, and John with His profound revelations of divine truths), but he impresses us with His excellent deeds in His gospel service, providing more detail than the other Gospels, in order to portray the Slave-Savior's diligence, faithfulness, and other virtues in the saving service He rendered to sinners for God.

In Mark's Gospel are the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Christ as the Slave of Jehovah in Isaiah 42:1-

4, 6-7; 49:5-7; 50:4-7; 52:13—53:12 and the details of the teaching regarding Christ as the Slave of God in Philippians 2:5-11. His diligence in labor, His need of food and rest (Mark 3:20-21; 6:31), His anger (3:5), His groaning (7:34), and His affection (10:21) display beautifully His humanity in its virtue and perfection. His lordship (2:28), His omniscience (v. 8), His miraculous power, and His authority to cast out demons (1:27; 3:15), to forgive sins (2:7, 10), and to silence the wind and the sea (4:39) manifest in full His deity in its glory and honor. What a Slave of God! How lovely and admirable! Such a Slave served sinners as their Slave-Savior, with His life as their ransom (10:45), for the fulfillment of the eternal purpose of God, whose Slave He was.
(Excerpt from Mark Life-studies, msg #1)

Burdens for Church Prayer

- 2026 Targets, # of baptized:22; # of prayer meeting attendance:35; average Lord's Day attendance:10% increase
- Spread the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel on the WVC campus and in the community.
- Multiply the number of small groups for the increase and building up of the Body of Christ
- Perfect young working saints with shepherding families as containers for the next generation.
- Practice PSRP, BNBP, and vital small groups.
- Blending in the Body, by participating in conferences and trainings
- Establish and strengthen the church services, including children, YP, ushering, etc.
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately
- Pursuing the truth and growth in life to live in the reality of the kingdom.

Announcements

- Life-study of Mark MSG 1, 2
- HWMR: 2025 Fall ITERO Week 3
- 1/20 (Tue) 7:45pm, Prayer meeting at meeting hall.
- 2/21, 3/14, 10am. Lessons on small groups with br Minoru on Zoom.
- 1/31(Sat) 9:30-noon, South Bay blending conference of Chinese speaking sisters – Respeaking of 2025 Winter Training messages at Santa Clara meeting hall.
- 2/13-15 International Chinese-speaking Blending Conference, Anaheim.

2/13 (Fri)	7:30pm	1st meeting
2/14 (Sat)	9:00am	2nd meeting
	11:00am	3rd meeting
	7:30pm	4th meeting
2/15 (LD)	9:30am	5th meeting

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