

THE GOSPEL of

MARK

*The Authority of
Jesus Questioned*

THE GOSPEL of **MARK**

Authority
Questioned

The Gospel of Mark so far...

- Mark's purpose for writing this gospel was to show that Jesus was the Son of God – the stories, messages and miracles are documented as evidence to prove to the reader Mark's bold opening statement that Jesus is the "Messiah" or "Son of God"
- Jesus identifies his mission (1:15): "The kingdom of heaven is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Setting & Plot

Chapter 1 – introduces Jesus and his mission. The people are astounded and marvel at his teaching, miracles and authority

- Jesus' fame spreads like wildfire so he is forced to stay in lonely places

Chapter 2 – Jesus begins to face opposition as he does not act like the other religious leaders

- Jesus continues to heal and preach, but the religious leaders begin to question him and his authority as he pronounces people forgiven of their sins – an act reserved for God alone

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Mark
2:18-22

¹⁸ Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, “Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” ¹⁹ And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. ²¹ No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. ²² And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins.”

Story #1: Not Just A New Kingdom

1. Jesus' Opponents Go on Offence

- Questioner for the first time is confronting Jesus rather than responding (clear escalation in Mark's Gospel)
- The question is critical in nature and meant to expose Jesus and his followers to their disadvantage

2. Significance of fasting...

- Jews required to fast 1 day a year – Day of Atonement
- Pharisees were known for fasting 2 times/week
- The ultimate goal of fasting was to seek the presence of God – to the Pharisee, fasting showed his piety, zeal and commitment both to God and man

Story #1: Not Just A New Kingdom

1. Jesus' Opponents Go on Offence

2. Significance of fasting...

3. Typical counter Question from Jesus

- The “counter questions” of Jesus are meant to reveal the principles of the new kingdom and expose the error in the thinking and world view of the questioners
- Wedding analogy meant to show an absurdity – who in their right minds would fast during a wedding?
- Jesus introduces himself as the “Bridegroom”

Story #1: Not Just A New Kingdom

1. Jesus' Opponents Go on Offence
2. Significance of fasting...
3. Typical counter Question from Jesus

The Point of the Story: Jesus was not coming to set up a new kingdom under the old system or old ways. Rather, he was bringing a new kingdom with a new way of thinking and living

²³ One Sabbath he was going through the grain fields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴ And the Pharisees were saying to him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ²⁵ And he said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: ²⁶ how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?” ²⁷ And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

Story #2: Lord of the Sabbath

1. Jesus Accused of Breaking the Sabbath Law

- Sabbath rest commanded in OT
- Religious leaders made their own rules that governed the Sabbath that were not from the Bible

2. Significance of Sabbath...

- Jews required to rest 1 day a week (Saturday)
- Rhythm given by God in creation
- One of the BIG 10
- Sabbath was meant to remind God's people that they were dependent on him for their livelihood – a reminder that they were not slaves

Story #2: Lord of the Sabbath

1. Jesus Accused of Breaking the Sabbath Law

2. Significance of Sabbath...

3. Counter Question from Jesus

- Jesus refers to story of David when he was running from King Saul and ate the “bread of the presence”
- Question is meant to show that it is lawful to take care of need (especially one as basic as hunger) on the Sabbath
- Jesus finishes his rebuttal with identifying himself as “the Son of Man” and the “Lord of the Sabbath”

Story #2: Lord of the Sabbath

1. Jesus Accused of Breaking the Sabbath Law
2. Significance of Sabbath...
3. Counter Question from Jesus

The Point of the Story: God's rhythms for creation were built with humans in mind – they were built to bless us and help us flourish

THE GOSPEL of **MARK**

Mark
3:1-6

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. ² And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. ³ And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here."
⁴ And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. ⁵ And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

Story #3: A Demonstration of Love Over Law

1. Religious Leaders Looking to Accuse Jesus

- 3:2... And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so they might accuse him.
- Healing considered a “work” by religious leaders

2. Counter Question...

- “Is it ok to do good on the Sabbath?” So simple, it must have infuriated his opponents!
- Jesus is both angered and grieved by the hardness of their hearts
- Jesus chooses to heal the man because “the Sabbath was meant for man, not man for the Sabbath”

Story #3: A Demonstration of Love Over Law

1. Religious Leaders Looking to Accuse
2. Counter Question...

The Point of the Story: In healing on the Sabbath Jesus shows the motivation of the Law is actually love which trumps the laws made by man

3 Stories 3 Lessons for us Today

1. Becoming a believer means you are a new creation with a new way of thinking and living
 - You cannot follow Jesus and live and think by the principles of your old life
 - 2 John 2:5b-6... By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

3 Stories 3 Lessons for us Today

1. Becoming a believer means you are a new creation with a new way of thinking and living
2. God created the rhythms of live for humans, not humans for the rhythms
 - The outcome of getting this backward is despair and a lower view of human life
3. We either accept Jesus for who he really is, or we reject him – there's no middle ground
 - What do we do when our perception of God runs contrary to who the Bible reveals him to be?