



“College Life Class”

A Survey of the New Testament (Gospels and Acts)

First Baptist Church, Golden

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ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΡΚΟΝ

According to Mark

‘Αρχη του ευαγγελιου
‘Ιησου Χριστου
[‘υιου θεου].

Mark's 411

Author: John Mark (John = Hebrew name & Mark = Latin).

1. An associate of Peter (1 Pet. 5:13);
2. Once a missionary companion of Paul (Acts 13:5);
3. The son of one Mary (12:12);
4. A nephew (or cousin) of Barnabas (Col. 4:10);
5. The subject of dispute between Paul & Barnabas (Acts 15:37-40);
6. Later reconciled to Paul (2 Tim. 4:11);
7. Perhaps the person whose home was the “upper room” (cf. Mark 14:12-16; Acts 12:12, 14);
8. Possibly well-to-do (owned a big home) and his cousin owned land (4:36-37), and;
9. May have been the unclad lad who fled the Garden (Mark 14:51-52).

Date: A.D. 55-60

Mark's 411

Audience (& location): Roman Christians (in Rome and the Roman world)

The theme: Christ the servant of the Lord.

The key verse: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (10:45).

Themes of Mark

1. To depict Christ as a **servant** to Romans
2. To give a historical explanation of “the Gospel;” biographical, not so much theological
3. To provide an apologetic to the Romans for Jewish unbelief in their own Messiah (Answering: “Why should Romans accept Jesus if the Jews had rejected him as their Messiah?”)

Mark's 411

Isaiah 42:1

¹“Here is My servant, whom I uphold,
My chosen one in whom I delight; I
will put My spirit on Him and He will
bring justice to the nations.”

Other characteristics:

- Mark has 18 miracles, only 4 parables, and only one major discourse.
- Jesus is depicted as *Servant of the Lord* (cf. Isa. 42:1).
- Mark is more biographical than theological. It stresses the **works** of Jesus, not His words. Matthew emphasizes what Jesus *said* while Mark emphasizes what Jesus *did*. It is the gospel of **activity** and **power** (both were desired by the Romans).
- Mark uses “Jesus,” “Jesus Christ,” “Lord,” **not** “Christ” (Messiah).
- It is the only gospel calling Jesus a Carpenter (6:3).
- It implies that Jesus had no leisure time (3:7-9; 6:31; 6:45; 7:24; 9:30).
- Mark presents Christ as the ideal Levite, Servant of man and God, before the altar and on the altar.

A Popular Survey of the NT by N.L. Geisler, 2014, pp.62-63

The pattern: The basic outline of Mark is patterned after Peter's sermon ([Acts 10:36-42](#)).

³⁶You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

³⁷You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—

³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power [[Mark 1:1-20](#)], and how He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him [[1:21-10:52](#)].

³⁹"We are witnesses of everything He did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem [[chs. 11-14](#)]. They killed Him by hanging Him on a tree [[ch. 15](#)],

⁴⁰but God raised Him from the dead on the third day and caused Him to be seen.

⁴¹He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen--by us who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead.

⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead [[ch. 16](#)]." (NKJV)

A Popular Survey of the NT by N.L. Geisler, 2014, pp.62-63

Problematic passages:

Acts 10:40-41 -⁴⁰but God raised Him from the dead on the third day and caused Him to be seen. ⁴¹He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen--by us who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead.

Problem: If the gospel is to be preached to all people, why did God grant resurrection appearances only to select persons?

Solution: This is a question no one can answer with certainty, but the selectivity theme fits with aspects of Jesus 's own approach (e.g., Mark 1:43-45; 4:11; 8:29-30). Also, it must be remembered that Jesus taught that even if someone appeared from the dead and offered a message from God, many would not believe it (Luke 16:30-31).

To believe, one must be open to the word of God, open to the fact that God can do miracles, and open to the teachings and claims of Jesus. Without such openness, a resurrection appearance would make no impact because the unbeliever would explain it away on skeptical grounds.

The Holman Apologetics Commentary on the Bible: The Gospels and Acts, ed. J.R. Howard, 2013, p. 703.

Problematic passages:

Mark 6:5 -If Jesus is God, why couldn't He do mighty works here?

Just because Jesus *possessed* all power does not mean that He always chose to *exercise* it. The “could not” in Mark 6:5 is moral, not actual. That is, He chose not to perform miracles “because of their unbelief” (v.6).

Jesus was not an entertainer, nor did He cast pearls before swine.

So the necessity here is moral, not metaphysical.

He had the ability to do miracles there and in fact did some (v. 5), but He refused to do more because He deemed it a wasted effort.

Problematic passages:

Mark 10:17-31 (cf. Matt. 19:16-30; Luke 18:18-30) -If Jesus was God, why did He seem to rebuke the rich young ruler for calling Him good?

Problem: Why did Jesus appear to deny that He was God to the young ruler?

Solution: Jesus did not deny He was God to the young ruler. He simply asked him to examine the implications of what he was saying. (“Do you realize what you we're saying when you called Me good? Are you saying I am God?”)

The young man did not realize the implications of what he was saying. Thus, Jesus was forcing him to a very uncomfortable dilemma.

Either Jesus was good and God, or else He was bad and mad--good God or bad man, but not merely a good man.

Those are the real alternatives with regard to Christ. For no good man would claim to be God when he was not. The liberal Christ, who was only a good moral teacher but not God, is a figment of human imagination.

A Popular Survey of the NT by N.L. Geisler, 2014, p. 68-69.

Problematic passages:

Mark 11:23-24 -Did Jesus promise to give literally anything we ask in faith?

Solution: 1. God cannot literally give us anything. Some things are actually impossible. For ex., God cannot grant a request of a creature to be God. Neither can He answer a request to approve of our sin. God will not give us a stone if we ask for bread, nor will He will give us a serpent if we ask for fish (cf. Matt. 7:9-10).

2. The context of Jesus' promise in Mark 11 indicates that it was not unconditional, for the very next verse says “*If you... forgive*” your brother then God will forgive your trespasses. Thus, there is no reason to believe that Jesus intended us to take His promise to give us “whatever things” we ask without any conditions.

When Critics Ask by N.L. Geisler & T. Howe, 1992, pp. 373-374.

Problematic passages:

Mark 11:23-24 -Did Jesus promise to give literally anything we ask in faith?

Solution: (continued)

3. All difficult passages should be interpreted in harmony with other clear statements of Scripture. And it is clear that God does not promise, for ex., to heal everyone for whom we pray in faith. Paul was not healed, though he prayed earnestly and faithfully (2 Cor. 12:8-9). Jesus taught that it was not the blind man's lack of faith that hindered his being healed. Rather, he was born blind “that the works of God should be revealed in him” (John 9:3).

4. Finally, when the rest of Scripture is taken into consideration there are many conditions placed on God's promise to answer prayer in addition to faith. We must “abide in him” and let His Word “abide in us” (John 15:7). We cannot “ask amiss” out of our own selfishness (James 4: 3). Furthermore, we must ask “according to His will” (1 John 5:14).

For prayer is not a means by which God serves us. Rather, it is a means by which we serve God. Prayer is not a means by which we get our will done in heaven, but a means by which God gets His will done on earth.

When Critics Ask by N.L. Geisler & T. Howe, 1992, pp. 373-374.

Problematic passages:

Mark 13:32 Was Jesus ignorant of the time of His second coming?

Problem: The Bible teaches that Jesus is God (John 1:1) and that He knows all things (John 2:24; Col. 2:3). On the other hand, He “increased in wisdom” (Luke 2:52) and sometimes did not seem to know certain things (cf. John 11:34). Indeed, He denied knowing the time of His own second coming here, saying, “but of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

Solution: We must distinguish between what Jesus knew as God (everything) and what He knew as man. As God, Jesus was omniscient (all-knowing), but as man, He was limited in His knowledge. This can be schematized as follows:

Jesus says God

unlimited in knowledge
no growth in knowledge
new time of His coming

Jesus as Man

limited in knowledge
growth in knowledge
did not know time of His coming

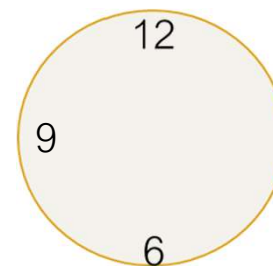
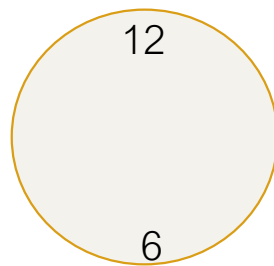
Problematic passages:

Mark 15:25 (cf. John 19:14) Was Jesus crucified in the 3rd hour or the 6th hour?

Problem: Mark's Gospel account says that it was the 3rd hour (9 a.m. Jewish time) when Christ was crucified. John's Gospel says that it was about the 6th hour (12 noon Jewish time) when Jesus was still on trial. This would make His crucifixion much later than specified by Mark. Which gospel is correct?

Solution: Both Gospel writers are correct in their assertions. The difficulty is answered when we realize that the Gospel writers used a different time system. John, writing after the destruction of Jerusalem, follows the *Roman* time system, while Mark follows the *Jewish* time system.

Roman 24 hour period
ran from midnight to
midnight.
John says **trial** at 6th
hour (6 a.m.)



Jewish 24 hour period
begins evening at 6 p.m.
The morning of that same
day begins at 6 a.m.
Mark says Jesus was
crucified at 3rd hour (9 a.m.)