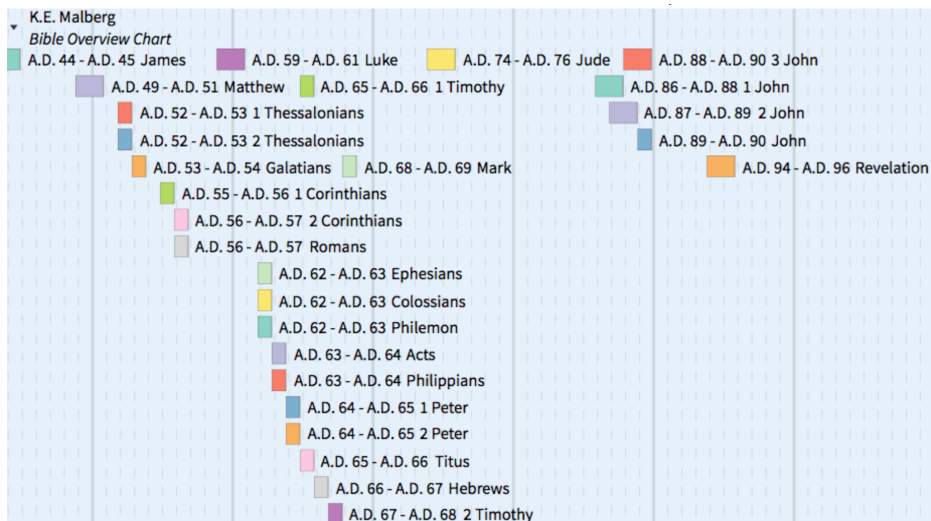


The Gospel of Mark – Part 1 – Introduction and John's Baptism of Repentance | 3/3/19

- Introduction
 - We are going to begin an in-depth study on the entirety of the Gospel of Mark.
 - The Gospels are vital to our salvation and our understanding of who Jesus is. By studying all that Jesus has done will give us a much greater understanding of what He has done for us and how we are to live our lives.
 - In part 1 we will focus on a general introduction of the Gospel of Mark and then look at John the Baptist and role that he played for the Kingdom of God.
- Authorship of the Gospel of Mark
 - While Mark is widely attributed and accepted to be the author of this Gospel (the human author as God is the real author) he is never identified.
 - However, the early church and church fathers have all identified and accepted that Mark was the author.
 - Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (A.D. 130) identifies Mark as the author who is recorded for us by the Jewish historian Eusebius. He noted how Mark had been with Peter and wrote down what he had heard and learned and also said that Mark was an "interpreter" for Paul. Which could mean he either explained Peter's sermons or did translations into other languages.
 - Others include Justin Martyr (A.D. 150) and Irenaeus (A.D. 185).
 - Historically throughout the earliest of church history, the author has always been attributed to Mark as were the authorship of Matthew, Luke, and John.
 - **These Gospels were widely circulated throughout all of the early churches and were never questioned when it came to them being "officially" canonized in the 4th century along with the other 27 books of the New Testament.**
 - Canonical: To state that a book is canonical means that it is inspired by God's Holy Spirit as he worked through the men who wrote it. If canonical it is authoritative.
 - Canonization: A process where the people of God are recognizing and collecting the books that God inspired. The search to find God's completed work.
 - **Regardless of the "human author" the actual author is God. We believe and have faith that this is the Word that He intended for us to receive.**
- When was the Gospel of Mark written?
 - Various scholars and historians have provided different dates which all lie in a span between A.D. 50 and A.D. 70.
 - Scholars disagree if Mark was written before Matthew and Luke or after. Those who affirm that it was written first put it in the mid-'50s while those who deem it after in the late '60s.
 - Therefore, there is conflict as to whether Mark was written after Matthew and Luke, or if it was the first.
 - The view of the early church until the 19th century was that Matthew was the first Gospel. Only then have scholars suggested that Mark was perhaps the first and therefore intense study and research has taken place because of this.



- Who is Mark?
 - In the Scriptures, Mark is also known as John or “John Mark.”
 - Acts 12:25
 - “And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.”
 - **Mark was Jewish and primarily a contemporary and companion of Peter.**
 - **Mark and Luke (unlike Matthew and John) did not follow or provide a personal eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus.** They were, however, companions of those who did.
 - Mark was a companion of Peter
 - Luke was a companion of Paul.
 - Mark was very close to Peter and has been called a “spiritual son” of Peter’s throughout early Christian history.
 - We can see Peter's reference to Mark as "his son."
 - 1 Peter 5:13
 - “She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.”
 - For him to refer to Mark in this way shows how close of a relationship they had.
 - Early tradition and church fathers also state that Peter assisted Mark with the writing of this Gospel.
 - Mark was a cousin of Barnabas and traveled together doing ministry work.
 - Barnabas who played an important role especially in the life of Paul was a cousin of Mark.
 - Colossians 4:10a
 - “Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas...”
 - They also traveled together to do ministry work.
 - Acts 15:37
 - “Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.
 - Acts 15:39b
 - “...Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus,”
 - Mark had an up and down relationship with Paul, but in the end, they made amends.
 - **Not only was Mark a companion of Peter but he also traveled with Paul and Barnabas.**

- However, on one occasion Mark deserted them which caused Paul to specifically request that Mark not accompany him on their next journey.
 - Acts 13:13
 - Acts 15:36-41
 - In the end, they seemed to have resolved their differences as Paul said that Mark was useful for the ministry.
 - 2 Timothy 4:11
 - “Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.”
- The Synoptic Gospels
 - When we study the Gospels, we notice a striking similarity between Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This is because they are "synoptic" which means that they convey the same story or truth but from different perspectives.
 - **Is everyone aware of this?**
 - To answer “why” this is the case you essentially have two different perspectives.
 - One modern “worldly view” is that Mark was written first and therefore Matthew and Luke used Mark’s work as the basis for theirs.
 - This view is popular among critics in that it disproves the belief that they were all individually inspired to write about Christ.
 - There are of course many reasons why this is not likely true.
 - **The traditional view is that all of the three of these authors (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) were inspired by God to write the Gospels independently of one another.**
 - This is, of course, the same perspective that we have on all of the human authors of Scripture.
 - Another simple reasoning is that of course they would have similar stories because they are all telling of the same events that took place in history.
 - They also shared a common bond of friendship.
 - **The Gospels are synoptic because God divinely inspired the writers to record exactly what He desired.**
 - 2 Peter 1:21
 - “For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”
 - The Bible is not a book about God. It is a Book FROM God.
- The Gospel | Mark 1:1
 - **Read Mark 1:1**
 - The very first verse of Mark tells us what we can expect to read.
 - This Book is the gospel of Jesus Christ who is the Son of God.
 - The word Gospel literally means “good news” or “proclaiming good news” in the Greek language.
 - **By definition, it is the message concerning Christ, the kingdom of God and salvation.**
 - Mark’s accounting will give us the good news of Jesus which includes His purpose, why He is here and of His death and resurrection. It will show us how we can receive salvation.
 - He also tells us immediately who Jesus is. He isn’t a prophet or a teacher, but He is the Son of God. He is divine and not a man.
 - The gospel is vital to all Christians. The message that is included in Mark along with Matthew, Luke and John is God's Word to us telling us who He is and what He has done. And then how we can have a relationship with Him, to receive salvation and everlasting life.

- John the Baptist | Mark 1:2-8
 - **Read Mark 1:1-8**
 - **Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark begins with John the Baptist, and he does not include the birth of Jesus.**
 - **John the Baptist was called by God to pave the way for Jesus Christ, to tell others that the Messiah was coming.**
 - John the Baptist had a significant purpose. His job was to go before Christ and to tell them of His coming.
 - John 1:31
 - “I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.”
 - This passage comes from the Book of John where at a later date John the Baptist was describing the events that took place when he baptized Jesus.
 - **Specifically, to prepare their hearts for repentance so that they can receive forgiveness for their sins so that they can be saved.**
 - John the Baptist, like Christ, was foretold in the Old Testament.
 - Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 is given to us in verses 2 and 3 in Mark.
 - The angel Gabriel came to John’s father and told him of his purpose.
 - Luke 1:12-17
 - “And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”
 - John’s father prophesized after his birth.
 - Luke 1:76-77
 - “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins,”
 - **Why do you think God saw it necessary to send John the Baptist before Jesus?**
 - **It had been 400 years since the last prophet spoke.**
 - **Why was it necessary for their hearts to be prepared?**
 - John was exceptional, and his life showed it.
 - John’s birth itself was a miracle as his mother was beyond childbearing age and was barren.
 - Luke 1:6-7
 - “And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.”
 - He was filled with the Holy Spirit even while in his mother’s womb.
 - Luke 1:15

- “for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.”
 - John was a cousin of Jesus
 - Jesus’s mother Mary and John’s mother Elizabeth were related.
 - Luke 1:36
 - “And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.”
 - Jesus said that he was the greatest of those on earth.
 - Matthew 11:11a
 - “Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist...”
 - He baptized Jesus
 - Mark 1:9
 - “In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.”
 - He had taken a Nazirite vow (like Samson and Samuel) to separate himself to the Lord.
 - This is why he was told to refrain from strong drink and also why his diet in the wilderness consisted of locust and honey.
 - Numbers 6:1-3a
 - “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When either a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink...”
 - Numbers 6:8
 - “All the days of his separation he is holy to the LORD.”
 - Continues until verse 21.
- **John’s baptism of repentance**
 - **John knew that the Messiah was coming quickly, and the people must repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ for their salvation.**
 - He was fulfilling his God-given calling. It was his appointed time as Jesus would very shortly begin his ministry.
 - **John's baptism with water was a precursor to all future baptisms.**
 - It was based on opening one’s heart and repenting of their sins.
 - Mark 1:4
 - "John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."
 - **He also was well aware that his baptism of water was nothing compared to the baptism that would come from Christ through the Holy Spirit.**
 - Mark 1:7-8
 - “And he preached, saying, After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.
 - To be baptized by the Holy Spirit takes place when one has received salvation.
 - **Baptism is a symbol of cleansing**
 - The water itself did not cleanse their sins. It was a symbol **demonstrating** their willingness to repent and turn away from their sins.

- **The baptism of John (like the baptism that we do today as Christ commanded) portrays an invisible belief in the heart.**
- **For them, it was an outward expression of the invisible repentance they had in their heart, for us today it is an outward sign of an inward grace.**
 - When we get baptized the water or ceremony does not save us. But it is **an act of obedience that demonstrated publicly that we have confessed and repented of our sins and that we believe in Jesus Christ.**
- **John knew that his baptism did not bring salvation, but it was only through belief in Jesus Christ.**
 - John was only leading and guiding others to Christ.
 - John 3:36
 - “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
 - Acts 19:4
 - “Paul said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the One who would come after him, that is, in Jesus.”
- **If the water baptism doesn’t save us, then why is it so important that Christ has commanded us to do it?**
- **John knew that for the people receive forgiveness of their sins, that they had to confess and repent of their sins.**
 - **To acknowledge our sins is vital for us to be a Christian. We cannot become one if we do not accept and confess them.**
 - 1 John 1:8-10
 - “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
 - If we think that we are pure and faultless, then we cannot become a Christian, because we have all sinned.
 - We MUST acknowledge our sins as it is the REASON that Christ went to the cross.
 - To say you have no sin is to refute why Christ went to the cross.
 - **Why does God require us to confess our sins? Doesn’t He already know what they are? What is the purpose for us to acknowledge and confess them?**
- **Our confession must also lead to repentance.**
 - Repentance has a much deeper meaning than merely acknowledging our sins.
 - To merely identify when we have done wrong and to call it out does not mean that we have repented of it.
 - **Repentance means "to turn back."**
 - Literally, the definition of the word repentance is to turn back.
 - This mean there is more to just acknowledging our sin, but to do something about it. To turn away from it.
 - **True repentance means that we have come to a new understanding of our actions, that what we have done is wrong and in disobedience to God. Then we CHANGE that behavior and turn back to God.**

- This action of changing our behavior and turning away from it involves a lot more than a simple acknowledgment.
- **This is contrary to confessing of something we have done when we have been "caught."**
 - True repentance is not the same as one who says sorry after they have been caught.
 - Those confessions do not result in repentance especially if they keep repeating them.
- **True repentance results from godly grief.**
 - When the Holy Spirit convicts of our sin and we experience godly grief, only then does that bring about true repentance.
 - 2 Corinthians 7:8-10
 - “For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. **For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.**”
 - The "worldly grief" comes from being caught, not because we are genuinely repentant.
 - Godly grief will bring us to our knees. It will break our hearts and shows us how our sins affect God.
- **Explain what it means to you to experience "godly grief." What does this look like?**
- **Explain what true repentance looks like and means to you.**