

**JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH—
COMMENTS ON MARK**

**--- Volume One of Four ---
(Mark Chapters 1; 2; 3; 4; & 5)**

A Practical Commentary on
The Gospel According to Mark

By

Joseph L. Looney II

GULF COAST BAPTIST INSTITUTE

2012

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(Consisting of Four Volumes)**

A Practical Commentary on
The Gospel According to Mark

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this dissertation is to develop an expository and practical commentary on "The Gospel According to Mark." This study will include the harmonized sequential headings or listings from the other Gospel records. The theme of the Book of Mark is found in the key verse which is Mark 10:45. Jesus is speaking and He states, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Without question to minister is to serve. Jesus was speaking of Himself as the Servant of God, the Father. In this verse He reveals that His first advent was two-fold: (1) to give His life to pay the redemption price for the sinner and thus to save every sinner who will believe; and (2) to minister for God and to serve others and thus be the supreme example as to how sinners saved by grace are to live so as to point all people to Christ Jesus as the one and only Savior. The title, "Jesus, My Servant the Branch - Comments on Mark," is derived from many references in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, but more particularly from Zechariah 3:8 (KJV) "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH."

By

Joseph L. Looney II

May, 2012; April, 2014

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH—COMMENTS ON MARK - VOLUME 1 of 4

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Also, I am grateful for the many pastors, preachers, Bible institute instructors, and others who have been a tremendous help and blessing along the way. They are too numerous to mention here. I thank God for having the opportunity to be taught and helped by each of these people. May God bless the memory of those who have been promoted to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. May He bless the ministry of those who continue to serve Him.

One brother of whom this writer is especially grateful is Jim C. Brasseal. He is pastor of Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, Lakewood, CO. At one time, he was Vice President and instructor of the Gulf Coast Baptist Institute from which he received his doctorate. Brother Brasseal has made many helpful suggestions. May God bless his ministry.

Most of all, I thank God and His dear Son, Jesus Christ, my personal Savior and Lord. To Him be the glory for all things. May His kingdom increase.

Joseph L. Looney II
Gillette, Wyoming
April 2012 through April, 2014

CREDITS, EXPLANATION, AND DEDICATION

CREDIT FOR SOURCES

Every reasonable effort has been made by this writer to give credit to all sources and authors where credit is due. However, over many years, this writer has read many comments from various sources in the course of sermon and lesson study and preparation. If any material from some of these many sources has been included in these comments and has not been documented, inadvertently or otherwise, this writer apologizes for the oversight.

EXPLANATION

The original intent was to write a commentary on all sixteen chapters of the Gospel of Mark for this dissertation (to be completed by the end of April, 2012). As of this date May 11, 2012, chapters ten through sixteen have not been completed. However, with the approval of Doctor Bruce Morris, Sr., President of the school, it was decided (due to the volume of the work on chapters one through nine) to allow this student to finish chapters ten through sixteen as soon as possible after May 11, 2012. The word count for Mark chapters one through nine is well over 100,000 words with over 350 pages, double spaced.

FINISHED

As of February, 2014, this dissertation is completed (all sixteen chapters of the Gospel of Mark) with 741 pages and over 242,000 words.

DEDICATION

The Late Brother Charles F. Hanes was a Missionary Baptist pastor/missionary for many years serving in Arkansas and South Dakota. He befriended this writer and was always a great encouragement. This work is dedicated to the memory of this dear brother.

Joseph L. Looney II
Gillette, Wyoming
April 2012 through February; April, 2014

FOREWORD

to the commentary entitled

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH—COMMENTS ON MARK

This paper or commentary was originally composed as a desertation submitted to Gulf Coast Baptist Institute of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Theology. With the written permission of the Gulf Coast Baptist Institute this writer now offers to the general public this commentary on The Gospel According to John Mark. There are four volumes. Volume One covers Mark chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Volume Two covers Mark chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9. Volume 3 covers Mark chapters 10, 11, 12, and 13. Volume 4 covers Mark chapters 14, 15, and 16.

It is without apology that this writer writes from the viewpoint of a Landmark Missionary Baptist pastor who was saved by the grace of God in June, 1960. God used the ministry of Central Missionary Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and the individual witnessing of Brother John Blake a follow engineering student at the University of Arkansas to bring this sinner to the realization that he needed to repent and trust in the Lord Jesus.

The overall plan of this writer is to write *verse by verse commentaries* on as many books of the 66 books of the Holy Bible as time permits in the time that he has left upon this earth until the Precious Lord Jesus Christ takes him home. The purpose of this is to help people who have the desire to understand the Word of Truth. It is this writer's prayer that God's Spirit will use this desertation and any in the future to help those who desire to know and understand the Bible. No doubt all questions will not be answered and there are human errors in this paper, but to the best of his ability and with the help of God, this writer has tried to get the correct and accurate teaching(s) of The Gospel According to John Mark. To God be the glory for any help and any good that may come from this effort.

In the service of the Master, Jesus Christ My Savior and Lord,
Joseph L. Looney II
Gillette, Wyoming
May, 2012; Sept; Nov, 2013; April, 2014

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

CREDITS FOR SOURCES -- ADDED REMARKS

This writer can not claim any originality for it is God who created him and has given him any ability that he may have, so the glory goes to God and His dear Son, Christ Jesus, who is this writer's Personal Savior and LORD.

Every reasonable effort has been made by this writer to give credit to all sources and authors where credit is due and when sources were known. However, over many years, this writer has read many comments from various sources in the course of sermon and lesson study preparations. If any material from some of these many sources has been included in these comments and has not been documented, inadvertently or otherwise, this writer apologizes for the oversight. It was and is not the intention of this writer not to recognize these sources. During in the ministry of this writer since 1971 and even before, he prepared and preached sermons from the four Gospel records of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John for the Mountain Grove Missionary Baptist Church near Alma, Arkansas, as well as the Unity Missionary Baptist Church near Paron, Arkansas, and Pine Top Missionary Baptist Church near Broken Bow, OK. In the course of the preparation for these sermons this writer leaned heavily on sermon booklets and commentaries by various preachers and writers. In many cases there are no formal references to these works in the text of this writer's commentary. Therefore, this writer acknowledges his debt to the work of all those preachers and commentators from which he had drawn resources for preaching and teaching.

APPRECIATION FOR PASTORS, PREACHERS AND INSTRUCTORS

Over the years the Holy Spirit of God has used several pastors and others to teach this writer spiritual and practical things from the Word of God. Some of those pastors were Charles Ashcraft in Fayetteville, Arkansas; Eugene Reagan in Jonesboro, Arkansas; Richard Folger in Russellville, Kentucky; Clarence Walker,

>>ADDITIONAL REMARKS (continued, page 2 of 3)

Carl Sadler, and Edward Overbey in Lexington, Kentucky; Gerald Scott Smith in Lexington, Kentucky; Buck Nicholson and E. Keith Simmons in Fort Smith, Arkansas; Hershel Adams in Alma, Arkansas; and J. C. James in Little Rock, Arkansas. Besides these brethren (some of whom were also my instructors in Baptist Bible institutes and seminaries) the following were also my instructors in various Baptist Institutes and Seminaries: Rocoe Brong, Johnny Thompson, and others in Lexington, Kentucky; John Penn, Charles Rogers, John Owen, Fred Vining, David Robinson, O. R. Baldwin, and Paul Goodwin, and L. D. Capell in Little Rock, Arkansas. {Much and special credit is due for one brother already mentioned and that is, Charles Rogers, this writer's Church Epistles' instructor, who required, influenced, and/or otherwise motivated this writer to write commentaries.} I thank the Lord-God of Heaven for being able to be under each of these pastors, preachers, and instructors.

May God bless the memory of those on this list who have been promoted to be with the Lord Jesus Christ and may He bless the continued ministry of those still alive, serving Him, and awaiting the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CREDITS DUE TO OTHERS

There have been many others who have been a big help to this writer along the way and especially in the writing of this dissertation. First of all, this writer would like to express thanks to Pat, his beloved and faithful wife, of over 56 years. She has helped this writer in many ways. During the process of writing this paper she has proofread many pages and helped in other ways.

Four other brethren who have been a big help are: Brother Norman W. Pierce of Rapid City, SD; Brother Jim Brasseal of Lakewood, CO; and the late Brother Chuck Hanes of Belle Fourche, SD. Each of these brethren have helped in various ways. Brother Pierce is a long time Missionary Baptist

>>ADDITIONAL REMARKS (continued, page 3 of 3)

pastor/missionary. At one time, he was a seminary instructor in the ABA school in Central Florida from which he received a doctorate. Brother Brasseal is also a long time Missionary Baptist pastor/missionary. He was at one time Vice- President of Gulf Coast Baptist Institute from which he received a doctorate. Brother Brasseal has read this thesis and had made many helpful suggestions and etc. The late Brother Charles F. Hanes was a Missionary Baptist pastor/missionary for many years. He was saved at Calvary Missionsary Baptist Church of Gillette, Wyoming, in the 1970's. He attended and received a Bachlor of Theology degree in 1987 from the Missionary Baptist Seminary in Little Rock, Arkansas.

EXPLANATIONS ABOUT BIBLE QUOTATIONS:

All Bible quotations are from the King James Version unless otherwise noted by abbreviations of the versions such as: NASB, the New American Standard Bible; NIV, the New International Version; AMP. BIBLE, the Amplified Bible. Quotations from other translations will be formally acknowledged in the sentence end parentheses and Bibliography.

DISCLAIMER

Use of other versions of the Bible other than the King James Version does not mean approval of the entire version by this writer. But rather it means that the translation of a particular verse was examined by the writer and found to be true to the Greek text(s) and versions available to him (to the best of his understanding and knowledge).

Joseph L. Looney II
Gillette, Wyoming
May, 2012; September, 2013; November 2013, April, 2014

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION ONE---

THE SERVANT AND BEGINNINGS

(Mark Chapters 1:1-15; 10:45)

---CHAPTER 1---

Introduction - All about the Gospel of Mark

(Mark Chapters 1:1; 10:45)

---CHAPTER 2---

The Forerunner of the Servant

(Mark Chapter 1:2-8)

---CHAPTER 3---

The Servant Initiating His Earthly Ministry

(Mark Chapter 1:9-15)

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION ONE--- THE SERVANT AND BEGINNINGS (Mark Chapters 1:1-15; 10:45)

---CHAPTER 1--- Introduction - All about the Gospel of Mark (Mark Chapters 1:1; 10:45)

OUTLINE

- | | |
|--|------------|
| I. Introduction -- All about the Gospel of Mark | 1:1; 10:45 |
| A. Statement of Purpose | 10:45 |
| B. The Gospel Account of Mark | 1:1 |
| 1. The author and his background | |
| 2. The recipients and occasion | |
| 3. Date, place and purpose of writing | |
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| F. Brief Analysis of the Life of Christ | |

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION ONE--- THE SERVANT AND BEGINNINGS (Mark Chapters 1:1-15; 10:45)

---CHAPTER 1--- Introduction - All about the Gospel of Mark (Mark Chapter 1:1;10:45)

Someone may ask, "Why study one of the Gospel records and why Mark?" It is part of the Bible and everyone, believers in particular, should study the Bible, the divine Word of God (1 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17). The Gospel records (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) reveal the true account of the virgin birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven of the only One who can save lost sinners (and all are sinners- Romans 3:23) from sin and the penalty of sin; who gives the believer peace, contentment, and satisfaction in this life; and who one day will take the born-again, blood-bought believer to heaven. The Gospel records help the believer understand the person and purpose of the only Savior, Jesus Christ, who is the "good news" of salvation to all human beings everywhere. These records reveal the example that Jesus Christ set for His disciples to follow.

The life and work of Jesus Christ as set forth in the Gospel records manifest, demonstrate, and show forth: one, His character -- believers are to conform to it (Romans 8:29); two, His life -- believers are to conduct their lives and be like Him;

and three, His mission -- believers as members of New Testament churches have the same mission (Luke 19:10; John 20:21). Further, the Gospel records relay that He organized His kind of church during His earthly ministry and that the business and mission of His church is the most important business in the world. True New Testament churches and individual members are to proclaim the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:14-21). These are some of the reasons for studying the Gospel records.

Of the four Gospel records "the Gospel According to Mark" is "the shortest and simplest. . ." and most direct (Hiebert 81). Although it is concise and unadorned, it is very vivid, and rapid moving, yet gives a detailed account (Hester 80; Wessel 603). It gives a correct understanding of the ministry, suffering, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hester 80; Wessel 603). Mark uses transition words like "straightway," "forthwith," and "immediately" at least thirty-nine times. Even the casual reader will notice and observe them time and time again. Because the divinely inspired author rushes from one scene to the next, Mark has been referred to as the "motion picture" gospel (Hester 80). Nevertheless, one should not get the idea that it is shallow. It is far deeper than it looks, like a pool or stream of clear, cool water (Wessel 603).

The Gospel of Mark opens with the ministries of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ but omits the birth, boyhood, and preparation of Jesus (Hester 80). These things would not be a concern to the original, primary recipients. Jesus is presented as "the Model Servant," "the Ideal Worker." (That Jesus was "the Model Servant" of the Father conforms to the testimony of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 2:5-11). In that He is presented as a servant, no genealogy is given, for "...it is not important to know the ancestry of a servant" (Owen, New Testament Outlines). However, since

He is presented as a servant, this Gospel "...is marked by energy..." and action, and "...stresses the works of Jesus more than his words" (Hester 80). The works of Jesus confirm and authenticate His most important message. This is emphasized by the key verse as found in Mark 10:45. Jesus came to save the lost from their sins. He came to serve God and to demonstrate how to serve God. Also, He came with a mission and gave it to His churches to carry forth as His special representatives. He said to the church that He established during His earthly ministry in John 20:21, "...Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Jesus came to serve all people and to show them how to serve God and one another. Jesus came to redeem everyone and especially "those that believe" (1 Timothy 4:10).

The purpose of this introduction is to introduce the reader to the Gospel of Mark. Moreover, the purpose of this discourse is seen in the statement written by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:2 "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." This does not mean that all one needs to know about Christ is His crucifixion. There is much more to Him and His message than that, yet everything else revolves around His death, burial and resurrection. The following questions could be posed: one, Why did He come? two, What did He do? three, What did He accomplish? four, Why did He organize and leave His kind of church on the earth? Mark answers these questions and others as he writes his Gospel account and they will be discussed as this commentary is developed.

In making comments on any book of the Bible certain introductory and background information is needed to have a proper understanding of the book and the message of the book. Hence, the basic "Rule of Interpretation" must be followed.

This "Rule" involves at least four questions:

1. Who is speaking?
2. To whom is he speaking?

3. About what is he speaking?
4. When was he speaking? (Bogard 42).

Therefore, to learn "All About the Gospel of Mark" and for a correct understanding of it and the background material covering it, the following particulars will be discussed: one, the gospel account of Mark, 1:1; two, the beginning of the Gospel, 1:1; three, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, 1:1; and four, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, 1:1. However, the writer will first of all insert the statement of purpose of this treatise.

A. Statement of Purpose 10:45

The purpose of this dissertation is to develop an expository and practical commentary on "The Gospel According to Mark." This study will include the harmonized sequential headings from the other Gospel records. The theme of the Book of Mark is found in the key verse which is Mark 10:45. Jesus is speaking and He states, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Without question to minister is to serve. Jesus was speaking of Himself as the Servant of God the Father. In this verse He reveals that the purpose of His first advent was two-fold: one, to give His life to pay the redemption price for the sinner and thus to save every sinner who will believe; and two, to minister for God and to serve others and thus be the supreme example as to how sinners saved by grace are to live so as to point all people to Christ Jesus as the one and only Savior. The title, "Jesus, My Servant the Branch - Comments on Mark," is derived from many references in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, but more particularly from Zechariah 3:8 "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they *are* men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH" (cf. Isaiah 11:1).

B. The Gospel Account of Mark 1:1

The Gospel account of Mark is one of the three "synoptic" Gospels. Matthew and Luke are the others. All three are very "...much alike in arrangement, content, and even in phraseology" (Hester 79). Baxter states that they are "called 'Synoptists,' from *syn* (together) and *opsis* (a view)" (189). Yet each has a different emphasis and purpose. As already stated Mark presents Jesus as "the Model Servant," "the Ideal Worker." It has been said, "God gave it [*that is, Mark*] that we His redeemed people might as His servants have a pattern in our service" (Gaebelein 790). An outline of the features of the Gospel account of Mark is as follows: one, the human author and his background; two, the recipients and occasion of writing; three, date, place and purpose of writing; and four, characteristics and theme of the Gospel of Mark.

The human author and his background Although the Gospel of Mark does not bear the signature of Mark, it is certain that the man identified as John Mark was the human author. This is according to uniform tradition of the New Testament churches of that day and the testimony of early writers and church leaders such as Eusebius, Origin, and Clement of Alexandria, who lived in the first to the third centuries (Hiebert 83-86). This testimony also was widespread in that it came from many "centers of early Christianity: Asia, Rome (with Gaul), and Alexandria" (Hiebert 86). They testify also that Mark was "closely associated with the apostle Peter. . ." and earthly speaking he received much of "his information . . ." from this association (Wessel 605, 07). There is much evidence for this, but possibly the epitome of it is found in the fact "that it conforms to the outline of the gospel story as given by Peter in Acts 10:34-43" (Hiebert 86). Carter states that Clement wrote (about A. D. 200) that, "at the request of the Christians in Rome, Mark recorded the things that Jesus did and said as he had heard them from Peter" (25).

John Mark is mentioned several times in the New Testament. He is mentioned by Luke in Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:37-39; by Paul in Colossians 4:10, Philemon 24, and 2 Timothy 4:11 and by Peter in 1 Peter 5:13. Also most commentators believe he was the young man referred to in Mark 14:51-52. These Scriptures reveal several facts about Mark. According to Acts 12:12 his mother was one of the several New Testament women whose name was Mary, whose home was a shelter and place of prayer for many of the church in Jerusalem. In Colossians 4:10 Paul wrote that Mark (also spelled Marcus) was a "sister's son to Barnabas" and thus by inference he must have been a Levite as per Acts 4:36.

According to Acts 11:27-30 and 12:25 when the church in Antioch of Syria sent a relief offering to the drought stricken saints in Jerusalem "...by the hands of Barnabas and Saul," they on the return trip "... took with them John, whose surname was Mark." Acts 13:5, 13 reveals that when Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit and the church in Antioch "...they had also John to their minister," but John departed from them at Perga in Pamphylia and returned to Jerusalem. Luke records in Acts 15:37-40 that when Paul and Barnabas set out for their second tour that "... Barnabas determined to take with them John. . . . But Paul thought not good to take him..." since he departed from them early in the first journey. Thus Acts 15:39,40 records that "...Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus; And Paul chose Silas. . ." and went out on his second missionary tour.

Nevertheless, Mark later seems to have been reconciled to Paul being with him in his imprisonment according to Colossians 4:10 and Philemon 24. In 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul tells Timothy to "...Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry." Mark was also with Peter in part of his ministry according to tradition and 1 Peter 5:13.

The recipients and occasion No doubt the book of Mark was written to all people and applies to people everywhere, yet most Bible scholars agree that it was written primarily for the Romans (Hester 80) and Gentiles in general (Hiebert 91) since the emphasis of Mark is on what Jesus can do and His divine power. (According to Colossians 4:10 and Philemon 24 Mark was in Rome during the first imprisonment of Paul.)

The Romans were a people of power whose engineering feats and accomplishments show that they were mighty workers. Thus Mark appeals to them in his presentation of Jesus as the Son of God. The One who is the perfect Almighty Servant, worked wonders and awe, had power over demons and had power to heal diseases. He also had power over the forces of nature and power even over that great enemy—death.

Date, place, and purpose of writing The Gospel of Mark was most likely the first of the gospels to be produced. It has been dated as early as A. D. 50 (Robertson Word Pictures 249) and as late as A. D. 66 but "...was certainly published before the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70" (Clarke 9). It was probably written "...as early as 59 and 60 A.D." (Carter 26). However, some place the date after the fire that destroyed over half of the city of Rome in A. D. 64 (Wessel 608).

The place of writing has already been implied to be in Rome. This is according to the almost uniform testimony of the early witnesses (Benware 95). {However, Baxter is inclined "...to think that the place... was Palestine rather than Rome" (221).} The content of Mark supports the view that it was written for Gentile readers and especially the Romans (Hiebert 91). This seems evident from the facts that one, no mention is made of the Law or the New Covenant, two, little is said about fulfilled prophecy and the like or the verbal attack of Jesus (Matthew 23) upon

the scribes (Hiebert 91). Mark is careful to explain Jewish customs and language. He translates Aramaic words and uses many Latin terms (Hiebert 91).

The purpose of the Gospel of Mark is not specifically stated, but the key verse, 10:45, indicates the purpose for which it was written. Jesus is presented as the fulfillment of the promise in Zechariah 3:8 that God would, "...bring forth my servant the BRANCH." Jesus is seen as the Mighty Worker. People were filled with amazement and astonishment by His mighty acts. He was a man of action and power who stopped the storm and wind on the sea; made the blind to see, the deaf to hear; healed the sick and raised the dead; performed many more marvelous miracles. In any case, the greatest thing He did and does is to save the lost. Jesus is manifested by John Mark unto the Roman world as a man who was a man indeed, the very best. Yet, He was a man whose manhood was crowned with divine glory and power. Notwithstanding, Jesus of Nazareth was not just a man. He was and is the God-man, the Son of God, a man, but a Man Divine and sinless among sinful and suffering men. His actions demonstrate and prove to the world who He was and is. His actions and miracles authenticated what He taught.

At the same time it must be recognized that about one-third of Mark has something to say about the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. It is through His work on the cross that souls are saved by the grace of God. Mark deliberately draws a contrast between the personal dignity of the God-man "...as the incarnate Son of God and the suffering and rejection which He voluntarily accepted" (Hiebert 96). This portrait of Jesus contains a notable "...blend of matchless strength and amazing submission" (Hiebert 96). It demonstrates the glorious victory of Christ Jesus through apparent defeat (Hiebert 97). It was the purpose of Mark that all could and would say with the centurion of Mark 15:39, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

However, it would also seem that Mark wanted his readers to recognize in this suffering Messiah the correct pattern of discipleship as well as recognizing Him as the only Savior of man (Hiebert 97). Jesus plainly taught His followers that the cross was not only for Him but also for all who would be His disciples according to Mark 8:34. Jesus explains in Luke 9:23 ". . .If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and **take up his cross daily**, and follow me."

Characteristics and theme of the Gospel of Mark The Gospel of Mark is not truly a biography in the normal sense of the term. Rather it is a historical chronicle or account concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ who is the "correct, accurate, good news" of salvation for all people everywhere. Yet this gospel account is considered by most New Testament students, including Dr. A. T. Robertson (Harmony 254,55) as the standard of the chronological order of the events in the life of our Lord, except, of course, for the birth and early life of Jesus which is omitted by Mark.

Mark was not an apostle, so humanly speaking, where did he get his information? Several early Christian writers imply that he traveled with the Apostle Peter and thus learned from him the details of the life of Christ (Benware 98; Hester 80; Hiebert 86; Robertson, Harmony 255; Word Pictures, 249-51). In these travels Mark acted as an interpreter for Peter, translating the Aramaic into the Greek. Nevertheless, the Gospel of Mark is God breathed, inspired of the Holy Spirit, so the ultimate source of it is the Holy Spirit. Hence, he wrote according to his own personality, yet without error recording what God wanted him to say. Thus, the Gospel of Mark is the Word of God.

The Gospel of Matthew was directed more to the Jews and presents Christ as "...the Messiah..." and King of the Jews and is called "the Gospel of the Kingdom"

(Analytical Bible and Dictionary: Dickson 1126). The Gospel of Luke was directed more toward the Greek mind and portrays Jesus as "the Perfect, the Universal Man" -- "the Son of Man," the answer to the needs of a fallen race, who is "the Saviour of all mankind" (Analytical Bible and Dictionary Dickson 1198). The Gospel of John is "...for the believing heart..." and pictures "...Jesus as the incarnate Son of God..." (John 20:31) -- the Divine One (John 1:1-3,14,15) (Hiebert 25). On the other hand, the Gospel of Mark appeals mainly to the powerful world-conquering Romans who needed to see Christ as the Almighty Power, World-Conqueror, the Ideal Servant of the only Lord God of the Universe (Analytical Bible and Dictionary Dickson 1154, 1155, 1198). Hiebert states, "Each writer, while presenting the same Saviour and Lord, portrays Him in a manner best suited to appeal to the particular ... original recipients" (24).

Although the Gospel of Mark is the shortest, it is vivid, full of action, full of interesting detail of related events, and realism in the life of Jesus. (It is the shortest because it begins with a brief introduction of John the Baptist, the baptism of Jesus, omits some of the ministry of Jesus, and many of the parables, the sermon on the mount, and other considerations.) The motto of this Gospel might be found in the saying of Jesus as found in John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish (*or accomplish*) His work."

The main and overall theme of Mark is twofold. First, Jesus the Servant of Jehovah is presented as the Pattern Servant, the Ideal Worker, the Most Extraordinary Servant. This servant is the God-Man. Second, Jesus is presented as the Redeemer of sinful men. For He is the only Redeemer of sinful men and for sinful men. This twofold theme is seen in Mark 10:45 where Jesus himself said, "For even the Son of man

came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Jesus came to minister and to redeem.

C. The Beginning of the Gospel 1:1a

Mark commences his Gospel Account in Mark 1:1 by simply stating "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ..." For proper understanding and interpretation this statement causes the writer to ask some questions. First, what is the beginning of the gospel? Second, what are some of the view points of the beginning of the gospel? Third, is the gospel new? Hence, this subsection may be divided as follows: one, the time of the beginning; two, some view points of the beginning of the gospel; and three, the gospel: not new--since originating from God.

The time of the beginning (1:1a) What is the beginning of the gospel? In other words, how is it the beginning, the beginning of what? The word "beginning" is from the Greek noun ἀρχη (arche). It can be used in the absolute or relative sense. If ἀρχη (arche) is used in the absolute sense it means "the beginning of all things. . ." (Thayer 76) as found in John 1:1. "In the beginning (Ἐν ἀρχη - en arche) was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." If ἀρχη (arche) is used in the relative sense it means "the beginning of the thing spoken of. . ." (Thayer 76) as used in John 16:4. Jesus said, "But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning (ἐξ ἀρχης - ex arches), because I was with you." The preposition ἐξ from ἐκ means "from out of, out from, forth from, from. . ." (Thayer 189). In this case it has to do with time so it means "from. . ." (Thayer 191). Thayer says Jesus is saying, "from the time when Jesus gathered disciples. . ." (Thayer 76). Jesus did not tell His disciples everything at the beginning of His ministry with them

because they were not ready for it. So how is the word "beginning" used here in Mark 1:1? In the relative sense. Also the Greek article is not found in the Greek text and so verse 1 was probably "intended as a title. . . either the title for the whole gospel of Mark or for verses 1-13" (Cranfield as qtd. in Rienecker 88). It is the beginning in the sense of Galatians 4:4. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Before this fullness of time, it was always -- He (Jesus) would (future) come. Now Mark states He has come (past tense with continuing results). It was the beginning in this sense. Jesus, the Servant of God is here - now. Thus it is the beginning about the telling of the facts of the gospel.

Some view points of the beginning of the gospel (1:1a) There are different viewpoints of the beginning of the gospel. This section will simply consider viewpoints from various individuals and from Bible verses. First, the viewpoint of eternal God concerning the beginning of the Gospel is from eternity past. This is seen from Acts 2:23 where Peter declares "Him [*that is Jesus*], being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." This speaks of the fact that in eternity past the Triune God in His love, mercy, and grace determined that God the Father, would send His Son to die for the fallen race, and that the Son of God would come to carry out the will of the Father, and that the Holy Spirit would work in the hearts of people to convict them of their need of redemption (John 16:8). So from the viewpoint of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ began in eternity past.

From the viewpoint of the first man, Adam, the gospel began after the fall when God asked Adam and Eve concerning their eating of the fruit "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." God had provided for the redemption of the race and

He gave the message of this good news in Genesis 3:15-16 where the Bible tells of the gracious provision of God for salvation through the seed of the woman.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

This was the beginning of the gospel from the standpoint of Adam.

From the viewpoint of Abraham the beginning of the gospel was when God called him from Ur and gave him what is called the Abrahamic Covenant as announced in Genesis 12:1-7. The Apostle Paul states in Galatians 3:8 "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." In Genesis 15:6 the Bible reveals that Abraham "...believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Mark expresses the viewpoint of the prophets of the beginning of the gospel in Mark 1:2-3 when he wrote "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." This passage is a quote from both Malachi and Isaiah (this will be discussed later). Many other prophets could be quoted, some of which are: Jacob in Genesis 49:10; Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15-18; Isaiah in Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Micah in Micah 5:2. All of these prophesied of the coming of Christ to redeem. For the people of the New Testament era the gospel began when Jesus arrived on the scene. For people from then until the time that Jesus shall come again, the gospel begins when each person hears it. This, in brief, is the relative view of the beginning of the gospel.

The gospel: not new--since originating from God However, from the absolute standpoint, the gospel is not new. It never has been new, since it originated with the eternal God. Yet, it is new and good news and ever powerful news to each new convert who repents and believes. The Bible records in Mark 1:14-15 that at the beginning of His earthly ministry Jesus "...came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Paul wrote in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." The power of the gospel message is that anyone will be saved who will receive Christ as personal Savior. Upon receiving Christ the repentant believer is made a new creation in Christ Jesus. Mark begins by saying, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." John Mark is saying let us plunge in and get started with the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior. It is not the absolute beginning of the gospel. But it is the beginning of the Gospel account of Mark telling of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ whereby He would accomplish His death on the cross only to be declared the sinless Son of God by the power of the resurrection.

D. The Gospel of Jesus Christ 1:1b

The second part of Mark 1:1 says, "...the gospel of Jesus Christ...." No doubt, volumes of books could be written if this were chosen as an independent subject. But the purpose of this paper is to take this in the immediate context. What does it mean in regard to verse 1, chapter 1, and the book of Mark? This subsection will be divided as follows: one, the definition of the word "gospel"; two, Called by Mark "the gospel of Jesus Christ"; and three, the gospel of Jesus Christ: salvation for the lost.

The definition of the word "gospel" The word "gospel" is from the Greek noun εὐαγγέλιον (euangelion). In the King James Version it is translated "gospel" 46 times, "gospel of Christ" 11 times, "gospel of God" 7 times, "gospel of the Kingdom" 3 times, and various other ways 10 times. It is used some 77 times in the New Testament. Εὐαγγέλιον originally meant "...a reward for good tidings... the fees given the διδάσκαλος (didaskalos) ..." (*or teacher*); but came to mean simply "...good tidings..." (Thayer 257). Also εὐαγγέλιον means "gospel, good news..." (Rienecker 88). Thayer expands on this by stating that, "In the *New Testament* spec(ifically) (*it means*) ... the glad tidings of the kingdom of God soon to be set up, and subsequently also of Jesus the Messiah, the founder of this kingdom..." (Thayer 257). Thus it means good, correct, accurate news--good or glad tidings.

Called by Mark "The gospel of Jesus Christ" (1:1b) Mark calls it "The Gospel of Jesus Christ." This qualifies the good news. The expression "...of Jesus Christ..." is in the Greek genitive case. "The genitive is the specifying case, expressed in English by the possessive or the objective with of" (Davis 29). Rienecker quotes Taylor and says this "...is objective genitive..." so it could be rendered "the good news about Jesus Christ" (Taylor as qtd. in Rienecker 88). It is the good news about a person, Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior. It is an accurate, correct, narrative account of the sayings, deeds, death, burial, and victory of Jesus Christ. It is good and accurate news about a plan, the only plan of God for the redemption of sinful men.

The summary of this plan is given in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4:

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

It is the good news for all people everywhere of every age. Why? Because in Jesus Christ and His blood, sins are forgiven and new life is imparted in the new birth. This takes place when the sinner comes to Jesus in repentance and faith.

Thayer adds the following about the use of το εὐαγγέλιον (to euangelion):

After the death of Christ, the term το εὐαγγέλιον comprises also the preaching of (concerning) Jesus Christ as having suffered death on the cross to procure eternal salvation for men in the kingdom of God, but as restored to life and exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, thence to return in majesty to consummate the kingdom of God;... *the glad tidings of salvation through Christ; the proclamation of the grace of God manifest and pledged in Christ* . . . (257).

The gospel of Jesus Christ: salvation for the lost The gospel of Jesus Christ saves the lost. As previously stated the gospel is the good news about a person, Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior. Jesus Himself states in Luke 19:10 "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." When the angel of the Lord announced the virgin birth of Jesus to Joseph he states in Matthew 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." The Apostle Paul declares in 1 Timothy 1:15 "This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Without Christ a sinner is lost and doomed for hell (John 3:18, 36; Romans 3:23; 6:23). But Jesus, the One called "the Son of man" in Luke, came to save lost sinners. The gospel message of Jesus is the good news that Jesus came and paid for the sins of the whole world. He came to pay the sin debt of the lost.

If a person owed a debt of a million dollars and could not pay it; yet someone else paid the debt in full for that person, would that not be good news, welcome glad tidings? Likewise, Jesus Christ paid an infinitely greater debt than that for lost sinners, of which no one is able to pay. The debt the lost person owes, that is, the

sin debt, is an infinite sum and only an eternally perfect sinless human being could pay it. Jesus suffered and died in the place of sinners to pay that debt. Jesus paid it all. That is good news, correct, and saving news for all who will accept it by simple child like faith. *This is the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16).*

E. Jesus Christ, the Son of God 1:1c

The last part of Mark 1:1 is significant and very rich in meaning. It simply says, "...Jesus Christ, the Son of God." First, the word "the" before "Son of God" is notably important. Second, the title "the Son of God" has much meaning. Third, the name of "the Son of God" is Jesus. Fourth, Jesus is called Christ. These words, titles, or names have considerable meaning to the blood—bought, born—again believer as well as to all people.

The importance of the word "the" The word "the" is important. Although the genitive Greek definite article τοῦ (tou) (normally rendered with the English "the") does not appear in the Greek text before the Greek genitive noun υἱοῦ (huiou) rendered "Son," it does appear in the English translations of the KJV, NASB, and the NIV (The New Testament, The Greek Text 63). In that the English translators used the word "the" without *italics* means that they did not consider it a supplied word but very essential to the meaning in the English translation. Dana and Mantey have much to say about the "The Absence of the Article." They maintain that, "Sometimes with a noun which the context proves to be definite the article is not used. This places stress upon the qualitative aspect of the noun rather than its mere identity." (Dana and Mantey 149-151). Therefore, this writer contends that the use of the word "the" in the English translations before "Son" is supremely significant for it directs attention to the fact that there is only one unique "Son of God." And since the title, "the Son of

God" is in apposition to the name "Jesus Christ," it also draws attention to fact that there is only one Jesus Christ. In John 3:16 Jesus calls Himself the "only begotten Son" or the only unique, one—of—a —kind son. [The two adjectives "only begotten" come from the Greek μονογενής {monogenes} which means "...single of its kind, only..." (Thayer 417).]

Meaning of the title "the Son of God" The title "the Son of God" has much meaning. Joseph, the husband of Mary, was told by the angel in Matthew 1:23 that the to be virgin born, Jesus would be called "Emmanuel" meaning "God with us. . . ." After the sinner repents and believes in Jesus and is born again, he or she is called a child of God. Sometime the King James Version will call the born—again—one "a son of God" but the better translation would probably be "child of God." Born—again believers are not sons of God in the unique way that Jesus is "the Son of God." Jesus is eternal and co-equal with God the Father (John 10:30). By adding "the Son of God" Mark emphasizes that Jesus, the Anointed One, is divine in His very nature and essence. It also reveals the divine origin of the Gospel According to Mark.

His name Jesus His name is Jesus. The name "Jesus" is from the Greek Ἰησοῦ (Iesou). This name is translated Jesus (*meaning* the Lord Jesus, the Savior, God incarnate) 972 times, Jesus (*meaning* Joshua the son of Nun, successor to Moses) 2 times, (once in Acts 7:45; once in Hebrews 4:8), and Jesus (surnamed Justus as found in Colossians 4:11) 1 time. Jesus is the Greek translation of the Hebrew name Joshua (Wessel 618). Francisco states that "The name Joshua is equivalent to the name *Jesus*. . ." (48). In other words, when the Hebrew word for Joshua was written in Greek, it came out as the Greek word translated Jesus. The name "Joshua means 'Jehovah is Saviour'. . ." (Gaebelein 189). To this Wessel agrees when he says, "Jesus. . . means 'Yahweh is salvation' or 'salvation of Yahweh' " (618).

Yahweh is another spelling of Jehovah. Joshua, the son of Nun, was a deliverer of Israel after Moses died. God had prepared Joshua to lead the people over the Jordan River and to conquer the Promise Land. Joshua was true to his name.

Jesus was the name that God revealed to Joseph by the angel in Matthew 1:21 which gives the primary meaning and/or mission of Jesus. The angel instructed Joseph to call the virgin born son to be born of Mary, "Jesus... for He shall save His people from their sins." Joseph did as the Lord instructed according to Matthew 1:25. Therefore the Son of God is called Jesus because He was to deliver, and does and will deliver, His people from their sins.

Jesus also called the Christ Jesus is also called the Christ. The title Christ is from the genitive of Χριστός (Christos). It means "anointed" (Thayer 672). Χριστός (Christos) is from the Hebrew word מָשִׁיחַ (Mashiyach). In the Old Testament מָשִׁיחַ (Mashiyach) is rendered "anointed" thirty seven times and "Messiah" two times (Daniel 9:25,26). It has the idea of the Anointed One and thus of the Messiah or Christ (Thayer 672, 73). Thus Christ from the Hebrew term and title, the Messiah, means the Anointed One of God, the Holy One of God. The Messiah was promised in the Old Testament time and time again. He was the coming King to deliver Israel and set up the Kingdom of David according to 2 Samuel 7:14. The Christ was first promised to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15 and called "her seed." The promise of the Christ was included in the Abrahamic covenant given to Abraham and His Seed in Genesis 12:3 where it declares "...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (cf. Genesis 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:8). The coming Christ was promised to Isaac. Jacob alludes to this promise in his blessings upon his twelve sons and especially upon Judah in Genesis 49:10, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and

unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*." The promise of the Messiah-King was also repeated to and through Moses, David, and the prophets.

F. Brief Analysis of the Life of Christ

For a better understanding of the Life of Christ the following brief and/or broad outline or analysis is being included in this commentary. For further study this writer recommends the reader to examine the book, The Heart of the New Testament, by H. I. Hester, pages 121-123. Hester quotes "Dr. James Stalker in his Life of Christ..." who in general characterizes the three or so years of the earthly ministry of Christ Jesus "...as one, the year of obscurity, two, the year of public favor, three, the year of opposition" (Stalker as qtd. in Hester 121).

From another source the following analysis is the Life of Christ in Nine Periods (This is from a Baptist preacher from Kentucky named John Thompson given to this writer sometime between 1963 and 1966).

<u>The Life of Christ in Nine Periods</u>		
I. Preparation		30 Years
Birth of Jesus to His Baptism		
II. Inauguration		15 months
Baptism to Rejection at Nazareth		
III. Early Galilean Ministry		4 months
Rejection at Nazareth to sermon on Mount		
IV. Later Galilean ministry		10 months
Sermon on Mount to Feeding of 5000		
V. Retirements		6 months
From Feeding 5000 to Feast of Tabernacles		
VI. Judean Ministry		3 months
Feast of Tabernacles to Feast of Dedication		
VII. Perea Ministry		4 months
Feast of Dedication to Arrival at Bethany		
VIII. Passion Week or Period		8 days
Arrival at Bethany to Resurrection		
IX. Resurrection Period		40 days
Resurrection to Ascension		

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION ONE--- THE SERVANT AND BEGINNINGS (Mark Chapters 1:1-15; 10:45)

---CHAPTER 2--- The Forerunner of the Servant (Mark Chapter 1:2-8)

OUTLINE

- II. The Forerunner of the Servant** 1:2-8
(Preparing the Way - Ministry of John the Baptist) (Matthew 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18)
- A. The Introduction of the Forerunner 1:2,3,7a
 - 1. Introduction by the Prophets 1:2,3
 - 2. The announcing and making plain his purpose 1:2b,3,7a
 - 3. The importance of this introduction of the forerunner 1:7; Matthew 11:11
 - B. The Identification and Authority of the Forerunner 1:2,3,4a,6
 - 1. His name: just plain "John" 1:4
 - 2. The son of Zacharias and Elisabeth Luke 1:5,17,63,64
 - 3. The prophet of the Highest - the prophet of God 1:2,3,6; Luke 1:76
 - 4. Simply named "John" but called "the Baptist" 1:4; Matthew 3:1
 - 5. God-sent with the authority from heaven 1:2,3
 - C. The Impelling Ministry of the Forerunner 1:4-8
 - 1. His message and action -- simple and from heaven 1:4
 - 2. The people responding by confessing their sins 1:5.
 - 3. Emphasizing his message by his manner of life 1:6
 - 4. Introduction and magnification of Christ Jesus by his ministry 1:7
 - 5. The contrast of his ministry with the ministry of Christ 1:7,8

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION ONE--- THE SERVANT AND BEGINNINGS (Mark Chapters 1:1-15)

---CHAPTER 2--- The Forerunner of the Servant (Mark Chapter 1:2-8) (Matthew 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18)

Kings and rulers in the Old Testament times had people who announced their coming and prepared their way. This is still practiced today by the President, the Vice-president and other dignitaries of the United States of America as well as in other nations. Jesus Christ, the Ideal Servant, is the subject and theme of the Gospel according to Mark. He is introduced to the Hebrew people and to the world by a forerunner. The ministry of this forerunner is very important to the proper understanding and interpretation of the Word of God, the plan and purpose of God, and the church of God. This forerunner is John the Baptist. His ministry fulfilled the prophecy that one would come to announce and prepare the way for Jesus the Lord and coming King. His ministry and life is a challenge to each born-again believer to allow Jesus Christ to be the main theme in their lives. The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 1:21, "For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain." Furthermore, the ministry and life of John the Baptist is a challenge to lost people to repent and trust in

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified, buried, and arose again in order to pay the penalty for the sins of every person in the whole world and to take each repentant believer to heaven. The ministry of the forerunner of the Servant, can be divided as follows: one, the introduction of the forerunner, 1:2,3,7a; two, the identification and authority of the forerunner, 1:2,3,4a,6; and three the impelling ministry of the forerunner, 1:4-8. This passage establishes John the Baptist to be the forerunner of Jesus.

A. The Introduction of the Forerunner 1:2,3,7a

Since Mark is primarily addressing the Romans, his Gospel omits all the preliminary points that are included in the other Gospel records. (The reason for this seems to be that the Romans would have no interest in such matters as would the Jews.) Thus he launches his Gospel with a brief account of the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ. This is the one who was to prepare the way of the Lord Jesus. The introduction of the forerunner includes the following parts: one, introduction by the prophets, 1:2,3; two, the announcing and making plain his purpose, 1:2b,3,7a; and three, the importance of this introduction of the forerunner, 1:7; Matthew 11:11.

Introduction by the Prophets (1:2,3) The forerunner was introduced by the prophets. In verses 2 and 3, Mark introduces his readers to the forerunner of the Servant, Jesus Christ, by quoting two prophets of the Old Testament. He commences verse 2 by declaring, "As it is written in the prophets. . . ." Some versions (such as the NIV and the NASB) say "in Isaiah the prophet. . ." but the KJV simply says "in the prophets. . ." which seems more accurate, since verse 2 is quoting Malachi 3:1, while verse 3 is quoting Isaiah 40:3. The expression "it is written" is from the perfect

passive Greek verb γέγραπται (gegraptai) from γράφω (grapho). Γράφω (Grapho) means "to write,. . . to express in written characters. . . to commit to writing (things not to be forgotten), write down, record. . . γέγραπται . . . used of those things which stand written in the sacred books (of the OT). . ." (Thayer 121,122). The perfect tense denotes completed action in the past with continuing results (Davis 152). The sense is "It stands written" or "It was written in the past and still is." The perfect tense of γράφω (grapho) is used here and throughout the New Testament to introduce Old Testament Scripture. The use of this expression underscores the strong belief of the writers of the unchanging inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. Also, according to an essay written by Christopher B. Raper, the use of the perfect passive verb γέγραπται (gegraptai)

is biblical and **grammatical proof to support the doctrine of preservation.** The perfect tense is used to emphasize **a continuous existing state in the present for an action that occurred in the past. . . .** Therefore, we affirm that the **Scriptures are not contained in some lost text but are found in the existing received text that God has preserved. . . .** We conclude that the written Word of God is preserved, and that both the OT and NT are in a **state of continuous existence--- preserved (29,30)** (the highlighted text is as it was copied).

This reminds each believer that the Holy Bible is the inspired and preserved Word of God and every believer would do well to study it, mediate upon it, and take heed to it.

First, the forerunner is introduced by quoting from Malachi, the last prophet of the Old Testament. The last part of Mark 1:2 states, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." The pronoun "thee" refers to Jesus, the LORD. The first part of Malachi 3:1 says "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. . . ." The pronoun "me" in this context refers to Jesus. Next, the forerunner is introduced by quoting from the prophet Isaiah (Spelled "Esaias" in the New Testament). Mark 1:3 states, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths

straight." This is a quote from Isaiah 40:3 which says, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

The announcing and making plain his purpose (1:2b,3,7a) The last part of verse 2 and verse 3 states, "...which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." In this statement the forerunner is introduced by the announcing and making plain his purpose in coming on the scene. He was to prepare the way of the Lord which would fulfill the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi. This is confirmed by Jesus in Matthew 11:7a,9,10 which declares, ". . . Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John. . . . But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."

In Mark 1:2,3 two different Greek verbs are used from which the word "prepare" is translated. In verse 2 (also Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:27) the Greek verb is κατασκευάσει (kataskeuasei) which is the future active indicative of κατασκευάζω (kataskeuazo). This verb means "to furnish, equip, prepare, make ready. . ." and is used ". . .of one who makes any thing ready for a person. . ." and ". . .of builders, to construct, erect, with the included idea of adorning and equipping with all things necessary" (Thayer 336, 337). The idea is simply that the messenger or forerunner that God is sending shall prepare or make all things ready for the Messiah before He comes. In verse 3 the Greek verb is ἐτοιμάσατε (hetoimasate) which is aorist active imperative of ἐτοιμάζω (hetoimazo). This word means "to make ready, prepare... to make the necessary preparations, get everything ready. . ." metaphorically ". . .drawn from the oriental custom of sending on before kings on their journeys persons to level

the roads and make them passable. . . to prepare the minds of men to give the Messiah a fit reception and secure his blessings. . ." (Thayer 255). Since ἐτοιμάσατε (hetoimasate) is second person plural and in the imperative mood, it is a command for Israel to listen to "the voice" to prepare their minds ". . .to give the Messiah a fit reception and secure his blessings. . ." (Thayer 255; Wuest 14). It is clear that "messenger" and "voice" refer to the forerunner. As shall be explained later, the forerunner was only one of many who made up "voice." Yet, in this context, he is "the voice."

Verse 3 records that the purpose of the forerunner and his ministry was not only to prepare the way of the Lord but also to ". . .make his path straight." The idea of making straight is to make level for the right way of life as opposed to the false way. The Apostle Peter spoke of those "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Peter 2:15). The Greek verb for "make" is ποιεῖτε (poiete) and is present imperative from ποιέω (poieo). Ποιέω (poieo) means "to do, to make" (Rienecker 88). Since it is present imperative, it was a command for the forerunner to continually obey (Wuest 14). Just as when a king would pass through an area and would send forth his herald before him calling on all to put the roads in order by filling in the low places and leveling out the hills (Clarke 16); even so this forerunner of Christ was to call upon all to repent and be prepared spiritually for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This is what Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 40:4-5: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*." Thus, the forerunner was to reveal "the glory of the LORD. . . ." "Shall be

revealed" from the Hebrew word גָּלַה (galah) means "to denude... fig. to reveal:-- + advertise, appear. . . disclose, discover, open. . ." reveal "plainly, publish. . . tell, uncover" (Strong 27). The idea is that the forerunner was to make manifest or visibly plain "the glory of the LORD. . . ." Jesus, the Son of God, is the glory of the LORD.

Next, this forerunner was to introduce the Messiah or Christ. The first part of Mark 1:3 says, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. . . ." This has the idea that the forerunner was to introduce the LORD-Jehovah or Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The word "voice" from φωνή (phone) is used without the article ὁ (ho) in the Greek text which is the word "the" in English. This emphasizes the message rather than the one who cried out or the forerunner. [There were many "mouthpieces," sent by God (Wuest 13).] "Voice" was to cry out and continue crying out. The idea of crying out is to use a loud voice or to shout loudly to be heard by all; or as someone has said to "bellow like a bull." The first part of Mark 1:7 says, "And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me. . . ." This reveals that the message "voices" that one mightier than the forerunner was coming. Malachi 3:1 makes it plain that this One is the LORD-Jehovah, the Messiah, even Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God and very God.

Also, the purpose of the forerunner was to introduce the only one who is able to take believing sinners to glory. This is the one Isaiah spake of in Isaiah 9:6,7. This is the one the Jews sought according to Malachi 3:1, for it says "...and the Lord, whom ye seek...." This is confirmed by Anna of the tribe of Aser, the elderly woman in the temple, who "gave thanks... unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:36-38). It is also confirmed by Simeon who long had desired to see "the Lord's Christ" and held the baby Jesus in his arms and said in part ". . .For mine eyes have seen thy salvation. . ." (Luke 2:25-35). This one is

Immanuel or Emmanuel, or "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23). This is none other than Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior. Matthew 1:21 says of Jesus, "...for he shall save his people from their sins." Isaiah 40:3-5 is quoted and interpreted in Luke 3:4-6, which states,

...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

The salvation of God is Jesus Christ, who is also the glory of the LORD-God Jehovah.

The importance of this introduction of the forerunner (1:7; Matthew 11:11) Verses 2,3 and 7a makes it clear and plain that the introduction of the forerunner is important. In Matthew 11:11 Jesus declares, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Who is the one who is "least in the kingdom of heaven;. . ." for this one is greater than the forerunner? The word "least" is from the Greek comparative substantive adjective μικρότερος (mikroteros) whose root is μικρός (mikros). Μικρότερος (mikroteros) is nominative singular masculine. Μικρός (mikros) means primarily "small, little. . ." and can be used "of size: hence of stature. . . of space. . . of age: less by birth, younger. . . of time: short, brief, a little while. . ." (Thayer 414). Thus, μικρός (mikros) "can refer to time, or age, or date of appearance" (Anderson, Baptist 13). Thus, by extension μικρός (mikros) can be rendered "later" (Anderson, Baptist 13). In Mark 1:7 it says that the forerunner "preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I **after me**. . ." Jesus came after the forerunner. So Jesus is the One who is "least (or later) in the kingdom of heaven than. . ." the forerunner. Hence, Jesus is saying in Matthew 11:11 that only He is greater than this forerunner

(Anderson, Baptist 13). Therefore, the introduction of the forerunner in Mark 1:2,3 is very important. His ministry was and remains a watershed occurrence; for God approved his ministry in every way.

B. The Identification and Authority of the Forerunner 1:2,3,4a,6

The identification of the forerunner has already been given. The forerunner of the Servant is the one named "John the Baptist." This name, all of it, was divinely given. Jesus called him "John the Baptist" in Matthew 11:11,12 and Luke 7:28,33. He was the answer to the prophecies of both Isaiah and Malachi previously mentioned. The Bible states that he was sent by God and thus had the authority of God for His ministry and baptism. Jesus recognized this; for He took the material prepared by John to establish His church during His personal earthly ministry. Even though "John did no miracle. . ." (John 10:40-42); yet, he was a prophet of God ending the era of the Old Testament and beginning the era of the New (Luke 16:16). This section can be sub-divided as follows: one, his name: just plain "John," 1:4; two, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, Luke 1:5,17,63,64; three, the prophet of the Highest - the prophet of God, 1:2,3,6; Luke 1:76; four, simply named "John;" but called "the Baptist," 1:4; Matthew 3:1; and five, God-sent with the authority from heaven, 1:2,3.

His name: just plain "John" (1:4) Verse 4 reveals that his name is John. Just simply "John." He was named by God before his birth. In announcing the birth of John to his father, the angel of the Lord revealed the name of the forerunner before he was born (Luke 1:13,19). The angel Gabriel said, "...and thou shalt call his name John." After his birth his mother and his father both confirmed that his name was John and not Zacharias "after the name of his father" (Luke 1:57-63). The name John

is the "English way of spelling Johanan..." which means "...Jehovah is gracious..." (Scofield, Proper Names 28). "The name was well suited to confirm hope" (Bliss 25).

The son of Zacharias and Elisabeth (Luke 1:5,17,63,64) John was the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth. There are at least four men in the New Testament named John. Which John is this? John the Baptist was not the same as John Mark, the human author of Mark mentioned in Acts 12:12 and so forth. He is not John the Apostle the brother of James, *the son* of Zebedee. He was not the John mentioned in Acts 4:6 along with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, and Alexander. John the Baptist was the Son of Zacharias and Elisabeth (Luke 1:5-25, 57-64; 3:2-6). Zacharias was a priest and Elisabeth was of the daughters of Aaron. Thus John was of the tribe of Levi; hence, he was not the Messiah. The Messiah was to be of the tribe of Judah. John was a kinsmen to Jesus, since his mother, Elisabeth, was a cousin to Mary (Luke 1:36).

The prophet of the Highest -- the prophet of God (1:2,3,6; Luke 1:76) John was the prophet of the Highest, the prophet of God. Zacharias, the father of John, declares in Luke 1:76 "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." He is called the messenger of God in Mark 1:2. Luke 3:2 says, "...the word of the God came unto John the son of Zarcharias in the wilderness." This compares him to the Old Testament prophets. Luke 16:16 and Matthew 11:9-11 prove that he was a prophet. Jesus recognized John as a prophet in Matthew 11:9 when He said, "But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet." Yet, he was more than that; he was the voice of God for that time—the messenger (1:2,3) sent of God to prepare the way and the material for Christ to take and to build His church. He wore the simple dress of the prophets. Mark 1:6 says, "And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin (leather - Matthew 3:4) about his loins"

This sounds like Elijah the Tishbite spoken of in 2 Kings 1:8 which states, "*He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. . . .*" Jesus said that John was the one who fulfilled the prophesy that Elias (Elijah) must come first (Malachi 4:5; Matthew 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13).

Simply named "John" but called "the Baptist" (1:4; Matthew 3:1) His name was simply "John" as seen from Mark 1:4; but he is also called "the Baptist." This name John was the name given to him before his birth by the divine messenger, Gabriel. Nonetheless, he is called "John the Baptist" for the first time in Matthew 3:1. He is called "John the Baptist" 13 times in 13 verses in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. He is called "John Baptist" 1 time. Why was he called "the Baptist?" Because he baptized people to memorialize the fact that they had repented and trusted in Christ. This is a good reason for the true people of God in this present age to be called Baptist. Since just like John the Baptist, true New Testament churches baptize converts inasmuch as God told them to do so. Baptism was given to the church by Jesus not to save, but to memorialize the fact that the repentant sinner has already been saved by the shed blood of Christ through genuine heart—felt faith in Christ. Anderson states,

The name "John" was divinely given before the birth of the Baptist (Luke 1:13, 60-66). The name "Baptist" was apparently given as well by divine direction. Since "all Scripture is inspired of God" (II Tim. 3:16), we must accept Matthew 3:1 as also inspired. Then the name "Baptist" is a name of more than human origin (Anderson, "The First Baptist," 17). ...All must conclude that the Lord Himself called John *the Baptist*. He was so named because the Lord sent him to baptize (...John 1:33) (Baptism 47).

God-sent with the authority from heaven (1:2,3) John was God-sent with the authority from heaven. Verse 2 emphasizes that John was "my messenger," meaning the messenger of God. That John is the one who was to come to prepare the way of Messiah and was heaven sent is verified by John 1:6 which states, "There was

a man sent from God, whose name was John." John 1:7 declares that John came "to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe." John 1:8 states that John "... was not that Light, but sent to bear witness of that Light (*that is, Jesus*)." John was the messenger or a voice sent by God before Christ came to prepare the way of the Lord. A. T. Robertson notes, "When the committee from the Sanhedrin came to ask John who he was, he used this very language (John 1:23) (*that is, the language of Mark 1:2,3*). He was only a voice, but we can still hear the echo of that voice through the corridor of the centuries" (Word Pictures 253).

John 1:30-33 further proves that John the Baptist was sent of God with the authority to preach and to baptize. Jesus Himself reveals in Mark 11:27-33 that John had the authority of heaven for his ministry. Who has authority of God to preach and to baptize in this present church age? It was placed in the hands of the New Testament church by Jesus according to John 4:1;2 and Matthew 28:18-20. In quoting the prophets of the Old Testament, John Mark is showing that John the Baptist was the one who was to fulfill these scriptures.

C. The Impelling Ministry of the Forerunner 1:4-8

Some synonyms for the word "impel" are "induce, force, incite, move, propel, drive" (Mawson 235). "Impel" means "to drive or to urge forward; press on: incite or constrain to action in any way... to drive, or cause to move, onward; propel; to impart motion to... compel" (American College Dictionary 606). Verses 4-8 reveal that the ministry of John the Baptist was impelling, powerful, forceful, and blessed because it was of God. This subdivision may be broken into the following segments: one, his message and action — simple and from heaven, 1:4; two, the people responding by confessing their sins, 1:5; three, emphasizing his message by his manner of life, 1:6;

four, introduction and magnification of Christ Jesus by his ministry, 1:7; and five, the contrast of his ministry with the ministry of Christ, 1:7,8.

His message and action -- simple and from heaven (1:4) Verse 4 reveals the message and action of John. It declares what he did. In this verse Mark introduces John the Baptist as the fulfillment of the prophecies recorded in verses 2 and 3. The following is verse 4 from the Textus Receptus: ἐγένετο Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ καὶ κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν (The New Testament, The Greek Text 63). The Greek verb ἐγένετο (egeneto) is second aorist from γίνομαι (ginomai) meaning "to become" and has the idea "to appear on the scene" (Rienecker 88). Thus it could be rendered "John appeared on the scene" (Rienecker 88). This "...emphasizes..." the "...emergence..." of John "...in accordance with God's divine purpose" and plan (Taylor *cited by* Rienecker 88). The verb "did baptize" in the KJV comes from the present active participle βαπτίζων (baptizon) from the Greek verb βαπτίζω (baptizo) and appears in the Greek text of Nestle with a definite article [ὁ] (ho) (Marshall 137). This makes it virtually a proper name describing what John was doing. He was baptizing. Robertson states, "He is described as *the baptizing one*. . ." (Word Pictures 253). The prepositional phrase "in the wilderness" connects verse 4 with the Old Testament prophecy recorded in verse 3. This "wilderness" from the Greek adjective ἐρήμῳ (eremoi) from ἔρημος (eremos) means mostly an uninhabited region-- probably west "and north of the Dead Sea" (Clarke 17). In Matthew 3:1 it is called "the wilderness of Judea." The late Dr. J. C. James (long time Bible and language instructor and for several years president of the Missionary Baptist Seminary, Little Rock, Arkansas—now promoted), says it means "the back side of a goat pasture."

John was not only baptizing but also preaching. The verb "preach" is from the present participle κηρύσσω (kerusson). It means "to proclaim as a herald" (Rienecker 88). John was proclaiming "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." "The baptism of repentance" simply means baptism with reference to repentance, that is, it solemnly declared the repentance of the one receiving the baptism. According to Matthew 3:7,8 John required evidence of repentance before he would baptize anyone. What is repentance? It is from the word μετάνοια (metanoia) and simply means "a change of mind." Yet, it is really more than this. "Repentance is a deep change of mind and purpose respecting sin — a change that includes forsaking as well as regret, a change that will have, if genuine, its appropriate 'fruits' " (Clarke 16). It is a profound and earnest change of mind, heart, and purpose in and with respect to self, sin, and God. It causes an "about face" in the person repenting.

Not only was the baptism of John with reference to repentance, but also it was "for the remission of sins." In other words, his baptism was a symbol of what had already happened in the heart. The remission or forgiveness of sins is the result of the repentance which is based on accepting by faith the sacrifice that was to be made by the coming Messiah or the Christ. Through his preaching John called upon people to repent. He also gave them by divine authority (John 1:33) the outward act and symbol of baptism in which to profess repentance and pledge themselves to a life corresponding to repentance and righteousness. The mode of baptism was immersion since the word "baptism" comes from the Greek noun βάπτισμα (baptisma) which means "...immersion, submersion..." (Thayer 94). This noun is derived from the verb βαπτίζω (baptizo) and means "to immerse, submerge... or to overwhelm..." (Clarke citing Grimm's N. T. Lexicon 16,17). Verse 5 states that John baptized in the Jordan.

His message was one of repent or perish, which is also what Jesus preached as gleaned from Mark 1:15 and Luke 13:3,5. Verse 4 could be translated, "John appeared on the scene baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming baptism with reference to or because of repentance for the remission of sins" (Looney, Various translations).

The people responding by confessing their sins (1:5) Verse 5 reveals the response and effect of the preaching and work of John. His preaching caused great excitement. Why? Because according to Matthew 3:2 he was not only preaching repentance; but also "...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Mark 1:7,8 reveals he was preaching the Messiah is coming. The first part of verse 5 says, "And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem. . . ." The verb "went out" from ἐξεπορεύετο (exeporeueto) from ἐκπορεύομαι (ekporeuomai) means "to go forth, go out . . ." (Thayer 199). Since ἐξεπορεύετο (exeporeueto) is the imperfect tense, it conveys the idea that the people came out in a steady continual stream. The last part of verse 5 states, "and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." The word "confessing" is from the present participle ἐξομολογούμενοι (exomologoumenoi) from ἐξομολογέω (exomologeō). This word means "to confess. . . to profess. . . acknowledge openly and joyfully. . . to agree. . ." (Thayer 224). The idea is to confess and agree with and to accept the message from the heart. This implies that these people were coming out and were being baptized as they were confessing their sins. Although great numbers came seeking baptism, John baptized only those who made an open confession of sin to God before John and the people. The inference is that not all who came confessed and were baptized: some refused the message and some were refused (Matthew 3:7-10).

Someone may ask, How did John conduct his baptism, that is, what did he say?

This may be answered by the following quote:

John's formula for baptism is given in Mark 1:4 and Luke 3:3. John's formula can be paraphrased as follows: first, he asked, "Have you acknowledged your sin in God's sight?" (The Pharisees did not acknowledge their sin and that is why John said what he said in Matthew 3:7,8.) John demanded fruit to manifest that they had repented. Second, he asked, "Have you asked God to forgive you of your sin and sins?" Third, he would say "All right I baptize you because you have (already) acknowledged your sin and have been (already) forgiven and have believed in God unto salvation having trusted the Christ." He preached the baptism of (because of) repentance for the remission sins (Mark 1:4). All of this was fine. Jesus took those prepared and baptized by John and built His church; but none of John's disciples had the authority to baptize outside of the confines of the church) (Looney II, Pastoral Epistles 46). *(A word of explanation is in order. This paraphrase was gleaned from notes from a lesson taught by the late Dr. J. C. James.)*

Emphasizing his message by his manner of life (1:6) Verse 6 gives a description of the manner of life of John and this emphasized his message. His simple clothing and food reveal he lived a simple life. John was a man, eating the food of that day, wearing apparel of that day. He was like others of that day, yet called of God to preach for a special mission. The locust he ate is listed as "clean" food in Leviticus 11:21-22. Honey from wild bees was abundant (1 Samuel 14:25; Deuteronomy 32:13; Psalms 81:16). He was like the Old Testament prophets, Elijah and Elisha, in his manner of life and dress (2 Kings 1:8; Malachi 4:5; Matthew 11:13-14). Jesus declared in Matthew 17:11-13, ". . .Elias (*Elijah*) truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." His simple life-style reflected and emphasized his simple, easy to understand message of repentance toward God and faith in the Messiah. His message is summarized in Matthew 3:2 "...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It

could be compared to the message of Amos in Amos 4:12 "...prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," for the kingdom and the King is at hand.

Introduction and magnification of Christ Jesus by his ministry (1:7) The ministry of John introduced and magnified Christ Jesus. Verses 7,8 could be called the introduction of the Servant-Jesus by John. This message of John, as reported in Mark, is only a fragment of his preaching (Luke 3:18). The Greek verb ἐκήρυσσεν (ekerussen) rendered "preached" is the imperfect tense. Hence, this indicates a thing that John continually proclaimed. Mark includes nothing of the admonitions of John to the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 3:7-10), or to the crowds, or to the tax collectors and soldiers (Luke 3:10-14). Instead, the focus of Mark is the message of John concerning the coming of the Mighty One. The ministry and message of John magnified Christ. John is the forerunner of the Coming King as indicated by the words "after me" which could be rendered "behind me" according the meaning of the Greek preposition ὀπίσω (opiso) (Thayer 449). In the Greek text the definite article is used before the words "one mightier" so it could be rendered "the one mightier" which denotes a certain one—even Christ. These words "one mightier" is used just like the term "the only begotten" in John 3:16 meaning the only one of a kind according to the late Dr. O. R. Baldwin (Bible instructor for over 30 years in the Missionary Baptist Seminary, Little Rock, Arkansas).

The last part of verse 7 denotes the humility of John. He considered himself unworthy of the Messiah. He says (paraphrased), "I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose the shoe latchet of this coming Mighty One." Nevertheless, a servant of a king is usually well and carefully chosen. No doubt, John was well and carefully chosen; for he was a man sent from God (John 1:6). John was not saying his task or calling is unworthy, rather he speaks of himself. He is implying, "I am unworthy to

be saved by this One much less to serve this One, the Coming Mighty King." In this John was magnifying the Coming Mighty King. This is an excellent example for all believers; that is, to put Christ on a much higher, unreachable level (Isaiah 55:8,9). John was emphasizing the holiness and greatness of Jesus; yet, he served Christ faithfully. Each reader, each believer, should ask himself: "Am I serving Jesus faithfully?" John had the right attitude, the attitude that every believer should have. His life of faithful service is a challenge to every believer to do the same. It would be good for each believer to remember that: one, Christ, the Ideal, Model Servant of God is the Coming One — at that time and in this present day; two, He is mightier than John and all others and all else; and three, He came after John — and He is coming again. John was saying get ready! Each reader, should ask himself: "Am I ready for His return?" Christ is worthy. John said, "I am unworthy." He had the right attitude. Yet, Christ can make each one who will repent worthy in Himself before God.

The contrast of his ministry with the ministry of Christ (1:7,8) In contrasting his ministry with that of the Messiah, John continues to introduce and magnify Christ. Jesus Christ, the Servant, is the One Mighty to save the lost; rule the universe; and bring peace and righteousness to the earth. To understand the contrast presented in verse 8 between the ministry and baptism of John to that of the Coming Mighty One, a better and more accurate translation of the preposition is needed. To do this, Mark 1:8 should be compared to the parallel passage of Matthew 3:11. The first part of Mark 1:8 states, "I indeed have baptized you with water. . . ." The Textus Receptus says, ἐγὼ ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ἐν ὕδατι... (The New Testament, The Greek Text 63). (The Nestle text omits the preposition ἐν (en) (Marshall 137). The first part of Matthew 3:11 states, "I indeed baptize you with water. . . ." The Textus Receptus says, ἐγὼ μὲν βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς ἐν ὕδατι . . . (The New Testament, The

Greek Text 4). In both verses the noun rendered "water" is from the Greek ὕδατι (hudati). This Greek noun is the locative case or "the local dative" (Dana and Mantey 86) of ὕδωρ (hudor). "The *locative* is the *in* case, corresponding to the English *in, on, among, at, by*" (Davis 29). "So we may define the locative as the case of position" (Dana and Mantey 87). Thus in Mark 1:8 the English preposition should be "in" rather than "with." This is further shown to be correct since Matthew 3:11 employs the Greek preposition ἐν (en) before the locative ὕδατι (hudati). With the locative case the "resultant meanings..." for ἐν (en) is "in, on, at, within, among" (Dana and Mantey 105). Thus John is saying, "I indeed have baptized you in water...." This lines up with the definition previously given of the word βαπτίζω (baptizo) or "baptize" which is "to immerse" (Thayer 94). The same principle is true for the last part of Mark 1:8 as well as Matthew 3:11. In any case, in both verses the preposition ἐν (en) is used before πνεύματι ἁγίῳ (pneumati hagioi) rendered "the Holy Ghost." Thus John is saying in the last part of Mark 1:8 "...but he shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost (or Spirit)." Therefore Mark 1:8 could be translated, "I immersed you in water, but he will immerse you in the Holy Spirit" (Vaughan, "26 Translations" 125). The water baptism of John prepared the disciples for Jesus to take them and place them in His church during His personal ministry on earth. The baptism "in the Spirit of God" (not "of" the Spirit) is that which Jesus administered on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and was a supernatural event. The baptism in the Spirit empowered and accredited the church that Christ Jesus built during His earthly ministry to do the work Christ commissioned her to do on the day of His ascension back to the Father up in heaven (Mark 16:15-20; Matthew 28:18-20). John is saying, "His ministry shall surpass mine; even so, He shall take the material I have prepared for Him and establish His kingdom (which includes His church)."

Summary of Chapter

Mark introduces John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Servant, by showing that his ministry was the fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi. The preaching and baptism of John prepared the way and made things ready for the Lord Jesus Christ. John called upon all to repent and be prepared spiritually for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Further, the forerunner introduced the Messiah when He came upon the scene. The introduction of the forerunner and his introduction of the Son of God was and remains a watershed occurrence for God approved his ministry in every way.

The name, both John and the Baptist, of the forerunner is of divine origin. He was sent by God; thus he had the authority of God for his preaching and baptism. Jesus recognized this for He took the material prepared by John to establish His church during His personal earthly ministry. Jesus recognized John as a prophet in Matthew 11:9. Jesus said that John was the one who fulfilled the prophecy that Elijah must come first. John was called the "Baptist" because he baptized people to memorialize the fact that they had repented and trusted in Christ. (Jesus Himself reveals in Mark 11:27-33 that John had the authority of heaven for his ministry.) Likewise, baptism was given to the New Testament church by Jesus, not to save, but to memorialize the fact the repentant sinner has already been saved by the shed blood of Christ through genuine heart felt faith in Christ.

The ministry of John the Baptist was impelling, powerful, and blessed because it was of God. His message and action was simple and from heaven. He preached that all should repent for the kingdom is at hand. People responded by confessing their sins and were baptized to memorialize the fact that they had repented and trusted in

Christ. Although great numbers came seeking baptism, John baptized only those who made an open confession of sin to God before him and the people.

His manner of life emphasized his message. His simple life-style reflected and emphasized his simple, easy to understand message of repentance toward God and faith in the Messiah. His ministry introduced and magnified Christ Jesus of whom John said, "There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." Christ, the Model Servant of God, is the Coming One. He is mightier than all. He came after John and is coming again. Each reader, should ask himself, "Am I ready for His return?"

John contrasted his ministry with the ministry of Christ by saying in Mark 1:8, "I indeed have immersed you in water: but He shall immerse you in the Holy Spirit" (Looney, Various translations). John is saying, His ministry shall surpass mine; even so, He shall take the material I have prepared for Him and establish His kingdom (which includes His church).

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION ONE--- THE SERVANT AND BEGINNINGS (Mark Chapters 1:1-15; 10:45)

---CHAPTER 3--- The Servant Initiating His Earthly Ministry (Mark Chapter 1:9-15)

OUTLINE

- III. The Servant Initiating His Earthly Ministry** 1:9-15
- A. His Inauguration - His Baptism by John 1:9-11
(Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-23)
 - 1. Inaugurating His ministry by the ordinance of baptism 1:9-10
 - 2. Revealing the requirements for valid baptism with His baptism 1:9-11
 - 3. The heavenly approval of the baptism of Jesus 1:10-11
 - 4. Making known three vital truths in His inauguration 1:11
- B. His Infallibility - His Temptation by Satan 1:12-13
(Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)
 - 1. Driven into the wilderness by the Spirit 1:12
 - 2. In the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan 1:13a
 - 3. Details of this temptation Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13
 - 4. With the wild beasts and the angels ministering to Him 1:13b
- C. His Illuminating Message Summarized 1:14-15
(Matthew 4:12-17; Luke 4:14-15)
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JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION ONE---

THE SERVANT AND BEGINNINGS

(Mark Chapters 1:1-15; 10:45)

---CHAPTER 3---

The Servant Initiating His Earthly Ministry

(Mark Chapter 1:9-15)

The purpose of the impelling or powerful ministry of the forerunner of the Servant, as seen in the previous chapter, was to introduce and to prepare the way for Jesus the Ideal Servant and His earthly ministry. This ministry of the forerunner not only introduced and prepared the way but magnified Christ and His ministry. The Apostle John epitomizes this when he records in John 10:40-42 that Jesus "went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there." While John was preaching and baptizing "Jesus came from Nazareth. . . and was baptized of John in Jordan" (Mark 1:9). This initiated and/or inaugurated the earthly ministry of Jesus, the Servant. The word "initiate" means "to induct. . . to set going: start. . . introduce. . . to induct into membership by or as if by special rites. . ." (Webster's 435). The word "inaugurate" means [literally "to practice augury. . ." from "the rites connected with augury]. . . to induct into an office with suitable ceremonies. . . to dedicate ceremoniously: observe formally the beginning of. . . to bring about the beginning of .

..)" (Webster's 422). This chapter may be divided as follows: one, His inauguration -- His baptism by John, 1:9-11; two, His infallibility -- His temptation by Satan, 1:12-13; and three, His illuminating message summarized, 1:14-15.

A. His Inauguration -- His Baptism by John 1:9-11

(Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-23)

It could be said that the baptism of Jesus Christ was the inauguration of His public earthly ministry. Jesus was approximately 30 years of age (Luke 3:23). The phraseology "it came to pass" in verse 9 is used by Mark to indicate a new paragraph and connects verse 9 with what has already been stated. This type of terminology is used many times in the Bible. It needs to be understood that there is probably a gap in time of about 6 months between verses 8 and 9. The following components will be discussed concerning the baptism of Jesus by John: one, inaugurating His ministry by the ordinance of baptism, 1:9-10; two, revealing the requirements for valid (or scriptural) baptism with His baptism, 1:9-11 (with passages from Matthew, Luke, and John); three, the heavenly approval (or acceptance) of the baptism of Jesus, 1:10-11; and four, making known three vital truths in His inauguration, 1:11.

Inaugurating His ministry by the ordinance of baptism (1:9-10) Jesus inaugurates His ministry by the ordinance of baptism. Evidently, the pictorial preaching ordinance of baptism was important to Jesus. Verse 9 says that Jesus traveled from Nazareth of Galilee to the Jordan river where John was baptizing. John was near the north end of the Dead Sea. (Matthew 3:1 states that John was "preaching in the wilderness of Judaea.") The town nearby was probably Bethany beyond or east of the Jordan River (Zondervan Pictorial 302). In John 1:28 this town is called Bethabara (Pfeiffer, Baker's 201). This means that Jesus walked about 60 miles. Correct, valid, (authorized), scriptural baptism to Jesus was important. This shows

that God would have every believer to follow the Lord Jesus in being baptized. Baptism is important to God. It is important to the New Testament church. Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan and with this ordinance initiates His earthly public ministry.

Revealing the requirements for valid baptism with His baptism (1:9-11)

The baptism of Jesus reveals the requirements for valid or scriptural baptism, 1:9-11 (along with passages in Matthew, Luke, and John). The New Testament reveals four requirements for the ordinance of baptism to be correct, valid, and scriptural or biblical. The first requirement for baptism that is recognized by God as revealed in this passage is *the proper method or mode of baptism*. The language of Mark 1:9-10 establishes the method that John the Baptist used in baptizing Jesus. If one does not believe that language is important, then that one has never signed a contract to buy a car or house and so forth, or has never negotiated to sell anything. Language is important and it is important in the Bible.

The language of these verses shows that Jesus was immersed completely in the waters of the Jordan River by John the Baptist. First, note the verb "was baptized" in verse 9. This verb is from the Greek verb βαπτίζω (baptizo). The verb βαπτίζω means to dip, plunge, or immerse as explained in the discussion of Mark 1:4. The meaning of this word shows that Jesus was immersed. In addition, the prepositional phrase "in Jordan" could better be rendered "into Jordan." The preposition "in" is the KJV translation of the Greek preposition εἰς (eis) but can be translated "into" in this context. (See comments by Clarke 20; and Dana and Mantey 103, 113, 114.) Jesus and John were "in" the Jordan River and Jesus was baptized "into" the waters of the Jordan. This is another proof that the mode used by John was immersion. That Jesus was immersed is also proved by the expression in verse 10, ". . . coming up out of the

water." There was no sprinkling or pouring involved whatsoever. Sprinkling or pouring for baptism is improper, invalid, incorrect, and unscriptural. God in His word does not recognize sprinkling nor pouring as valid baptism. Thus the first requirement for valid baptism is *the proper method or mode of baptism*.

The second requirement for correct, valid, scriptural baptism is revealed in the parallel passage Matthew 3:13-17 and is *the proper design or purpose of baptism*. Why did Jesus submit to the baptism of John? It should be stated that certainly Jesus was not confessing His sins since He was not guilty of any sin as attested by many passages in the New Testament. In John 8:46 Jesus asks the question, "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" Also, 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; and 1 Peter 2:2 state respectively that Jesus "knew no sin. . ." and was "without sin" and "did no sin. . . ." Jesus did not need to repent. It is clear and plain that Jesus was not a sinner. Yet, the purpose of the baptism of John as stated in the last part of Mark 1:4 was "the baptism of (*or because of or in reference to*) repentance for the remission of sins."

According to Mark 1,4,5; Luke 3:3; Matthew 3:7,8 before John would baptize anyone, he required that the candidates acknowledge their sins in the sight of God. (The Pharisees did not acknowledge their sin and that is why John said what he said in Matthew 3:7, 8. John demanded fruit to manifest that they had repented.) Next, he required that they ask God to forgive them of their sin and sins. These things being done, he would say, "All right I baptize you because you have (already) acknowledged your sin and have been (already) forgiven and because you have believed in God unto salvation having trusted the Christ" (Looney, Pastoral Epistles 46). Hence, if Jesus was not a sinner, why did He allow John to baptize Him? The answer is found in Matthew 3:13-15, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto

John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him." Jesus said it was "to fulfil all righteousness. . . ." "All righteousness. . ." is "a reference to God's plan and purpose for Jesus" (Wessel 621). In part it was to identify Jesus as the Messiah or the Christ. Jesus was baptized in order to picture His future burial (following His death) and His resurrection. Therefore, He solemnly consecrated Himself to His divine mission of going to the cross to redeem sinful man.

Why should anyone be baptized or *what is the proper purpose of baptism?* First, Jesus said to do it (Matthew 28:19). Second, the born-again believer should be baptized in order to show the world that he or she has already confessed his sins and is picturing to the world what saved him: the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Third, the believing saved sinner should do it in order to express in pictorial form that he or she is now going to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:1-13).

The third requirement for correct, valid, scriptural baptism as revealed in these Scriptures is *the proper candidate for baptism*. Was Jesus a proper candidate? Surely He was. He was already and is always the Son of God. Baptism did not make Jesus the Son of God. Even so, baptism does not make believing sinners children of God. Baptism is a pictorial ordinance and does not save. Only born-again, blood- bought believers, are proper candidates for baptism. In every incident of someone being baptized in the New Testament, he had already professed Christ Jesus as his personal Savior. (For example, see Acts 8:35-39.) One will look in vain for a case where either a non-professor or a baby was baptized in the New Testament. Someone may ask, what about Judas, the betrayer? He was a professor, yet, a false professor.

The fourth requirement for correct, valid, scriptural baptism as revealed in these

Scriptures is *the proper authority for baptism*. Did John have proper authority to baptize? Did he have the authority of heaven to baptize? Yes, he did! Consider the following Scriptures:

John 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John (*the Baptist*).

John 1:33 And I (*John the Baptist is speaking*) knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 21:23-27 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

Also consider that all the apostles as well many more were baptized by John and Jesus took them and organized His church during His earthly ministry. Even though John had authority from heaven to baptize, he could not of himself transfer it to anyone else. (Case in point: the disciples Paul baptized in Ephesus in Acts 19:1-7.)

Who has authority to baptize today? Jesus gave the authority to baptize to local New Testament churches as shown from Matthew 28:18-20 and John 4:1-2.

The heavenly approval (or acceptance) of the baptism of Jesus (1:10-11)

There were three signs given to show the approval or the acceptance of God for the baptism of Jesus at the hands of John. (Two were visible signs and one was an audible sign.) These signs took place immediately! The word "straightway" in verse 10 from the Greek adverb εὐθὺς (euthus) means "immediately, at once; so then, straightway, forthwith" (Rienecker 89). The first visible sign mentioned in verse 10

states that John "saw the heavens opened. . . ." The word "heavens" is from the noun οὐρανὸς (ouranous) from οὐρανός (ouranos). This word means

the vaulted expanse of the sky with all things visible in it... the universe... the aerial heavens or sky, the region where the clouds and the tempests gather, and where thunder and lightning are produced... the region above the sidereal heavens, the seat of order of things eternal and consummately perfect where God dwells and other heavenly beings..." (Thayer 464, 465).

The word "opened" is from the present passive participle σχιζομένουσ (schizo-menous) from the very graphic Greek verb σχίζω (schizo). This word means "to cleave. . . rend. . . to divide by rending. . . to be split into factions, be divided" (Thayer 610a). The use of present passive participle indicates that the heavens did not open of their own accord. God from above made a visible opening in the sky. God Himself made it happen. [Matthew 3:16 and Luke 3:21 use a less graphic word to describe this event; both of which are passive forms of the verb ἀνοίγω (anoigo). This verb means "to open. . . to be opened. . ." (Thayer 48).]

The second visible sign is found in the last part of verse 10. John saw, "the Spirit like a dove descending upon him (*Jesus*)." The preposition εἰς (eis) rendered "upon" could be rendered "into" (Dana and Mantey 103). The Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) descended in a dove-like form (Luke 3:22). This was a symbol of the anointing of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, to do His work on earth. (Refer also to Leviticus 8:5-12 and Isa 64:1.) The work of Jesus is spelled out in Luke and Mark:

The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised (Luke 4:18).

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

The finished work of Jesus on the cross brings peace to the repentant believing heart and will cause there to be peace upon the earth in a future day.

The audible sign is revealed in verse 11 and is the third sign of acceptance by the Father. This audible sign is the voice of God the Father. The first part of verse 11 states, "And there came a voice from heaven. . . ." The preposition "from" is the translation of the Greek word ἐκ (ek) and could be rendered "out of" (Dana and Mantey 102, 113, 114). This voice came "out of" heaven from the throne room of God. This was the voice of authority and power. This voice was the voice of God the Father for it said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Father spoke "out of" Heaven giving His audible approval of His Son and of His being baptized at the hands of John. The parallel Greek text in Luke 3:22 states "... Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ ἠὲ δόκησα" (The New Testament, The Greek Text 111). This literally says, "Thou art the Son of Me the beloved, in thee I am well pleased." Notice that the second person personal pronoun "thee" is used instead of "in whom." Jesus is the second manifestation of the Godhead. This passage of Scripture is one of the few places in the Bible where all three manifestations of the Trinity are spoken of together, yet, they are spoken of distinctly. There is only one God (1 Corinthians 8:4).

Making known three vital truths in His inauguration (1:11) Three vital truths are revealed in the inauguration of Jesus. One, Jesus is the Son of God as declared so by the Father out of heaven. Every person should accept Jesus as the Son of God and must do so in order to be redeemed. Two, God loves His Son. The Bible says in John 3:35 "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." Henceforth, every human being should love Him first and foremost. The Apostle John wrote in 1 John 4:19 "We love him, because he first loved us." Three, God approves of His Son and His work of redemption to save sinful man. Hence, each sinner should accept His work of redemption by faith and thus be saved.

B. His Infallibility -- His Temptation by Satan 1:12-13

(Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)

This passage reveals the temptation of Jesus by Satan. After His baptism the same Spirit that descended upon Jesus like a dove drove Him out into the wilderness. Mark emphasizes this close connection by his characteristic use of the Greek word εὐθὺς (euthus) rendered "immediately." According to Luke 4:1 Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit. Luke records, "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." Being full of the Spirit means one is yielded to the Spirit and allows himself to be controlled by the Spirit because it is the best and right thing to do and exalts God. Jesus being one with God the Father is also one with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Jesus, the man, willingly yielded Himself to the Spirit of God. The Bible says that He has the Spirit without measure in John 3:34, which declares, "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him*." Jesus demonstrates that He is infallible by this ultimate temptation by Satan. This passage will be discussed under the following particulars: one, driven into the wilderness by the Spirit, 1:12; two, in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan, 1:13a; three, details of this temptation as given in Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; and four, with the wild beasts and the angels ministering to Him, 1:13b.

Driven into the wilderness by the Spirit (1:12) Jesus was driven into the wilderness by the Spirit. The verb "driveth" from ἐκβάλλω (ekballo) means "...to cast out, drive out, to send out..." (Thayer 192, 193). Thayer adds when ἐκβάλλω (ekballo) is "followed by εἰς (eis) with the accusative of place. . ." it means "to lead one forth or away somewhere with a force which he cannot resist. . . ." This word is more vivid as well as stronger than the word "led" used by Matthew and Luke. The idea is that Jesus willingly (being full of the Spirit) was thrown out from within or driven out into the wilderness by the Spirit. The word "wilderness" from ἔρημος

(eremos) is the same word as used in verses 3, 4. This was most likely the area between Jerusalem and North of the Dead Sea (Carson 99), probably "...near Jericho..." according to Jewish tradition (Vincent 163).

In the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan (1:13a) According to verse 13 Jesus was in the wilderness forty days. Matthew 4:2 says that He "fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungered." Luke 4:2 concurs and adds that He was "tempted of the devil..." The language does not necessarily imply that Jesus went out to be tempted but to be alone in prayer with the Father. However, it seems that this was inevitable since Jesus identified Himself with man and the sin of man in His baptism, since His baptism pictured His death, burial, and resurrection for the redemption of sinful man. (Refer to Hebrews 2:9-18; 4:14-16.) The verb "tempted" in verse 13 from πειραζόμενος (peirazomenos) is a present passive participle of πειράζω (peirazo). This indicates continuous action on the part of Satan during the forty days. Yet this period of time was not the only time Satan tempted Jesus to do evil. Satan tempted Jesus all during His earthly ministry, yet Jesus never sinned whatsoever. Luke 4:13 states, "when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season." Walter W. Wessel writes, "that Jesus' entire ministry was one continuous encounter with the Devil and not limited to a few temptations in the desert. . ." (623). Hebrews 4:15 states that Jesus, "was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin."

Someone might ask the question, was is possible for Jesus, the Son of God, to be tempted since the Bible states clearly in James 1:13 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." Yet one is reminded that Jesus Christ according to Philippians 2:6-8 emptied Himself of His preincarnate glory and became like a man and was a bondservant, and thus, it was possible for Him to be tempted. Why? Hebrews 2:18

has the answer, "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Hebrews 2:14 states, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

Details of this temptation (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13) Mark does not go into detail as does Matthew and Luke. From the other Gospel records given in Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13 one can surmise that the temptation of Jesus was like that of Eve in Genesis 3:1-7. This corresponds to three basic classes of sin as described in 1 John 2:15-17. According to 1 John 2:16 man is tempted in a three-fold way. Man is tempted through "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. . . ." Genesis 3:6 gives the account of how Eve was tempted. "And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." "The lust of the flesh. . ." compares with the statement "when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food" This compares to the temptation of Jesus recorded in Matthew 4:3,4 and Luke 4:3,4. Next, "the lust of the eyes. . ." compares with "that it *was* pleasant to the eyes. . ." This compares to the temptation of Jesus recorded in Matthew 4:5-7 and Luke 4:9-10. Last, "the pride of life. . ." compares with "and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise. . . ." This compares to the temptation of Jesus recorded in Matthew 4:8-10 and also Luke 4:5-8.

Wuest writes, "The first Adam fell into sin in an environment that was perfect and harmonious. The last Adam maintained His sinlessness in an environment that was hostile" (26). Jesus, the Ideal Servant, Jesus, the Son of God, manifested Himself to be infallible and thus victorious over sin in every respect. (Study Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Revelation 5:1-14.) Thus He was the only eligible and

time, since it is about the message of forgiveness, restoration, and new and eternal life in Jesus Christ. Jesus proclaimed that He was the Messiah or the Christ sent from God to redeem sinful men, women, boys, and girls. He was the One promised of God to come and pay the price for the sin and sins of every person ever born or ever to be born. The gospel is given in a nutshell in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The Apostle Paul summarized the message of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. In Acts 17:3 Paul preached, "that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." The bad news is that all are sinners and all are doomed to an eternity in hellfire without having a Savior. The good news is that Jesus paid the full price for the sins of all people of all time. Furthermore, He came out of the grave victorious over sin, hell, and the grave to give everyone who will believe a sure hope and full assurance of life everlasting in heaven with Him.

This message is an illuminating message since it brings the light of life to the darkness of each sinful rebellious heart (Matthew 4:16). It reveals that all are sinners and full of depravity and that anyone without Christ is doomed for the eternal burning hell. At the same time this illuminating message opens the eyes of convicted sinners to turn them "from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18). To the church in Colosse the Apostle Paul wrote how God the Father uses the Gospel message so that the believing sinner is delivered "from the power of darkness, and. . ." is "translated. . . into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:13-14).

Revealing the summary of His preaching (1:15) In verse 15 Jesus reveals the summary of His message. In so doing He gives the requirements to be delivered and thus to be redeemed. These are simply that one must repent and believe the gospel. The first part of verse 15 could be rendered, "And saying, the time has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has drawn near..." since both verbs "is fulfilled" and "is at hand" are in the perfect tense. "Is fulfilled" is from πληρόω (pleroo) and means "to make full, to fill up, i.e., to fill to the full..." (Thayer 517). "Is at hand" is from ἐγγίζω (eggizo) and means "to bring near, to join one thing to another... to draw or come near to..." (Thayer 164). The idea is that the time is ripe and the kingdom is at hand. The kingdom of God has been defined in various ways. The kingdom includes a present or spiritual as well as a future or visible aspect. John F. Carter defines the spiritual kingdom this way:

...the Kingdom of God is presently existing in reality, with God in the person of Jesus as King; and that those who have repented . . . and looked to Jesus in faith for the righteousness of God, submitting themselves to Him as their Lord and King, are. . . subjects of the Kingdom. This is the spiritual Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom in its spiritual manifestation (56).

(For more information on the kingdom, refer to the discussion of the same by Carter on pages 54-57. Also refer to the comments on page 6 under the heading "The New Testament church is not the same as the kingdom or family of God" in the thesis entitled THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH -- A GOOD MODEL, by this writer.) The term kingdom of God does not appear in the Old Testament, but the idea is abundantly present as seen in such passages as Exodus 15:18; Psalm 29:10; Isaiah 43:15. There are two kingdoms in the universe: the kingdom of God or of Heaven and the kingdom of Satan. The kingdom of God will one day put down completely that of Satan and his kingdom of darkness. When the Millennial Kingdom of King Jesus begins, it will be the answer to the prayer "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

In verse 15, note that Jesus says, "the time is fulfilled. . . ." The word "time" from the noun *καιρὸς* (*kairos*) means "a measure of time. . . a fixed and definite time... the time when things are brought to crisis, the decisive epoch waited for..." (Thayer 318). Because the time, decisive time, has been fulfilled and the kingdom is at hand, Jesus calls upon all of all ages to "...repent ye, and believe the gospel." This is the same message as that of John the Baptist. The command to repent is from the present imperative of *μετανοέω* (*metanoeo*). This word means "to repent, have a change of heart, turn from one's sins, change one's ways" (Bushell, computer program). Thayer adds that it means "...to change one's mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins" (405). Thus to repent has the idea of changing the thinking, the mind, and the heart completely in regard to sin, self, and Satan and turning to God. In turning to God one must believe in His good news of salvation in Christ Jesus. "Believe" is from another present imperative verb: *πιστεύετε* (*pisteuete*). One is the negative; the other the positive and they must come in this prescribed order, and they are inseparable. One cannot be complied with without complying with the other. (In the absence of one the other is implied.)

Summary of Chapter

Jesus, the Servant, was baptized of John the Baptist in Jordan and with this ordinance initiates and/or inaugurates His public ministry. While Jesus and John were still in the water, God put His stamp of approval upon Jesus and this inaugural act. In so doing God initiated three signs to show His acceptance. He opened the heavens and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus "in a bodily shape like a dove. . ." (Luke 3:22). Also, the Father spoke out of heaven and said, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). Mark (along with passages from Matthew, Luke, and John) in his account of the baptism of Jesus reveals four requirements that

End Note

A. The harmonized sequential listings from the other Gospel records have been gleaned from various sources and from study. This writer leaned heavily on A Layman's Harmony of the Gospels by John F. Carter and A Harmony of the Gospels for Students of the Life of Christ by A. T. Robertson. Both of these are listed in the Bibliography. All other sources are also listed.

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION TWO---

THE SERVANT: ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY

(Mark Chapters 1:16-45; 2:1-28; 3:1-35)

---CHAPTER 4---

Establishing Authority in His Early Ministry around Galilee

(Mark Chapter 1:16-45)

---CHAPTER 5---

Authority against Growing Opposition

(Mark Chapters 2:1-28; 3:1-6)

---CHAPTER 6---

Authority to Select Twelve and Authority over Beelzebub

(Mark Chapter 3:7-35)

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION TWO---

THE SERVANT: ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY

(Mark Chapters 1:16-45; 2:1-28; 3:1-35)

---CHAPTER 4---

Establishing Authority in His Early Ministry around Galilee

(Mark Chapter 1:16-45)

OUTLINE

- IV. Establishing Authority in His Early Ministry around Galilee** 1:16-45
 - A. Authority to Begin His Church and Calling of His First Disciples 1:16-20
 - 1. The calling of four busy fishermen to be His disciples 1:16-20
 - 2. Calling Andrew and Simon Peter to come after Him 1:17,18
 - 3. Calling James and John, sons of Zebedee 1:19,20
 - 4. This calling constituted the beginning of His New Testament Church
 - B. Authority to Teach and Power to Cast Out Devils 1:21-28
 - 1. Jesus teaching on the Sabbath days in the synagogue 1:21; Luke 4:31
 - 2. The reaction of the congregation to the teaching of Jesus 1:22; Luke 4:32
 - 3. The man possessed with an unclean spirit 1:23,24; Luke 4:33,34
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 - C. Authority and Power to Heal all Manner of Diseases 1:29-34
 - 1. Healing the mother-in-law of Peter 1:29-31
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 - D. Establishing His Authority by His Actions and Examples 1:35-45
 - 1. Establishing authority by expressing His purpose in His actions 1:38,39
 - 2. Establishing authority by explaining His purpose Luke 4:16-21
 - 3. Establishing authority by manifesting His purpose Luke 4:18-19
 - 4. Establishing authority by His action in praying 1:35
 - 5. Establishing authority as seen in the people who followed him 1:36-37
 - 6. Establishing authority with His compassion in healing a leper 1:40-45

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION TWO---

THE SERVANT ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY

(Mark Chapters 1:16-45; 2:1-28; 3:1-35)

---CHAPTER 4---

Establishing Authority in His Early Ministry around Galilee

(Mark Chapter 1:16-45)

The early ministry of Jesus Christ, the Model Servant, in and around Galilee is recorded in Mark 1:14-4:34. During this period Jesus established His authority and identity as the Son of God, the One sent from God. He began by establishing His authority around Galilee by manifesting His power and compassion in teaching, preaching, healing divers diseases, and casting out demons. With authority, yet with compassion and love, He also faced growing opposition, ordained twelve apostles, and readily handled the Beelzebub controversy while identifying His true kindred. During this early ministry by His authority, Jesus began and established His New Testament church on the shores of the Sea of Galilee

At this juncture one needs to ask four very important questions. Number one: Where or from whom did Jesus get His authority? Number two: At what point in time or history did the New Testament church have its beginning? Number three: Who established the very first New Testament church. Number four: What is the

definition of a New Testament church? The answer to all of these questions can be found in the Holy Scriptures.

Jesus was sent by God the Father to come into the world to redeem sinful, doomed sinners. (This is affirmed by many verses in the book of John [John 7:28; 8:26,29 and others].) The Bible declares in Matthew 1:18-25, Luke chapters 1 and 3, and John chapter 1 that Jesus was virgin born and that He was come to ". . . save his people from their sins." These same Scriptures state that Jesus was and is "Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us" or God in the flesh. In John 10:30 Jesus asserts that "I and *my* Father are one." John 3:16 declares that He was "the only begotten Son" sent in love by the Father or given by the Father "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

In Matthew 28:18 Jesus declares to His disciples which constituted His church that the Father gave Him "All power . . . in heaven and in earth." This word "power" from the Greek noun ἐξουσία (exousia) means "the power of authority . . . the power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed) . . . authority over mankind . . ." (Thayer 225). Jesus had and has the power and authority to do the work God sent Him to do and it came from Almighty God.

The answers to the questions two and three can be answered together. The New Testament church had its beginning with Jesus Himself during His personal ministry upon the earth. [As previously mentioned, He took the material prepared by John to establish His church during His personal earthly ministry (see chapter 2, pp. 31, 42; see chapter 3, p. 50).] Jesus states in Matthew 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus Himself is the "rock" [πέτρα (petra) a massive

rock like Gibraltar], and thus He built His church upon Himself (Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 1:16-19). The words "I will build my church . . ." has the idea that Jesus at that very time was building His church and would continue to do so in the future. Thus Jesus established His New Testament church Himself and this was accomplished long before the day of Pentecost.

The fourth question was "What is the definition of a New Testament church?" But first one must define the word "church" itself: The English word "church" as used in Matthew 16:18 and in all other places in the New Testament is a translation of the Greek word ἐκκλησία (ekklesia).

The word church has been much mis-aligned and mis-defined over the centuries. To properly define this word one must go back to the Koine Greek usage and see how the word ἐκκλησία was used among the Greek people. Before and during the time the New Testament was being written, the Greek city employed a town meeting type government whereby the citizens of the city would be brought together by means of a town cryer. The town cryer would walk throughout the city and announce the time and place of the town meeting and the nature of the business. The citizens would then assemble together and discuss and carry out the business at hand. This assembly was called an ἐκκλησία. It was by nature a visible and local assembly of the town people who were citizens of a particular city. Jesus and the writers of the New Testament have this type of usage in mind (Looney II, The Thessalonian Church - A Good Model 5).

Hence, to answer the question of "What is the definition of a New Testament church?" the following is submitted:

Based on this definition of the word ἐκκλησία (ekklesia) as given previously, a New Testament church has been defined as a local congregation of scripturally baptized believers covenanting together to carry out the commands of her head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and specifically His Great Commission as given in Matthew 28:18-20 and other such passages. The words assembly and congregation are synonyms one for the other. By nature the word assembly must be local and visible. While the term ἐκκλησία is used in a generic way or in an institutional sense in some instances in the Bible, the Bible never speaks of a church as other than local and visible. Even the generic or institutional usage is referring to a local and visible assembly of born again blood bought believers who have come together in order to give

glory to God and His Son, Jesus Christ (Looney II, The Thessalonian Church - A Good Model 7).

In the Gospel Record of John there are at least thirty-five times when Jesus states that He was sent into the world by God the Father. (To be considered later are the statements of Jesus in Mark 1:38 and Luke 4:43.) In Mark 1:11 God the Father speaks from heaven and said unto Jesus "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This proves that the authority of Jesus came directly from God, the Father, to come and to conduct His ministry of redemption. Nevertheless, the Jews and Gentiles in the land of Israel needed to recognize that He was the Messiah that was to come and that He had the authority of God. This authority needs to be recognized by all people today.

According to Mark Chapter 1:15-45 Jesus began His ministry in and around Capernaum and other towns on and near the Sea of Galilee. In so doing He established His authority and the fact that He was sent from God and was the prophet of whom Moses prophesied in Deuteronomy 18:15-19 would come. This chapter relates how the Servant by His actions establishes His authority very early in His ministry. This passage may be divided as follows: one, authority to begin His church and calling of His first disciples, 1:16-20; two, authority to teach and power to cast out devils, 1:21-28; three, authority and power to heal all manner of diseases, 1:29-34; and four, establishing His authority by His actions and examples, 1:35-45.

A. Authority to Begin His Church and Calling of His First Disciples 1:16-20

(Matthew 4:18-22; Luke 5:1-11)

As Jesus walked along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, He called His first disciples and in so doing He begins and establishes His church. This passage records the calling of four busy fishermen to be His disciples in the work of fishing for men. This reveals that God calls those who are busy already. In this Jesus reveals the

urgency of the task of the spreading of the Gospel. Mark 1:16-20 may be broken into four components: one, the calling of four busy fishermen to be His disciples, 1:16-20; two, calling Andrew and Simon Peter to come after Him, 1:17-18; three, calling James and John, sons of Zebedee, 1:19,20; and four, this calling constituted the beginning of His New Testament church.

The calling of four busy fishermen to be His disciples (1:16-20) By this time according to Luke 4:14-21 and 5:1 Jesus had begun to preach and it was time to gather around Him men whom He could teach and they in turn could pass the message along to others. From the account in John 1:35-42, it seems that these busy fishermen had already heard the preaching of John the Baptist and had made professions of faith and had been baptized by John. The account in Matthew 4:18-22 is a parallel account. However, the account in Luke 5:1-11 adds more information and may or may not be the same incident as that in Mark and Matthew (Carter 84; Robertson, Harmony 33). In calling these fishermen Jesus would begin His New Testament church on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, also called Gennesaret.

Verse 16 says that Jesus "walked by the sea of Galilee" The word "walked" from the Greek word περιπατῶν (peripaton)¹ is really a present active participle from περιπατέω (peripateo). Περιπατέω means to walk; [walk about...] ... to make one's way" (Thayer 504). Jesus was making his way along the shore and observed Simon and Andrew in the act of casting a net into the sea being fishermen. The idea behind the Greek expression for "casting a net" from βάλλοντας ἀμφίβληστρον (ballontas amphiblestron) was to throw the net first on one side and make a haul and then on the other side (Wuest 28). Βάλλοντας is from βάλλω (ballo) which means "to throw -- either with force, or without force yet with purpose or even carelessly . . . to cast into . . ." (Thayer 93). Ἀμφίβληστρον (amphiblestron) is a Greek noun

derived from the verb ἀμφιβάλλω (amphiballo). Ἀμφιβάλλω (amphiballo) means "to throw around "to cast to and fro now to one side now to the other: a net . . ." (Thayer 33). Simon and Andrew were commercial fishermen. Some say these men were uneducated and poor; but commercial fishing of that day was a great profession and a very good and profitable business. The equipment and boats or ships they used were expensive for that day and time. In any case, it should be remembered what the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 1:24-31. This passage states in part,

"But unto them which are called, . . . Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. . . . For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: . . . That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Calling Andrew and Simon Peter to come after Him (1:17-18) The call of Jesus in verse 17 is simple and clear. He distinctly commands or exhorts them, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." The word "come" is from the Greek word δεῦτε (deute) which is actually an adverb "used when two or more are addressed . . ." meaning "come hither, come here . . ." (Thayer 130). Michael S. Bushell states that δεῦτε (deute) is from δεῦρο (deuro) and "an imperative form of eimi (to go)" (Bible Works for Windows). However, it is a call that is to be answered by a walk of faith. This call was not a call unto salvation for these fishermen were already saved. After having been saved by grace these men had also been baptized by John the Baptist. They had already talked and spontaneously walked with Jesus as seen in John 1:35-51; 3:22-4:4. [In fact, before this these men had fellowshiped with Jesus in making and baptizing disciples (Carter 79; Clarke 23).] The idea is that of Jesus saying to them "follow me" (which is how Matthew records it in Matthew 4:19). Jesus calls unto them and tells them to follow after Him.

Notice that He continues and says, "I will make you to become fishers of men." "Make" is from the Greek verb ποιήσω (poieso) which is the future indicative active of ποιέω (poieo) and in this construction of the sentence has the meaning "to cause someone to do something" (Rienecker 89). The idea is that Jesus, by a long, slow process, would train them so they could carry out His work (Robertson, Word Pictures 257). According to verse 18 these men were obedient to Jesus for it states "And straightway (*or immediately*) they forsook (*or left*) their nets, and followed him." The word "forsook" is from the Greek word ἀφέντες (aphentes) from ἀφίημι (aphiemi). This verb is translated in various ways: leave, forgive, suffer, let, forsake, let alone, etc. It means "to send from one's self... to send away . . . to send forth, . . . to let go . . ." (Thayer 88). It has the idea to forsake, leave, or "to send from one's self" and that Simon and Andrew are to separate themselves from the fishing industry unto the preaching of the good news. Since this verb is an aorist, the idea is a once for all action. The word "followed" comes from the aorist verb ἠκολούθησαν (ekolouthesan) from ἀκολουθέω (akoloutheo) and means "to follow as a disciple. . ." (Thayer 22) and "implies personal adherence and association" (Rienecker 89). It has the meaning of "to walk the same road" (Wuest 52) even to the point of dying. The people of God need to understand that God still calls men out of those who are saved to preach the gospel message to a lost and dying world.

Calling James and John, sons of Zebedee (1:19,20) Verses 19, 20 relate the calling out of James and John, sons of Zebedee, (who also were fishermen, since Jesus found them in their ship mending their nets). The word "mending" from the present active participle of καταρτίζω (katartizo) means "to put in order, mending, cleaning, folding, and making the nets ready for another night's fishing" (Rienecker 89, 90). Jesus straightway or immediately "called" them to follow Him. The word

"called" is from the aorist form of καλέω (kaleo) which is ἐκάλεσεν (ekalesen). Being aorist it expresses the idea of a once and for all call. All four of these men immediately followed Jesus. Why? Because being fishers of men is the urgent task of rescuing men from the impending judgment to come. It is the task of proclaiming the correct, yet, good news that men, women, boys, and girls may be delivered unto a state of justification before God with the sure knowledge that one day they will be taken up into heaven to be with Jesus forever and forever. And just as they were to carry out the will, way, and message of God even so New Testament churches have the same dire and urgent call and responsibility today (Matthew 28:18-20).

This calling constituted the beginning of His New Testament Church This calling and these men following Jesus constitutes the beginning and or institution of the New Testament church of Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18; 18:20). This is asserted, warranted, and claimed inasmuch as the Bible states in 1 Corinthians 12:28 "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles...." It must be remembered that the word ἐκκλησία (ekklesia) which is rendered church has the idea of to call out for a specific purpose. This is what Jesus was doing as recorded in these verses. By way of explanation the following is submitted:

The word ἐκκλησία is actually a combination of two Greek words: that being the preposition ἐκ (ek) and the verb καλέω (kaleo). The word ἐκ is a primary preposition denoting origin (the point whence motion or action proceeds) and among other things may be translated from, out from, away from, by, by means of, by reason of, because; for; on, at; of, off from (Strong, op. cit., p. 26 of The Greek Dictionary of the New Testament). The verb καλέω means to call, call aloud, utter in a loud voice, call out or call forth, name, address, invite, summon, or call in (Thayer 342). Hence the primary meaning of the noun ἐκκλησία is that of ones called out to assemble in a designated place for a particular purpose (Looney II, The Thessalonian Church - A Good Model 5, 6).

The church or ἐκκλησία (ekklesia) of the Lord Jesus is a called-out body of baptized believers covenanted together to carry out the will of God and the Great Commission

as set forth in Matthew 28:18-20, etc. and to bring glory unto God (Ephesians 3:21). Jesus said, in effect, in Matthew 16:18 that He was at that very time in the process of building His church or ἐκκλησία (ekklesia) upon Himself, for He is the Rock. By this He was saying He had already begun and was continuing to build it. Matthew 16:18 explains what happened in Mark 1:16-20. Jesus by the authority of heaven started His church on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

B. Authority to Teach and Power to Cast Out Devils 1:21-28

(Luke 4:31-37)

Jesus not only utilized His authority and power to establish His church, but He also exercised His authority and power in all of His ministry. After calling and gathering Simon, Andrew, James and John as his first disciples (later to be ordained as apostles), Jesus went to Capernaum and taught in the synagogue. Immediately, those in the synagogue recognized that this One taught with "authority" which word is used both in verses 22 and 27. The people were astonished and amazed. It was not that Jesus whipped them with His words; rather, it was the way He spoke that caused them to realize that this teacher was different from the regular rabbis. This One knew about what He spoke and spoke in such a way that made them sit up and listen. His teaching was reinforced with authority and power by His commanding an unclean spirit to come out of a demon possessed man. This power and authority exhibited in the synagogue by the Servant caused much excitement. This passage consists of at least five sub-parts as follows: one, Jesus teaching on the Sabbath days in the synagogue, 1:21; Luke 4:31; two, the reaction of the congregation to the teaching of Jesus, 1:22; Luke 4:32; three, the man possessed with an unclean spirit, 1:23,24; Luke 4:33,34; four, Jesus rebuking this evil spirit to come out, 1:25,26; Luke 4:35; and five, the reaction of the people, 1:27,28; Luke 4:36,37.

Jesus teaching on the Sabbath days in the synagogue (1:21; Luke 4:31) In verse 21 Mark records that Jesus with His newly called-out disciples went into Capernaum and on the Sabbath day entered into the synagogue² and taught. At least three things need to be mentioned about verse 21. One, Capernaum was the home of Peter according to verses 29-31 and became the headquarters of operations for the ministry of Jesus in Galilee (Luke 4:31,38). Two, the word "synagogue" from συναγωγή (sunagoge) refers either "to the local congregation or to the building in which the congregation met" (Wessel 626). The third thing is that Jesus taught them. The word "taught" is from the imperfect form of διδάσκω (didasko) and has the idea of "He began to teach" (Rienecker 90). This is the case of the inceptive imperfect (Rienecker 90). "The force of the inceptive imperfect may revert to the opposite of realization, and signify the initiation of a process . . . the beginning of an action . . ." (Dana and Mantey 190). This is confirmed in Luke 4:31 which uses the plural of days for it states that He "taught them on the sabbath days."

The reaction of the congregation to the teaching of Jesus (1:22; Luke 4:32)

Verse 22 reveals the reaction of the congregation to the teaching of Jesus. It declares that "they were astonished at His doctrine" The verb "were astonished" is from the imperfect passive of ἐκπλήσσομαι (ekplessomai). It is translated both "to be astonished or to be amazed." It carries the idea of "to strike a person out of his senses by some strong feeling such as fear, wonder, or even joy" (Gould *qtd. in* Rienecker 90). This was "prolonged amazement" (Wuest 30). The reason they were so amazed is because "he taught them as one that had authority" The word "authority" from ἐξουσία (exousia) is "used here of that authority which a person has which is delegated to him from someone else" (Wuest 31). {Luke in 4:32 uses the word "power" which is a translation also of ἐξουσία (exousia). This is also true of the

word "power" in Matthew 28:18.) The authority of Jesus came straight from God and the people recognized this. Further reason for their astonishment and recognition of His authority and power is that the doctrine (or teaching) of Jesus was not in the same manner as one of the scribes. Jesus did not have to quote someone else as did the scribes (or teachers of the Law).

The man possessed with an unclean spirit (1:23,24; Luke 4:33,34) In verses 23-27 the authority of Jesus is exemplified by the healing of a man in the synagogue who was possessed with an unclean spirit (πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ pneumatī {spirit} akathartōi {unclean}). The healing of this man caused further excitement in the synagogue. Luke states in 4:33 he had "a spirit of an unclean devil . . ." This means the man was possessed and controlled by a demon. This human being was so controlled by this demon that it was as if there was only one being and not two. A. T. Robertson comments, "The unclean spirit was in the man and the man in the unclean spirit, a man in the power of the unclean spirit" (Word Pictures 260).

Luke records that this demon cried out to Jesus with a loud voice (4:33). Verse 24 reveals the demon spirit knew who Jesus was, for it was this unclean spirit who was really the one crying out saying "let us alone." This unclean spirit was saying to Jesus, "we do not have anything to do with you so do not have anything to do with us." In other words, leave us alone. He did not want the power and authority of Jesus to cast him out of the possessed man. This demon also asked Jesus "art thou come to destroy us?" He knew that Jesus had the power to destroy all of the demons and that one day it would all come to an end and he would be cast into hellfire.

In Mark this is the first recorded incident in which Jesus encountered a demon spirit. This demon called Jesus "The Holy One of God." He knew that Jesus was the Holy One of God, a name which connects Jesus with that of the Old Testament name

of Jehovah God, the Almighty God. The term "the Holy One" or "the Holy One of Israel" is used over thirty times by the prophets and the psalmist to speak of the LORD-GOD (Psalm 78:41; Isaiah 1:4; Jeremiah 50:29; Ezekiel 39:7; Hosea 11:9; Habakkuk 3:3; etc.). This demon knew of the controversy between the kingdom of God and of Satan (1 John 3:8; James 2:19). An application of this is that a great number of people in this day and time are saying to Jesus, "let us alone." {This appeal was also used by the Israelites as they were coming out of Egypt (Exodus 14:12).} Yet, if Jesus leaves people alone they will go to hell. This is why God sent Jesus in His love into the world so that whosoever believes in Jesus will be redeemed and go to heaven. This is why God has the gospel preached and His Holy Spirit to convict of sin and the need of salvation.

Jesus rebuking this evil spirit to come out (1:25,26; Luke 4:35) Verses 25, 26 records that Jesus rebuked this evil spirit and that the demon obeyed the authority of Jesus. There are two words in the Greek for "rebuke." Wuest states, "The one used here, ἐπιτιμάω (epitimaō), which means "to rebuke another, the rebuke failing to bring the offender to acknowledge his sin. . . ." (*The other*) ἐλέγχω (elegcho) . . . results in a conviction of sin and sometimes a confession of sin on the offender's part" (33). The word ἐλέγχω (elegcho) is used in 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:13;2:15 with the idea that the desired result ensued. Satan and his fallen angels (or demons) refuse to be convicted of sin and to repent (Wuest 33). After rebuking this demon Jesus told him to, "Hold thy peace . . ." This expression is from φημίω (phimōō) and means to close the mouth or to be muzzled (Thayer 655). This same word is also used in 1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Timothy 5:18; Matthew 22:34; Mark 4:39. Jesus further ordered the demon to "come out of . . ." or leave the man. The Greek word is ἐξέλθε (exelthe) and is the aorist active imperative and thus, the word is a command from a

power and authority that must be obeyed at once and had the effect that the demon came out never to possess the man again. Verse 26 says that the demon obeyed the authority of Jesus and came out of the man. Nevertheless, he did so under protest as indicated by the use of the word *σπαράσσω* (*sparasso*) meaning "to tear, to pull to and fro, to convulse" and was used of "medical writers . . ." "of the convulsive . . ." *rotating* "action of the stomach . . ." (Rienecker 90; Robertson, Word Pictures 261). The unclean spirit also "cried with a loud voice . . ." Nevertheless, he obeyed the command and authority of Jesus and came out of the man. This violent action reveals the rebellious nature of demon spirits or fallen angels. Luke adds that "he came out of him, and hurt him not" (4:35).

The reaction of the people (1:27,28; Luke 4:36-37) In verses 27, 28 Mark again reports the reaction of the people. They were all amazed. The word "amazed" comes from the verb *θαμβέομαι* (*thambeomai*). This word has in it the idea of being somewhat alarmed and astonished and even to be frightened or at least shocked (Thayer 282). Thus the people in the synagogue "questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this?" They wondered at the authority of Jesus. The teaching of Jesus was fresh and given with authority. The authority of Jesus was inherent within Himself. This was the Son of God and even the demons obeyed Him. The power of Christ is infinitely greater than that of Satan (1 John 4:4). Jesus Christ is the Creator and Satan is a mere created being who rebelled against God. The result of all this is seen in verse 28 in that immediately the fame of Jesus was spread over the whole region of Galilee. The noun "fame" is from the Greek word *ἄκοη* (*akoe*) which is from the verb *ἀκούω* (*akoeo*) meaning "to hear" (Wuest 36). *Ἄκοη* (*akoe*) means "the thing heard or the thing rumored" (Matthew 24:6) (Wuest 36). A. T. Robertson observes, "They had no telephones,

telegraphs, newspapers or radio, but news has a marvellous way of spreading by word of mouth" (Word Pictures 261, 262). Thus all the people in the countryside around the Sea of Galilee heard about Jesus and His authority and His power to cast out demon spirits or devils. Although they may not have understood all of the ramifications, many were believing that this One they called Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah of God who was to come. This was due to the power and authority of the Servant exhibited in the synagogue.

C. Authority and Power to heal all Manner of Diseases 1:29-34

(Matthew 8:14-17; Luke 4:38-41)

After Jesus left the synagogue in Caphernaum He forthwith entered into the house of Simon Peter and Andrew. [Notice that all the disciples (including James and John) that Jesus had called previously, followed Him wherever He went. Jesus was training His church members. Mark is the only one who records that these disciples went into the house of Simon.] There Jesus continued His ministry exercising His authority and power to heal all manner of diseases and in casting out demons. These verses can be divided as follows: one, healing the mother-in-law of Peter, 1:29-31; Luke 4:38,39; and two, healing many more sick people and casting out demons, 1:32-34; Luke 4:40,41.

Healing the mother-in-law of Peter (1:29-31; Luke 4:38,39) Verses 29-31 is the record of the healing of the mother-in-law of Peter and her subsequent service to Jesus and those with him. This incident occurs after Jesus left the synagogue and entered into the house of Simon. Mark uses the term "forthwith" which is from a Greek word similar to the word translated "immediately" and has the same idea. In Luke 4:38 Luke states, "And he arose out of the synagogue . . ." which gives the same sense as "forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue" These verses

reveal that Peter, who is also called Simon, was married.³ The eyewitness details suggest that the account is from Peter himself.

Verse 30 reveals that the mother-in-law of Peter was in bed with a fever. The word "fever" from πυρέσσω (puresso) is from the Greek word for "fire" and Mark uses the present tense participle meaning "burning up with a fever" (Wuest 36). Luke, being a physician, uses a medical term, "was taken with a great fever" (4:38) (Bliss 91). In both Mark and Luke the imperfect tense of the verb (lay sick and was taken) is used. "The imperfect . . . represents an action as going on in past time" (Davis 41). Thus she was sick and continued to be sick. Upon being told Jesus "took her by the hand, and lifted her up." Luke adds that Jesus "rebuked the fever . . ." (4:39). Mark records in verse 31 that "immediately the fever left her . . ." Thus the cure was instantaneous and complete, for she immediately began to serve the needs of her guests which means she probably prepared food for them. This was truly a miracle performed by the power of God.

Healing many more sick people and casting out demons (1:32-34; Luke 4:40,41) Verses 32-34 give the account of many more sick people being brought to Jesus and He healed them. Some were possessed of devils or demons. The expression "were possessed with devils" is from the present participle δαίμονιζομένων (daimonizomevous) from the verb δαίμονίζομαι (daimonizomai) meaning to be "possessed by demons" (Rienecker 91). The mighty power of Jesus is demonstrated by this incident of healing and casting out of demons. It is interesting to note that the words "they brought" from ἔφερον (epheron) is the imperfect from φέρω (phero) and means that they carried them in to Jesus and continued to do so. It was a steady stream. Verse 34 again reveals that Jesus muzzled the demons. Why was this? Probably because of the jealousy of the leaders of the Jews. This is why Jesus did

not at this time want them to spread forth the word of His Messiah-ship (Luke 4:41). Matthew observes that this was a fulfillment of part of the prophecy of Isaiah 53 when he declares in Matthew 8:17 "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses."

D. Establishing His Authority by His Actions and Examples 1:35-45

(Matthew 4:23-25; 8:2-4; Luke 4:16-21, 42-44; 5:12-14)

This passage in Mark chapter 1 verses 35-45 and the previous verses (16-34) is the first incident of a traveling church. Jesus now tours Galilee (Matthew 4:23-25; Luke 4:42-44) with the four fishermen (called to be disciples and later to be ordained as apostles). It speaks of the actions and examples of Jesus to get His message across and to establish His authority among the people of Israel and to the world; in order that all might believe His message and be saved. His actions (praying, witnessing, and giving glory to God) are examples that His people should follow. "The word of the Master is "Go" (Matt 28:19)—a word which he has illustrated for us by his own example" (Clarke 29). There is a cliché that declares, "actions speak louder than words." Everyone likes action since it gives people something to do and breaks their boredom. As one examines the life of Jesus, he can see plenty of action, and the beautiful thing about it is that the actions of Jesus were completely consistent with what He said. His actions did not drown out His words. Rather, His actions served to reinforce His message and to establish His authority (Mark 1:22,27; John 7:46). This is the way it should be in the life of one who would say with the Apostle Paul "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..." (Galatians 2:20). The life of the born-again believer is to be consistent with what he says (1 Thessalonians 1:5-6). There was plenty of action in the life of Jesus Christ.

How did Jesus operate? Mark 1:35-45 reveals much concerning this question as one considers this bird's-eye view of the daily ministry of Jesus.

The first action Jesus took the first thing in the early morning was to pray unto His heavenly Father and afterwards He preached. He also cast out demons and demonstrated His compassion by the cleansing of a leper. Yet, the most important action and example for Jesus was to pray unto His Father in heaven. This example is set for all to follow. No doubt, Jesus was praying unto His Father about His purpose and what He was doing to accomplish that purpose and plan of God. Therefore, the order of sub-divisions for this section will be as follows: one, establishing authority by expressing His purpose in His actions, 1:38,39; two, establishing authority by explaining His purpose, Luke 4:16-21; three, establishing authority by manifesting His purpose, Luke 4:18-19; four, establishing authority by His action in praying, 1:35; five, establishing authority as seen in the people who followed Him, 1:36-37; six, establishing authority with His compassion in healing a leper, 1:40-45. The events of verses 35-45 exemplify the book of Mark as the book of "Jesus in Action" and Jesus as the Servant for they occur very rapidly. Also, they are continued actions taken by Jesus in training His disciples.

Establishing authority by expressing His purpose in His actions (1:38,39)

These verses show the actions of Jesus and thus, they express the purpose of Jesus. He came to call out and establish His kind of church to perpetuate the preaching of the gospel in all nations throughout the so-called "church age," this present age (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28). This is shown in that Jesus said, "Let us go into the next town, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth." His primary work was preaching the good news of salvation and redemption. This is the primary task of His New Testament churches from that day until this (Mark 16:15; Matthew

28:18-20). Jesus desires that preachers and churches be firm and authoritative, yet loving, in preaching and spreading this most needed message. Clarke states, "His mission has been transferred to his people (John 17:18; 20:21), and in their hands it is of the same kind as in his" (29).

His purpose was to preach. This is reinforced by the parallel verse in Luke 4:43 "And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent." These statements by Jesus reveal the purpose and authority of Jesus. He said, "for therefore came I forth" and "for therefore am I sent." He was sent of God the Father and He came forth to preach the good news of salvation through the grace and mercy of God that whosoever believes would be saved.

His disciples sought Him according to verse 37 and told Him "...All *men* seek for thee." People sought Him for His miracles to see them and have them performed. However, the performing of miracles (healing diseases and casting out demons) was not His reason for coming forth from the Father (Clarke 28). Jesus used the miracles only as they pertained to His main purpose. Yes, He manifested His mighty power in performing miracles. Yet, the reason He did was primarily so that people would be convinced that He was who He said He was. Jesus states in John 5:36 "But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."

Jesus was the Prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy 18:18 where God declares unto Moses, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." Jesus was the Messiah spoken of by the prophets. He was the very Son of God – the Son of Man – come forth from God, "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He expressed this very plainly in Luke 4:18,19, "The Spirit of

the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Accordingly, Jesus preached in the Jewish synagogues as proclaimed in Mark 1:39 "And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils."

Establishing authority by explaining His purpose (Luke 4:16-21) To completely bring out the purpose of Jesus as brought out in Mark 1:38 a brief exposition of Luke 4:16-21 is necessary. In this passage the purpose of Jesus is explained very clearly. Luke reveals that Jesus stood up and read from the Old Testament before the congregation in the synagogue in Nazareth. He read from Isaiah 61:1,2a as recorded in Luke 4:18,19. In comparing Isaiah 61:1,2 with Luke 4:18,19 it shows that Jesus did not quote all of Isaiah 61:2. Jesus did not quote the part that states "and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn." Why was this omitted? Notice that Jesus said in Luke 4:21, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." This Scripture applies to Jesus. He was fulfilling it and was the fulfilling of it and by doing so He explains His purpose. Nevertheless, He would not at that time (during His first coming) fulfill the last part of Isaiah 61:2 and thus He did not quote it. In verse 18 He states, "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me" He then proceeds to give six reasons for this. In these reasons He manifests His purpose in coming forth from God.

Establishing authority by manifesting His purpose (Luke 4:18-19) In these verses Jesus said, "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me" and then He explains why. In this explanation He manifests His purpose in being sent of God and thus coming forth from God. First, He said that the Spirit had "anointed me to preach the gospel

to the poor" Who are the poor? Does He mean the financially poor? No, for this would leave out the financially rich. The dictionary defines "poor" as meaning "having little or nothing in the way of wealth, goods, or means of subsistence; . . ." and further it defines "poor" as "deficient or lacking in something specified . . ." (American College Dictionary 942). It is the latter shade of meaning that Jesus was using here. He was speaking of the poor state of all men before God. Men have nothing in the way of spiritual wealth before God. Men have nothing to commend them before God. All human beings are deficient or lacking in what it takes to be rich before God. Men are unrighteous and unholy in His sight (Romans 3:10-23). Men are poor spiritually speaking. Thus Jesus came and gave up the glory of heaven to preach "the glad tidings" of salvation and to die for sinners in that He is that very Savior (Philippians 2:5-8). Each person should ask the question, "Have I trusted Him as my personal Savior?" For without Him each person is spiritually poor.

Second, Jesus said that the Spirit had "sent me to heal the brokenhearted" Who are the brokenhearted? Those brokenhearted over sin in their lives and because of the guilt of iniquity. Also those brokenhearted because they face the penalty of their transgressions and because they face judgment before the just and the true God. And, most of all, those brokenhearted because they are not right with the God who created them. The prophet Isaiah states in Isaiah 53:5 "But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Thus Jesus came to heal (or make whole) the brokenhearted by His suffering and dying on the cross for all people of all ages. He came to reconcile the repentant sinner to God. In this way the believing sinner is healed, made whole spiritually, by His suffering. This explains the reason He came.

Third, Jesus said that "The Spirit . . . is upon me, . . . to preach deliverance to the captives . . ." What does He mean "captives"? The word "captives" comes from the Greek word αἰχμάλωτος (aichmalotos) which means "a prisoner of war . . . a captive . . ." (Strong's 164; Greek Dictionary 9). Captives in this case are those bound: by selfishness, by sin, by Satan, by the doom of the just judgment of God, by evil habits, and by the doom of hell. Jesus said in John 8:34 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." So Jesus came in divine love to set the captive sinner free. Jesus said in John 8:32,36 "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Free from what? Free from the dominion of Satan and sin, the guilt of sin, the penalty of sin, the doom of sin (the judgment of God), the consequence of sin (hellfire). Free to live for God and serve God and to go to heaven by His grace.

Fourth, Jesus said that the Spirit has "sent me . . ." for the "recovering of sight to the blind . . ." It is true that during His personal ministry upon the earth, Jesus restored the physical sight of some people who were blind, and this is a marvel of His power and wonderful in itself. Howbeit, what He is speaking of here in Luke 4:18 is that of the opening of the eyes of the ones lost in sin. The lost are blinded to their condition. They need the gospel light in order that they may see. The Apostle Paul states, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). Jesus was speaking of His church in Matthew 5:14 when He states, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Thus, through the good news of the love of Jesus

Christ, the repentant believing sinner is brought to the light of the truth of the salvation provided only by God. When the sinner repents and believes, his spiritual eyes are opened. Jesus came so that the sinner could see himself as he is in the sight of God and see God as He is, holy and undefiled. Jesus came to reconcile the whosoever believer to God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

Fifth, Jesus said that "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised. . . ." The "bruised" are those bruised by the guilt of sin, guilt that will not go away but stains the very depth of the soul of the sinner. The "bruised" are those convicted of their guilt, convicted that God is just, convicted that God is just to cast them into hell. But Jesus declares that He came "to set at liberty them that are bruised." He does so by His death, burial, and resurrection through the grace of God. Because of this saved, born-again, blood-bought believers are at liberty to serve God. The one set at liberty is still a sinner, but saved and desires to serve God and glorify the Savior.

Sixth, the purpose of Jesus is manifested when He said in Luke 4:18,19 that "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, . . . to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." This is why Jesus declares in Mark 1:38 "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth." In the final analysis, this really refers to the fact that salvation is available to any and all who will accept it right now in the present time. The Apostle Paul explains in 2 Corinthians 6:2 "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation."

In summary the purpose of Jesus was to preach the Gospel (Mark 1;14,15,38,39). He came and died for sinners. He came to forgive the repentant sinner. He came by the grace of God the Father, in order that the sinner may be saved

from his sins by meeting the conditions of repentance toward God and faith in His Son. He came to give every believer life eternal and the promise of the resurrection. He came to establish His church so that the correct message of the good news of the redemption of man might be perpetually preserved, preached, and presented to a lost and dying world until Jesus shall return the second time to this earth (1 Timothy 3:15). Most of all, His purpose was to glorify and please His Father. Therefore, the purpose of the ministry of Jesus on earth is manifested in Mark 1:38; Luke 4:16-21; and Luke 19:10 among other passages.

Establishing authority by His action in praying (1:35) After a very busy evening of healing and casting out demons, Jesus seeks a solitary place for prayer with His Heavenly Father the first thing in the early morning hours. This demonstrates the importance of prayer. Clarke observes that this is "An impressive illustration of his love of prayer, and of his desire to be alone for communion with his Father" (28). "Jesus seeks the strength that only communion and fellowship with the Father can provide" (Wessel 629). It would seem that His ministry was in a crisis situation in that the people were having the wrong perception of His ministry (Wessel 629), (just as many have the wrong idea about Jesus, His ministry, and His churches today.) They seemed "only interested in what He could do to heal their physical afflictions . . ." (Wessel 629), when in reality the important thing was and is His preaching of the Gospel and the spiritual aspect of salvation. (It is sad today, for many people, for the most part, are only interest in entertainment and recreation and someone to baby sit their children.)

The praying of Jesus cannot be over emphasized for without it He could accomplish nothing (John 8:26-29). In this way He stayed in connection with His Father at all times. From verse 35 and other Scriptures at least three major points can

be learned: one, the time of prayer; two, the place of prayer; and three, the teachings of Jesus about prayer. One, the time of prayer was early in the morning. This verse states "Rising up . . . before day" before all other activities would claim His attention. This was important. He prayed in order to carry out His personal ministry according to the will of His Father. His authority came from God. His purpose in prayer was so that His actions would be controlled and guided by God throughout the day. This is a good example for the children of God to be in tune and in touch with God everyday and every hour. It is the best way to start the day. This is illustrated by the following poem by Ralph Cushman (the source is unknown to this writer).

IN THE MORNING

I met God in the morning, When my day was at its best
And His presence came like sunrise Like a glory in my breast.
All day long the Presence lingered. All day long He stayed with me.
And we sailed with perfect calmness O'er a very troubled sea.
Other ships were blown and battered Other ships were sore distressed.
But the winds that seemed to drive them Brought to us a peace and rest.
Then I thought of other mornings With a keen remorse of mind,
When I, too, had loosed the moorings With the Presence left behind.
So I think I know the secret Learned from many a troubled way.
You must seek God in the morning If you want Him through the day.

This is not the only time the people of God should pray as seen from other examples and words of Jesus.

Two, the place of prayer was a solitary place. Jesus wanted to be alone with God. He wanted to get away from the rush and scramble of the world and the distractions of frenetic crowds. Consider some examples of Jesus praying and being alone with the Father: before walking on the water, Mark 6:45-52; before ordaining His 12 apostles, Mark 3:13,14; Luke 6:12-16; before and during the temptation by Satan, Matthew 4:1,2; Luke 4:1,2; on the Mount of Transfiguration with his closest disciples, Luke 9:28; after healing a leper, Luke 5:16; and before asking His

disciples, whom do men say I am; Luke 9:18 and others. All His public deeds were preceded and accomplished by prayer. Time alone with God is important.

Three, the teachings of Jesus about prayer are found throughout the four Gospel records. Consider first of all the question, what is prayer? Alexander Cruden defines it this way: "It is an offering up of our desires to God for things lawful and needful, with an humble confidence to obtain them through the alone mediation of Christ, to the praise of the mercy, truth and power of God" (368). Simply stated, it is reverently talking with God, being humble before Him, asking Him for our needs and praising and thanking Him, believing He will do what we ask. However, all requests of prayer must be asked in accordance with His will. The examples of Jesus bear this out (Mark 14:36).

What did Jesus teach about prayer? Jesus taught "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). Jesus taught His disciples how to pray in "the Model Prayer" of Matthew 6:8-15. In a summary of this Jesus instructs: to pray and honor God, the Father (this includes worship and giving praise in praying); to pray that His kingdom will soon come and that the will of God will be done (this includes praying according to His will); to pray for daily needs and provisions; to ask for forgiveness of sins and to forgive others; to pray that one be not led into temptation but be delivered from evil (this includes praying for the strength to overcome and be delivered from the power of sin in daily living and to pray for protection); and to recognize that the kingdom, power, and glory belong only to God, for ever. Furthermore, in Matthew 6:14-15 Jesus states the condition for disciples to be forgiven when He declares, "if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Jesus gives also the conditions for answered prayers in Mark 11:22-26 and John 16:23 which shall be discussed in dissertation chapter 18 which is for Mark 11:1-26. Jesus also taught His disciples to pray for others. He taught this by example in the real Lord's Prayer according to John 17:1-26. The Bible also teaches this in 1 Timothy 2:1-4. Others things can be said of Jesus and prayer: He prayed often; He prayed before He faced any great task or trial; He prayed in public; He prayed in secret; sometimes all night; sometimes alone; sometimes with His disciples. Jesus put a high premium on secret prayer (Matthew 6:6). He practiced intercessory prayer according to John 17. He promised the power of the Spirit in answer to prayer (Luke 11:13). He taught that a sinner could pray for his own salvation (Luke 18:13).

Establishing authority as seen in the people who followed Him (1:36-37)

According to verse 36 when Simon and those with him found that Jesus was out of the house they "followed after him." The words "followed after" is from the Greek verb καταδιώκω (katadioko). This word means "search for diligently" (Bushell, Bible Works for Windows). Also, it means "to follow hard upon; to track, follow perseveringly" (Analytical Greek Lexicon 215). It has the idea of an intense "hunt, chase" with the idea of "pursuit" (Robertson, Word Pictures 264). Verse 37 reveals the reason for this for they said to Him, "All men seek for thee." But the people were seeking the physical.

Although Simon and the others may not have followed after Jesus at this particular time for the right reason, nevertheless the disciples of Jesus will follow Him (John 10:27). Why? because of who He is. He is the Son of God. He is the Lamb of God (John 1:29). He is the One who has all power and all authority (Matthew 28:18). He is the Savior of all who will repent and believe (1 Timothy 4:10).

In addition, His disciples follow Him because they have: been called out by the Gospel (Mark 1:14-20; 1 Corinthians 1:18-20); been convicted by the Holy Spirit; answered by repentance and faith; been redeemed by the blood, (1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:9); and been given eternal life, (John 10:28). Furthermore, they follow Him because He calls them to service (Matthew 11:28-30). And last but not least, His people follow him because they have a personal relationship with and to Him (John 10:27,28) and they have sweet fellowship with Him and love Him.

Establishing authority with His compassion in healing a leper (1:40-45)

Verses 40-45 speak of Jesus establishing His authority by making a leper clean. As Jesus continued His ministry in and around Capernaum a leper was drawn to Him. Leprosy in that day was a very dreaded and dreadful disease much like cancer and "Aids" are today. There was and is no known cure. Leprosy in some ways is a type of the sin nature within us. According to the Law, a leper must announce as he approached people, "Unclean, unclean." Also he was to live alone or with others of his kind and outside the camp (Leviticus 13:45-46). Nevertheless, this leper realizing his need to be healed and having heard of the fame of Jesus believed He could heal him. Thus he came to Jesus beseeching Him and kneeling before Him saying, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." He had no doubt in the power of Jesus but he did doubt His mercy. This is so much like people today!

Verse 41 reveals that Jesus was "moved with compassion" and reached out and touched this unclean leper and said, "I will; be thou clean." This act of touching incurred defilement and was unlawful but at the same time was an expression of compassion. Jesus boldly placed love and compassion over ritual and regulation for it was God who had commanded these laws for the good of the people as a whole. Verse 42 says, "the leprosy departed from . . ." the man, "and he was cleansed." This

shows the wonderful working power of our Savior-God and reveals the grace and mercy of God.

The spiritual application of this incident is what it pictures. All men are drawn by the power of the Holy Spirit to Christ. They are drawn by the need to be cleansed of sin. They are drawn by the power of God. They are drawn by a need to get right with God. They are drawn by the preaching and witnessing of the gospel. The truth is that all are sinners and all need a Savior. Jesus is that Savior, the only Savior. Jesus came preaching the good news of the kingdom of God. Jesus came preaching that "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Anyone and everyone who will repent and believe the gospel shall be saved, born-again from above. Sinners are saved by the power of Christ and His shed blood. They are washed in the blood. The stain of sin is gone. The guilt is gone. Their souls are as white as snow. They stand justified before the holy and righteous God.

In verses 43, 44 Jesus demonstrated His respect for the Law of Moses in that He told the man to go to the priest. Jesus did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17,18). Thus, He abided by the Law and not the false interpretation of it by the Jewish leaders of that day. It should be noted that Jesus charged this cleansed leper to "say nothing to any man" as he went to the priest. Verse 45 reveals the purpose of this charge. Jesus did not want His ministry to be thwarted by premature violence of His enemies. But what Jesus feared seems to have happened, and it curtailed His public ministry. This man went out and blazed abroad his cure before going to the priest. This resulted in Jesus not being able to "openly enter into the city. . . ." Yet in His isolation, "the desert places," people managed to find Him for "they came to Him from every quarter." The compassion of Jesus illustrates His purpose and His authority to act for His Father.

Summary of Chapter

Jesus began His ministry in and around Capernaum and other towns near the Sea of Galilee. He called His first disciples and in so doing He began and established His New Testament church on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus trained these disciples to be fishers of men. These disciples recognized His authority in that they followed Him. [God still calls men out of those who are saved to preach the gospel message of the death, burial, resurrection of Christ Jesus.] God in His love sent Jesus to die and pay for the sins of the whole world so that whosoever believes in Jesus will be redeemed and go to heaven (John 3:16; 20:21). Jesus came into the world to redeem and save sinful, doomed sinners. He came to establish His church so that the correct message of the good news of the redemption of man might be perpetually preserved, preached, and presented to a lost and dying world until He shall return to this earth as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 19:16).

As He taught in the synagogue and cast out the demon, the people recognized that this One taught with authority and power and that His doctrine came from God. By His actions and examples, the Servant established His authority early in His ministry by teaching, praying, preaching, and performing miracles. He established His authority and the truth that He was sent from God by His instantaneous power and complete healing of all manner of diseases and in casting out demons.

The compassion of Jesus in healing a leper illustrates His purpose and His authority to act for His Father. Most of all, His purpose was to glorify and please His Father. [Jesus used miracles only as they pertained to His main purpose. The reason He did was primarily that people would be convinced that He was who He said He was.] The life of Jesus presents plenty of action and the actions of Jesus were completely consistent with what He said. His actions served to reinforce His message

and to establish His authority. The first action that Jesus took in the early morning was to pray unto His heavenly Father. This demonstrates to one and all the importance of praying and staying in touch with God.

Chapter Notes

1. (See page 70; Mark 1:16.) [Note of explanation: περιπατῶν (peripateo) is from the "Textus Receptus" as found in The New Testament, The Greek Text page 64. On the other hand, παράγω from παράγω (parago) {meaning "to pass by, go past . . ." (Thayer 480)} is used by Alfred Marshall in The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament page 138].
2. (See page 75; Mark 1:21.) The synagogues originated during the Babylonian captivity (Thayer 600). The Jews learned they could worship God without being in the temple (Wuest 30). They brought this back into the land upon their return and met together for prayer and study of the Torah or Law (Wessel 626). In the day of the public ministry of Christ there were about 1500 synagogues in Israel. The Jewish custom was to recognize visitors to speak and thus Jesus (and later the apostle Paul) took advantage of this opportunity (Wuest 30; Luke 4; Acts 13).
3. (See page 80; Mark 1:29-31.) The fact that Peter indeed had a wife negates the idea of celibacy of the clergy as taught by the some.

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION TWO---

THE SERVANT: ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY

(Mark Chapters 1:16-45; 2:1-28; 3:1-35)

---CHAPTER 5---

Authority against Growing Opposition

(Mark Chapters 2:1-28; 3:1-6)

OUTLINE

V. Authority against Growing Opposition	2:1—3:6
A. The Forgiving and Healing of the Palsied Man (Matthew 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26)	2:1-12
B. The Call of Levi and Eating with Sinners (Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32)	2:13-17
C. Question Concerning Fasting; an Illustration and a Parable (Matthew 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39)	2:18-22
D. Two Controversies about Sabbath Observance (Matthew 12:1-14; Luke 6:1-11)	2:23-28; 3:1-6
1. Plucking and eating corn on the Sabbath	2:23-28
2. Healing a withered hand on the Sabbath	3:1-5
3. Plotting to destroy the Model Servant	3:6

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION TWO---

THE SERVANT ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY

(Mark Chapters 1:16-45; 2:1-28; 3:1-35)

---CHAPTER 5---

Authority against Growing Opposition

(Mark Chapters 2:1-28; 3:1-6)

In the last part of Mark chapter 1, Jesus manifested His compassion in His power and authority to heal leprosy. This was also part of illustrating His purpose. This theme of the compassion (with authority) of Jesus is seen also in chapter 2:1-12 and 3:1-5. As Jesus continued His earthly ministry in and around Galilee, He had conflicts with various religious leaders (Wessel 631) ending in a plot to kill Him (Mark 3:6,7). Notwithstanding, He continued to establish His authority with compassion and love; but now, He faces growing opposition from some of the religious leaders of the Jews. This passage, Mark 2:1—3:6, entitled "Authority against growing opposition" may be divided into four parts: one, the forgiving and healing of the palsied man, 2:1-12; two, the call of Levi and eating with sinners, 2:13-17; three, question about fasting; an illustration and a parable, 2:18-22; and four, controversies about Sabbath observance, 2:23—3:6. Some commentators believe that these incidents are not in chronological sequence, but that "Mark" simply "brought them together because they have a common theme: conflict with the religious

authorities" (Wessel 631). This may or may not be so; nevertheless, the words and order are inspired by the Holy Spirit. The way Jesus handled each circumstance also manifested His authority as the Son of man, the perfect servant of God the Father; for Jesus states in Mark 2:10-11 "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power (*or authority*) on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house."

A. The Forgiving and Healing of the Palsied Man 2:1-12

(Matthew 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26)

The real emphasis of this entire passage is that Jesus "preached the word" to the people as seen in verse 2. The word "preached" is not from the same Greek root word as used in Mark 1:14 for "preaching the gospel" or for "may preach" in 1:38. The word used there is κηρύσσω (*kerusso*) and means "to be a herald; to officiate as herald; to proclaim after the manner of a herald; always with a suggestion of formality, gravity, and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed; . . . spec(*ifically*) used of the public proclamation of the gospel and matters pertaining to it, made by John the Baptist, by Jesus, by the apostles and other Christian teachers . . ." (Thayer 346).

Even though a different Greek word is used, the idea is still the same. The word rendered "preached" in verse 2 is ἐλάλει (*elalei*) which is the imperfect third person singular of λαλέω (*laleo*). This Greek verb means "to utter a sound . . . to emit a voice, make one's self heard; hence to utter or form words with the mouth, to speak . . . to use words in order to declare one's mind and disclose one's thoughts; to speak . . ." (Thayer 368). The statement "and he preached the word unto them" as used in verse 2 has the idea of ". . . to announce or preach the word of God or the doctrine of salvation . . ." since the basic construction is (λαλεῖν τόν λόγον) [*preach the word*] (Thayer 369). Therefore, the word "preached" as used in this verse was without a

doubt, the good news of salvation as it is in Christ Jesus. Salvation involves the forgiveness of sin and thus Jesus demonstrated the need for forgiveness in first forgiving the palsied man of sin before He healed his physical illness. Jesus wanted to emphasize that the greatest problem of man is sin and thus the greatest need is the forgiveness of sin. Also, in His declaration of forgiving the palsied man Jesus was declaring the presence of the kingdom of God among men (Wessel 634). In the midst of doing this Jesus was demonstrating and establishing His "authority against growing opposition." This segment of Mark may be subdivided as follows: one, the setting of the scene, 2:1-4; two, first things first: sins forgiven, 2:5; three, the reasoning and opposition of the scribes, 2:6,7; four, Jesus revealing that He is God, 2:8,9; and five, Jesus demonstrating His authority to forgive by His power to heal, 2:10-12.

The setting of the scene (2:1-4) Verse 1 records that Jesus once again returned to Capernaum and to the house of Peter (1:29). Some have suggested that this was the headquarters of Jesus during His Galilean ministry (Wessel 632; Clarke 31). But "even the place Jesus called home afforded Him no privacy" (Wessel 632), for it was noised abroad that He returned. Thus, verse two reveals that many came to Him "insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door" They wanted to see Him perform miracles but Jesus was doing what He came to do: preach the gospel. Remember what He said in Mark 1:38 "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth." In order to understand verses 3, 4 Wessel explains, "it is necessary to visualize the layout of a typical . . . house" of that day. Normally, "it . . . was a one-room structure with a flat roof." Usually a stairway was built on the outside for easy access to the roof (632). "The roof probably was formed by beams and rafters across which matting, branches, and twigs, covered earth trodden hard, were laid" (Taylor *qtd.* by Rienecker 92). Luke 5:19 states that they "let him down through the tiling . . ." The Greek word for "tiling"

is κέραμος (keramos). This word means "clay, potter's earth; anything made of clay . . . a roofing tile . . ." (Thayer 344). This implies that some kind of stone tiles may have been used also.

According to verses 3,4 four men came to the house bringing a man to Jesus who was "sick of the palsy. . . ." The word "palsy" is from the Greek noun παραλυτικός (paralutikos). It means "paralytic, i. e. suffering from the relaxing of the nerves of one side; universally, disabled, weak of limb . . ." (Thayer 484). This man was a paralytic or paralyzed, unable to walk on his own. The men carrying this paralytic man were persistent. They could not get into the house and get close to Jesus because of the press or crowd of people. Nevertheless, they believed that Jesus could heal their friend and so they "uncovered the roof" The word "uncovered" comes from the Greek ἀποστεγάζω (apostegazo) which means "to uncover, take off the roof . . . dug out. . ." (Thayer 67). These men were so determined that they went up on the roof and "literally unroofed the roof" (Clarke 32). The expression "and when they had broken *it* up. . ." comes from the first aorist participle ἐξορύσσω (exorusso) and means "to dig out . . . to dig through . . ." (Thayer 224). This means that these determined, persistent men removed (possibly) stone tiles (Luke 5:19) and/or beams of wood and then, dug or scooped out with their hands the matting, branches, and twigs, which were covered with earth trodden hard. Then, they lowered the man through the now exposed beams to the floor below. The bed was probably a thickly padded quilt or mat, or even "a pallet" (Thayer 358). This incident gives believers a good example to follow. If these men were persistent in getting this man to Jesus just to get him healed of his physical disability, should not the people of God be persistent in trying to get loved ones, neighbors, and friends to Jesus so they will trust in Him for eternal soul salvation.

First things first: sins forgiven (2:5) Verse 5 begins with "When Jesus saw their faith" Their faith was manifested visibly by their "ingenuity and persistence" (Wessel 632) in overcoming obstacles to get this palsied man to Jesus. They could have given up and gone away. They did not have to go up on the roof and dig it out. But they loved this man and they wanted to get help for him. Each believer should ask himself or herself, "Do we love the soul of the lost that much?" Their purpose was so that the man would be healed physically, but Jesus realized that this palsied man had a greater need and so He took care of this first by saying, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." On the surface this did not seem to be what the man needed (Wessel 632), but Jesus saw the heart and He saw the spiritual sickness of the man. Forgiveness of sin is the greatest need of all people in every age, no matter how great their physical ailments and needs may be. The word "forgiven" is from the Greek verb ἀφίημι (aphiami) of which Thayer says means "to send from one's self, to send . . . away . . . to let go, give up, a debt, by not demanding it . . . to remit, forgive" (88, 89). The idea is that when one appropriates the Lord Jesus as Savior by simple child—like faith, he has his sins put away forever and forever. The Psalmist expresses this truth in Psalms 103:2-12,

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things*; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

The sins of the repentant believer are put away judicially by the shed blood of Jesus who paid the penalty of the broken Law and satisfied the demands of divine justice.

Also, God removes the guilt of sin and bestows a positive righteousness, Jesus Christ Himself. Paul wrote:

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The reasoning and opposition of the scribes (2:6,7) Verses 6, 7 tells of the opposition of the scribes. The scribes were teachers of the Law. The word "scribe" from γραμματεύς (grammateus) is explained this way by Thayer,

a clerk, scribe, especially a public scribe, secretary, recorder, whose office and influence differed in different state In the Bible, a man learned in the Mosaic law and in the sacred writings, an interpreter, teacher Since the advice of men skilled in the law was needed in the examination of causes and the solution of difficult questions, they were enrolled in the Sanhedrin; and accordingly in the N. T. they are often mentioned in connection with the priests and elders of the people (121).

These scribes were there seemingly hoping to ensnare Jesus on some theological point. Robertson states, "These scribes (and Pharisees, Luke 5:21) were there to cause trouble, to pick flaws in the teaching and conduct of Jesus" (Word Pictures 268]. The statement about forgiveness of sin gave them their opportunity. (Critics like this are still around today.) They were jealous of Jesus and His popularity and power. Verse 6 ends with the statement that the scribes were "reasoning in their hearts," and verse 7 tells what they were thinking. They were thinking within themselves: "Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?" The word "reasoning" comes from the Greek word from which we derive the English word "dialogue." Mark used the Greek present middle participle nominative plural masculine διαλογιζόμενοι (dialogizomevoi) from the deponent middle verb διαλογίζομαι (dialogizomai). Thayer writes that this verb means "to bring together different reasons, to reckon up the reasons, . . . revolve in one's mind, deliberate . . ."

(139). They argued within their hearts and thought that Jesus was blaspheming God. The word "blasphemies" is from the plural form of the Greek noun βλασφημία (blasphemia). It means "slander, detraction, speech injurious to another's good name . . . impious and reproachful speech injurious to divine majesty (Thayer 102). In Ephesians 4:31 this word is translated "evil speaking." According to Dr. J. C. James "blasphemy" means "to utter stupid speech or slander" (*from class notes and sermons preached*). If they were correct, "their reasoning was flawless" (Wessel 633) since no one, but God can forgive sin. But their fatal mistake was "not recognizing who Jesus really was—the Son of God . . ." the God-man "who has the authority to forgive sins" (Wessel 633).

By this time they had heard the message of John the Baptist as recorded in John 1:29 "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." If they had listened to John the Baptist, they would have known that Jesus was God and therefore He had the authority to forgive sin. Peter preached in Acts 10:43 "To him (*that is, Jesus*) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Sins cannot be forgiven or remitted without the shedding of blood according to Heb 9:22; but in the view from eternity Jesus was already crucified, dead, buried and risen again.

Jesus revealing that He is God (2:8,9) Verses 8 relates that "Jesus perceived in His spirit" the thinking of the scribes. Jesus is not only omnipotent or all powerful but also omniscient; He knows all things. The word "perceived" from the aorist participle ἐπιγνούς (epignous) from ἐπιγινώσκω (epiginosko) means "to perceive, to recognize . . ." (Rienecker 92). The idea behind this word is that Jesus fully knew and was aware of the reasoning of these men. Thus to reveal their thinking Jesus

challenged them with the questions in verses 8,9, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say . . . *Thy sins be forgiven thee*; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" In a paraphrase, indeed, one could ask, "Is it easier to say, your sins are forgiven you or to say get up off your bed of affliction and walk and live in a normal way." Is any mere human able to say and perform such a feat as to heal someone stricken with paralysis? Both alike are impossible to men but equally easy for the God who has all power, knowledge, wisdom, and authority. With God all things are possible (Mark 10:27; 14:36; Luke 1:37).

Jesus demonstrating His authority to forgive by His power to heal (2:10-12) Jesus addresses the scribes and said in the first part of verse 10 "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" A literal rendering of verse 10 could be as follows, "But in order that ye may know and understand that authority has the Son of man to forgive sins upon the earth" (Looney, Various translations). Then to demonstrate this "he saith to the sick of the palsy" in verse 11, "To you, I am saying, rise up or get up, take the mat or bed of you and go unto your own house." (Looney, Various translations). The fact that Jesus could heal this man of his paralysis proved that He was the God in the flesh and verified His claim to grant forgiveness. Someone has said, "He did the miracle which they could see that they might know that He had done the other one that they could not see" (Hunter 38, *qtd. in* Wessel 633). In verse 12 Mark records that the cure was instantaneous and that in full view of them all, the palsied man arose, took up his mat and walked out. The reaction was one of intense amazement. Therefore, they all glorified God for they had never seen anything like this; for they said, "We never saw it on this fashion." In all of this Jesus was emphasizing the forgiveness of sins. Being forgiven of sin, brings cheer and joy to the life of the one who knows that God has

forgiven his or her sins. Jesus told the palsied man according to the parallel passage in Matthew 9:2 ". . . Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." The conclusion from this is that only God can forgive sin, yet, Jesus is God. God forgives because of and through the shed blood of His precious Son, Jesus Christ. Each person should ask himself or herself, "Can I truly say that my sins are forgiven?" If one cannot say this, then his or her sins are still upon him or her. If the sins of anyone are unforgiven, it is only because he or she has not trusted in the one and only Savior and that is none other than Jesus Christ. No one can have good cheer before God and feel comfortable in His presence unless he knows he has been forgiven of sin.

B. The Call of Levi and Eating with Sinners 2:13-17
(Matthew 9:9-13, Luke 5:27-32)

As Jesus continued His earthly ministry the religious leaders continued to oppose Him. Nevertheless, Jesus was establishing His authority and demonstrating the power of God in the midst of this growing opposition. In Mark 2:13-17, the Jewish leaders continue to oppose Jesus. This passage relates the second conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders of the day. This particular event is introduced in verses 13-17 by the account of the calling of Levi and eating with sinners. The particulars of this incident are: one, the call of Levi; Jesus adding to His church, 2:13-14; and two, eating with sinners; sinners called to repentance, 2:15-17.

The call of Levi; Jesus adding to His church (2:13-14) The parallel for this is given in Matthew 9:9; Luke 5:27-28. Mark records in 2:13 "And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them." Jesus emphasized teaching throughout His earthly ministry. Verse 13 underlines this truth, the teaching ministry of Jesus, as He was again walking alongside the Sea of Galilee; for Mark wrote, "he taught them," that is, the multitude. The Holy Spirit of

God emphasized teaching when He had Paul to write in Ephesians 4:11 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and (*or even*) teachers." The Apostle Paul charged Timothy to teach in his preaching when he wrote "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:1-2). Preaching is teaching. The word doctrine means teaching. The church pastor has the responsibility to teach the people in his flock. This is the example of Jesus throughout the four Gospels. It is the responsibility of the flock to listen, learn, take heed, and apply the teaching of the Word of God to themselves.

According to verse 14 Jesus calls Levi to follow Him and thus adds him to His church. In so doing He calls another of the disciples of John the Baptist to follow Him just as He did Simon, Andrew, James, and John (1:16-20). As Jesus walked along the sea side, He saw Levi the *son* of Alphaeus sitting at the place of toll, or "receipt of custom." This Levi is the same as the one called Matthew in Matthew 9:9. "It was not uncommon among the Jews to have two names" (Barnes 335). Levi was "his given name and Matthew ('gift of God') his apostolic name" (Wessel 634). He was a tax collector and these collectors were also called publicans as seen in Luke 5:27. Matthew Levi was employed by the Roman tetrarch of Galilee, Herod Antipas, to collect toll on freight and to collect taxes (Robertson, Word Pictures 270). Tax collectors were hated by the Jews and considered traitors because they were allowed a commission but many were also extortioners (Wessel 634; Wuest 51). Matthew was a business man and he had to figure taxes on loads of freight. He had to know mathematics and the business practices of the day. He was an intelligent man. This place of toll was located "on the Great West Road from Damascus to the

Mediterranean . . ." going through Capernaum (Wuest 51). This was probably not the first time Jesus and Levi had seen each other (Wuest 51). Jesus knew that this business man was also a busy man with an intensity of purpose. Jesus called him in order to transform his abilities into the work for the Lord.

The command of Jesus to Levi, "Follow me" is from the same Greek word as used in Mark 1:18. In Mark 2:14 the present imperative [ἀκολουθεῖ (akolouthei)] is used, but carries the same idea "to walk the same road" (Wuest 52). Thayer states that it means "to join one as a disciple" (22). The present tense means not only to begin an action but to continue in it. Jesus was saying, make it "a habit of life to follow me" (Wuest 52). Levi obeyed this command. To do so meant he had to have complete faith in Jesus, for unlike Peter and Andrew, it would be difficult for him to return to his occupation. Luke 5:28 says that Matthew Levi "left all" or forsook all and also (with Mark and Matthew) that he "followed him." What an example this is for believers and especially preachers that Matthew forsook all to follow Jesus! Barnes gleans a another good example as written in his comments on The Gospel According to Matthew that all believers should follow:

"It is worthy of remark that Luke has mentioned a circumstance favourable to Matthew, which Matthew himself has omitted. Luke says, "*he left all*" Had Matthew said this, it would have been a commendation of himself utterly unlike the evangelists. No men were ever farther from *praising themselves* than they were" (99).

Eating with sinners; sinners called to repentance (2:15-17) The parallel for this is given in Matthew 9:10-13; Luke 5:29-32. Mark 2:15-17 gives the account of Jesus and His disciples eating with publicans and sinners and the conflict with the religious leaders because of this. Matthew Levi made Jesus a great feast in his house and called all of his friends to the feast. Mark 2:15 reports : "that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house" The pronoun "his" refers back to the name Levi in verse 14. Luke

5:29 makes it clear that the feast took place in the house of Levi when he states, "And Levi made him a great feast in his own house" Many were invited to this feast in the house of Matthew Levi according to verse 15 and the many included publicans (or tax collectors) and sinners who sat together with Jesus. The publicans and sinners seemed to have been excluded from the synagogue (Wuest 53), thus in the eyes of Jesus this was a golden opportunity to preach to them. Wuest states, "This was Levi's gesture (*or way*) of introducing his fellow tax collectors to his new-found Saviour" (53). This suggests to believers in this age that this example would be a good way to introduce loved ones, friends, fellow workers, and neighbors to Jesus and His way of salvation. Verse 15 further declares concerning the publicans and sinners that "there were many, and they followed him."

However, growing opposition raises its head again according to verse 16. Verse 16 begins with "The scribes and the Pharisees," yet some commentators take it as "the scribes of the Pharisees," that is, "the scribes who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees" (Wuest 54; Clarke 37). *No doubt, some of the scribes were Pharisees.* These were those who were critics of Jesus. They criticized Jesus for eating with sinners and publicans. Wessel says that "'Sinners' denotes those people who refuse to follow the Mosaic Law as interpreted by the Pharisees" (635). It was unthinkable for these scribes and Pharisees that Jesus would eat with such people. Hence, they asked the disciples of Jesus, "How is it that He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?"

Who were the Pharisees? The following answer is adapted from the Harmony by John Franklin Carter:

This group was doubtless the most influential of the religious sects of the time of Jesus. . . . they had their beginning as a group . . . in the days . . . of the Maccabees Their distinguishing characteristics and doctrines were: (a) They put great emphasis on keeping the law. . . . *yet they* sought to bring God under obligation to themselves (cf. the Pharisee's prayer, Luke 18:11,12). (b)

They regarded the interpretations by the scribes (the 'tradition of the elders') as equally authoritative with the written Law itself. (c) They looked on themselves as righteous . . . and were highly critical of others (cf. Luke 18:11,12; Matt. 5:20). They called those sinners who lived in disregard of their rules and standards. (d) They believed in . . . angels, in life after death, and in a future resurrection . . . (cf. Acts 23:6,8; 24:15) (17,18).

And of course, the beliefs in part (d) of the above quote are Biblical teachings.

In verse 17 Jesus made a very profound statement in answer to the criticism of the scribes and the Pharisees. He said, "They that are whole (*the healthy*) have no need of the physician, but they that are sick . . ." Then, He makes the application very clear for He declares, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). His mission was not to conform to the Pharisees and their traditions. Their religion was based on incorrect and added interpretations of the Law and Jesus would not adhere to this. He did what was right and not what man thought was right. This is why the Pharisees thought so little of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For the same reason many today get upset with the preacher who preaches and teaches the truth whether in public or in private. The call of Jesus to salvation is to all people but will be heeded only by those who recognize their need. A self-righteous man is incapable of recognizing that need, but a sinner can. It was not a new doctrine that God would save sinners, but evidently, the Pharisees did not believe that God loves each sinner and saves them as they are, as sinners. This is why Jesus was eating with such a motley group (at least that was the opinion of some) so that He might reach them with the good news of salvation by grace (Ephesians 2:8,9).

In the account of Matthew of this incident some words of explanation are given. Jesus counsels in Matthew 9:13 "But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Jesus was quoting Hosea 6:6 "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and

the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." In addition to this, one should consider the words of Micah 6:6-8:

Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, *and* bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? 7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, *or* with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul? 8 He hath showed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Therefore, God calls not the righteous, that is, those who think in their deceived hearts that they are all right with God, but rather God calls "...sinners to repentance."

C. Question Concerning Fasting; an Illustration and a Parable 2:18-22

(Matthew 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39)

Verses 18-22 is another case where the Lord Jesus, the Servant, was brought into conflict with the religious leaders. In this passage Jesus uses a practical illustration and two, really one parable to defend His disciples for feasting rather than fasting. (The parallel in Luke uses the term "parable" in Luke 5:36, where the Bible states, "And he spake also a parable unto them") This passage consists of the following components (the question and a two-fold answer): one, a question about fasting by the improbable combination of two groups, 2:18; Luke 5:33; two, Jesus using an illustration of the children of the bridechamber, 2:19,20; Luke 5:34,35; and three, using the parable of the new patch on an old garment and the new wine in old wine-skins, 2:21,22; Luke 5:36-39.

A question about fasting by the improbable combination of two groups

(2:18; Luke 5:33) In verse 18 Jesus is approached by an unlikely combination of people. He was approached by one group called "the disciples of John" (meaning John the Baptist who at that time was in prison according to 1:14) and another group called "the disciples of the Pharisees" (Luke 5:33). Both of these groups were fasting

seemingly at the time the Lord and His disciples were feasting at the house of Matthew (Luke 5:33). It seems they did not understand why Jesus and His disciples were not fasting like as they. So they ask the question as recorded in the last part Mark 2:18, "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?" The Law only required fasting on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16:29-31; 23:27-32; Numbers 29:7). After the Babylonian Exile four other annual fasts were observed by the Jews (Zechariah 7:5; 8:19) (Wessel 636). But the Pharisees fasted twice a week according to Luke 18:12, seemingly to be seen of men. Why the disciples of John were fasting is not completely known. And why they sided with the Pharisees of whom their leader, John, called a brood of vipers (Matthew 3:7) is hard to understand. Nevertheless, they teamed with the Pharisees in criticizing Jesus on this occasion. Jesus answers and explains this question of verse 18 by using the illustration of verses 19,20 and the parable in verses 21, 22.

Jesus using an illustration of the children of the bridechamber (2:19,20; Luke 5:34,35) The first part of this two-fold answer is found in verses 19,20, concerning the children of the bridechamber. This is a reference to the custom of marriage of that day. The emphasis is on the joy the presence of Jesus makes possible. Thus "fasting — a sign of mourning — is not appropriate" (Wessel 636). The wedding feast of that day was a very joyous event (Wessel 636). The guests joined in the celebration that lasted for days. Fasting during such an event would be unimaginable. Jesus is the bridegroom (John 3:29) and His disciples, the children. So while Jesus "remains with them they will rejoice, (*and*) not fast" (Wessel 636). Yet He would not always be with them, and when He is taken away then they would fast. Jesus did, in fact, teach His disciples to fast and pray according to Matthew 6:5-18, but to do both for the praise of God and not to please and impress men. The

real problem was that Jesus did not conform to the standard of Pharisees under their interpretation of the Old Testament. He shows that He was not bound by the customs of the Pharisees. (This will be addressed again, but especially in Mark chapter 7.)

Using the parable of the new patch on an old garment and the new wine in old wine-skins (2:21,22; Luke 5:36-39) The illustration of the children of the bridechamber as well as the parable found in verses 21, 22 serve as an explanation by Jesus concerning the dissension between the Pharisees and Jesus. Actually the teaching here has a broader scope than fasting, but our Lord Jesus used it to apply to fasting and that fasting belonged to the old dispensation. Verses 21,22 teach the relationship between the old and new: the law age and the church age. Luke 5:36-39 is a parallel passage to Mark 2:21,22. The passage in Luke is explained and exposed in detail in a sermon preached by Brother Randy Murry¹ entitled "*The Old and the New Luke 5:36-39,*"

Luke 5 verses 36-39 (*Mark 2:21,22*) teach the relationship between the old and the new. These verses teach exactly the same thing. They give us two illustrations of the same parable. Cloth and wine should not be spiritualized into something other than cloth and wine. What did Jesus mean when He said cloth? Cloth! What did He mean when He said wine? Wine! They were but illustrations to teach the parabolic lesson. An explanation of the cloth used in the first century is needed. The cloth of that day was handmade. There was no chemical treatment to prevent shrinkage. Therefore every time a garment would be washed it would shrink. If a tear should come to be in a used garment and a seamstress took a new piece of unwashed cloth and sewed it into their old garment, the new piece would shrink at a greater rate than the old and this in turn would create another rent by combining or mixing the old and new cloth. One would simply produce the same problem that originally intended to be corrected.

The same lesson is taught in verses 37-39 by the putting of new wine in old bottles. The bottles of that day were not made from glass but from animal skins. The skins were not tanned and would expand as the new wine fermented. If more new wine were poured into the already expanded skins, the resulting fermentation would rupture the container and both the container and the wine would be lost. This teaches as does verse 36 that the old and the new cannot be mixed.

The central truth or lesson illustrated in both of these examples is that the old and the new cannot be mixed. This is the parabolic teaching. Thus Jesus says in verse 38 (*Mark 2:22*), "But new wine must be put into new bottles." And Luke further records in *Luke 5:38* that Jesus added, "...and both are preserved." Both old and new must be identified and so used properly and applied correctly. This teaches the relationship between the Old and the New Covenants or Testaments.

They do have a relationship and both are needed in the Bible. It is like a two-page letter. The first page introduces and is needed to understand the second page and the second helps understand the first. The second page would make little sense if the reader would not first study the first. Yet the letter would make little sense if the reader did not go on to page two. Both pages are needed. And so also it is true that the Old and the New Covenant have a meaningful and purposeful relationship. They are not the same. They are not to be mixed. But they do have a relationship. --- The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. This is the relationship they have. Thus the Old Covenant is useful and needed today for such things as history, types, and prophecy. Yet, the New Testament contains the doctrines which are the rules for our faith and practice in this age. We are not under the time of the Old Covenant. We are in a new time under that New Covenant. There is a relationship between the two but they are not to be inter-twined. And this is what Jesus is teaching. The New is not merely a restatement of the Old. Indeed the New does not proceed on the same level with the Old. The New rises out from the letter and into the Spirit that is the basic principles of the will of God.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught what was important about the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." He taught what was important about the commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." It went out from the letter into that which is more important. So that we can understand better the will of God and the direction our life should take. Through the New Covenant the veil is taken away and men can go boldly in the presence of God and value that New Covenant. As such under the New Covenant we are not required to observe the Holy Days. It should not be made a test of faith as to the day a person worships. We are not obligated to keep the feasts and fasts of the Old Covenant. We are not under the dietary laws. Such matters as fasting and prayer are calls to rise above the empty traditions as practiced by the Pharisees in the days of Jesus. They came to be meaningful worship. Under the New Covenant the sacrificial system is outdated because all that it pictures and foreshadows is brought to focus by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the New Covenant emphasizes that law and works have no part in procuring or preserving salvation. Too many today try to mix grace and law in the matter of salvation. Jesus was teaching that you cannot mix the two (Murry).

35:2 and Numbers 15:32-36. Wherefore, Jesus again defends the actions of Himself and of His disciples. He shows that: He is the Lord of the Sabbath; and teaches that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. He challenges them with the question in 3:4 "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" In handling these two controversies about Sabbath observance, Jesus manifested His authority as the Son of man, the perfect servant of God the Father even against growing opposition. Mark 2:23—3:6 relates more conflicts between Jesus and the Jewish leaders of the day and may be sub-divided as follows: one, plucking and eating corn on the Sabbath, 2:23-28 (Matthew 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5); two, healing a withered hand on the Sabbath, 3:1-5 (Matthew 12:9-13; Luke 6:6-10); and three, plotting to destroy the Model Servant, 3:6 (Matthew 12:14; Luke 6:11).

Plucking and eating corn on the Sabbath (2:23-28) (*The parallel for this is given in Matthew 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5.*) In verses 23,24 Jesus is criticized for plucking corn on the Sabbath. Verse 23 describes the action for which the Pharisees in verse 24 criticizes Jesus and His disciples. Verse 23 says "...that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn." The emphasis is the fact they were doing this on the Sabbath day. The expression "corn field" is from the Greek genitive plural σπορίμων (sporimon). This word means "fit for sowing, sown . . . sown fields, growing crops" (Thayer 585). The idea is that of a corn field or grainfield. The expression "ears of corn" is not corn as people understand it today. The Greek word στάχυς (stachus) means "an ear of corn or of growing grain" (Thayer 586). This word was rendered corn in the King James English because corn in that day, 1611, simply meant an ear of wheat or barley. The English infinitive "to pluck" is from the Greek present participle τίλλοντες (tillontes) from τίλλω (tillo) meaning to "pluck or pick" (Bushell, Bible Works for

Windows). This gives the idea that they were pushing their way through the grain field and as they went they were plucking the ears and eating.

In verse 24 the expression "said unto him" from the Greek is from the inceptive imperfect verb of λέγω (lego) and can literally be translated "they began to say" (Rienecker 94; Dana and Mantey 190,191). The Greek imperfect tense is durative in action and so conveys the idea that the Pharisees were continually criticizing Jesus. In this case the controversy was not over the act of harvesting with their hands and eating for this was allowed in the Law according to Deuteronomy 23:25; 24:19. But the Pharisees were charging that this entailed labor and was, therefore, unlawful on the Sabbath day. They were opposing and questioning Jesus and His authority. They were saying that he was breaking the Law God gave to Moses for the Hebrew people.

In verses 25-26 Jesus gives His defense. First, He asked the Pharisees a counter-question by asking, "Have ye never read...?" This wording is from the Greek οὐδέποτε (oudepote) ἀνέγνωτε (anegnote). Ὁυδέποτε (oudepote) may literally be rendered "did ye not ever?" (Wuest 59). Ἀνέγνωτε (anegnote) from ἀναγινώσκω (avaginosko) means "to read." The negative particle οὐ (ou) in οὐδέποτε (oudepote) being used in a question expects an affirmative answer (Dana and Mantey 264). Jesus was saying, "did ye not ever read?" or in other words, "I know you have read." He was appealing to their knowledge of the Old Testament. Jesus continues His counter-question by referring to an incident about David from 1 Samuel 21:1-6. David and his companions were being chased by King Saul and were hungry and ate the shewbread in the Holy Place. This bread was baked by the priests and twelve fresh loaves were brought into the sanctuary each Sabbath to replace the old ones. The old bread was then to be only eaten by the priests (Exodus 25:30; 35:13; 39:36; Leviticus 24:5-9). David was not condemned for his action and "Jesus does not claim . . ." that David did not "technically" break the Law (Wessel 638). Nor does Jesus

claim that the Law of the Sabbath was not technically broken (Wessel 638). However, He does claim ". . . that such violations under certain conditions are warranted, . . ." since real human need transcends the law of religious ritualism (Earle as used in Wessel 638). This is what He teaches in verses 27.

In verses 27, 28 Jesus gives a two-fold answer in defense and explanation of His actions and those of His disciples. First, He said that, "The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath." The word "man" comes from the Greek noun ἄνθρωπος (anthropos) which means mankind in general and not males only (Thayer 46). [If Jesus had meant a male only, he would have used the word ἀνήρ (aner) or ἄνδρας (andras) meaning a male and/or a husband (Thayer 45). This is the word translated man in both Acts 6:5 and 8:12.] The sabbath was "a gift of God to man . . ." to provide mankind with a day of rest and opportunity to worship (Wessel 638) after a long week of hard work. Second, Jesus taught them that "the Son of man is Lord also over the sabbath" (2:28). By using the title "Son of man," Jesus identifies Himself as the Messiah and the incarnate Son of God manifested in human flesh (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6,7; Matthew 2:21-25; John 1:1,2,14). As the Son of man He was not the slave of the sabbath but the κύριος (kurios) or Lord over it. Κύριος (kurios) means "he to whom a person or thing belongs, the owner" (Wuest 61). This is the One in charge or the One who has Authority. Jesus has authority over all things. This authority was given to Him by God the Father up in heaven (Matthew 28:18). This One called here, the Son of man, is none other than, Jesus the Creator. The Creator is speaking—the Lord of and over the creation and thus over the Sabbath of which He brought into being for the sake of man. Jesus thus demonstrated that an attitude such as the Pharisees possessed was wrong. Their idea was that the Sabbath did not permit the doing of good on the Sabbath and the taking care of real human needs (Matthew 12:9-14). Jesus did not break the Law nor sin for He never sinned in any way (2

Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5). The Pharisees simply had the wrong interpretation. They were trying to find a way to have Jesus put to death. Jesus went about doing good and the Bible says that He always did those things that pleased God, His heavenly Father (John 8:29; Acts 10:34-43).

Healing a withered hand on the Sabbath (3:1-5) In these verses the scribes and the Pharisees look for an opportunity on a Sabbath to discredit Jesus and to set the people against Him. The scene is that of Jesus in a synagogue healing a man with a withered hand on a Sabbath Day with the enemy looking on to find an occasion to accuse and to destroy Jesus. This is another occasion that shows that there was growing opposition to Jesus. Nevertheless, He was undaunted in manifesting His compassion and authority and revealing who He was by His teaching and supernatural power. (The parallel for this is given in Matthew 12:9-13; Luke 6:6-10.) Of this event, Luke states, "that he entered into the synagogue and taught . . ." (6:6).

This is the second incident of this series and a continuation of the controversies about the sabbath. It is the last of a series of five conflict incidents that commenced with Mark 2:1. Who is the "they" or enemy of Mark 3:2? Luke identifies the enemy as the scribes and the Pharisees (6:7) who "watched Him, whether He would heal on the sabbath day" Mark 3:1 says there was a man in the synagogue "which had a withered hand." The word "withered" is from the perfect passive participle of ξηραίνω (xeraino) meaning (for the passive) "to become dry, to dry out, to be withered" (Thayer 432). Since the participle used is in the perfect tense this points to action happening in the past with continuing results. The withered hand was probably due to "the result of injury by accident or disease . . ." and "was not from birth" (Rienecker 94). Whatever the case, the hand of this man was withered. Luke adds the detail of a physician that it was the right hand (6:6).

The scribes and Pharisees were there to spy and to catch Jesus. Verse 2 implies that some were there "in the synagogue, not to worship God, but to spy on Jesus" (Wessel 639). They watched Jesus intently to find occasion to accuse Him. The word "watched" from the imperfect tense of παρατηρέω (paratereo) means "to watch assiduously, observe carefully; . . ." and "contextually in a bad sense, to watch insidiously . . ." (Thayer 486). (An example of this usage is found in Luke 20:20.) The imperfect tense denotes that they were continually dogging every footstep of the Lord. The word "accuse" is from the aorist subjunctive of κατηγορέω (kategoreo) meaning "to speak against . . . in court, in the assembly of the people, to accuse . . . before a judge" (Thayer 340). It has the idea to accuse in order to bring charges against someone publicly. The issue as far as the scribes and Pharisees were concerned was not if He could heal, but if He would do so on the Sabbath (Wessel 639). That would be breaking their traditions!

Being aware of the opposition, Jesus proceeds. Verse 3 is connected to verse 2 by the Greek conjunction και (kai) translated "and." This shows that Jesus was well aware of the accusing hearts of the scribes and the Pharisees. Therefore, He commands the man with "the disabled hand" to "Stand forth" or in other words, to stand up in the midst of those seated around him. In so doing our Lord teaches by His example that the man of God, that is, the preacher, should not back down and compromise with the crowd of the devil when he knows he is right. (Yet, the preacher must remember that Jesus said in Matthew 10:16 "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.")

In verse 4 Jesus defends what He is about to do by asking challenging questions. He said unto them, "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? . . ." This revealed to the opposition that Jesus knew what was in their hearts. These questions could be paraphrased like this, "On the

Sabbath is it lawful, to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" The action of the opposition reveals their real concern. Mark states, "But they held their peace." This could literally be rendered, "But they were silent." The verb "held" in the Greek is the imperfect of *σιωπάω* (siopao) showing that they continued to be silent. In other words, "they continued in holding their peace or they continued not to say anything." This proved that they were not interested in the welfare of this man. By His questions Jesus implies that "the will of God is served better by saving (i. e., restoring to health) a life than by plotting to kill (as the Pharisees were doing; cf. v. 6)" (Wessel 639). Also since Jesus came "to destroy the works of Satan And, since evil works seven days a week, 'the warfare against Satan must go on on the Sabbath as well as on the other six days' " (Wessel 639; partial qtd. of Manson).

In verse 5 both the righteous indignation and power of the Servant is manifested. The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:26,27 "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil." ["Be ye angry" is from the present middle imperative verb *ὀργίζομαι* (orgizomai), while "wrath" is from *παροργισμός* (parorgismos).] This shows that sometimes it is correct and right to be angry. Verse 5 states that Jesus "being grieved," looked at the people all around the room of the synagogue showing by the expression on His face that He was angry. No doubt the hypocritical Pharisees "felt the cut of that condemnatory glance" (Robertson, Word Pictures 276). Jesus is rarely ever referred to as being angry. But His anger is ". . . never the expression of injured self-concern" (Wessel 639). His was "righteous indignation" — what a righteous man experiences ". . . in the presence of stark evil" (Wessel 639).

In the Greek there are three words which may be translated "angry or anger." *Θυμός* (thumos) means "passion, angry, heat, anger forthwith boiling up and soon

subsiding again . . ." (Thayer 293), but is usually translated "wrath" as in Luke 4:28; Acts 19:28; Hebrews 11:27, and so forth. Ὀργή (orge) ". . . denotes indignation which has arisen gradually and become more settled" (Thayer 293, 452). While this word is translated "anger" in Mark 3:5 and two other places, it is translated "wrath" thirty-one times. [The verb form rendered "be ye angry" is used in Ephesians 4:26.] The third word that speaks of anger is the noun παροργισμός (parorgismos) which is used only in Ephesians 4:26 and speaks of anger in the sense of "indignation, exasperation, wrath" (Thayer 490).

Mark uses the word ὀργή (orge) denoting the indignation of Jesus which had commenced "gradually and become more settled" (Thayer 293, 452). Jesus was highly displeased with the attitudes of the hearts of the Pharisees because they were being used as tools of Satan. This anger of Jesus was "justifiable" and "was couched in compassion" (Wessel 640) even for those who opposed Him. That Jesus truly has compassion for His opposers is shown by the statement "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts" Jesus was distressed because of "their 'stubborn hearts'" and that they failed "to recognize who He really was" (Wessel 640) — the Messiah — who could forgive them and save them.

"Being grieved" is from the present participle συλλυπέομαι (sullapeomai) meaning "to be grieved with, to feel sympathy . . . utterly distressed" (Rienecker). The present tense shows "the continuous state of grief" (Robertson, Word Pictures 276) that Jesus had toward the sins of people. He was called by Isaiah "a man of sorrows" (53:3). The aorist tense of the Greek word translated "looked" shows that His look with anger was but for a moment. These things together reveal His compassion on a people hardened by the sin of disbelief, self-righteousness, and preconceived ideas. The word "hardness" is from πωρώσει (porosei). Wuest says "the verbal form

means to cover with thick skin, to harden by covering with a callus, the noun poros meaning hard skin, a hardening" (65). Πωρώσιό (porosis), a noun, has the idea of "obtrusiveness of mental discernment, dulled perception, the mind of one has been blunted" (Thayer 559). Jesus compares their hearts to hands or feet covered with callouses. Their moral and spiritual perception was dulled.

Notwithstanding, Jesus ordered the man to "Stretch forth thine hand." The man obeyed, and immediately and completely, he was healed "and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Mark 3:5). The words "was restored" is from the aorist passive verb of ἀποκαθίστημι (apokathistemi) and means "to restore to its former state . . . to be in its former state" (Thayer 62). The use of the aorist tense means it "was restored" and remained or would stay restored.

Plotting to destroy the Model Servant (3:6) Mark records in verse 6 "And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him." (The parallel for this is given in Matthew 12:14; Luke 6:11.) The action of Jesus of restoring the man with the withered hand to health angered the scribes and the Pharisees for they could not wait to counsel together to see how they might kill Jesus being increased with enmity. And they did this on the Sabbath. Verse 6 reveals the real interests of the Pharisees. They were not interested in the welfare of this man. They were only interested in finding a way "to put" Jesus "out of the way entirely" [Thayer 64, ἀπόλλυμι (apollumi)] once, and for all and thus to slay Him.

The Pharisees and the Herodians were normally opposed to one another, but now they find a common ground in their opposition to Jesus. This verse can literally be rendered, "And going forth the Pharisees immediately with the Herodians gave counsel or plotted against Him that they might destroy Him" (Looney, Various translations).

The Herodians were "Jews who preferred to be ruled by . . . the Herod family rather than (*directly*) by Roman procurators; and yet they professed a willing submission to the Roman government" (Carter 18). They had influence in the courts of law and therefore the Pharisees felt their assistance would be helpful in their seeking the destruction of Jesus. This is brought out in some of the following Scriptures: Mark 8:15;12:13; Matthew 22:16. So indeed, the question is: "Is it lawful... to save life, or to kill?" What a striking contrast between Jesus the Savior and these murderers.

Summary Of Chapter

Jesus, the Model Servant, continued to establish His authority with compassion and love as He taught, preached, and healed in and around Galilee. He did so in the face of growing opposition. The religious leaders charged Him with blasphemy, mixing with publicans and sinners, not fasting, and doing things illegal on the Sabbath. They opposed Jesus on many fronts: politically, socially, economically, and religiously. Nonetheless, Jesus was doing the will of His Father (John 8:28,29). However, He continued to establish His authority against growing opposition which culminated in a plot to kill Him. Yet, He was showing and proving to the people that believed, that He was the Messiah, the Son of God, that was prophesied to come.

With compassion coupled with His authority, He put first things first and forgave the palsied man of his sins. Then, to show them all that He truly was God (the Son of God, the Son of man), He healed the man of his paralysis. No mere man could do this. After calling Levi to follow Him and eating with publicans and sinners, the scribes and Pharisees questioned His disciples saying, "How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?" The Model Servant answered, "They that are

whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The problem was that Jesus did not conform to the standards of the Pharisees under their interpretation of the Old Testament. He shows that He was not bound by their customs but by the truth. Like the Pharisees, many today do not want to give up the self-righteousness of keeping the Law. One must give up the Law and accept the New Testament by faith. The books of Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews were written to show that the Law was done away and people are to accept the New Covenant by faith which is in Christ Jesus. Justification before God is by faith in Christ and His righteousness and shed blood (Romans 4:25).

The Pharisees questioned Jesus about doing things that according to their interpretations were unlawful to do on the Sabbath. Jesus defends His actions by showing that He is the Lord of the Sabbath and that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. He challenges them with the question "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" Jesus honored the Sabbath as a day of worship and of rest (Luke 4:16) and according to the Law. Jesus did not break the Law nor sin, for He never sinned in any way. The Pharisees simply had the wrong interpretation. They were trying to find a way to have Jesus put to death. In handling these controversies, Jesus manifested His love, compassion, righteous indignation, power, and authority as the Son of man, the Perfect Servant of God the Father, even against growing opposition.

Chapter Note

1. (See page 112; Mark 2:21,22.) The passage in Luke was explained and exposed in detail in a sermon preached by Brother Randy Murry entitled *"The Old and the New Luke 5:36-39, "at the Annual Opening Day/Fellowship Day for the Missionary Baptist Seminary Fellowship Day at Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, Little Rock,*

Arkansas, on August 27, 1985. Therefore by written permission from Brother Murry this writer has quoted verbatim from his sermon.

End Note

A. The harmonized sequential listings from the other Gospel records have been gleaned from various sources and from study. This writer leaned heavily on A Layman's Harmony of the Gospels by John F. Carter and A Harmony of the Gospels for Students of the Life of Christ by A. T. Robertson. Both of these are listed in the Bibliography. All other sources are also listed.

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION TWO---

THE SERVANT ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY

(Mark Chapters 1:16-45; 2:1-28; 3:1-35)

---CHAPTER 6---

Authority to Select Twelve and Authority over Beelzebub

(Mark Chapter 3:7-35)

OUTLINE

- VI. Authority to Select Twelve and Authority over Beelzebub** 3:7-35
{Apostles Ordained - Beelzebub Dispute- True Kindred }
- A. Withdrawal to the Lake and Selection of the Twelve 3:7-19a
 - 1. Withdrawal to the lake—multitudes healed 3:7-12 (Matthew 12:15-21)
 - 2. Selection of the Twelve Apostles 3:13-19a
(Luke 6:12-16; also see Matthew 10:1-4 and Acts 1:13)
 - B. The Beelzebub Controversy and the True Kindred of Jesus Identified 3:19b-35
 - 1. The comment of the kindred of Jesus 3:19b-21
 - 2. The Beelzebub controversy 3:22-30 (Matthew 12:22-37; Luke 11:14-23)
 - 3. The identity by His true kindred 3:31-35 (Matthew 12:46-50; Luke 8:19-21)

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION TWO---

THE SERVANT ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY

(Mark Chapters 1:16-45; 2:1-28; 3:1-35)

---CHAPTER 6---

Authority to Select Twelve and Authority over Beelzebub

(Mark Chapter 3:7-35)

This passage is a continuation of the early ministry of the Servant in Galilee which is part of that recorded in Mark 1:14—4:34. Carter writes:

"In spite of the wave of opposition. . ." *Jesus encountered from the various religious and political groups,* ". . . the common people came unto Jesus in increasing numbers. Possibly some came only to receive the benefits of His miraculous power in healing, . . . and others may have come out of mere curiosity—to . . . hear what He had to say. But whatever their motives . . . the number of those who thronged around Him continued to grow" (Carter 95, 97).

However, the opposition and the plot to kill Him caused Jesus to withdraw to the sea according to Mark 3:7. Nevertheless, He could not get away from the multitudes. During this time Jesus, the Model Servant, not only healed many and rebuked unclean spirits but also exercised His authority to select His twelve apostles and manifest His authority and power over Beelzebub and demons plus reveal those who are His true kindred. This section may be divided into two parts: one, withdrawal to the lake and selection of the twelve, 3:7-19a; and two, the Beelzebub controversy and the true kindred of Jesus identified, 3:19b-35.

A. Withdrawal to the Lake and Selection of the Twelve 3:7-19a

(Matthew 12:15-21; with Luke 6:12-16; Matthew 10:1-4; and Acts 1:13,15-26)

Because of the severe opposition of the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Herodians and also because a great number of people were crowding around Him, Jesus deemed it necessary to "withdraw himself with his disciples to the sea." Matthew records "But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence . . ." (12:15). This seems to refer to the counsel (of the madness or rage of the folly of the leaders) to destroy Him (Mark 3:6; Matthew 12:14; Luke 6:11). However, Jesus continued His ministry of preaching and healing since great numbers (both of Jews and Gentiles) were coming "to hear him" (Luke 6:17) from near and far away. This passage, Mark 3:7-19a, records that He called and ordained twelve men as apostles "that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils" (Mark 3:14-15). This subdivision consists of two subparts as follows: one, withdrawal to the lake—multitudes healed, 3:7-12; Matthew 12:15-21; and two, selection of the twelve apostles, 3:13-19a (with Luke 6:12-16; Matthew 10:1-4; and Acts 1:13,15-26).

Withdrawal to the lake—multitudes healed (3:7-12; Matthew 12:15-21) In verse 7 the verb "withdraw" is from the aorist tense of ἀναχωρέω (anachoreo) and could be rendered "He departed" (Analytical Greek 26). The sea or lake is the Lake of Gennesaret or Sea of Galilee. But as already stated "this withdrawal . . . did not separate him from the crowds" (Wessel 641). "Mark alone notes no less than eleven occasions on which Jesus retired from His work, in order to escape His enemies or to pray in solitude, for rest, or for private conference with His disciples. See 1:12; 3:7; 6:31,46; 7:24,31; 9:2; 10:1; 14:34" (Vincent qtd. in Wuest 66, 67). Verses 7,8 reveal that the masses came from places all over the land of Israel and the surrounding areas: Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumaea, beyond Jordan (Decapolis and Perea), and

Tyre and Sidon. Some commentators believe those in verse 7 are one group and those of verse 8 another group (Clarke 45). The country of Idumaea (south and east of Judea) was where the descendants of Esau dwelt and who were also call Edomites. Herod the Great was from this area. "Beyond Jordan" as well as "Tyre and Sidon" would have been mainly inhabited by Gentiles. Some of these people came from places up to eighty to one hundred miles away or possibly more. The last part of verse 8 reveals the reason they came as "when they had heard what great things He did" It seems the multitudes were not as interested in the spiritual things as they were in the physical. This is what a lot of people want out of the church today. Howbeit, the New Testament Church is only commissioned to take care of the spiritual (Matthew 28:18-20). The Greek verb rendered "He did" is present tense and carries the idea that the people were continually hearing of the miracles Jesus was always performing. Thus the crowds came and praised Him and this caused the opposition to become increasingly jealous.

Verse 9 says that Jesus instructed His disciples "that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him" [The words "a small ship is from the Greek noun πλοιάριον (ploiarion) meaning "a small vessel, small boat" (Thayer 519).] Evidently He intended to have in constant readiness a small vessel (probably like a rowboat). "The mention of the boat here is peculiar to Mark" (Clarke 46). The reason for this was "because of the multitudes, lest they should throng him." The verb "throng" from the present subjunctive form of θλίβω (thlibo) means "to pressure, to squeeze" (Rienecker 95). The present tense gives the idea that this was a continuous action. The idea is that the boat was to be at the disposal of Jesus as a refuge from the pressure of the great crowd of people. Wuest states, "The sight must have been pathetic" (68). Jesus stayed with the crowds to minister to them

but He needed the protection in order not to be crushed. Verse 10 states clearly why this provision was necessary, "For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues." The people were falling upon Him in order to touch Him so as to be healed, but it was a dangerous situation for Jesus (Wuest 68; Robertson, Word Pictures 278). Nevertheless, Our Lord and Savior "graciously healed many of them" (Wessel 641).

According to verses 11,12 Jesus again comes into conflict with demons. These unclean spirits "recognized who Jesus was—even if the crowds did not" (Wessel 641). Verse 11 relates, "And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God." Of course, it is to be understood that those who fell down before Jesus were those who were possessed by these demons or unclean spirits. But the demons were the ones causing the possessed ones to do it. The verbs "saw, fell down, and cried" are all renderings of the imperfect tense and carry the idea of continuous action. They continually cried out that Jesus was the Son of God. It should be no surprise that they knew who Jesus was because James 2:19 states, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."

Truly as stated by Wuest, "Our Lord is the unique, peculiar, only Son of God, in a class by Himself, with whom in His unique relationship to God, no one can be compared" (69). However, according to verse 12 Jesus did not welcome this testimony of these fallen angels and so He gave them strict orders not to manifest to others who He was (see comments on Mark 1:23-28; 32-34). W. N. Clarke writes that Jesus "rejected the testimony of demons; the appeal that he made to evidence is illustrated in John 5:32-37, and his witnesses are the Baptist and his own holy and gracious works, and the Heavenly Father himself. . . . Possibly the charge of

collusion with Beelzebub (verse 22) may have been suggested by this testimony of demons" (47). The demons certainly did not testify in order to glorify Jesus but probably as already stated to cause the opposition to be all the more jealous. Wessel submits that "the demons were hardly appropriate heralds of him (*Jesus*)" (641).

Selection of the twelve apostles (3:13-19a; Luke 6:12-16; with Matthew 10:1-4 and Acts 1:13,15-26) According to Mark 3:13-15 with Luke 6:12 Jesus went up into a mountain and prayed to God all night. (*What an example for believers!*) After this He called certain ones of the disciples unto Himself. Of these disciples that came unto Him He chose and ordained a special group of twelve. Luke says Jesus named this group of twelve, apostles (6:13). He ordained the twelve for the special task of building His kingdom. His general ministry to the multitudes was to be aided by a very special organization that He had already begun to build as seen in Mark 1:16-21. In connection with this as previously mentioned one should consider what the Bible says in the first part of 1 Corinthians 12:28 "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers"

The building of this organization—His ekklesia, His New Testament Church—was now to be enhanced by the selection of the twelve apostles. The word apostle is from the Greek noun ἀπόστολος (apostolos) which means "a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders" (Thayer 68). Verses 14, 15 contain two purpose clauses beginning with "that." These two purpose clauses define the purpose for the calling out of this special group, the apostles. First, He ordained or appointed them "that they should be with Him." This was in order that He might teach them and then they would be able to go out and accomplish the second thing. Second, He appointed them "that He might send them forth to preach . . . to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." Although Mark does not record the "Sermon on

the Mount" as given in Matthew chapters 5—7, it is considered to be the ordination sermon for the twelve as well as a primary lesson on the way each born-again believer is to conduct his or her life. It was necessary for the apostles to learn at the feet of the Master and so Jesus taught them about His Kingdom so that they could go out and be His representatives in preaching, teaching and in planting New Testament churches after His ascension. The apostles were the foundation of the church with Christ being the "key stone" or "cornerstone" This type of terminology is used in Acts 4:11; Isaiah 28:16; Ephesians 2:19-22; and 1 Peter 2:6.

Mark 3:16-19 names the apostles. They are also named in Luke 6:14-16, Matthew 10:2-4 and Acts 1:13,15-26. The chart below gives the four namings

<u>Mark 3:14-19</u>	<u>Matthew 10:1-4</u>	<u>Luke 6:12-16</u>	<u>Acts 1:13,15-26</u>
1. Simon Peter (or Cephas) 2. James the son of Zebedee 3. John the brother of James 4. Andrew brother to Peter	1. Simon Peter 2. Andrew his brother 3. James the son of Zebedee 4. John the brother of James	1. Simon Peter 2. Andrew his brother 3. James 4. John	1. (Simon) Peter 2. James 3. John 4. Andrew
5. Philip 6. Bartholomew (or Nathanael**) 7. Matthew (or Levi***) 8. Thomas (or Didymus** or "twin")	5. Philip 6. Bartholomew 7. Thomas 8. Matthew the publican	5. Philip 6. Bartholomew 7. Matthew 8. Thomas	5. Philip 6. Thomas 7. Bartholomew 8. Matthew
9. James, son of Alphaeus 10. Thaddaeus 11. Simon the Canaanite (Zelotes) 12. Judas Iscariot	9. James, son of Alphaeus 10. Lebbaeus, surnamed Thaddaeus 11. Simon the Canaanite 12. Judas Iscariot, the betrayer	9. James, son of Alphaeus 10. Simon called Zelotes 11. Judas, brother to James (Thaddaeus) 12. Judas Iscariot, the traitor	9. James, son of Alphaeus 10. Simon Zelotes 11. Judas, brother to James 12. Matthias

devils casteth he out devils," or the equivalent, are recorded in Matthew 9:32-34; Luke 11:14-23. But these are at a different time.

The subject, "the Beelzebub Controversy" is a difficult one. This writer does not have all the answers. However, this writer believes that a good, correct interpretation can be made. One thing for certain is that Jesus shows in this passage along with verse 12 that He has authority and power over Beelzebub and all of the demons. Since this passage involves the "the Unpardonable Sin" the question must be asked and answered, *what is "the Unpardonable Sin?"* Before one can answer this question, the significance of the "the Beelzebub Controversy" must be understood. Also it must be understood how a lost person is saved and once saved is never lost again.

First, the lost sinner must be convicted of sin in his or her life. The Bible teaches that none are righteous and "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10,23). Second, the lost sinner must realize that he or she deserves to be punished by God. The Bible declares "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Refer also to Revelation 21:8. Third, the lost one must be convinced that he or she is lost, but can be saved by the grace of God because of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Paul and Silas told the Philippian jailer when He asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? . . . Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30,31). Fourth, the lost one must understand that he or she cannot save himself or herself. The Bible proclaims "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9; also refer to John 1:12-13; Titus 3:5). Fifth, the lost person must realize Jesus came to die for him or her, personally, as well as for all the whole

world. The Bible declares "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8). Sixth, in so doing Jesus came to save each person from his or her sins. He came to give each lost person that repents and believes eternal life in heaven.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:14-18).

At the point of repentance and faith, Jesus, by the mercy and grace of God, gives the believer eternal—everlasting, forever salvation. The emphasis here is on everlasting salvation because the Bible teaches that once saved, one is always saved.

To understand "the Beelzebul Controversy" one must go back to the previous context. A brief review of Mark 1:22-28,34,39; 2:1-12,17; 3:1-12 is helpful. Jesus taught with authority and cast out a demon spirit (1:22-27). His fame spread abroad, but He continued to perform great miracles by His divine power (1:29-34). He preached and cast out devils (1:39). Jesus was more concerned with forgiving the sins of the palsied man than anything else, such as his physical health (2:5,9,10). He teaches that the sick are the ones who need a physician and then He declared that He came to call sinners to repentance and salvation (Mark 2:17). He healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath (3:1-5). This caused the Pharisees to be jealous to the point that they, along with the Herodians, plot to destroy Him (3:6). Jesus with His disciples withdrew to the sea, yet great multitudes came to Him when they heard

what He was doing (3:7,8). He healed people and cast out unclean spirits (demons) (3:9-12). Also one must keep in mind the immediate context of chapter 3:13-19a and Luke 6:12.

The comment by the kindred of Jesus (3:19b-21) This short passage relates that the multitudes continued to press so near to Jesus and the disciples that they could not even eat bread to nourish their bodies. The last part of verse 19 is a transition statement and is placed with verse 20 in what is called the Textus Receptus Greek text (The New Testament, The Greek Text 68). It says, "and they went into an house." Moffat renders this "Then they went indoors" (Vaughan, Curtis, The New Testament from 26 Translations 137). It carries the idea that Jesus changed from a hill-life to coming home to a house-life. (This is probably the house of Peter, Mark 1:29.)

Verse 20 reports that Jesus and His disciples were unable to eat. Since Jesus was not able or just did not take enough leisure time to take care of His physical needs, His friends came to lay hold on him saying that He must be insane. Mark 3:21 states "And when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself." Who are these that are called His friends? A. T. Robertson says that this phrase "his friends . . . (hoi par' autou)" literally means "those from the side of Him (Jesus)" (Word Pictures 281). According to Robertson this idiom probably means his kindred rather than just friends since they are mentioned in verse 31 (Word Pictures 281). The verb κρατέω (krateo) rendered "to lay hold" carries the idea of arresting someone (Rienecker 95). This verb is used this way in Mark 6:17; 12:12; 14:1,44,46,49,51. "The family wanted to get hold of Jesus, to take control of his actions" (Taylor, *qtd. in* Rienecker 95). The Greek verb ἐξέστη (exeste) from ἐξίστημι (existemi) translated "He is beside himself" means one is out of one's

head or mind, to be insane (Thayer 224). [The Apostle Paul also was charged with this in Acts 26:24 (the Greek word is not the same but it has the same idea); 2 Corinthians 5:13.] This charge against Jesus by His family helped to precipitate the blasphemous charge by the scribes in verse 22.

The Beelzebub controversy (3:22-30; Matthew 12:22-37) While the family of Jesus said He had gone out of His mind the scribes from Jerusalem in verses 22-30 charged that "He hath Beelzebub." John also records several occasions when Jesus was charged with having a devil (7:20; 8:48, 52; 10:20). Verse 22 relates, "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils." The scribes and the Pharisees were jealous because Jesus taught "as one that had authority." Verse 22 is saying that Beelzebub is "the prince of devils" or demons. The word "prince" from ἄρχων (archon) means "a first (in rank or power) . . . chief (ruler), magistrate, prince, ruler" (Strong's 758). Beelzebub is "first or head one." Beelzebub is the Devil, Satan (Strong's 954). In the parallel account Matthew states that Jesus had just healed a man "possessed with a devil, blind and dumb" (12:22). Thus they were saying that Jesus and Satan were in collusion with each other.

Verses 23-27 contain the reply of Jesus to this charge. After Jesus called them unto Him, He "said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?" "In parables" means Jesus was making an "illustrative comparison" to explain His answer to this charge (Carter 88). In verse 23 Jesus literally is saying. "How is it possible for Satan to cast out Satan?" He continues in verse 24, 25 by using two illustrations to show that Satan would not work against himself. He says, "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand." Jesus expressed a well understood truth that a

kingdom or a house if divided against itself cannot stand. In a literal translation of verse 26 Jesus is saying that likewise "And if Satan stood up against himself, and was divided, he cannot stand, but that would be the end of him" (Looney, Various translations). According to verse 27 Jesus further argues that in order to enter the house of a strong man and spoil it, one must first tie up the strong man. The word "spoil" is from διαρπάζω (diarpazo) and means "to plunder . . . thoroughly ransack" (Rienecker 95). A. T. Robertson says this verse presents the "picture of Satan, plundering the demons, the very tools (skeue) (*or goods*) by which he carried on his business" (Word Pictures 282). Two things can obviously be drawn from this statement of Jesus: one, Jesus cannot be in league with Satan (in common country, every day language, this means Jesus cannot be in "cahoots" with the Devil) and two, Jesus is actually destroying the works of Satan since He is more powerful than Satan. Robertson declares, "Jesus is the conqueror of Satan, not in league with him" (Word Pictures 282). The scribes should have recognized these obvious conclusions.

In verses 29-30 Jesus speaks about what is usually called "*the Unpardonable Sin.*" Wuest quotes Expositors and states "Jesus now changes His tone" (77). He had been using reason but "now He solemnly warns" (Wuest 77). Verses 28-30 have been much discussed because of what Jesus said in verse 29. "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." A literal translation: "But whoever blasphemes against the Spirit the Holy will not be forgiven unto the ages of the ages (the eternal ages), he is in danger of an eternal condemnation" (Looney, Various translations). It says "is in danger of" not "will be." Jesus meant that this was a sin for which one could never be forgiven. Many have thought that they have committed the sin sometimes called "*the Unpardonable Sin.*" But to commit this "sin" one has to have blasphemed the Holy Spirit, otherwise they

have not committed it. This is so, because Jesus says in verse 28 that all other sin shall be forgiven and even blasphemies. In Mark 3:28 Jesus states clearly, "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme." Of course, this is based upon the condition that one repents and ask God to forgive them. Jesus wants each person to take this thing seriously and very solemnly. Why? Notice how He introduces verse 28, "Verily I say unto you" This could be rendered, "Truly or of a truth I say this unto you." This is as very serious matter, a solemn warning, and thus each person had better listen. So the unpardonable sin is to blaspheme specifically the Holy Spirit.

How does one do that? The word "blaspheme" is from the Greek word βλασφημέω (blasphemeo) and means "to speak reproachfully, to rail at" (Thayer 102) and "to use abusive speech" (Mat 12:31, Rienecker 36). Blasphemy is "malicious misrepresentation" (Wuest 77). It is being so angry at anyone and never relenting, nor stopping being angry. What is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? First, it is that which makes one guilty of an eternal sin. What is this eternal unpardonable sin? Verse 30 reveals the answer; "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." This refers back to verse 22. The scribes had accused Jesus, because He was casting out demons, of doing the work of the Devil and of being the Devil. Jesus had done good by the power of the Holy Spirit, but the scribes ascribed it to the power of Satan. However, they knew full well that this was not so. This is the unpardonable sin. It is committed when one calls the work of Christ performed through the Spirit the work of the devil. Robertson states, "In saying that Jesus had an unclean spirit (verse 30) they had attributed to the devil the work of the Holy Spirit. This is the unpardonable sin and it can be committed today by men who call the work of Christ the work of the

devil . . ." (Word Pictures 282). Speaking to true church members of true churches, this writer must say, "I doubt that any of you have ever really done that."

The question arises and should be answered: Can a child of God commit this sin? That is, can a born-again, blood-bought believer commit this sin? The answer is a resounding "no," since every child of God is forgiven already and can seek forgiveness. John wrote in 1 John 1:7-9 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." To commit this sin one must have set his or her heart to continuously be against God and His Son, Jesus. To further explain this a few quotes will suffice. Herbert Lockyer states, "Of the so-called 'Unpardonable Sin,' one writes 'From verses 22 and 23 this is quite clearly calling the Holy Spirit a demon. It is the setting of one's heart continuously against God. One thing is certain, that those who are guilty of it are not at all disturbed by it' " (227). To this Wessel agrees for he says, "Surely what Jesus is speaking of here is not an isolated act but a settled condition of the soul—the result of a long history of repeated and willful acts of sin. And if the person involved cannot be forgiven, it is not so much that God refuses to forgive as it is the sinner refuses to allow him" (645, 6). By way of assurance it can be said that if anyone is "anxious about this sin: . . ." it is for sure that the ones ". . . troubled about it are most unlikely to have committed it" (Ryle *qtd. in* Wessel 646). "On the other hand . . ." if anyone actually has committed this sin they are ". . . so dominated by evil that it is unlikely that they would be aware of it" (Wessel 646). Be assured that what the Bible says in 1 John 1:7-10; 2:1,2 is true. Beside that, the doctrine of eternal security of the believer is true and sure.

Summary Of Chapter

Jesus, being the Son Of God, had the authority and did select His twelve apostles. This was part of His organizing His ekklesia, His New Testament church during His earthly ministry. In Mark 3:11,12, 22-30 Jesus shows that He has authority and power over Beelzebub and all of the demons. Jesus was a miracle worker, for He was God in the flesh. He miraculously healed many and rebuked unclean spirits plus revealed those who are His true kindred. He used these things to prove that He was the Messiah sent from God and thus to accomplish His primary goal to seek and to save the lost from spiritual ruin in hell and to redeem every one who will repent and believe in Him as personal Savior.

His general ministry to the multitudes was to be aided by a very special organization that He had already begun to build. Jesus continued to build his church by calling and ordaining 12 apostles for the special task of building His Kingdom. Their primary task was to preach and teach the truth and the gospel message of salvation. It was necessary for the apostles to learn at the feet of the Master so that they could go out and be His representatives in preaching, teaching, and planting New Testament churches after His ascension. Hence, today churches are to learn at His feet and carry out the Great Commission.

The opposition to Jesus accused Him of having Beelzebub, and that by the prince of the devils He was casting out devils. Jesus answered by asking them a question "How can Satan cast out Satan?" Then He followed that by saying (paraphrased), "that if a kingdom or a house is divided against itself, that kingdom or house cannot stand." In so saying, Jesus shows that they did not know what they were talking about and thus their charge against Him was false.

On the other hand, He told them that they were "in danger of eternal damnation." Jesus is saying that to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit is "*the Unpardonable Sin.*" How does one commit that? First, it is that which makes one guilty of an eternal sin. Verse 30 reveals the answer; "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." Jesus had done good by the power of the Holy Spirit, but the scribes ascribed it to the power of Satan. This is the unpardonable sin. It is committed when one calls the work of Christ performed through the Spirit the work of the devil. To commit this sin one must have set his or her heart to continuously be against God and His Son, Jesus and ascribe the work of the Spirit of God to the work of the Devil.

End Note

A. The harmonized sequential listings from the other Gospel records have been gleaned from various sources and from study. This writer leaned heavily on A Layman's Harmony of the Gospels by John F. Carter and A Harmony of the Gospels for Students of the Life of Christ by A. T. Robertson. Both of these are listed in the Bibliography. All other sources are also listed.

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION THREE---

THE SERVANT: TEACHING WITH PARABLES AND POWER

(Mark Chapters 4:1-41; 5:1-43)

---CHAPTER 7---

The Servant Using Parables to Teach the Multitudes

(Mark Chapter 4:1-34)

---CHAPTER 8---

The Servant Overcoming Hostile Powers

(Mark Chapters 4:35-41; 5:1-43)

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION THREE---

THE SERVANT TEACHING WITH PARABLES AND POWER

(Mark Chapters 4:1-41; 5:1-43)

---CHAPTER 7---

The Servant Using Parables to Teach the Multitude

(Mark Chapter 4:1-34)

OUTLINE

VII. The Servant Using Parables to Teach the Multitudes	4:1-34
(Matthew 13; Luke 8)	
A. The Setting and Reason for Teaching in Parables	4:1-2,10-12
1. The setting and time 4:1,2	
2. Reason for teaching in parables 4:10-12	
B. The Parable of the Sower and the Interpretation	4:3-9,13-20
(Matthew 13:3-23; Luke 8:5-13)	
1. The giving of the parable of the sower 4:3-9	
2. The interpretation of the parable 4:13-20.	
C. The Parable of the Candle	4:21-23
(Matthew 5:15,16; Luke 8:16;11:33)	
D. The Measure	4:24,25
E. The Parable of the Secretly Growing Seed	4:26-29
F. The Parable of the Mustard Seed	4:30-32
(Matthew 13:31,32; Luke 13:18,19)	
G. Brief Summation of the Teaching Using Parables	4:33-34

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION THREE---

THE SERVANT: TEACHING WITH PARABLES AND POWER

(Mark Chapters 4:1-41; 5:1-43)

---CHAPTER 7---

The Servant Using Parables to Teach the Multitudes

(Mark Chapter 4:1-34)

Division Three of this treatise covers chapters four and five of the Book of Mark and consists of chapters seven and eight of this dissertation. Chapter seven with comments on Mark 4:1-34 is about "the Servant Using Parables to Teach the Multitudes." Chapter eight with comments on Mark 4:35—5:43 shows "the Servant Overcoming Hostile Powers." In summary this division is about parabolic teachings of Jesus, the Servant, and His demonstrated power over the wind, the sea, the demons, disease, and even over that great enemy, death.

In general Mark 4:1-34 may be divided into three parts: the setting for the teaching, verses 1,2; the parables and their teachings, verses 3-32; and the summary of the parabolic section, verses 33-34. (This is the seventh and last subdivision under what some call "The Ministry in Galilee," Mark 1:14-4:34.) While Mark uses the terms "teaching" and "taught" concerning the actions of Jesus throughout his Gospel, this is one of the few passages "devoted to teaching" (Wessel 646). Other places where it states that Jesus taught include 1:21; 2:13; 6:2, 6; 13:2-37; 7:1-13. In this

chapter Mark records four of the parables of Jesus which are: one, the parable and interpretation of the sower; two, the parable of the candle (responsibility of the hearers); three, the parable of the secretly growing seed; and four, the parable of the mustard seed.

The word "parable" comes from the Greek παραβολη (parabole) meaning "something placed along side" of something else, a likeness (Robertson, Word Pictures 101). Thayer says that metaphorically it means "a comparing, comparison of one thing with another, likeness, similitude . . . a pithy and instructive saying, involving some likeness or comparison and having preceptive or admonitory force . . . a proverb" (479). The Hebrew word of the Old Testament most often used is מִשְׁלָּה (mashal) and means "proverb, parable . . . proverbial saying, . . . byword . . . similitude, . . . poem . . . sentences of ethical wisdom . . . (Strong's 4911 and 4912). Thus it can mean "anything from a simple metaphor to an elaborate story" (Wessel 647). Mashal is translated "parable" in Habakkuk 2:6. It is translated "proverb" 19 times and "parable" 18 times. The popular definition of the word "parable" as used in the New Testament is that it is "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." The parables of Jesus for the most part deal with the kingdom of heaven or of God (Matthew 13:19; Mark 4:26,30). The greatest use of parables should not be to establish truth but to use them to illustrate truth. Many have used the parables improperly to establish truth. (This has caused many to go off into error, such as the "New Light Doctrine," that has plagued the ranks of Missionary Baptist). Parables should not be interpreted allegorically but rather the interpreter should "look for the one main point a parable teaches" (Wessel 647). However, some parables may "have more than one" (Wessel 647). This passage concerning Jesus Christ teaching the multitudes with parables may be divided as follows: one, the setting and reason for

teaching in parables, 4:1-2,10-12; two, the parable of the sower and the interpretation, 4:3-9,13-20, three, the parable of the candle, 4:21-23; four, the measure, 4:24,25; five, the parable of the secretly growing seed, 4:26-29; six, the parable of the mustard seed, 4:30-32; and seven, brief summation of the teaching using parables, 4:33-34.

A. The Setting and Reason for Teaching in Parables 4:1-2,10-12

(Matthew 13:1-3a, 10-17; Luke 8:4, 9-10)

This whole chapter is given over to the subject of teaching and especially teaching by Jesus in parables. This subdivision includes verses that do not follow one right after the other. Yet, after study, this writer believes that they should be considered together. The particulars are: one, the setting and time, 4:1,2; and two, reason for teaching in parables; 4:10-12.

The setting and time (4:1,2) The time of this situation is not given. Mark simply uses the indefinite "again." Verse 1 states, "And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land." This seems to be the third time that Jesus taught by the seaside of Galilee (Luke 5:1,2; Mark 3:7-12)(Carter 125). Once again the fame and reputation of Jesus is seen by the attendance of a great multitude. This is why Jesus had to enter into a boat. This circumstance is similar to that recorded in 3:9. However, two different words are used for ship in the Greek text. In 3:9 the word for a small boat or ship [πλοιαρίον (ploiarion)] is used, while in 4:1 the word for a larger boat or ship [πλοῖον (ploion)] is used. Wuest writes ". . . the boat from which He preached, was a larger vessel, moored in close to shore. With a narrow strip of water between Himself and the crowd, Jesus taught them. The acoustics on a lake shore are excellent. One can hear and understand the human voice quite a distance" (81).

In verse 2 and the first part of verse 3 Mark reports that Jesus "taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, Hearken . . ." or listen. The verb "taught" in verse 2 is in the imperfect tense from διδάσκω (didasko) and thus speaks of continuous action. Mark says "he taught many things by parables." The word "doctrine" is from the noun διδασχῆ (didache) meaning "that which is taught" (Thayer 144). These words are from the same root. How did Jesus teach? He taught the way that people learn if they truly want to be taught. The Bible relates who and how people are to be taught. The prophet declared in Isaiah 28:9-10 "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.* For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little." Who shall be taught knowledge and doctrine? The Apostle Paul indicates in Hebrews 5:11-14 that there are those who cannot take the meat of the word and must be fed milk. Yet the Bible exhorts in 2 Timothy 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The people of God need to advance from the milk to the meat of the Word of God. The process of learning is slow and many times not easy. Thus Jesus taught line upon line, precept upon precept; in a simple manner and method using repetition so that the people could understand. (No doubt, there were people with all kinds of interest in this great multitude both saved and unsaved.) Even for those who want to learn, it takes time to learn. Jesus wants people to learn; but the question most of the time is, do people want to be taught and to learn? More is explained on this and about the method Jesus used for teaching in verses 10-12.

Reason for teaching in parables (4:10-12) After Jesus taught the parable of the sower, verse 10 relates that the twelve apostles and other disciples waited till they

were alone with Jesus and asked Him about the parable. (The twelve and the other disciples meeting together with Jesus was actually a meeting of the church of the Lord Jesus.) It seems they waited until they were alone with Jesus because they did not want the multitude to see that they did not understand His teaching (Robertson, Word Pictures 285). The parable of the sower will be discussed after this passage.

In verses 11,12 Jesus explains the reason for teaching in parables. [Matthew records this in more details (13:10-17)]. Mark 4:11-12 says, "And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them." The word "mystery" is from the Greek noun μυστήριον (musterion) and does not mean something mysterious. The word μυστήριον (musterion) means "something formerly unknown but now revealed" (Bushell, Bible Works for Windows). Rienecker states that it means "that which man cannot know apart from God's revelation" (96). Jesus is now going to reveal something previously unknown concerning the kingdom of God.

Jesus spoke in parables because it was not given unto the unsaved world to know about kingdom principles. The revealing of the parables was given to His disciples "because they had responded in faith" (Wessel 649). However, to "them that are without" (men hardened by unbelief) it is not given for them to know and understand. So the purpose is twofold: one, to conceal to those who will not respond in faith, and two, to reveal to those who really want to know the meaning and interpretation. By using parables people who really did not care what Jesus was teaching would think (in the case of the sower) that Jesus knew a great deal about agriculture and soon leave. Jesus used parables to test the character of His hearers. If

they wanted to understand, they would come to Jesus for the explanation and meaning as did the disciples. If they did not want to know, they would not take a direct statement of plain truth.

Verse 12 is a quotation of Isaiah 6:9-10. It is speaking of persistent unbelievers, people who just refuse to know and believe the truth. If people do not see and hear it, it is because of their own choice for deep down they realize that if they did see and hear they would have to repent and take action. Furthermore, God reacts to people the way they react to Him as shown in the hardening of the heart of Pharaoh (for explanation, refer to Romans 11:25-32; Romans 9:14-18). When light is resisted, it blinds and hardens the heart. This whole context is related to Mark 3:22-30 which is about the Beelzebub Controversy and the Unpardonable Sin. A. T. Robertson writes "What is certain is that the use of parables on this occasion was a penalty for judicial blindness on those who will not see" (Word Pictures 286). This whole section may be referring to these incidents (there are more than one) when the scribes and the Pharisees charged that Jesus "hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils" (Mark 3:22). They were developing hostile minds towards Jesus and the truth of salvation because they had closed minds.

B. The Parable of the Sower and the Interpretation 4:3-9,13-20

(Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23; Luke 8:4-8, 11-15)

Although Luke nor Mark records the title of this parable, Matthew does. Jesus said in Matthew 13:18, "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower." In giving this parable in Matthew 13:19 Jesus likens the hearing of the word of the kingdom to that of the sowing of wheat or barley seed. As previously given, the meaning of the word "parable" is "something placed along side" of something else for comparison and to illustrate truth. Jesus is using this parable to illustrate one aspect of the work of

the kingdom of God. This subdivision is made up of the following components: one, the giving of the parable of the sower 4:3-9; and two, the interpretation of the parable, 4:13-20.

The giving of the parable of the sower (4:3-9) Jesus exhorts in verses 3 and 9: "Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow . . . He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." [Wuest notes that this crowd of people was "more interested in coming in contact with the Lord Jesus in order to be healed than in salvation for their souls" (83).] In these verses Jesus calls for careful attention on the part of the hearer. Robertson notes that, "It is significant that even Jesus had to ask people to listen when he spoke" (Word Pictures 284). It is recorded that Moses had to do the same in Deuteronomy 6:1-4. So, today, it should not be surprising if the preacher exhorts people to listen to the Word of God. Thus Jesus warns that the meaning may not be self-evident and thus an alert mind is needed to understand the truth (Wessel 648). The background of farm life in the land of Palestine needs to be understood. The seed was sown in broadcast fashion and fell wherever it would: on the way side, in the stony places, among the thorns [or at least where thorn seeds had been blown in by the wind (Wuest 83)] as well as on good ground. Many times the sowing took place before the plowing. If plowing was delayed for very long, the consequence mentioned by Jesus would be the results (Wessel 648). Verse 3 may be paraphrased as follows; "Give audience, and understand what I am about to say; Notice and take care to understand what I am saying, one that sows seed went out to scatter and thus to plant the seed in order to get a harvest." In verses 3-8 Jesus is putting the stress of His teaching upon the act of scattering the seed and not so much the soil upon which it is sown. Jesus spoke the parable to prepare the preacher of the gospel as to how the people would receive the message of truth. This makes the preacher, and/or the one

who witnesses, responsible for proclaiming the word and not the saving of souls. The preacher cannot make people bear fruit nor can he make the seed of the word to grow. In verse 9 Jesus stated, "He that hath to ears to hear, let him hear." People who know and want to know will hear and add to their knowledge. People who do not know and do not want to learn will lose their curiosity. More of this is explained in the interpretation and has been discussed previously with verses 10-12.

The interpretation of the parable (4:13-20) In verses 13-20 Jesus gives the explanation of the parable of the sower. In verse 13 Jesus indicates that the meaning is conspicuous and understandable. He asks, "Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?" He is saying, if they could not understand this clear parable, how would they understand any other? However, it is true that even born-again believers do not understand all of the parables — which need to be explained. This parable is not dealing with the lost specifically as some suppose but could be speaking to either a lost person or saved person. Jesus said in Matthew 13:18 that this was the parable of the sower (not the parable of the soil). Thus it would seem in the parable itself that the importance is on the sowing. Howbeit, in the explanation the emphasis is on the different kind of grounds and/or the response to the sown seed. In His interpretation Jesus shows the way people react to the sown seed.

In Mark 4:14 Jesus indicates that the seed is the word, that is, the word of the kingdom as shown from Matthew 13:19. The primary sower is Jesus along with everyone who preaches or witnesses to the word. Jesus explains in Mark 4:15, "And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts." Verse 15 explains verse 4 concerning the seed which fell on the wayside and was

devoured by the fowls of the air. This applies to both the saved and unsaved. The wayside is the trodden path. Some people receive the word like the seed sown on the trodden path. When they have heard the word, it is snatched away by Satan. The seed cannot penetrate the hardened heart.

Verses 16, 17 interpret verses 5, 6 concerning seed sown on stony ground or rocky places. Jesus states in Mark 4:16-17, "And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended." Again this can apply to both saved and unsaved. The rocky places was soil covered by outcroppings of rocks such as slate. The soil would be very shallow if there were any at all. The seed when sown would hit stone and thus there would be no roots or very little roots. The growth would not be solid and enduring. The word when sown in this type heart is received with joy but does not endure. When the truth is preached, many times afflictions and trials will come if one seeks to follow the truth and act on it. However, if there is no root of the word in the heart, these people will become offended by the word of the truth. People will become offended at the church and the preacher when really it is the truth by which they are offended. Thus these people are joyous only temporarily for they become really angry with the truth.

The third group of hearers is found in verses 18, 19 which explains the seed sown in the thorny places of verse 7. Jesus states in Mark 4:18-19, "And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." The cares of the world, the deceitfulness of

riches and the lusts of other things is the paying attention to the things of this present world and the physical aspect of life to the neglect of the spiritual side of life. Many people receive the word sown and make good progress for a while but eventually let other things choke out the word of truth. Because they are distracted by such they become unfruitful in the work of the kingdom. Demas spoken of in 2 Timothy 4:10 is an example of this kind of hearer.

Verse 20 is the fourth group and explains verse 8 concerning the seed falling on good ground. Jesus declares in Mark 4:20, "And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred." When the seed falls on good soil it is very productive. This kind of heart is open and receptive to the word of the kingdom. "He is neither hard, shallow, nor preoccupied" (Wessel 651). Therefore, the message issues forth in him and causes his life to be very productive. In this type of hearer the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) blossoms forth and he or she brings glory and honor to the Savior. If they would receive the word by faith, every person can be this kind of ground.

C. The Parable of the Candle 4:21-23

(Matthew 5:15,16; Luke 8:16;11:33)

Just as the explanation of the parable of the sower in verse 13 is introduced by the words "And he said," even so, the parables of the candle, of the measure, of the secretly growing seed, and of the mustard seed are introduced with the same words. In this parable of the candle Jesus is teaching the same basic thing that He was teaching in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:15 and what He was teaching in Luke 8:16; 11:33. However, the passages in Matthew and Luke occur in different contexts. In Mark 4:21 Jesus asks His disciples, "Is a candle brought to be put under a

bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?" The word "candle" is from the Greek noun λύχνος (luchnos) meaning "a lamp, candle, that is placed on a stand or candlestick" (Thayer 384). The verb "is brought" is a translation of ἔρχεται (erchetai) which is present middle of ἔρχομαι (erchomai) meaning "to come . . . of persons . . . to come from one place to another, and used both of persons arriving . . . to appear, make one's appearance . . . metaph(orically) to come into being, arise, come forth, show itself, find place or influence . . ." (Thayer 250-252).

To begin His question Jesus used the Greek negative particle μήτι (meti). When μήτι (meti) is used in a question it expects a strong negative answer (Dana and Mantey 265; Rienecker 97). The Greek definite article is used before each of the words "lamps, bed, and candlestick" or lampstand. This shows that these were familiar articles in the houses of that day. The word "bed" from κλίνη (kline) means a small "bed . . . a couch to recline on at meals . . ." (Thayer 350). It speaks of the reclining couch placed by the side of the eating table. The answer to the question, "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?" is no. If the lamp were placed under the bushel or peck measure or bed, the flame would go out and thus give no light.

Jesus is teaching that the purpose of the lamp or candle was to give light and that it should be placed where it could give the most light and help the most people. Both Rienecker and Clarke imply that Jesus is speaking about Himself as being the "light of the world" (John 8:12; 12:46) (Rienecker 97; Clarke 62). Clarke also states that into the hands of His disciples this lamp is entrusted and is "not to be hidden, but to be placed where it can shine" (62). He writes, "Though they receive truth in the form of parables, which all cannot now receive, still they must not think it was given for themselves alone: the light was meant for the lampstand (Matt 5:15,16)" (Clarke 62). This is what Jesus teaches in verse 22, "For there is nothing hid, which shall not

be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad." Jesus wanted his disciples to understand that things are hidden now in order to be revealed later. Concealment now is only a means to later make things known and thus a means to an end (Robertson, Word Pictures 288). In this way Jesus was charging his disciples and saying, that what is secret now is to be revealed to all after I go away. His disciples were to reveal things and carry on the mission of teaching the all things of the Scriptures. This is summed up by Jesus in Matthew 10:27 "What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops." Jesus was teaching his disciples that the more light or understanding they had, the more they were to use it to help others see the light and thus they all could give glory to God. This is why Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Paul taught the same thing in Philippians 2:15-16. A practical application to this is once a lost person is saved and sees the light, he or she should join a New Testament church and let his or her light shine.

Jesus states in Mark 4:23, "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear" (Jesus had given forth this exhortation in verse 9.) It should be noted that the "if" in verse 23 is not to convey the conditional idea normally given it in English, but should be taken as "since." This is one of the meanings of the Greek particle εἰ (ei) which is the particle of fulfilled condition when used with the indicative mood (Davis 68). The idea is that since you have ears, use them, and use them in a spiritual way to perceive spiritual truth and disseminate the same.

D. The Measure 4:24,25

This passage is an extension and further explanation of the parable of the candle in which Jesus is teaching that since you have received the light you are thus

commissioned to spread the light. The Servant exhorts His disciples in Mark 4:24-25, "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." In these verses Jesus begins with an exhortation to be spiritually perceptive. Jesus uses this proverb, verse 24, in Matthew 7:2 and Luke 6:38 in other contexts with different applications. The idea is that the more one pays close spiritual attention to the teachings of Jesus and appropriates it (puts it to practical everyday use), the more the truth about Jesus will be revealed. The more one knows, the more he will understand. Just like in mathematics, the more you study mathematics, the more you understand it. Mark 4:24 as rendered from the Amplified Bible gives the meaning more clearly, "And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you—and more [besides] will be given to you *who hear*." A secondary application for verse 24 is that we reap what we sow, or what goes around comes around as taught in Galatians 6:7.

Verse 25 also occurs in other places and contexts such as Matthew 13:12; 25:29; and Luke 19:26. (The "he" of verse 25 is one who diligently pursues truth and knowledge of the Word of God.) Jesus continues the thought of verse 24 but goes a step further. The idea is that since one has the truth, learn more about it and give it out to others. The truth is "not only for your own benefit but for the benefit of others." Also if one does not do this, he will ever be "a disciple without becoming an" evangelizing witness (in the sense of one sent forth with a message of truth) (Clarke 63). "The giver hath, the miser hath not" (Clarke 63). Jesus is teaching his disciples to be evangelists. In other words, the truth one possesses (which is unused) will become

ineffective just as an unused muscle. (What the Apostle Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:3-11 is a commentary on this passage.)

E. The Parable of the Secretly Growing Seed 4:26-29

This parable explains that the mystery of the kingdom which has been previously concealed, is now to be known and revealed. This parable is recorded only by Mark. Jesus said in verse 26,27, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." Verses 26 shows that this "parable relates to the kingdom of God and . . . how that kingdom grows" (Wessel 652). Scofield calls this parable "The Unconscious Growth" (1050). Dr. John Penn calls this "the Parable of Spontaneous Growth" (*from class notes and sermons preached*). In contrast to the parable of the sower this parable emphasizes the secret and spontaneous power of the seed itself to produce a crop. Thus it illustrates how the kingdom grows, that is, the process and development of it. All the farmer is able to do is to plant the seed on suitable ground. Mark 4:26 is the only place in the New Testament where it says "cast seed into the ground." It is significant to note that the definite article is used in the Greek before the word "seed." Thus the idea is that "the seed," meaning a particular kind of seed, is being cast into the ground. This implies that the seed is the gospel message and the truth of the Word of God.

The first part of verse 27 shows that once the seed is sown the sower cannot make it grow. In fact, according to last part of verse 27, he does not even understand how it grows; for it states, "he knoweth not how." This is the key to the parable. It is still true today what Robertson writes, "The mystery of growth still puzzles farmers and scientists of today with all our modern knowledge" (Word Pictures 288,289).

Nevertheless, even though it is not understood, "nature's secret processes" (*set in motion by God*) "do not fail to operate . . ." (Word Pictures 289).

Verse 28 further explains verse 27 for it declares, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The Greek word for "of herself" is from αὐτόματος (automatos) from which comes the modern day word automatically (See Acts 12:10 where αὐτόματος (automatos) is translated "of his own accord" speaking of the opening of the "iron gate"). The growth of the seed (that is, the Word of God) is in the seed itself and not in the cultivating, weather or the soil (Robertson, Word Pictures 289). Of course, "these things help, but the seed spontaneously works according to its own nature" (*set in motion by God*) (Word Pictures 289). The way the kingdom grows in the heart and life is the point of this parable. All the preacher can do is preach and live the Word. "The Holy Spirit works . . ." in the heart using the sown "seed and makes it germinate and grow" (Word Pictures 289). The preacher cannot make people to be saved. Therefore, he is to preach and wait patiently on the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 55:11; 1 Corinthians 3:6; Galatians 6:9; Ecclesiastes 11:6).

Jesus says in verse 29 "But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Hence, after the earth bears fruit spontaneously and is ready, the sickle standing for the reaper is sent forth (John 4:38). Why? because the heart is ready. This speaks of the future judgment.

F. The Parable of the Mustard Seed 4:30-32

(Matthew 13:31,32; Luke 13:18,19)

This is the last parable recorded in Mark chapter 4 concerning the seed sown. In this parable Jesus likens the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard seed when it is sown and grows and becomes greater than all herbs and is a lodging place for the

fowls of the air. Jesus uses the mustard seed and the "greater than all herbs" it becomes to illustrate the truth about the development and success of the kingdom. In verse 30 Jesus said, "Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?" The word "comparison" is from παραβολη (parabole) also rendered "parable." In verse 31 He likens the kingdom to the mustard seed, "*It is* like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth" Literally, the Greek reads, "As to a grain of mustard, which, when it has been sown upon the earth, less than all the seeds is which [are] upon the earth" (Berry 99). According to Wessel, "The mustard seed was proverbial for its smallness. . . , but it is not, in fact, the smallest known seed (e.g. the seed of the black orchid is smaller). Jesus obviously was not giving a lesson in botany. The mustard seed was the smallest seed his audience was familiar with" (653). Clarke reminds his readers that "**Less than** and **greater than** are not to be pressed to the point of minute precision. There may be smaller seeds in existence without giving us reason to stumble at our Saviour's words. The mustard-seed was commonly spoken of as the smallest of seeds, and that is enough" (65).

Verse 32 relates that the mustard seed grows into a very huge tree-like shrub. Jesus declares, "But . . . it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it." It has been reported that some of these plants in Israel may grow from six to twelve feet high (Wuest 94). The main point of this parable is that the kingdom of God is like what happens to the mustard seed. Its beginnings were insignificant and weak in the eyes of the world. Nevertheless, a day is coming when it will be the greatest and most powerful kingdom of all and Jesus Christ will be sitting upon the throne of David. Even in this present age, the growth of the kingdom can be seen in

the growth of true Christianity and the true churches of the Lord Jesus up to this present time. This illustration teaches us at least one overall practical lesson: We should not judge the significance of a thing by the size of its beginning. The prophet Zechariah proclaims, "For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel *with* those seven; they *are* the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth" (4:10). Just because a church may be few in number does not mean God cannot use it to accomplish great things for Him. This parable is given to encourage those who labor in the vineyard of the Servant.

G. Brief Summation of the Teaching Using Parables 4:33-34

This section in Mark ends with a broad summary about the use Jesus made of parables. Verse 33 states, "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*." (Matthew and Luke record many more parables than does Mark.) In teaching the multitudes the truth about the kingdom of God Jesus uses parables most of all. Why did He do this? In order to help the crowds understand according to their ability. This is what the expression "as they were able to hear *it*" means. It was a gracious way to get them to think and to stir up their spiritual discernment and comprehension. The idea behind "as they were able to hear *it*" may very well be expressed by Jesus in John 16:12 where He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." The multitudes were not able nor prepared to understand the direct teaching of truth that Jesus would have liked to have revealed unto them. Wuest states, "The implication is clear that parables were employed to make truth plain" (95).

On the other hand, verse 34 reveals that when Jesus was alone with His disciples, He explained the parables unto them. Verse 34 says, "But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples." It is the plan and intention of Jesus that His disciples should preach and teach the truth concerning the kingdom of God as explained in the parable of the candle and in the exposition of the measure.

Summary of Chapter

This section of Mark is devoted specifically to teaching and particularly to teaching by parables. Mark records four of the parables of Jesus: the parable and interpretation of the sower; the parable of the candle (responsibility of the hearers); the parable of the secretly growing seed; and the parable of the mustard seed. The word "parable" means "something placed along side" of something else, a likeness. The popular definition is that it is "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." The parables of Jesus for the most part deal with the kingdom of God. Parables should not be used to establish truth but to illustrate truth. Usually, parables will have one main subject illustrating, in particular, one truth.

Jesus taught line upon line, precept upon precept; in a simple manner and method using repetition so that the people could understand. He used parables to test the character of His hearers. If they wanted to understand, they would come to Him for the explanation and meaning as did the disciples. The revealing of the parables was given to His disciples because they believed in Jesus. However, to "them that are without" (men hardened by unbelief) it is not given for them to know and understand and they will not take a direct statement of plain truth. If people do not see and hear

it, it is because of their own choice; for deep down they realize that if they did see and hear they would have to repent and take action. It is sad that some people (like the scribes and the Pharisees who opposed Jesus) develop hostile minds towards Jesus and the truth of salvation and close their minds. The mercy and grace of God is available to all alike.

Jesus uses the parable of the sower to illustrate one aspect of the work of the kingdom of God. In giving this parable Jesus put the stress upon the act of scattering the seed and not so much the soil upon which it is sown. He spoke the parable to prepare the preacher of the gospel as to how the people would receive the message of truth. This makes the preacher, and/or the one who witnesses, responsible for proclaiming the word and not the saving of souls. However, in the interpretation of this parable, the emphasis is on the different kinds of ground and/or the response to the sown seed.

In the parable of the candle with the measure Jesus taught that the purpose of the candle was to give light and that it should be placed where it could give the most light and help the most people. Hence, since Jesus has entrusted the light of the Word of God unto His disciples, they are to expose the light so that all can be guided to Jesus and salvation. The sum of this is given in Matthew 10:27 "What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops." The idea is that since one has the truth, learn more about it and give it out to others. The truth is "not only for your own benefit but for the benefit of others."

The parable of the secretly growing seed explains how the kingdom of God grows. This parable emphasizes the secret and spontaneous power of the seed itself to produce a crop. All the farmer can do is to plant the seed. The seed is the Word of God. The way the kingdom grows in the heart and life is the point of this parable. All

the preacher can do is preach and live the Word and wait upon the Holy Spirit to work.

In the parable of the mustard seed Jesus uses the fact that it becomes "greater than all herbs" to illustrate the truth about the development and success of the kingdom. The teaching of this parable is that the kingdom of God is like what happens to the mustard seed. Its beginnings were insignificant and weak in the eyes of the world. Nevertheless, a day is coming when it will be the greatest and most powerful kingdom of all and Jesus Christ will be sitting upon the throne of David. The practical application is this: just because a church may be few in number does not mean God can not use it to accomplish great things for Him. It is the plan and intention of Jesus that His disciples and churches should preach and teach the truth concerning the kingdom of God and the plan of salvation.

JESUS, MY SERVANT THE BRANCH- COMMENTS ON MARK

---DIVISION THREE---

THE SERVANT: TEACHING WITH PARABLES AND POWER

(Mark Chapters 4:1-41; 5:1-43)

---CHAPTER 8---

The Servant Overcoming Hostile Powers

(Mark Chapters 4:34-41; 5:1-43)

OUTLINE

- VIII. The Servant -- Overcomes Hostile Powers** 4:35—5:43
- A. Rebuking the Tempestuous Raging Sea 4:35-41
(Matthew 8:18, 23-27; Luke 8:22-25)
 - 1. Jesus, the true miracle worker 4:35-41
 - 2. Proceeding to the other side of Galilee 4:35,36
 - 3. The Servant of God stilling the storm 4:37-41
 - B. Healing the Demon Possessed Man of Gardara 5:1-20
(Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39)
 - 1. The other side of the Sea of Galilee 5:1
 - 2. A man with an unclean spirit 5:2-6
 - 3. Commanding the unclean spirit to come out of the man 5:6-10
 - 4. The legions of demons desiring to be sent into the swine 5:10-14
 - 5. The response to this miracle 5:14-17
 - 6. The evidence of conversion 5:18-20
 - C. Revealing His Power over Disease and Death 5:21-43
(Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 8:40-56)
 - 1. The urgent petition of Jairus 5:21-24
 - 2. Healing of the woman with the flow of blood 5:25-34
 - 3. Raising of the daughter of Jairus 5:35-43

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---CHAPTER 8---

The Servant Overcoming Hostile Powers

(Mark Chapters 4:34-41; 5:1-43)

The fame of Jesus was now very great. Immense crowds followed Him everywhere because of His miracles which He performed in and around Galilee. Jesus knew that trouble was brewing and that He had a limited amount of time to complete the needed training of His young church. Thus, He carefully planned withdrawals or retirements. There are four of these retirements. These four withdrawals and returns extend from Mark 4:35 to 9:50 (Hiebert 106). Why did Jesus utilize these withdrawals (Robertson, Harmony 85)? Several reasons can be gleaned from them. One, Jesus knew that the people of Galilee were following Him for superficial reasons, so they could make Him an earthly king who would and could supply their material needs. Two, the opposition of the Pharisees and Sadducees was more and more intolerable to His purpose. Three, Herod Antipas appeared ready to employ his forces against Jesus. Fourth, Jesus and His disciples greatly needed to rest. Five, Jesus wanted to give His disciples some intensive training.¹ The first withdrawal and return (Hiebert 106) may be sub-divided into four parts: one, the Servant overcoming

hostile powers, 4:35-5:43; two, the rejection of Jesus in His own home town, 6:1-6a; three, sending forth the twelve, 6:6b-13; and four, the reaction of Herod Antipas to the reported fame of Jesus, 6:14-29. Each of these will be dealt with in this chapter and the next few chapters.

During His earthly ministry Jesus dealt with many different hostile powers. In this passage, Mark 4:35—5:43, He manifested that He truly was the Son of God in that He overcomes hostile powers: the adverse power of an angry menacing tempestuous raging sea, the intimidating power of a legion of demons, and the fearful power of disease and death. This chapter entitled "the Servant -- Overcomes Hostile Powers" may be partitioned in the following way: one, rebuking the tempestuous raging sea, 4:35-41; two, healing the demon possessed man of Gadara, 5:1-20; and three, revealing His power over disease and death, 5:21-43.

A. Rebuking the Tempestuous Raging Sea 4:35-41

(Matthew 8:18, 23-27; Luke 8:22-25)

In this passage Jesus demonstrates His power over nature by stilling the storm as He rebukes the tempestuous raging sea. This was the work of Jesus, the Son of God in performing a true biblical miracle. While this is not the first miracle recorded by Mark, this writer believes this subdivision should include the definition of Biblical miracles. This subdivision is made up of the following components: one, Jesus, the true miracle worker, 4:35-41; two, proceeding to the other side of Galilee, 4:35,36; and three, the Servant of God stilling the storm, 4:37-41

Jesus, the true miracle worker (4:35-41) Generally speaking, the first recorded miracle performed by Jesus was the turning water into wine as recorded in John 2:1-12. In Mark the first miracle recorded is found in 1:21-27 in the casting out of a demon spirit. Hence, this miracle of rebuking the tempestuous raging sea is not

the first to be recorded but it is quite significant, since it again demonstrates that Jesus is the true miracle worker. Because there are so many incidents in this modern age that are called miracles, the question needs to be broached as to what is a miracle? Dr. Albert Garner in his book Bible Analysis gives a very good study on miracles on pages 83-86. He begins this study by relating what a miracle is not. He writes:

The mere operation or demonstration of supernatural power according to ordinary laws of nature is not a miracle.

1. It takes supernatural power to keep the planets, stars, sun, and moon in their fixed orbits, but this is not a miracle; nor does the Bible ever claim that the action of the sun, moon, and stars is a miracle. It takes supernatural power for these to function, but mere demonstration of supernatural power is not a miracle. 2. It takes supernatural power to bring about a physical birth, . . . but the growth and eventual birth of a conceived child is not a miracle, nor is it ever called a miracle. . . . 5. It takes supernatural power to save a soul from hell. But even the salvation of a lost soul is not a miracle, nor is it ever called such in the Bible. . . . The new birth is not a miracle. What then is a miracle, in the light of the Bible's teaching? (83, 84).

Next, Dr. Garner tells "What a Miracle is."

A Bible miracle may be defined as the instantaneous demonstration of supernatural power, overcoming or suspending natural law, for the accomplishment of a divine purpose.

New Testament miracles were always performed by the Lord and His disciples, with a specific purpose, to accomplish a divine end. The two primary purposes of New Testament miracles were stated to be: (1) to prove that Jesus was come from God, and (2) to prove that He had power to save and forgive sin. Miracles were therefore performed to convince unbelievers of the deity of the Son of God and that He had power to save from hell (84).

To this Dr. G. F. Crumley agrees for he writes, "Miracle may be defined as, an unusual demonstration or manifestation of the (supernatural) power of God" (28). It could be said that this unusual demonstration or manifestation of the (supernatural) power of God is that which sets aside natural laws already put in place by God.

Dr. Garner continues his study on miracles by stating specifically, "The Purpose of New Testament Miracles."

It has been stated that the purpose of New Testament miracles was to prove, to convince men that Jesus was divine and could save, forgive sin. . . . (*Refer to Mark 2:10-11*). . . .

At the tomb of Lazarus, our Lord performed a miracle in calling Lazarus forth. He did not do it just to make Mary and Martha happy, but for the sake of the unbelievers who were standing by. His prayer indicates this in John 11:42. . . .

Why did our Lord perform this miracle? The answer is that men might believe God had sent Jesus. The primary purpose of miracles was never just to make the sick person well, or give life to the dead for himself and his eternal blessing alone.

Nicodemus, and the other members of the Sanhedrin which he represented, were convinced that Jesus was come from God because of the miracles that He performed to prove, demonstrate His divinity (John 3:2) (85, 86).

So the definition of "a Bible miracle may be defined as the instantaneous demonstration of supernatural power, overcoming or suspending natural law, for the accomplishment of a divine purpose" (Garner 84). Crumley gives the reasons for Bible miracles as follows:

Jesus did not perform miracles to create a sensation among His hearers, nor to make a show, nor to attract a crowd (Matthew 8:4; Mark 8:22-26; Luke 8:41,42,49,54-56). . . . He did not perform miracles to make money nor to gain prominence for Himself nor His disciples. Neither Jesus nor any of the apostles performed miracles for the personal benefit of any individual (1 Timothy 5:21). The purpose of the miracles of Jesus was to bear witness that Jesus was from God, with all power and authority, (John 3:1-3; 5:36). . . . The purpose of the apostles' miracles was to confirm their testimony, that they were from God (Hebrews 2:3-4) (28).

As stated previously, "miracles were therefore performed to convince unbelievers of the deity of the Son of God and that He had power to save from hell" (Garner 84).

The miracle recorded in Mark 4:35-41 of instantaneously calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee teaches us that Christ has the power over the natural things of this world. And why should this not be true? He is the creator according to John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17. The details (such as the mention of "other little ships") of this account suggests that the report was that of an eyewitness (Wessel 655; Clarke 68). No doubt, Peter gave the story to Mark and Mark wrote it by inspiration. What is meant by the word inspiration? (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). The word inspiration

literally means God-breathed — not dictation, but that the Holy Spirit so superintended the mind and heart and writings of Mark that he wrote what God wanted him to write. Jesus was and is the true miracle worker.

Proceeding over to the other side of Galilee (4:35,36) According to Mark 4:1 Jesus had been teaching the people from a boat pushed out a little way from the shore. When the evening was come, Jesus decided it was time to leave the area around Capernaum (Clarke 66) and go over to the other side of the sea according to verse 35. The words "Let us pass over" come from the Greek compound verb and preposition διέλθωμεν (dielthomen) (Thayer 147) which is what is called hortatory subjunctive (Rienecker 98) and is more of a request than a command. {Διέλθωμεν [first person plural aorist 2nd subjunctive] actually comes from the Greek verb διέρχομαι (dierchomai) (Thayer 147) which is made up of the preposition διά (dia) and the verb έρχομαι (erchomai).} In verses 35, 36 no reason for this request is given, however, the clause in verse 36 "...they took him even (*or just*) as he was in the ship...." suggests the reason. (The Amplified Bible suggests, "just.") Jesus had been teaching all day and, no doubt, felt that He and His disciples needed to escape from the crowds for a little while and renew their strength (Wessel 655; Clarke 67, 68) in the withdrawals mentioned earlier. Robertson in Word Pictures states "They were on the western side and a row over to the eastern shore in the evening would be a delightful change and refreshing to the weary Christ" (291). This teaches that Jesus was not only God but human also.

Hebrews 2:16-18 "For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

Hebrews 4:15 "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin."

Jesus was God and Jesus was man since He was born of the virgin Mary who conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus Jesus was the God—man. He was just as much God as He was man and just as much man as He was God. Jesus was God come in the flesh, yet without sin. Jesus was Emmanuel or God with us (Matthew 1:23).

The Servant of God stilling the storm (4:37-41) According to scholars "the geographic location of the Sea of Galilee makes it particularly susceptible to sudden, violent storms. . ." being ". . . in a basin surrounded by mountains (Wessel 655). To this Clarke concurs (68). Verse 37 reveals that a great storm or tempest arose upon the Sea of Galilee and the waves were so high that the boat was filling up with water. (Matthew says "covered with the waves," and Luke adds that "they were in danger") (Clarke 68). Under normal circumstances this would mean that the Lord and the disciples in the boat were all in jeopardy.

Even so, Jesus was resting. In verse 38 Mark records that Jesus was asleep on a pillow at the hinder part or stern of the ship. Jesus "must have been very tired to have slept through such a violent storm" (Wessel 655). This crossing of the lake "is the only place in the Gospels where Jesus is said to have slept" (Wessel 655). Yet this also reveals the peace He had in His heart. This is a peace that all may share when they trust in Him. The Bible speaks of a peace that born-again, blood-bought believers can enjoy which passes all human understanding or passes the ability of which to comprehend (Philippians 4:7).

Nevertheless, in contrast to the peace of Jesus, the disciples were alarmed and even terrified. The last part of verse 38 reveals the fear of His disciples. They were so

frightened that they awoke and even rebuked Jesus for sleeping through the storm. They said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" (Neither Matthew 8:25 nor Luke 8:24 record this rebuke but rather statements of alarm and request that Jesus deliver them from the storm so they will not perish.) Some commentators believe that this rebuke in Mark are the words of Peter (Clarke 68).² Of course, they were wrong in this rebuke of the Son of God, but this may reveal that they really did not know nor realize completely at that time who He was. This is indicated by their response in verse 41. Yet, it should be realized that their response was a natural human reaction that would be common to most people. All people experience storms in their lives. Usually their first concern demonstrates that they emphasize the physical and material when they really should emphasize the spiritual, as the Lord Jesus does.

According to verses 39,40 Jesus rebukes the seemingly hostile tempestuous wind and the raging Sea. In these verses Jesus issues a two-fold rebuke: one to the wind and the sea and another to His disciples. At the command of Jesus the wind and the sea ceased instantly from their violent storm. Clarke writes, "It was not a gradual dying away of the wind, followed by a long swell of the waters, but quick cessation, followed almost immediately by a great calm" (69). This manifests the almighty power and authority of God in God the Son. Jesus, the sovereign Lord, simply had to say those wonderful words, "Peace, be still," [from Σιώπα, πεφίμωσο (Siopa, pephimoso) literally "Be silent, be muzzled")] and "His creation responded immediately" (Wessel 655). To show that this storm was an evil force the following is quoted from Walter W. Wessel,

"It has often been pointed out that the verbs *ἐπιτιμάω* (*epitiman*, "to rebuke") and *φιλμόυν* (*phimoun*, "to muzzle") (in 4:39 rendered "be still" -- noted by JLL2) are also found in the description of the exorcism of Mark 1:25. . . . The raging storm is an evil "force" threatening Jesus and his disciples. Jesus muzzled it by his sovereign word of authority (656).

When the storms of life assail the believer and/or when persecutions come, Jesus is always there to bring peace and calm to the heart whether He chooses to still and quieten the storms or not.

In verse 40 Jesus said unto His disciples, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" This rebuke by Jesus "indicates that Jesus had expected them by this time to have. . ." manifested ". . .more mature faith" (Wessel 655). "This is the first of several. . ." such rebukes ". . .for their lack of understanding and faith" (Wessel 655). Other places of rebuke recorded in Mark are found in (7:18; 8:17-18, 21, 32-35; 9:19). The word "faith" as used in verse 40 "means trust in God's saving power as it is present and active in the person of Jesus" (Wessel 655). Each person should ask himself or herself "Do I have that kind of faith?" To have this faith is to have the promise of heaven and the peace of God that passes all human understanding and comprehension. This "faith" also speaks of the need for an increase in the faith of each believer after he or she is saved. Truly, this was what Jesus wanted in His disciples.

The purpose of this miracle is revealed in verse 41. The response of the disciples in verse 41 manifests that there was something about Jesus revealed to them that they had not previously experienced or understood. This verse says, "they feared exceedingly. . ." They were asking one to another concerning who Jesus really was. They were asking themselves the question, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" To paraphrase their question, they were saying, "Who is this one that can do such a thing?" This seems to imply the answer "He is the all powerful and authoritative Son of God." This assures the trusting believers that this All Powerful Holy One will go with them into the storms of persecution, despair, affliction, and tribulation.

B. Healing the Demon Possessed Man of Gadara 5:1-20

(Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39)

The Servant of God used His supernatural powers as the Son of God to instantaneously suspend the raging storm upon the Sea of Galilee by rebuking the wind and saying unto the sea, "Peace, be still . . . and there was a great calm." By so doing, Jesus demonstrated His power over hostile forces of nature. In Mark 5:1-20 He manifests His divine authority and power over the forces of spiritual evil by casting out demons from a deranged maniac and healing him. These real Bible miracles reveal that the Lord Jesus is, in fact, God come in the flesh. These miracles prove again that He is who He said He was, the Son of God, the one and only Savior and Redeemer. This passage consists of at least six sub-parts: one, the other side of the Sea of Galilee, 5:1; two, a man with an unclean spirit, 5:2-6; three, commanding the unclean spirit to come out of the man, 5:6-10; four, the legions of demons desiring to be sent into the swine, 5:10-14; five, the response to this miracle, 5:14-17; and six, the evidence of conversion, 5:18-20.

The other side of the Sea of Galilee (5:1) Verse one says "they came over unto the other side of the sea." This means the eastern side. As indicated by the name Decapolis in verse 20 the population of this area was mostly Gentile. This is also confirmed by the mentioning of the large herd of pigs which were considered unclean by Jewish Law (Leviticus 11:1-18). This part of the country on "the other side of the sea . . ." is called the country of the Gadarenes according to Mark. In the parallel passage in Matthew 8:28 it says, "He was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes." In the parallel passage in Luke 8:26 it says, "And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee." The difference in the name of the country or region between Mark, Luke, and Matthew can probably best be explained by the fact that both names were used. There a was village called Gerasa

(Kherasa) which was in the region belonging to the city of Gadara of the province of Decapolis. {Discussions of this location can be read in "A Harmony of the Gospels" on page 71 by A. T. Robertson and in other commentaries to which this writers refers.}

A man with an unclean spirit (5:2-6) Verse 2 and verse 6 need to be read and compared together to understand this passage. Verse two states that immediately upon stepping out of the ship, Jesus was confronted by a man³ "with an unclean spirit" or who was demon possessed. He was under the power of this unclean spirit. Verse 6 shows that the man had seen Jesus coming and he came running to Him.

Verses 3-5 reveal the place of dwelling of this man and his condition as a result of his demon possession.

Mark 5:3-5 "Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: 4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones."

Evidently, this wretched man had been driven to living among these natural limestone caves used for tombs by the people in the nearby towns for he could not be subdued, not even with chains. Wessel notes that not far from the ruins of Gerasa (Kherasa) "there is a cliff within forty meters of the shore and some old tombs" (657). The word "dwelling" means "living quarters." It is said that according to the Hebrew Talmud there were four signs of madness: one, walking abroad at night; two, spending the night on a grave; three, tearing one's clothes, and four, destroying what one was given (source unknown to the writer).

According to verses 3, 4 efforts had been made to contain this maniac but to no avail. The word "tame" is from the aorist form of the Greek verb δαμάζω (damazo) which means "to tame, curb, restrain" (Thayer 124) and carries the idea of subdue or

control. He was very strong and had often broken the chains used to bind him. Verse 5 further reveal his wretched condition. This gives a vivid picture of what the devil will do for a person in the long run. This man was discontent in every way.

The worship of Jesus by the man in verse 6 is really an act of deference or homage. As shall be seen from verses 7-9, it was really the demon(s) that possessed him that was worshipping Jesus. This was not true worship (Clarke 71). The demon or demons within him shows respect because he realizes that he has come face to face with one who is greatly superior to him (James 2:19). This man could have been this writer or anyone for that matter. Thank God for His marvelous grace! "Oh! But for the grace of God!" Remember what the apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:10 "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Thank God that Jesus was not finished with this man. For as shall be seen, the grace of God is extended to this man also.

Commanding the unclean spirit to come out of the man (5:6-10) Verse 6 with Luke 8:28 reveals that this demon possessed man came before Jesus falling upon his knees. He was greatly disturbed within himself by Jesus. According to verse 7 the demon cried out with a loud voice or as loud as he could, and said unto Jesus, "What have I to do with thee Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?"⁴ This was his way of saying "What do we have in common?" (Wessel 657). He realized who Jesus was and that Jesus had the power and authority to judge him. He recognized Jesus for who He was, the Son of Almighty God. Yet the demon did not use this name to express a belief in Jesus, but expecting maybe to control Him (1:24) (Wessel 657). The last statement in verse 7 was an effort by the demon to get Jesus to leave things as they were. The demon said, "I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." This

is similar to what the demon spoke in Mark 1:24. They both were afraid of being destroyed before their time.

In any case, verse 8 reveals that Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. According to verse 9 Jesus asks this demoniac, "What is thy name?" Jesus probably asked this in order "to recall the man to the remembrance of his humanity" (Clarke 72). This man needed to understand that he was still responsible for his own actions though influenced by demons. However, the answer seems to have come from the demons within; for he said, "My name is Legion: for we are many." "Legion" from the noun λεγιών (legeon) is the name given to a Roman troop of at least 6,000 men (Rienecker 99). The answer reveals the shifting and divided consciousness: first singular and then plural. Notice the pronouns in verses 9: "thy," "he," "my," and "we." (The demons caused the man to have a split personality.)

This singular and then plural use by this poor man is again seen in verse 10 when "he" requested that Jesus not send "them" (the demons) "away out of the country." (He was like a lot of people today; they do not want their sins too far away from them.) He was so possessed that he was unable to act apart from the demons within him. The demons were "speaking through the lips of the demoniac" (Wessel 658). It is interesting to note that in Luke 8:31 these demons requested "that they not be sent into (*the deep or*) the Abyss (Rev 20:1-3), the place of confinement before their final judgment" (Wessel 658).

The legions of demons desiring to be sent into the swine (5:10-14) Now, Jesus is going to take action concerning these devils to rid the country of them. This was an act of divine judgment and cleansing. Verses 11-13 say that Jesus gave the devils leave or permission to enter into a herd of swine according to their plea.

Mark 5:10-13 "And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a

great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea."

Evidently the pigs were so excited that they ran violently down a steep place and drowned in the sea. Why did Jesus allow the demons to enter and destroy these 2,000 pigs? It may be that Jesus wanted the man and all others to have tangible evidence "that the demons had actually left him and that their purpose had been to destroy him even as they destroyed the pigs" (Wessel 658). Each person needs to be reminded of Numbers 32:23 "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out." Sin and sins destroy people. That is one reason Jesus is needed in the heart of every soul. People need to realize that "demons are emissaries of Satan, the Destroyer" (Wessel 658).

The response to this miracle (5:14-17) Verse 14 states "And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. . . ." This caused the people to come to the scene of the miracle to the place where Jesus was. Verse 15 relates what they saw. What they saw they could hardly believe. This once demon possessed man who had been so violent that he could not even be controlled by chains was now "sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind. . . ." Luke adds that the man was "sitting at the feet of Jesus" (8:35). Remember that Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus was commended of Jesus for sitting at His feet. Jesus said of Martha, in Luke 10:42 "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." This expression, from Luke, "sitting at the feet of Jesus" implies learning more of Jesus and His doctrine as well as worshipping and being devoted to Him. All believers would do well to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn more of Him and His blessed Word, way, and will.

Now note that this man was now clothed. Spiritually speaking, when one is saved he or she is clothed with the righteousness of Jesus. Jesus becomes the righteousness of and for the saved one (Romans 4:1-25; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21). For the born-again, blood-bought believer is justified before the holy and righteous God by the blood of Jesus through faith in Him. Before Jesus came along this man could not be subdued (5:3-5). What chains could not do the power of God could and did. And so it is with the Law. The Law cannot control the flesh but God through His grace redeems sinful man and this gives the redeemed one the Holy Spirit to dwell within and thus the power to yield to the control of God (Romans 6:6-20; Galatians 5:13-26).

One would think that these people would rejoice, but the last part of verse 15 says "and they were afraid." The words rendered "were afraid" is from aorist middle indicative of the Greek verb φοβέομαι (phobeomai) from φοβέω (phobeo). Thayer says φοβέω (phobeo) means ". . . to fear, be afraid, to be struck with fear, to be seized with alarm . . ." (655). These people were alarmed and struck with fear. They rather should have trusted in the One whose power brought this about. Concerning their fear and what they saw Expositors says:

". . . they see there a sight which astonishes them, the well-known demoniac completely altered in manner and aspect: sitting quiet, not restless; clothed, implying previous nakedness, which is expressly noted by Luke (8:27), sane, implying previous madness . . . They were afraid of the sane man, as much as they had been of the insane, i.e., of the power which had produced the change." (*Expositors qtd. in Wuest* 105).

Verse 16 explains that the eyewitnesses to the miracle told the people what happened. "And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine." {Born-again ones, the saved, are eyewitnesses, so to speak, of what Jesus has done for lost sinners to redeem them and so the redeemed sinners should tell others. This world of lost people needs to be told

of Jesus and that He saves and forgives lost sinners and will one day take the believing redeemed sinners to heaven.}

This caused the people of that region to ask Jesus "to depart out of their coasts" according to verse 17. They should have asked Jesus for mercy and salvation, but fear, ignorance, and selfishness caused them to do otherwise. They were afraid that more of their pigs and other natural wealth might be destroyed. Therefore, Jesus did leave, because where He is not wanted He does not stay. How sad! Each person needs to consider these questions: "Will I ask Jesus to leave me alone? What is more important to me? This life or the life to come?"

The evidence of conversion (5:18-20) Verses 18-20 along with verse 15 give the evidence of the conversion of this man. This man once possessed by demons is now a saved, redeemed saint. Besides the fact that he was now "sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind," verse 18 says that this man wanted to go with Jesus. "And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him." This was "a perfectly natural reaction" (Wessel 659). He was glad and thankful for having been released from the slavish control of Satan and redeemed by the power, grace, and love of God (John 8:32-38). He wanted to be near Jesus and learn more of Him. Even now, Jesus lived in his heart even as He lives in the hearts of those today who trust in Him. However, according to verse 19, Jesus, our Lord, did not permit this man to come with Him at that time. What Jesus did was to charge and commission the man to return to his home (family, friends, and neighbors) and bear witness to the mercy and grace of God as manifested in His Dear Son. Jesus would have been justified to just let the man go, but He was merciful and gracious and saved his soul. He will do the same for anyone who seeks Him in repentance and faith. One wonders why Jesus told this man to go tell others and yet in

1:44,45 and in other places He instructed people not to tell others. "This is probably because in this case . . . Jesus was in Gentile territory where there would be little danger that popular messianic ideas about Him might be circulated" (Wessel 659). But now one can be assured that Jesus wants him or her not only to be saved but He wants each one to tell others so they can be saved. Verse 20 says that this healed and redeemed man departed and obeyed Jesus without argument. He is a great example to all believers. What he did each believer should do also. He went throughout Decapolis bearing testimony of what "great things Jesus had done for him." Decapolis was a league of ten originally free Greek cities located mostly on the east side of the Sea of Galilee.⁵ The last part of verse 20 declares that the people of this area listened to this man concerning the "great things Jesus had done for him" and "did marvel." The verb "did marvel" is from the imperfect active form of the Greek verb θαυμάζω (thaumazo) and has the idea of "amazement and wonder" (Bible Works for Windows). Being in the imperfect tense this response was of an ongoing amazement and wonder.

C. Revealing His Power over Disease and Death 5:21-43

(Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 8:40-56)

In this section of chapter 5 Jesus demonstrates His power to effectively deal with the two additional hostile powers which are arch enemies of God and man. He performs two miracles by healing a woman with an issue of blood and by raising the dead daughter of Jairus. Yes, Jesus did show these people compassion and love but most of all He performed these miracles so that the people of that day and people today would realize that He was truly God come in the flesh and had power to save, redeem and forgive the sins of each believing sinner before the God of heaven. This section of chapter 5 can be sub-divided into three parts: one, the urgent petition of

Jairus, 5:21-24; two, healing of the woman with the flow of blood, 5:25-34; and three, raising of the daughter of Jairus, 5:35-43. It is interesting to note that both of these miracles have to do with ritual uncleanness according to the Jewish Law. In the eyes of God, without Jesus in the heart and as personal Savior, each human being is unclean and needs the cleansing that only Jesus and His shed blood can supply.

The urgent petition of Jairus (5:21-24) The scene in these verses shifts to the west side of the Sea of Galilee. On the east side they prayed Jesus to depart, but on this side He is once again greeted by the multitudes. Although it is not stated, this probably was at Capernaum since Luke (8:40) records that the people "were all waiting for him." According to verse 22 one of the "rulers of the synagogue" named Jairus came before Jesus and "fell at his feet." The words "rulers of the synagogue" come from the compound Greek word ἀρχισυναγωγός (archisunagogos) meaning "leader or president of a synagogue" (Rienecker 100). Thayer states that "It was his duty to select the readers or teachers in the synagogue, to examine the discourses of the public speakers, and to see that all things were done with decency and in accordance with ancestral usage" (78). {Luke relates in Acts 13:15, "And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, *Ye men and brethren*, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."} Rienecker notes that this was "the official whose duty it was to take care of the physical arrangements for the worship services" (100). In Mark 5:22 the Greek text records εἰς τῶν (eis ton) before ἀρχισυναγωγῶν (archisunagogon). Εἰς (eis) is the "cardinal numeral one" (Thayer 186). Since the Greek definite article τῶν (ton) is used with εἰς (eis) it is speaking of a specific ruler meaning "the particular ruler."

Verse 23 records the plea and request of Jairus, "And (*he*) besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." The verb "besought" is from παρακαλέω (parakaleo) and in this context has the idea of begging, entreating, or beseeching (Thayer 482). {The noun form παράκλητος (parakletos) means one called alongside to help (Thayer 483) and is the word Jesus used of the Holy Spirit, called "the Comforter" in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7.} Jairus was in deep distress because his little daughter was at the point of death thus "he fell at his feet" (Mark 5:22). He had heard about Jesus and believed He could heal his child. The last part of verse 23 is a purpose clause telling the reason Jairus wanted Jesus to come. Jairus states pleadingly, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her . . ." He takes this action in order that "she may be healed: and she shall live."

According to verse 24 Jesus did not reply orally, but He did so by His action. "Actions speak so much louder than words." It says, "And Jesus went with him . . ." As Jesus went a large crowd of people —probably curiosity seekers— followed along and thronged Him or crowded around Him. Take note, the humble request of Jarius was to be honored by Jesus, the Son of God. {If a lost sinner asks from a broken and contrite heart for Jesus to save him or her, He will honor the request and He will save the lost sinner on the spot (Psalms 34:18; 51:17; Isaiah 57:15; 66:2). In many circumstances, the child of God would do well to follow the example of Jesus in this; he or she should take action rather than speak. Parents can send their children to church, but if they take them, it will mean so much more. It will have a lasting effect. Furthermore, the father should be the leader in this.}

Healing of the woman with the flow of blood (5:25-34) Verse 25 is tied to the previous verse with the Greek conjunction καί (kai) translated "and" with a

copulative connecting force (Thayer 315). This account is thus inserted between the plea of Jairus and the action of Jesus in raising his daughter to life. The idea is that as Jesus went, the woman with a hemorrhage came unto Jesus believing, that if she could only touch His clothes she would be made whole as seen in verse 28. Verse 25 says that her bleeding had persisted for twelve long years. Verse 26 adds the vivid details: she had suffered much, had been treated by many doctors, had spent all she had, and instead of getting better, had actually gotten worse. Luke 8:43 records that "neither could (*she*) be healed of any," that is, none of the doctors and/or physicians, could heal her illness. Verses 27-29 report that this woman, after having heard of Jesus, came up behind Him in the press or crowd and touched His garment. Verse 28 gives the reason for her action. "For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." She believed by the touching of His garment she would be made whole. Verse 29 records that her faith was at once rewarded; for it says "she was healed of that plague." Luke adds "immediately her issue of blood stanch'd" (8:44).

While verse 29 reports that the woman felt in her body that she was made whole, verse 30 records that Jesus also was conscious that something had occurred. This shows that He is the all knowing God. Verse 30 declares "And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?" The word "virtue" comes from the Greek noun δύναμις (*dunamis*) that means "strength, ability, power; . . . inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth . . . power to heal disease . . . the power of performing miracles . . ." (Thayer 159). Jesus actually knew that healing power had proceeded from Him. Since He is the all-knowing God, He knew who the woman was and what she was going to do before she did it. Nevertheless, with the great crowd all about Him, He

asked, "Who touched my clothes?" Not because He did not know! But to bring out what had happened and who it was that touched Him and was healed.

Verse 31 reveals that His disciples truly did not yet realize that Jesus was and is very God; for they seemed to think that this question of Jesus was impractical in view of the throngs of people about Him. They said to Jesus, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" However, their harsh reply may have been caused by their concern to get Jesus quickly to the daughter of Jairus (Wessel 661). To them that was the real emergency. Nevertheless, Jesus being God took each thing as being important for He knew that He could take care of everyone who requested His help. This circumstance demonstrates that Jesus can and will answer the prayers of each and everyone who come to Him in faith and humility.

After the disciples in great amazement and wonder said to Jesus, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" Verse 32 relates that "He looked round about to see her that had done this thing." The verb "looked around" is from the Greek verb περιεβλέπετο (perieblepeto) which is from the imperfect middle of περιβλέπω (periblepo) which means "to look around, to look around about one's self . . ." (Thayer 502). The imperfect middle, περιεβλέπετο (perieblepeto), carries the idea that Jesus was looking and continued to look about Himself to find the woman who had touched Him. According to verse 33 the woman responded to the search of Jesus. She came in fear and trembling and falling before Him, confessing the truth. {Anyone who would be saved must confess his sinful condition before Jesus and ask Him to forgive him and He will.}

Verse 34 shows that it was not the purpose of Jesus to rebuke this woman but to make personal contact with her. Jesus "said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." She needed to realize that

"it was her faith, not her superstitious belief, that caused God to heal her" (Wessel 661). Jesus addressed her as "daughter." She was now a child of God. This is the only occurrence in the Gospels of Jesus using the word "daughter" (Wessel 662). He made it clear that her faith had healed her (Wessel 662). The words rendered "hath made the whole . . ." is from two Greek words $\sigma\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\omega\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \sigma\epsilon$ (sesoken se) which could be translated "has healed thee." $\Sigma\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\omega\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ (sesoken) [from $\sigma\acute{\omega}\zeta\omega$ (sozo) which means "to save . . . to make well, heal . . ." (Thayer 610)] is in the perfect tense and thus "emphasizes the present state as a result of a completed action" (Rienecker 101), that of her having been healed already by Jesus. It should be noted that this word denotes not only a physical healing but a spiritual salvation as well. This is backed up by the exhortation to "go in peace." The word "peace" from $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\rho\eta\acute{\nu}\eta$ (eirene) carries the idea of being free from inward anxiety because one has been "brought into a right relationship with God" (Wessel 662). The clause "be whole of thy plague" shows that Jesus was the one who had, indeed, healed her. Jesus thus demonstrated His godly power over disease. {A person may not have a terrible physical disease and all can be thankful to God for that, but if one has never been saved then that one has a disease that is even worse and that is the spiritual disease of sin and the only cure is to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Each person should ask himself, "Have I come to Jesus in faith and humility asking Him that my sins be forgiven and that He would save my soul from hell and take me to heaven?" If not, why not, for He is the only Savior, the only One, who can forgive a person of sin and save the lost sinner with eternal salvation and someday take the redeemed sinner to heaven.}

Raising of the daughter of Jairus (5:35-43) The words in verse 35, "While He yet spake" show the tremendous demands that were made upon Jesus. Before He could finish one thing something else cropped up. Yet the calm and patient manner in

which He handled each event is a great example to born-again, blood-bought believers to display the same even in times of great stress when the days seem long and unending. The message of these that came from the home of Jairus was indeed sad. They brought the news that his daughter had died. Verse 35 states, "there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead. . . ." In view of this, the messenger exclaimed, "why troublest thou the Master any further?" In other words, they told the ruler not to bother the teacher anymore. But what is impossible to men is possible to God for with God all things are possible. Hence Jesus, upon overhearing these discouraging words and ignoring their sad message, turns to Jairus the ruler of the synagogue and says in verse 36, "...Be not afraid, only believe" or in other words trust in Me and do not fear any more. Luke 8:50 records it this way, "But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole." These were meant to be words of encouragement and of assurance. In reference to the words in Mark 5:36, "Be not afraid," Jesus used the present imperative of φοβέομαι (phobeomai) with the negative μή (me). The meaning of the present imperative with the negative is to stop an action in progress (Davis 168,169). [For the meaning of "afraid" refer to the comments for 5:15]. Jesus was saying, "stop fearing." Also the verb πιστεύω (pisteuo) (meaning believe) is in the present imperative meaning to continue an action already in progress (Davis 168,169). In other words, Jesus was saying to Jarius, "You stop being afraid right now, and you continue to believe or to have faith in Me." The man had been believing and so Jesus told him to continue to believe.

Verse 37 implies that Jesus broke away from the multitude and allowed only three of His disciples to go with Him. Verse 37 declares, "he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James." The disciples

were in training thus Jesus chose Peter, James, and John as a unit to represent the twelve to witness this great miracle that was about to take place (Wuest 115).⁶ The house was probably too small for all twelve of the apostles.

Verse 38 describes a great commotion at the house that went along with the wakes of that day. "And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly." It was the custom to hire professional mourners. According to verse 39 Jesus asks, "Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel (*or young child*) is not dead, but sleepeth." Or paraphrased, "Why all this commotion and wailing?" In Luke 8:52 the Bible says, "And all wept, and bewailed her: but he (*Jesus*) said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth." What did Jesus mean? He meant her death was not final. But the mourners evidently did not understand the inference of Jesus to sleeping.⁷ Jesus is saying that the damsel sleeps as in death but she will shortly be brought back to life. The professional mourners thought that Jesus meant that she was not really dead and so they laughed Him to scorn according to verse 40. That the tears changed to laughter so quickly clearly indicates "the superficiality of the grief of these professional mourners" (Wessel 663). Jesus would not allow this noisy unbelieving crowd to be present when He performed this great miracle. Hence, verse 40 says He put them out and allowed only the mother and father of the young girl plus His disciples to witness the miracle He was about to perform upon this dead child.

Verse 41 says that Jesus took the young girl by her hand and commanded in the Aramaic words "Talitha cumi" (meaning damsel, arise). Mark translates this for his Gentile readers when he records: "being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." Matthew says it this way in Matthew 9:25, "But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose." Therefore this 12 year old girl

arose from the hostile power of death by the power of the words of the Lord Jesus, the mighty Servant of God. [Jesus has the power to raise the dead, for He is the resurrection (John 11:24-26; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58).]

In verse 42 Mark uses his characteristic word "straightway" to show that the little girl arose immediately. As proof of her resurrection she not only stood up but walked around the room and Luke adds "And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat" (8:55). The response of those in the room was that "they were astonished with a great astonishment" (5:42). Two different Greek words are used to describe their complete amazement. The word "astonished" comes from the verb ἐξίστημι (existemi) and means "to throw out of position, displace, to amaze, to astonish, throw into wonderment, to be . . . astounded to be out of one's mind" (Thayer 224). The second word, "astonishment," comes from the noun ἔκστασις (ekstasis) and means "any casting down of a thing from its proper place or state, displacement, a throwing of the mind out of its normal state . . . amazement, the state of one who, either owing to the importance or the novelty of an event, is thrown into a state of blended fear and wonderment" (Thayer 199). The minds of the five witnesses of the great miracle were thrown into a state of blended fear and wonderment at the raising to life of the young girl. They were surprised out of their minds.

In verse 43 Jesus issued two insistent commands: first, "he charged them straightly that no man should know it" {Wessel explains that Jesus meant no one was "to reveal the facts about the miracle" (663)} and second, "that something should be given her to eat." Why did Jesus issue the first command? One commentator explains it this way: "That the girl had recovered could not be hid, but that she had been brought back from death might be. Jesus wished this, not desiring that expectations of such acts should be awakened" (*Expositors qtd. in* Wuest 118). Why? One may ask.

28). "Miracles were therefore performed to convince unbelievers of the deity of the Son of God and that He had power to save from hell" (Garner 84).

The miracle recorded in Mark 4:35-41 of instantaneously calming the hostile storm on the Sea of Galilee teaches us that Christ has the power over the natural things of this world. Jesus simply gave the command to the wind and the sea, "Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." When the storms of life assail the believer and/or when persecutions come, Jesus is always there to bring peace and calm to the heart whether He chooses to still and quieten the storms or not. The purpose of this miracle was so that the disciples would understand that "Jesus is the all powerful and authoritative Son of God." This assures trusting believers that this All Powerful Holy One will go with them into the storms of persecution, despair, affliction, and tribulation.

In Mark 5:1-20 Jesus manifests His divine authority and power over the hostile forces of spiritual evil by casting out a legion of demons from a deranged maniac and healing him. (He restores the man to sanity and most importantly demonstrates His power to save the soul of this man.) These miracles prove again that He is who He said He was, the Son of God, the one and only Savior and Redeemer. By His divine power Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. The result was that this once demon possessed man who had been so violent that he could not even be controlled by chains was now "sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind." He wanted to go with Jesus, but Jesus told him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." This is what Jesus wants each redeemed one to do.

Mark 5:21-43 tells of Jesus demonstrating His power to effectively deal with the two additional hostile powers which are arch enemies of God and man. He

performs two miracles by healing a woman with an issue of blood and by raising the dead daughter of Jairus. Yes, Jesus did show these people compassion and love but most of all He performed these miracles so that the people of that day and people today would realize that He was truly God come in the flesh and had power to save, redeem and forgive the sins of each believing sinner before the God of heaven.

It is interesting to note that both of these miracles have to do with ritual uncleanness according to the Jewish Law. In the eyes of God without Jesus in the heart and as personal Savior, each human being is unclean and needs the cleansing that only Jesus and His shed blood can supply. Jesus healed the woman with an issue of blood and told her, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." When word came that the daughter of Jarius was dead, Jesus told him "Be not afraid, only believe." Then Jesus proceeded to go into house of the ruler of the synagogue and took the damsel by the hand, and said Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked. . . ." The minds of these five witnesses of this great miracle were thrown into a state of blended fear and wonderment at the raising to life of the young girl. To further prove that the young girl was indeed now alive and well, Jesus insisted "that something should be given her to eat."

Chapter Notes

1. (See page 167; Introductory comments.) Born-again believers in every age need intensive training, that is why they should take heed to Hebrews 10:23-25 and attend worship services at every opportunity. Believers need to get away from the world and learn more about Jesus.

2. (See page 173; Mark 4:38.) Alvah Hovey, editor of An American Commentary of the New Testament, notes and concludes that the words in Mark 4:38 "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" are actually the impetuous words of Peter as recorded by Mark. This, he says is another proof that Mark received his information from Peter as noted by this writer on page 7 (Clarke 68, 69).

3. (See page 176; Mark 5:2.) Matthew 8:28 mentions two men who were possessed with demons while Mark 5:2 says, "a man." To explain the difference Clarke writes, "The common conjecture for explanation is that there were two, but that one was so far inferior to the other in violence and prominence as to pass almost unnoticed" (71).

4. (See page 177; Mark 5:7.) The name "the most high God" (or "the most High") as used in Mark 5:7 is connected to Genesis 14:18; Numbers 24:16, and Deuteronomy 32:8. See the comments on Mark 1:24 also.

5. (See page 182; Mark 5:20.) Of the cities of Decapolis only Beth Shan, aka Scythopolis, was west of Jordan. The city of Beth Shan (also spelled Bethshean) of the Old Testament (Josh 17:11-12; Judg 1:27; 1 Sam 31:8-12; 1 Chr 10:10) became known as Scythopolis in Hellenistic times and was one of these cities and was located at the junction of the Jordan and Jezreel valleys, about 14 miles (22 km) S of the Sea of Galilee (Rairdin, PC Bible Atlas for Windows, Ver 1.0j).

6. (See Mark 5:37, page 189.) In some Greek texts the definite article τὸν (ton) is used before the name "Peter" and used with the co-pulative καί (kai) (rendered "and") with the names John and James show that they were considered as a unit (Wuest). Also this is according to the generic use of the Greek article (Dana and Mantey 144).

7. (See Mark 5:39, page 189.) The word "sleepeth" comes from the present active indicative verb form of καθεύδω (katheudo). In the Bible the word "sleep" can be used in least three different ways. The first and primary meaning is for one to simply "fall asleep, drop off to sleep; to sleep" (Thayer 313) as used in Matthew 8:24; 13:25; 25:5; 26:40,43,45; Mark 4:27,38; 13:36; 14:37, 40-41; Luke 22:46; 1 Thess 5:7. A second meaning is to use the word "euphemistically" and meaning "to be dead" (Thayer 313) as used in 1 Thessalonians 5:10 and Daniel 12:2 (one in the grave). A third meaning is to use the word metaphorically so as "to yield to sloth and sin" and "to be indifferent to one's salvation" (Thayer 313) as used in Ephesians 5:14 and 1 Thessalonians 5:6.

End Note

A. The harmonized sequential listings from the other Gospel records have been gleaned from various sources and from study. This writer leaned heavily on A Layman's Harmony of the Gospels by John F. Carter and A Harmony of the Gospels for Students of the Life of Christ by A. T. Robertson. Both of these are listed in the Bibliography. All other sources are also listed.

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Joseph L. Looney (II): Landmark Baptist Preacher-Teacher

(About the Author)

Joseph L. Looney (II) was born in Shreveport, LA, and raised near Magnolia, Arkansas. He was the third child of Jack and Mary Looney who taught him right from wrong, about the Bible and the true God. His father worked in the oil fields. His mother was a school teacher and later a librarian at Southern State College (now: Southern Arkansas University). His father went to the Methodist Church. His father made a profession of faith and was baptized and became a member of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church southeast of Magnolia in 1969.

Upon graduation from Magnolia High School in 1956, Joe joined the U.S Army Reserves, "Six Month Active Duty Program" and served about 6 years in the Reserves. After the Six Month Program, Joe attended Southern State College, Magnolia. In the summer of 1957 while working for the Banner News, Joe met and later married Miss Patsy Ruth Griffis, December 27, 1957, at the Davidson Missionary Baptist Church near Waldo, AR. Pat has been a faithful, loyal companion ever since that time. (Pat worked as a school teacher and assistant for 31 years.) January, 1961, Joe received the Bachelor of Science--Industrial Engineering degree from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

In May, 1960, John Blake a follow engineering student revealed the following Scriptures (Romans 3:10,23; 6:23; 5:6,8 and etc.). Joe realized that he was lost and needed to be saved. Two weeks later Joe asked Christ Jesus to save him and forgive him of his sins and was saved at the age of 21 (June, 1960). He then followed the Lord in scriptural baptism and became a member of Central Missionary Baptist Church of Fayetteville, AR.

While working as an Industrial Engineer for Poinsett Lumber and Manufacturing Company in Trumann, AR, the Lord began dealing with Joe concerning the call to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. It wasn't until October, 1971, that Joe came before the Cavanaugh Missionary Baptist Church, Ft. Smith, AR, and surrendered to the Master's will by faith. In January, 1973, he accepted the pastorate of the Mountain Grove Missionary Baptist Church near Alma, AR. He was ordained in March, 1973, by the Cavanaugh Church under the ministry of Brother E. Keith Simmons. Joe worked as an industrial engineer for over 20 years in Arkansas and Kentucky (1960 -- 1982).

Joe has served the following Missionary Baptist churches as pastor from 1973 until the 2017:

Mountain Grove, near Alma, AR January 1973 -- July 1981

Unity, near Paron, AR March 1983 -- August 1986

Pine Top, near Broken Bow, OK June 1987 -- July 1995

Calvary, Gillette, WY August 1995 -- July 2014

Wards Creek, Simms, TX April through July, 2017 (Interim)

Joe and Pat are currently Members of Austin Chapel, De Kalb, TX

Education: Magnolia High School, Magnolia, Arkansas Graduated: 1956

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas

Graduated: January, 1961 BS-Industrial Engineering

Lexington Baptist College, Lexington, Kentucky

Attended: 1963-1968 (Concurrent with working for Square D Co.)

Missionary Baptist Seminary, Little Rock, Arkansas

Graduated: B. B. L., May, 1986; TH. B., May, 1987

Gulf Coast Baptist Institute, Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Master of Theology, May 4, 2001; Doctor of Theology, May 11, 2012

Service for Missionary Baptist Associations:

Annual Speaker for Central MBA of AR.; Messenger Meeting: Oct. 18, 1985

Annual Speaker for Macedonia MBA of OK.; Messenger Meeting: Sept. 30, 1989

Moderator for Macedonia MBA of OK.; Messenger Meeting: Sept. 1994 & elected for 1995

Moderator (& Moderator's Address) for Rocky Mountain MBA: August 4, 2000 (Greeley, CO)

Moderator (& Moderator's Address) for Rocky Mountain MBA: August 3, 2001 (Cheyenne, WY)

Assistant Parliamentarian for Rocky Mountain MBA for several years

Speaker for Graduation Exercises in May, 2012 for Gulf Coast Baptist Institute, Hattiesburg, MS

Organizer, Planner, and Moderator for the WyKota Landmark Baptist Fellowship Retreat (Meeting at Fort Robinson State Park near Crawford, NE) (2002 thru 2014)

Joe and Pat have three children, Joe L. Looney III (Baptist preacher) of Broken Bow, OK, Marietta Raney (school teacher in New Boston) of De Kalb, TX, and William Looney (computer building structure designer) of Lowell, AR; and four grandchildren.

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--- Volume One of Four ---

(Mark Chapters 1; 2; 3; 4; & 5)

A Practical Commentary on The Gospel According to Mark

By

Joseph L. Looney II