

# The New Testament Canon: An Overview by Genre

(in parentheses: total number of chapters / verses in each book)

**Four “Gospels”:** attributed to the four “Evangelists”; narrative “portraits” of Jesus’ life and ministry:

**Matthew** (28 / 1071)  
**Mark** (16 / 678)  
**Luke** (24 / 1151)  
**John** (21 / 878)

} The Synoptic Gospels  
→ The Fourth Gospel



**One “Acts”:** a partial narrative account of the growth of early Christianity; not a complete “history” of apostolic Christianity:

**Acts of the Apostles** (28 / 1008)

**Twenty-One “Letters” or “Epistles”:** written by (or attributed to) various early Christian “apostles”

**Thirteen “Pauline Letters”:** attributed to Paul; written to communities or individuals; listed by decreasing length, not age:

**Romans** (16 / 433)  
**1 Corinthians** (16 / 437)  
**2 Corinthians** (13 / 257)  
**Galatians** (6 / 149)  
**Ephesians** (6 / 155)  
**Philippians** (4 / 104)  
**Colossians** (4 / 95)  
**1 Thessalonians** (5 / 89)  
**2 Thessalonians** (3 / 47)  
**1 Timothy** (6 / 113)  
**2 Timothy** (4 / 83)  
**Titus** (3 / 46)  
**Philemon** (1 / 25)

} letters to Christian communities in these cities  
} letters to individual Christian leaders, but only the first three are called the “Pastoral Letters”



**One Biblical “Sermon”:** interpreting Jesus’ significance in light of OT; not really a “letter” (no author/audience explicit):

**Hebrews** (13 / 303)

**Seven “Catholic Epistles”:** attributed to other apostles; written to broader audiences (“catholic” = “general, universal”):

**James** (5 / 108)  
**1 Peter** (5 / 105)  
**2 Peter** (3 / 61)  
**1 John** (5 / 105)  
**2 John** (1 / 13)  
**3 John** (1 / 14)  
**Jude** (1 / 25)



**One “Apocalypse”:** a highly symbolic narrative that interprets a historical crisis and provides hope for a better future:

**The Book of Revelation** (22 / 404)

**More about the Gospels** – the word “Gospel” is derived from the Old English “god-spel” (*god* = good; *spel* = news), which is equivalent to Greek *eu-angelion* (*eu* = good; *angelion* = message; *angelos* = messenger). Originally “gospel” referred to *oral* proclamations (see Mark 1:14-15), but it is later used for a particular genre of *written* literature (based on its use in Mark 1:1).

- Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the “**Synoptics**” because they see Jesus “with the same eye”; the “**Fourth Gospel**” (John) is substantially different from the Synoptics in content, style, and theology, but no less valuable.
- About thirty other early Christian “Gospels” were not accepted into the New Testament (called “**non-canonical** Gospels”).
- All four canonical Gospels were originally written in Koine (“Common”) **Greek** between the late 60’s and early 90’s.
- The authors of the Gospels are usually called the four “**Evangelists**” (from Greek *euangelion*, lit. “good news”).
- The official titles are “The Gospel *according to...*” (although we often use the shorter, but less accurate titles “Gospel *of...*”)
- The **Q-Document** (“Quelle” = “source” in German) is a hypothetical collection of sayings & teachings of Jesus; many scholars think it was a written source (from the 50’s?) used later by Matthew and Luke, but it is now lost.
- The NT Gospels are similar to *ancient biographies* in literary form, but *very different* from *modern* biographies!

**Pauline Letters or Epistles** – the thirteen letters attributed to Paul are often subdivided into various groups:

- Seven “authentic” or “*undisputed Pauline Letters*” (Rom, 1 & 2 Cor, Gal, Phil, 1 Thess, Phlm);
- Six “disputed” or “*deutero-Pauline Letters*” (Col, Eph, 2 Thess, 1 & 2 Tim, Titus), since some scholars think these are “authentic” [actually written by Paul], while others argue that they were written pseudepigraphically (by Paul’s followers after his death);
- The three letters written to early “pastors” (1 & 2 Tim, Titus) are usually also called the “*Pastoral Epistles*.”
- Eph, Phil, Col, Phlm are sometimes called “*Prison Letters*,” since Paul apparently wrote them while he was in prison.
- The anonymous sermon apparently written “*To the Hebrews*” was *not* written by Paul, nor even attributed to him!

### **Eight Tips about the Canonical Arrangement of the NT** (to help you learn the correct order of the 27 NT books):

1. The 27 books of the New Testament are **NOT** listed in *chronological* order (not the order in which they were written historically); several *other* principles were operative instead.
2. The **overall order** begins with the life of *Jesus* (the four Gospels), then deals with the growth of the Christian *Church* (Acts, Letters, Epistles), and finally focuses on the *Eschaton* (the end of time, as described symbolically in the Book of Revelation).
3. The four **Gospels** are listed in what *was* traditionally regarded as their chronological order (i.e., Matthew was thought to be the oldest Gospel); most scholars today, however, believe that *Mark* was the first written Gospel (or at least the oldest of the four canonical Gospels in their full versions, as we know them today).
4. The **Acts** of the Apostles was originally the second volume of Luke's two-volume work; but when the four Gospels were grouped together, Acts was placed after John.
5. The letters written by **Paul** (or at least attributed to him) are divided into *two sub-groups*: those written to communities and those addressed to individuals; within each sub-group, the letters are arranged *not* in chronological order, but rather in *decreasing order of length* (more or less, although Galatians is slightly shorter than Ephesians).
6. The anonymous "Letter to the **Hebrews**" comes immediately after the Pauline letters because people *used* to think it was also written by Paul; it may have been written by one of his followers, but was almost certainly *not* written by Paul himself.
7. The Catholic or General **Epistles** are also listed in decreasing order of length, although letters attributed to the same apostle are grouped together.
8. The Book of **Revelation** (singular! not plural "Revelations!") closes out the NT canon, since it concludes with a description of the end of time (New Heavens, New Earth, New Jerusalem, etc.).

### **Ten Stages of NT Formation and Transmission** (with chronological overlap, continuing down to today):

- **Life & Ministry of Jesus** – words are spoken and deeds are performed by Jesus himself during his lifetime on earth.
- **Oral Tradition** – traditions and beliefs about Jesus are developed and passed on by early Christian communities.
- **Written Sources** – some of the miracles and/or sayings of Jesus are compiled and recorded in early written documents.
- **Written Texts** – individual letters, full Gospels, etc., are written with particular messages for particular situations.
- **Distribution** – some writings are copied and shared with other Christian communities throughout the Mediterranean.
- **Collection** – certain Christians begin collecting the letters of Paul and gathering together several different Gospels.
- **Canonization** – four Gospels, several collections of letters, and a few other texts are accepted as authoritative scriptures.
- **Translation** – biblical texts are translated into other ancient and modern languages: Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, etc.
- **Interpretation** – the meaning of the scriptures is investigated on various levels: literal, spiritual, historical, social, etc.
- **Application** – communities and individuals put the NT to practical use: liturgical, moral, sacramental, theological, etc.

### **Four Criteria for Canonicity** (why certain books were eventually accepted into the NT Canon, while others were rejected):

1. **Apostolic Origin** – attributed to and/or based on the preaching/teaching of the first-generation apostles (or their closest companions).
2. **Universal Acceptance** – acknowledged by all major Christian communities in the Mediterranean world (by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century).
3. **Liturgical Use** – read publicly along with the OT when early Christians gathered for the Lord's Supper (their weekly worship services).
4. **Consistent Message** – contain theological ideas compatible with other accepted Christian writings (esp. Jesus' divinity *and* humanity).

### **Four-Fold Role of the Evangelists as Authors** (what they contributed, even if "God is the Author" of all scripture):

1. **Selectors** – from among the many things Jesus said and did, they chose which stories they wanted to include and which to omit.
2. **Arrangers** – they organized the materials in a particular sequence, not necessarily chronologically but often in thematic blocks.
3. **Shapers** – they adapted and edited the individual stories from their sources so as to emphasize the themes they wanted to stress.
4. **Proclaimers** – they were not objective historians, but preached the "good news" about Jesus in ways appropriate to their audiences.

## Lectionary Readings for Sundays in Ordinary Time

**Year A: Matthew** (2011, 2014, 2017, 2020, etc.)

| 2014    | Wk   | First Reading         | Gospel Reading                   |
|---------|------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1/12    | [1]  | Isa 42:1-4, 6-7       | Matt 3:13-17                     |
| 1/19    | 2    | Isa 49: 3, 5-6        | John 1:29-34                     |
| 1/26    | 3    | Isa 8:23b—9:3         | Matt 4:12-23 <i>or</i> 12-17     |
| [2/2]   | 4    | Zeph 2:3, 3:12-13     | Matt 5:1-12a                     |
| 2/9     | 5    | Isa 58:7-10           | Matt 5:13-16                     |
| 2/16    | 6    | Sir 15:15-20          | Matt 5:17-37 <i>or</i> shorter   |
| 2/23    | 7    | Lev 19:1-2, 17-18     | Matt 5:38-48                     |
| 3/2     | 8    | Isa 49:14-15          | Matt 6:24-34                     |
| X       | 9    | Deut 11:18, 26-28     | Matt 7:21-27                     |
| [Pent.] | 10   | Hos 6:3-6             | Matt 9:9-13                      |
| [Trin.] | 11   | Exod 19:2-6a          | Matt 9:36—10:8                   |
| [Body]  | 12   | Jer 20:10-13          | Matt 10:26-33                    |
| [6/29]  | 13   | 2 Kings 4:8-11,14-16a | Matt 10:37-42                    |
| 7/6     | 14   | Zech 9:9-10           | Matt 11:25-30                    |
| 7/13    | 15   | Isa 55:10-11          | Matt 13:1-23 <i>or</i> 1-9       |
| 7/20    | 16   | Wis 12:13, 16-19      | Matt 13:24-43 <i>or</i> 24-30    |
| 7/27    | 17   | 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12     | Matt 13:44-52 <i>or</i> 44-46    |
| 8/3     | 18   | Isa 55:1-3            | Matt 14:13-21                    |
| 8/10    | 19   | 1 Kings 19:9, 11-13   | Matt 14:22-33                    |
| 8/17    | 20   | Isa 56:1, 6-7         | Matt 15:21-28                    |
| 8/24    | 21   | Isa 22:15, 19-23      | Matt 16:13-20                    |
| 8/31    | 22   | Jer 20:7-9            | Matt 16:21-27                    |
| 9/7     | 23   | Ezek 33:7-9           | Matt 18:15-20                    |
| [9/14]  | 24   | Sir 27:30—28:7        | Matt 18:21-35                    |
| 9/21    | 25   | Isa 55:6-9            | Matt 20:1-16a                    |
| 9/28    | 26   | Ezek 18:25-28         | Matt 21:28-32                    |
| 10/5    | 27   | Isa 5:1-7             | Matt 21:33-43                    |
| 10/12   | 28   | Isa 25:6-10           | Matt 22:1-14 <i>or</i> 1-10      |
| 10/19   | 29   | Isa 45:1, 4-6         | Matt 22:15-21                    |
| 10/26   | 30   | Exod 22:20-26         | Matt 22:34-40                    |
| [11/2]  | 31   | Mal 1:14b—2:2b, 8-10  | Matt 23:1-12                     |
| [11/9]  | 32   | Wis 6:12-16           | Matt 25:1-13                     |
| 11/16   | 33   | Prov 31:10-31 (sel.)  | Matt 25:14-30 <i>or</i> 14f, 19f |
| 11/23   | [34] | Ezek 34:11-12, 15-17  | Matt 25:31-46                    |

**Year B: Mark** (2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, etc.)

| 2015    | Wk   | First Reading         | Gospel Reading                |
|---------|------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1/11    | [1]  | Isa 42:1-4, 6-7       | Mark 1:7-11                   |
| 1/18    | 2    | 1 Sam 3:3b-10, 19     | John 1:35-42                  |
| 1/25    | 3    | Jon 3:1-5, 10         | Mark 1:14-20                  |
| 2/1     | 4    | Deut 18:15-20         | Mark 1:21-28                  |
| 2/8     | 5    | Job 7:1-4, 6-7        | Mark 1:29-39                  |
| 2/15    | 6    | Lev 13:1-2, 44-46     | Mark 1:40-45                  |
| X       | 7    | Isa 43:18-25 (sel.)   | Mark 2:1-12                   |
| [Pent.] | 8    | Hos 2:16b,17b,21-22   | Mark 2:18-22                  |
| [Trin.] | 9    | Deut 5:12-15          | Mark 2:23—3:6                 |
| [Body]  | 10   | Gen 3:9-15            | Mark 3:20-35                  |
| 6/14    | 11   | Ezek 17:22-24         | Mark 4:26-34                  |
| 6/21    | 12   | Job 38:1, 8-11        | Mark 4:35-41                  |
| 6/28    | 13   | Wis 1:13-15; 2:23-24  | Mark 5:21-43                  |
| 7/5     | 14   | Ezek 2:2-5            | Mark 6:1-6                    |
| 7/12    | 15   | Amos 7:12-15          | Mark 6:7-13                   |
| 7/19    | 16   | Jer 23:1-6            | Mark 6:30-34                  |
| 7/26    | 17   | 2 Kings 4:42-44       | John 6:1-15                   |
| 8/2     | 18   | Exod 16:2-4, 12-15    | John 6:24-35                  |
| 8/9     | 19   | 1 Kings 19:4-8        | John 6:41-51                  |
| 8/16    | 20   | Prov 9:1-6            | John 6:51-58                  |
| 8/23    | 21   | Jos 24:1-2a,15-17,18b | John 6:60-69                  |
| 8/30    | 22   | Deut 4:1-2, 6-8       | Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23      |
| 9/6     | 23   | Isa 35:4-7a           | Mark 7:31-37                  |
| 9/13    | 24   | Isa 50:4-9a           | Mark 8:27-35                  |
| 9/20    | 25   | Wis 2:12, 17-20       | Mark 9:30-37                  |
| 9/27    | 26   | Num 11:25-29          | Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48       |
| 10/4    | 27   | Gen 2:18-24           | Mark 10:2-16 <i>or</i> 2-12   |
| 10/11   | 28   | Wis 7:7-11            | Mark 10:17-30 <i>or</i> 17-27 |
| 10/18   | 29   | Isa 53:10-11          | Mark 10:35-45 <i>or</i> 42-45 |
| 10/25   | 30   | Jer 31:7-9            | Mark 10:46-52                 |
| [11/1]  | 31   | Deut 6:2-6            | Mark 12:28b-34                |
| 11/8    | 32   | 1 Kings 17:10-16      | Mark 12:38-44                 |
| 11/15   | 33   | Dan 12:1-3            | Mark 13:24-32                 |
| 11/22   | [34] | Dan 7:13-14           | John 18:33b-37                |

**Year C: Luke** (2013, 2016, 2019, 2022, etc.)

| 2016    | Wk   | First Reading         | Gospel Reading                   |
|---------|------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1/13    | [1]  | Isa 42:1-4, 6-7       | Luke 3:15-16, 21-22              |
| 1/20    | 2    | Isa 62:1-5            | John 2:1-12                      |
| 1/27    | 3    | Neh 8:2-4a,5-6,8-10   | Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21              |
| 2/3     | 4    | Jer 1:4-5, 17-19      | Luke 4:21-30                     |
| 2/10    | 5    | Isa 6:1-2a, 3-8       | Luke 5:1-11                      |
| x       | 6    | Jer 17:5-8            | Luke 6:17, 20-26                 |
| [Pent.] | 7    | 1 Sam 26:2-23 (sel.)  | Luke 6:27-38                     |
| [Trin.] | 8    | Sir 27:4-7            | Luke 6:39-45                     |
| [Body]  | 9    | 1 Kings 8:41-43       | Luke 7:1-10                      |
| 6/9     | 10   | 1 Kings 17:17-24      | Luke 7:11-17                     |
| 6/16    | 11   | 2 Sam 12:7-10, 13     | Luke 7:36—8:3 <i>or</i> 7:36-50  |
| 6/23    | 12   | Zech 12:10-11; 13:1   | Luke 9:18-24                     |
| 6/30    | 13   | 1 Kings 19:16b, 19-21 | Luke 9:51-62                     |
| 7/7     | 14   | Isa 66:10-14c         | Luke 10:1-12, 17-20              |
| 7/14    | 15   | Deut 30:10-14         | Luke 10:25-37                    |
| 7/21    | 16   | Gen 18:1-10a          | Luke 10:38-42                    |
| 7/28    | 17   | Gen 18:20-32          | Luke 11:1-13                     |
| 8/4     | 18   | Eccl 1:2; 2:21-23     | Luke 12:13-21                    |
| 8/11    | 19   | Wis 18:6-9            | Luke 12:32-48 <i>or</i> 35-40    |
| 8/18    | 20   | Jer 38:4-6, 8-10      | Luke 12:49-53                    |
| 8/25    | 21   | Isa 66:18-21          | Luke 13:22-30                    |
| 9/1     | 22   | Sir 3:17-29 (sel.)    | Luke 14:1, 7-14                  |
| 9/8     | 23   | Wis 9:13-18b          | Luke 14:25-33                    |
| 9/15    | 24   | Exod 32:7-11, 13-14   | Luke 15:1-32 <i>or</i> 1-10      |
| 9/22    | 25   | Amos 8:4-7            | Luke 16:1-13 <i>or</i> 10-13     |
| 9/29    | 26   | Amos 6:1a, 4-7        | Luke 16:19-31                    |
| 10/6    | 27   | Habb 1:2-3; 2:2-4     | Luke 17:5-10                     |
| 10/13   | 28   | 2 Kings 5:14-17       | Luke 17:11-19                    |
| 10/20   | 29   | Exod 17:8-13          | Luke 18:1-8                      |
| 10/27   | 30   | Sir 35:12-14, 16-18   | Luke 18:9-14                     |
| 11/3    | 31   | Wis 11:22—12:1        | Luke 19:1-10                     |
| 11/10   | 32   | 2 Macc 7:1-2, 9-14    | Luke 20:27-38 <i>or</i> 27,34-38 |
| 11/17   | 33   | Mal 3:19-20a          | Luke 21:5-19                     |
| 11/24   | [34] | 2 Sam 5:1-3           | Luke 23:35-43                    |

**Notes:**

The First Readings from the OT were chosen to fit with the themes of the Gospel readings, and thus come from different OT books, with almost no continuity between weeks. The Second Readings from the NT Epistles follow a different, semi-continuous reading schedule, and thus are usually unrelated to the theme of the First Reading and Gospel. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday is the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The 34<sup>th</sup> Sunday is the Solemnity of Christ the King. **Other Sundays** may be supplanted by certain Solemnities or Feasts.

## Lectionary Readings (Sundays & Feasts) – Use of the Gospel according to Mark

| <b>Sunday or Feast</b>   | <b>Lect#</b> | <b>Gospel Passage Prescribed</b>  | <b>Verses Omitted Sundays (but possibly used for Weekday Masses)</b>  |
|--|--------------|---|---|
| <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent – B</i>                       | 5B           | Mark 1:1-8 – Preaching of John the Baptist  |   |
| <i>Baptism of the Lord (Year B opt.)</i>                         | 21B          | Mark 1:7-11 – Baptism of Jesus  |   |
| <i>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent – B</i>                         | 23B          | Mark 1:12-15 – Temptation of Jesus; Beginning of the Galilean Ministry                  |   |
| <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>                | 68B          | Mark 1:14-20 – Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry and Calls His First Disciples         |   |
| <i>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>                | 71B          | Mark 1:21-28 – First Exorcism, in Synagogue at Capernaum                                | Mark 1:21a – “When they came to Capernaum” (geographical transition)  |
| <i>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>                | 74B          | Mark 1:29-39 – Jesus Cures Simon’s Mother-in-Law, then Leaves Capernaum                 |   |
| <i>6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>                | 77B          | Mark 1:40-45 – Cleansing of a Leper   |   |
| <i>7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>                | 80B          | Mark 2:1-12 – Healing of a Paralytic in Capernaum                                       | Mark 2:13-17 – Call of Levi (Weekday 310)   |
| <i>8<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>                | 83B          | Mark 2:18-22 – Question about Fasting   |   |
| <i>9<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>                | 86B          | Mark 2:23–3:6 or 2:23-28 – Sabbath Disputes: Picking Wheat; Healing a Withered Hand     | Mark 3:7-12, 13-19 – Mercy of Jesus; Mission of the Twelve (Weekdays 314-315)   |
| <i>10<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 89B          | Mark 3:20-35 – Beelzebul Controversy; Jesus and His Family                              | Mark 4:1-20, 21-25 – Parable of Sower, Purpose of Parables; Parable of Lamp (Wk 319-320)  |
| <i>11<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 92B          | Mark 4:26-34 – Parables of Seed Growing by Itself; Mustard Seed                         |   |
| <i>12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 95B          | Mark 4:35-41 – Jesus Calms a Storm at Sea   | Mark 5:1-20 – Healing of the Gerasene Demoniac (Weekday 323)  |
| <i>13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 98B          | Mark 5:21-43 or 5:21-24, 35-43 – Healing Jairus’ Daughter and a Hemorrhaging Woman      |   |
| <i>14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 101B         | Mark 6:1-6 – Jesus’ Rejection at Nazareth   |   |
| <i>15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 104B         | Mark 6:7-13 – Mission of the Twelve   | Mark 6:14-29 – Herod’s Opinion of Jesus, Death of John the Baptist (Weekday 327)  |
| <i>16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 107B         | Mark 6:30-34 – Return of the Twelve   | Mark 6:35-44, 45-52 – Feeding of 5000; Walking on Water (Weekdays 213-214)<br>Mark 6:53-56 – Healings at Gennesaret (Weekdays 329)                              |
| <i>22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 125B         | Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 – Traditions of the Elders                                     | Mark 7:9-13, 16-20 – Traditions of Elders about Clean/Unclean (Weekdays 330-331)<br>Mark 7:24-30 – Syrophenician Woman’s Faith (Weekday 332)                    |
| <i>23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 128B         | Mark 7:31-37 – Healing of a Deaf Man  | Mark 8:1-10, 11-13 – Feeding 4000; Demand for Sign (Weekdays 334-335)<br>Mark 8:14-21, 22-26 – Leaven of Pharisees; Blind Man of Bethsaida (Weekdays 334-337)   |
| <i>24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 131B         | Mark 8:27-35 – Peter’s Confession; First Passion Prediction; Conditions of Discipleship | Mark 8:36-38 – Conditions of Discipleship (Weekday 339)   |
| <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent – B</i>                         | 26B          | Mark 9:2-10 – Transfiguration of Jesus  | Mark 9:11-13, 14-29 – Coming of Elijah, Healing of Boy with a Demon (Weekdays 340-341)  |
| <i>25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 134B         | Mark 9:30-37 – Second Passion Prediction; Disciples Argue about Greatness               |   |
| <i>26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 137B         | Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48 – Another Exorcist; Temptations to Sin                          | Mark 9:44, 46 – [text crit. later additions; duplicate of v. 48]<br>Mark 9:49-50 – Simile of Salt (Weekday 344)   |
| <i>27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 140B         | Mark 10:2-16 or 10:2-12 – Jesus’ Teaching about Marriage and Divorce                    | Mark 10:1 – “He went to Judea & Perea” - geographical transition (Weekday 345)  |
| <i>28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 143B         | Mark 10:17-30 or 10:17-27 – Rich Man Asks about Eternal Life                            | Mark 10:31, 32-34 – Last/First; Third Prediction of Passion (Weekdays 348-349)  |
| <i>29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 146B         | Mark 10:35-45 or 10:42-45 – Ambition of James and John                                  |   |
| <i>30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 149B         | Mark 10:46-52 – Healing of Blind Bartimaeus   | Mark 11:11-26 – Fig Tree Cursed, Cleansing of Temple, Withered Fig Tree (Weekday 351)<br>Mark 11:27-33 – Authority of Jesus Questioned (Weekday 352)            |
| <i>Palm Sunday – B [before Mass: Procession of Palms]</i>        | 37B          | Mark 11:1-10 or John 12:12-16 – Jesus’ Entry into Jerusalem                             | Mark 12:1-12, 13-17 – Parable of Tenants; Paying Taxes to Caesar (Weekdays 353-354)<br>Mark 12:18-27 – Sadducees’ Question about the Resurrection (Weekday 355) |
| <i>31<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 152B         | Mark 12:28b-34 – Greatest Commandment   | Mark 12:28a – “A scribe came forward and heard them...”   |
| <i>32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 155B         | Mark 12:38-44 or 12:41-44 – Jesus Denounces the Scribes; Poor Widow’s Contribution      | Mark 12:35-37 – Question about David’s Son (Weekday 357)  |
| <i>33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – B</i>               | 158B         | Mark 13:24-32 – Coming of the Son of Man; Lesson of the Fig Tree                        | Mark 13:1-23 – Destruction of the Temple Foretold, Signs of the End, Great Tribulation  |
| <i>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent – B</i>                       | 2B           | Mark 13:33-37 – Need for Watchfulness   |   |
| <i>Palm Sunday – B [during Mass]</i>                             | 38ABC        | Mark 14:1–15:47 or 15:1-39 – Markan Passion Narrative                                   |   |
| <i>Sunday After Trinity Sunday: Body and Blood of Christ – B</i> | 168B         | Mark 14:12-16, 22-26 – Preparations for the Passover; Last Supper                       |   |
| <i>Easter Vigil – B</i>  | 41ABC        | Mark 16:1-7 ** – Resurrection of Jesus: Empty Tomb                                      | Mark 16:8 – Women Flee from the Tomb in Fear and Silence<br>Mark 16:9-14 – Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene, Two Disciples, the Eleven (Weekday 58)              |
| <i>Ascension of the Lord – B</i>                                 | 58B          | Mark 16:15-20 – Jesus Commissions the Eleven, then Ascends to Heaven                    |   |

# The Gospel according to Mark: Themes and Resources

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## Outline:

*Introduction:* John the Baptist & Jesus (1:1-15, incl. theme of Jesus' preaching, v. 15)

**Early Ministry:** healing & preaching, mostly in Galilee; training the disciples (1:16 – 7:23)

Expanded Ministry: including to non-Jews outside of Galilee (7:24 – 8:21)

**Central Section:** Jesus and his disciples journey **“On the Way” to Jerusalem (8:22 – 10:52)**  
(includes *three passion predictions*, framed by two healings of *blind men*)

Final Ministry: confronting the Jerusalem authorities; the apocalyptic discourse (11:1 – 13:37)

**Passion Narrative:** Last Supper, arrest, trials, crucifixion, death, burial (14:1 – 15:47)

*Conclusion:* the women find Jesus' tomb empty (16:1-8; vv. 9-20 are not original, but added later)

## Material found only in Mark:

- 1:1 – Introductory Verse
- 3:19b-21 – Jesus' Family Tries to Restrain Him
- 4:26-29 – The Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself
- 7:31-37 – Jesus Heals a Deaf Man in the Decapolis
- 8:22-26 – Jesus Gives Sight to the Blind Man of Bethsaida
- 14:51-52 – A Young Man Runs away Naked after Jesus' Arrest
- [16:14-18] – [The Commissioning of the Eleven]

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## Literary Features & Thematic Emphases

### Paratactic Style:

- **Parataxis** – stringing together (lit. “placing next to”) short, loosely connected episodes, like pearls on a string.
  - 410 of the 678 verses in the original Greek version of Mark's Gospel begin with **“And”** (Gk. *kai*)!
- **Immediacy** – Mark's Gospel emphasizes action, as seen in the frequent use of the Greek word *euthys* (“**immediately**, right away, at once, as soon as”), used an astounding 42 times, esp. near the Gospel beginning (1:10,12,18,20,21,23,28,29,30,42,43; 2:8,12; 3:6; 4:5,15,16,17,29; 5:2,29,30,42; 6:25,27,45,50,54; 7:25; 8:10; 9:15,20,24; 10:52; 11:2,3; 14:43,45,72; 15:1).
  - One could feel exhausted after reading Mark's Gospel, so quickly does the action seem to occur!

### Thematic Groupings:

- Mark sometimes **places similar stories together** for thematic continuity, even if the events related might not have occurred one right after the other. Examples:
  - Several **miracle stories** interconnecting Jesus' preaching & healing activity in the first chapter (1:21-45)
  - Five **controversy stories** involving various opponents are in a connected block (2:1—3:6)
  - Three **parables** and further teachings about Jesus' parables are in one chapter (4:1-34)
  - Four more **miracles stories** (of different types) are found together (4:35—5:43)
  - Three **“passion predictions”** are near the middle of the Gospel (8:31—10:45)
  - Seven **controversy dialogues** with or about Jesus' opponents in Jerusalem (11:35—12:44)
  - Many of Jesus' **eschatological teachings** are collected in one chapter (13:1-37)
- Mark also periodically **encapsulates or summarizes the action**, in contrast to telling individual stories:
  - 1:14-15 – Jesus' initial preaching about the Kingdom/Reign of God
  - 1:32-34 – Jesus heals many different people one evening
  - 1:39 – Jesus goes throughout Galilee preaching and exorcizing
  - 3:7-12 – Great crowds acknowledge Jesus' power
  - 6:6b – Jesus goes throughout the villages of Galilee teaching
  - 6:12-13 – Jesus' disciples go out preaching, exorcizing, and healing
  - 6:53-56 – Mark summarizes Jesus' healing activity

### Three-fold Patterns, usually with Progressive Heightening:

- Three times Jesus calls/commissions his core disciples (1:16-20; 2:14-17; 3:13-19)
- Three times Jesus predicts his suffering, death, and resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34)
- Three times Jesus warns, “If your hand/foot/eye causes you to stumble...” (9:43, 45, 47)
- Three times Jesus speaks to the sleeping disciples in Gethsemane (14:32-38, 39-40, 41-42)
- Three times Peter denies knowing Jesus or being his disciple (14:66-68, 69-70a, 70b-72)
- Three groups of people deride Jesus as he is hanging on the cross (15:29-30, 31-32a, 32b)
- Other threes: Peter, James, John (9:2; 14:33); priests, scribes, elders (11:27; 14:43); women (15:40; 16:1)

### Inclusio and Intercalations:

- **Inclusio** – bracketing or “enclosing” a story or section by using the same or similar words, phrases, or themes at the beginning and the end.
- **Intercalation** – enclosing or “sandwiching” one story in the middle of a different story (forming an **A1, B, A2** pattern), so that each affects the interpretation of the other.
- **Examples** of inclusio and intercalation in Mark, some of which involve larger blocks of material:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| A1) 2:1-5 – A paralytic is brought to Jesus<br>B) 2:6-10 – Dispute over Jesus’ authority to forgive sins<br>A2) 2:11-12 – Jesus heals the paralytic  | A1) 3:20-21 – Jesus’ family goes out to restrain him<br>B) 3:22-30 – the Beelzebul controversy<br>A2) 3:31-35 – Jesus’ family arrives; who is his “true family”?  |
| A1) 4:3-8 – Jesus tells parable of the sower and the seed<br>B) 4:10-12 – Why does Jesus speak in parables?<br>A2) 4:13-20 – Jesus explains parable of the sower and the seed              | A1) 5:21-24 – Jairus asks Jesus to heal his dying daughter<br>B) 5:25-34 – a hemorrhaging woman touches Jesus’ clothes<br>A2) 5:35-43 – Jesus raises the daughter of Jairus to life   |
| A1) 6:7-13 – Jesus sends out the twelve apostles on a mission<br>B) 6:14-29 – the death of John the Baptist is recalled<br>A2) 6:30-31 – the apostles return, reporting what they had done | A1) 8:22-26 – Jesus gives sight to a blind man near Bethsaida<br>B) 8:28–10:45 – three passion predictions; discipleship teachings<br>A2) 10:46-52 – Jesus gives sight to blind Bartimaeus near Jericho                             |
| A1) 9:1 – the coming of the Kingdom of God in power<br>B) 9:2-8 – the Transfiguration of Jesus<br>A2) 9:9-13 – the coming of Elijah and of the Son of Man                                  | A1) 11:12-14 – Jesus curses a fig tree outside of Bethany<br>B) 11:15-19 – Jesus expels sellers and buyers from the Temple<br>A2) 11:20-25 – the fig tree is withered; the importance of faith                                      |
| A1) 14:1-2 – chief priests want to arrest and kill Jesus<br>B) 14:3-9 – a woman anoints Jesus at Bethany<br>A2) 14:10-11 – Judas arranges to betray Jesus to the chief priests             | A1) 14:54 – Peter enters the courtyard of the high priest, and sits by a fire<br>B) 14:55-65 – Jesus is interrogated by the council of the chief priests<br>A2) 14:66-72 – in the courtyard, Peter denies knowing Jesus three times |

### Realism in Narrative Details:

- **Long and detailed narratives:** for example:
  - healing of the Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20; contrast much shorter parallel story in Matt 8:28-34),
  - double-healing of Jairus’ daughter and a bleeding woman (Mark 5:21-43; cf. Matt 9:18-26; Luke 40-56).
- **Use of the “historical present” in narration:**
  - throughout Mark, the Evangelist prefers the grammatical present tense while narrating past events;
  - Matthew and Luke sometimes switch to a past tense in their versions of the same stories;
  - for example, contrast the Greek text of Mark 1:12 with Matt 4:1 and Luke 4:1; or Mark 1:21 with Matt 4:12; Luke 4:31; John 2:12.
- **Realism about Jesus’ emotions and reactions:**
  - compassion (1:41); strong displeasure (1:43); amazement at disbelief (6:5); sighing deeply (8:12); indignation (10:14); love (10:21); *all these details are omitted in parallel stories of Matthew and/or Luke.*
- **Realism of his family’s opposition and his disciples’ weaknesses:**
  - disciples “hunt” for Jesus (1:36)
  - his family wants to restrain him, thinking he’s crazy (3:21)
  - disciples fail to understand (4:13); they are afraid and lack faith (4:40)
  - they don’t understand because their hearts are hardened (6:52)
  - they have eyes that don’t see and ears that don’t hear (8:18-19)
  - Peter is called “Satan” (8:33; also in Matt 16:23)
  - most of these details are omitted in the parallel stories of Matthew and/or Luke.

## Use of Aramaisms:

- Mark often includes Aramaic or Hebrew words & phrases, which makes the narrative more vivid. Given in Greek transliteration and often followed by a translation, most of these words are omitted by Matthew and/or Luke:
- **Boanerges** – “sons of thunder” (**Mark 3:17**; omitted in Matt 10:2 and Luke 6:14)
- **Beelzebul** – (not translated in **Mark 3:22**; also used in Matt 12:24, 27, and Luke 11:15, 18-19)
- **talitha cum** – “Little girl, get up” (**Mark 5:41**; omitted in Matt 9:25 and Luke 8:54)
- **Corban** – “an offering to God” (**Mark 7:11**; omitted in Matt 15:5; no parallel story in Luke)
- **ephphatha** – “be opened” (**Mark 7:34**; omitted in Matt 15:29-31; no parallel in Luke)
- **rabbi** – (not translated in **Mark 9:5**; replaced by “Lord” in Matt 17:4; replaced by “master” in Luke 9:33)
- **Bartimaeus** – “son of Timaeus” (**Mark 10:46**; omitted in Matt 20:30 and Luke 18:35)
- **rabbouni** – (not translated in **Mark 10:51**; replaced by “Lord” in Matt 20:33 and Luke 18:41)
- **hosanna** – (not translated in **Mark 11:9-10**; used in Matt 21:9; omitted in Luke 19:38)
- **rabbi** – (not translated in **Mark 11:21**; omitted in Matt 21:20; no parallel in Luke)
- **abba** – “father” (**Mark 14:36**; omitted in Matt 26:39, 42 and Luke 22:42)
- **rabbi** – (not translated in **Mark 14:45**; used in Matt 26:49; omitted in Luke 22:47)
- **Golgotha** – “the place of a skull” (**Mark 15:22**; used in Matt 27:33; omitted in Luke 23:33)
- **Eloi eloi lema sabachthani** – “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (**Mark 15:34**; used in Matt 27:46, omitted in Luke 23:45-46)

## Use of “Literary Echoes” for retrospectives or foreshadowing:

- **Literary Echoes within the Gospel narrative:**
  - 1:7 – someone will come who is “more powerful” than John the Baptist (see 1:21-28; 3:27)
  - 1:14 – “after John is arrested” (imprisonment narrated more fully in 6:14-27)
  - 2:20 – “the bridegroom will be taken away” (cf. Passion narrative, 14:43—16:3)
  - 3:6 – Pharisees and Herodians plot to destroy Jesus (cf. 8:15; 11:18; 12:13; 14:1)
  - 8:19-20 – Jesus recalls previously feeding the 5000 & 4000 (cf. 6:30-44; 8:1-10)
  - 8:27-28 – a discussion of Jesus’ identity recalls previous opinions of his being a prophet (6:14-16)
  - 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-33 – Jesus predicts his upcoming passion (cf. 14:43—16:3)
  - 9:7 – a voice from heaven again declares that Jesus is God’s beloved Son (cf. 1:11)
  - 14:17-21 – Jesus foretells his betrayal by Judas (cf. 14:10-11; 14:43-50)
  - 14:26-31 – Jesus foretells the disciples’ desertion and Peter’s denial (cf. 14:50-52; 66-72)
- **Foreshadowing of events beyond the narrative:**
  - 1:8 – John the Baptist says, “He will baptize with the Holy Spirit”
  - 1:16-20 – Jesus tells Simon & Andrew, “I will make you fish for people”
  - 10:38-39 – Jesus foretells the deaths of James and John
  - 13:2 – Jesus foretells the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple
  - 14:25 – Jesus tells his disciples, “I will never again drink... until that day... in the Kingdom of God”

## Repetition of Key Words and Phrases:

- **Key Words used throughout Mark’s Gospel:**
  - **Gospel / Good News** – 1:1, 14-15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9; [16:15]
  - **Christ** – 1:1; 8:29; 9:41; 12:35; 13:21; 14:61; 15:32
  - **Son of God** – 1:1; 3:11; 5:7; 15:39; cf. 1:11; 9:7; 13:32; 14:61
  - **Authority** – 1:22, 27; 2:10; 3:15; 6:7; 11:28-33; 13:34
  - **Kingdom of God** – 1:15; 4:11; 4:26, 30; 9:1; 9:47; 10:14-15; 10:23-25; 12:34; 14:25; 15:43
  - **Follow/Behind** – 1:17, 18, 20; 2:14, 15; 3:7; 5:24; 6:1; 8:33, 34; 9:38; 10:21, 28, 32, 52; 11:9; 14:13, 54; 15:41
  - **The Way / Road** – 1:2-3; 2:23; 6:8; 8:3, 27; 9:33-34; 10:17, 32; 10:46, 52; 11:8; 12:14
  - **Believe/Faith** – 1:15; 2:5; 4:40; 5:34, 36; 9:23, 24, 42; 10:52; 11:22, 23, 24, 31; 13:21; 15:32; 16:13, 14, 16, 17
- **Phrases repeated in close proximity:**
  - “stand up, take your mat” (2:9b, 11a); “he appointed twelve” (3:14, 16);
  - “healed of her disease” (5:29, 34); “the head of John the Baptist... on a platter” (6:24, 25, 28);
  - “Don’t you understand?” (8:17, 21); “If your XYZ causes you to stumble...” (9:43, 45, 47);
  - “How hard it is to enter the Kingdom of God” (10:23, 24, 25); “Son of David, have mercy on me” (10:47, 48);
  - “Call him... They called him... He is calling you” (10:49); “their testimony did not agree” (14:56, 59)

## Latinisms:

- **Mark's Greek** contains many words and phrases that seem to be *borrowed from* or *influenced by* Latin; this may support the early Christian tradition that Mark's Gospel was closely connected with the city of Rome.
- **Individual Words borrowed from Latin:**
  - *μοδιον* = *modius* = bushel basket, bowl, tub (4:21)
  - *χορτος* = *herba* = blade, shoot, stalk (4:28)
  - *λεγιων* = *legio* = legion (5:9, 15)
  - *σπεκουλατωρ* = *speculator* = soldier, executioner (6:27)
  - *δηναριον* = *denarius* = coin of daily wage (6:37; 12:15; 14:5)
  - *ξεστης* = *sextarius* = pot, jug, pitcher (7:4)
  - *κηνσος* = *census* = census tax (12:14)
  - *κοδραντης* = *quadrans* = penny, small coin (12:42)
  - *φραγελλω* = *fragello* = to scourge, flog (15:15)
  - *πραιτωριον* = *praetorium* = palace, governor's headquarters (15:16)
  - *κεντυριων* = *centurio* = centurion, officer (15:39, 44, 45)
- **Expressions influenced by Latin:**
  - *οδον ποιειν* = *iter facere* = to make one's way (2:23)
  - *συμβουλιον εδιδουν* = *consilium dederunt* = to deliberate, give counsel (3:6)
  - *εσχατως εχει* = *in extremis esse* = to be at the point of death (5:23)
  - *ειχον... οτι* = *habere* = to think, lit. "to have/hold that" (11:32)
  - *ραπισμασιν... ελαβον* = *verberibus acceperunt* = to strike/beat, lit. "to receive with blows" (14:65)
  - *συμβουλιον ποιησαντες* = *consilium capere* = to deliberate, lit. "to make counsel" (15:1)
  - *το ικανον ποιησαι* = *satisfacere* = to satisfy, lit. "to make enough" (15:15)
  - *τιθεντες τα γονατα* = *genua ponentes* = to kneel down, lit. "to place the knees" (15:19)

## The "Messianic Secret":

- In Mark's Gospel, Jesus frequently tells people not to tell others about his healing activities:
  - After performing exorcisms, he silences the demons and forbids them from speaking (1:23, 34; 3:11-12)
  - He warns a leper not to speak publicly about his cleansing (1:43-45)
  - He tells the family of Jairus not to tell of their daughter's raising (5:43)
  - After healing a deaf man, he orders the witness to tell no one (7:36)
  - He tells a blind man to go home, rather than going into his village (8:26)
  - *One exception:* Jesus tells the Gerasene demoniac (a Gentile!) to tell his relatives (5:19)
- The Markan Jesus also admonishes his disciples not to tell others that he is the Messiah:
  - After Peter's "Confession of Faith" at Caesarea (8:30)
  - After coming down from the Mount of the Transfiguration (9:9)
- Somewhat related is the distinction Jesus makes between his disciples and "outsiders":
  - "To you has been given the secret (or mystery) of the Kingdom of God, but for those outside everything comes in parables..." (4:10-12)
  - Similarly, while Jesus is teaching his disciples inside a house, his family remains "outside" (3:31-32)

## Special Relationships of Narrator and Reader:

- **Eyewitness Narrator:** Mark was not himself an eyewitness of Jesus' ministry, but a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Christian (most likely a follower of Peter); yet the "internal narrator" of the story writes as if he had witnessed all the action.
- **Omniscient Narrator:** the narrator has lots of "inside information":
  - details about people's private thoughts, feelings, or plans (1:41; 2:6-8; 5:28; 6:2; 6:52; 14:4)
  - details about events at which no disciples were present (3:6; 14:1-2; 14:55-65; 15:1-5, 16-19)
- **Privileged Reader:** the narrator gives the reader special insights:
  - things characters in the story don't know, or only find out later (e.g., Jesus is Christ and Son of God; 1:1)
  - extra information the reader needs (e.g., 7:3-4, 19 Jewish rituals; or 13:14, "let the reader understand")



# The Gospel according to Mark: Section Outlines

## The Structure and Contents of the Gospel's Beginning (Mark 1:1-45)

### Introduction of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (1:1-15):

- **Evangelist's Literary Introduction** – “The beginning of the *good news* of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” (v. 1)
  - As written by the prophet Isaiah (and Malachi), John the Baptist preaches repentance in the wilderness (vv. 2-6)
    - John *speaks about Jesus* coming after him: “I baptize with water; he will baptize with holy Spirit” (vv. 7-8)
      - Jesus comes from Nazareth, is baptized by John in the Jordan; heavens open; the Spirit descends (vv. 9-10)
    - A voice from heaven *speaks to Jesus*: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” (v. 11)
  - The Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness, where he remains for forty days, tested by Satan (vv. 12-13)
- **Jesus' Initial Preaching** – “The kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the *good news*.” (vv. 14-15)

### Some Typical Events in Jesus' Ministry (1:16-45):

- Jesus calls four fishermen, who follow him as his disciples (vv. 16-20)
  - **The First Exorcism: Jesus exorcises an unclean spirit in Capernaum** (vv. 21-28)
    - The first healing narrative: Jesus heals Simon's Mother-in-law of a fever (vv. 29-31)
    - The first healing summary: Jesus heals many sick people and drives out many demons (vv. 32-34)
  - **The First Journey: Jesus expands his preaching beyond Capernaum** (vv. 35-39)
- Jesus cleanses a leper, restoring him to health and to society (vv. 40-45)

## A Comparison of Mark 1 and Parallel Episodes in the other Gospels:

| Pericope                                       | Mark    | Matthew            | Luke                   | John           |
|--|---------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Literary Introduction                          | 1:1     | 1:1                | 1:1-4                  | 1:1-18         |
| [ <i>Infancy Narratives</i> ]                  | —       | [ <i>ch. 1—2</i> ] | [ <i>ch. 1—2</i> ]     | —              |
| John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness    | 1:2-8   | 3:1-6, 7-12        | 3:1-6, 7-20            | 1:19-23, 24-28 |
| Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan river  | 1:9-11  | 3:13-17            | 3:21-22, 23-38         | [1:29-34]      |
| Jesus is tested by Satan in the wilderness     | 1:12-13 | 4:1-2, 3-11        | 4:1-2, 3-13            | —              |
| Jesus preaches the Good News in Galilee        | 1:14-15 | 4:12-17            | 4:14-15, 16-30         | —              |
| Jesus calls his first four disciples           | 1:16-20 | 4:18-22            | [5:1-11]               | [1:35-51]      |
| Jesus exorcises an unclean spirit at Capernaum | 1:21-28 | —                  | 4:31-37                | —              |
| [ <i>Sermon on the Mount</i> ]                 | —       | [ <i>ch. 5—7</i> ] | [ <i>cf. 6:17-49</i> ] | —              |
| Jesus heals Simon's Mother-in-law              | 1:29-31 | [8:14-15]          | 4:38-39                | —              |
| Jesus heals and exorcizes many others          | 1:32-34 | [8:16-17]          | 4:40-41                | —              |
| Jesus preaches beyond Capernaum                | 1:35-39 | 4:23               | 4:42-44                | —              |
| Jesus cleanses a leper                         | 1:40-45 | [8:1-4]            | 5:12-16                | —              |

## A Cycle of Five “Conflict Stories” (Mark 2:1—3:6)

Mark seems to have intentionally grouped these five conflict stories together near the beginning of his Gospel. Note how each story ends with one or two brief sayings of Jesus, which seem to express the main point of the story, and how the conflict builds from one story to the next, culminating in the plot to kill Jesus in 3:6.

| Mark  | Pericope Title                       | Who Objects?             | Against Whom?    | About What?                            |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--|
| 2:1-12  | <b>Healing a Paralytic</b>           | scribes                  | among themselves | forgiving/ blaspheming                 |
| Jesus' Saying: “... <i>the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.</i> ” (2:10)  |                                      |                          |                  |  |
| 2:13-17   | <b>Calling Levi, a Tax Collector</b> | scribes of the Pharisees | Jesus' disciples | eating with tax collectors and sinners |
| Jesus' Sayings: “ <i>Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.</i> ” (2:17a)<br>“ <i>I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.</i> ” (2:17b) |                                      |                          |                  |  |

| Mark  | Pericope Title                         | Who Objects? | Against Whom?                  | About What?            |
|---|--|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 2:18-22   | <b>About Fasting</b>                   | people       | Jesus                          | disciples not fasting  |
| Jesus' Sayings: <i>"The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them..."</i> (2:19-20)<br><i>"No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak..."</i> (2:21-22) |  |              |                                |                        |
| 2:23-28   | <b>Plucking Grain on the Sabbath</b>   | Pharisees    | Jesus                          | breaking the sabbath   |
| Jesus' Sayings: <i>"The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath."</i> (2:27)<br><i>"So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."</i> (2:28)              |  |              |                                |                        |
| 3:1-6   | <b>Restoring a Man's Withered Hand</b> | Jesus        | "them" (Pharisees & Herodians) | healing on the sabbath |
| Jesus' Question: <i>"Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?"</i> (3:4)  |  |              |                                |                        |

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## Jesus' Early Ministry: Training the Twelve Disciples (Mark 3:7—6:6a)

### Jesus Interacts with Crowds and Opponents, Disciples and Family (3:7-35)

- Crowds from Galilee and beyond come to Jesus, who heals them (3:7-12)
  - Jesus chooses twelve followers "to be with him and to be sent out" (3:13-19)
- Scribes from Jerusalem challenge Jesus: the Beelzebul controversy (3:20-30)
  - Jesus contrasts his family and his true disciples, who do the will of God (3:31-35)

### Jesus Teaches the Crowds and the Disciples with Enigmatic Parables (4:1-34)

- *The Evangelist introduces Jesus' teaching in parables* (4:1-2)
  - **The Parable of the Sower & the Seed** (4:3-8)
    - Why Jesus Uses Parables (4:10-12)
  - **Jesus explains the Sower & the Seed to his disciples** (4:13-20)
    - The Lamp on a Stand & various short sayings about Jesus' parables (4:21-25)
  - **Two Parables about the Kingdom of God:**
    - The Seed Growing Secretly (4:26-29)
    - The Mustard Seed (4:30-32)
- *The Evangelist summarizes Jesus' use of parables* (4:33-34)

### Jesus Shows His Power in Words and Mighty Deeds (4:35—6:6a)

- Jesus calms a storm on the Sea of Galilee by "rebuking" the wind (4:35-41)
  - Jesus expels a "Legion" of unclean spirits from the Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20)
- Jesus heals a bleeding woman and restores Jairus' daughter to life (5:21-43)
  - Jesus teaches in Nazareth, his hometown, but is rejected by the people (6:1-6a)

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## Jesus' Expanded Ministry: Sending Out the Twelve Apostles (Mark 6:6b—8:21)

- Jesus sends the Twelve on a mission to preach, heal, perform exorcisms (6:6b-13)
  - The death of John the Baptist is recounted (6:14-29)
    - **Jesus Feeds 5000 People** in rural Galilee with five loaves and two fish (6:30-44)
      - Jesus walks on water; the disciples are afraid (6:45-52)
    - Jesus heals many people from around Gennesaret (6:53-56)
      - Jesus argues with some Pharisees about purity laws and ritual traditions (7:1-23)
    - Jesus exorcizes the Syrophenician woman's daughter (7:24-30)
      - Jesus enables a deaf-mute to hear and speak (7:31-37)
    - **Jesus Feeds 4000 People** in Gentile territory with seven loaves and a few fish (8:1-10)
  - The Pharisees ask for a sign from Jesus (8:11-13)
- Jesus' disciples fail to understand the significance of the yeast and bread (8:14-21)

## Mark's Central Section: "On the Way" to Jerusalem (Mark 8:22—10:52)

### Jesus and His Disciples Journey from Bethsaida and Caesarea Philippi to Jericho and Jerusalem

[transition/preface: 8:14-21 – The "blindness" of the disciples!]

8:22-26 – *The Two-Stage Restoration of Sight to a Blind Person at Bethsaida, north of the Sea of Galilee*

8:27-30 – Peter's Confession near Caesarea Philippi: "You are the Christ"; Jesus says "not to tell anyone about him"

**8:31 – First Passion Prediction** (Son of Man must suffer, be rejected, be killed, and rise after three days)

8:32-33 – *Peter misunderstands* and "rebukes" Jesus, who "rebukes" Peter in return

8:34–9:1 – *Jesus teaches: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel will save it."*

9:2-30 – Transfiguration (2-8); Coming of Elijah (9-13); Exorcism of an Epileptic Spirit (14-29)

**9:31-32 – Second Passion Prediction** (Son of Man will be betrayed, be killed, but rise after three days)

9:33-34 – *All the disciples misunderstand*, arguing who among them was the greatest

9:35-50 – *Jesus teaches: "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all..."*

10:1-31 – Teaching on Divorce (1-12); Blessing Children (13-16); the Rich Man (17-22); Entering the K of G (23-31)

**10:32-34 – Third Passion Prediction** (Son of Man will be handed over, condemned to death, mocked, spat upon, scourged, put to death, but will rise after three days)

10:35-40 – *James and John misunderstand*, asking for the seats of honor when Jesus is in "glory"

10:41-45 – *Jesus teaches: "Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

10:46-52 – *The Immediate Restoration of Sight to Blind Bartimaeus outside of Jericho, on the way to Jerusalem*

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## Jesus' Final Week in Jerusalem (Mark 11:1—13:37)

### The Entry into Jerusalem and the Cleansing of the Temple (11:1-33)

- Jesus and the disciples enter into Jerusalem in a triumphant procession (11:1-10)
  - They enter the Temple briefly, but soon go out to Bethany since it is evening (11:11)
- The next morning, **Jesus curses a fruitless fig tree** (11:12-14)
  - They enter the Temple; Jesus casts out the sellers, buyers, and money changers (11:15-19)
- The next morning, **the disciples see the fig tree withered** (11:20-25)
  - They enter the Temple again; officials approach and challenge his authority (11:27-33)

### Further Controversies with the Jerusalem Authorities (12:1-44)

- The Parable of the Wicked Tenants, directed against the temple authorities (12:1-12)
  - Pharisees and Herodians question Jesus about paying taxes (12:13-17)
    - Sadducees question Jesus about the resurrection of the dead (12:18-27)
    - The "Good Scribe" questions Jesus about the greatest commandment (12:28-34)
  - Jesus questions the scribes about the "Son of David" (12:35-40)
- Jesus commends a poor widow for her offering (12:41-44)

### The Eschatological Discourse (13:1-37)

- **Intro A)** Jesus and a disciple dialogue about the grandeur and the destruction of the Temple (13:1-2)
- **Intro B)** Jesus' closest disciples ask him privately: **When?** And what will be the **signs?** (13:3-4)
- **Jesus' Warnings about Trials and Tribulations on Earth (13:5-23):**
  - **Take heed:** let no one lead you astray; wars, earthquakes and famines will come (13:5-8)
  - **Take heed:** you will be arrested, put on trial, hated, put to death; *whoever endures will be saved* (13:9-13)
  - *Let the reader understand:* the desolating sacrilege, greater tribulations than ever before (13:14-20)
  - **Take heed:** Don't be led astray by false messiahs and false prophets; Jesus has forewarned us (13:21-23)
- **Jesus' Teachings about the Coming of the Son of Man (13:24-29):**
  - After the foregoing tribulations, there will be signs in the heavens (13:24-25)
    - The Son of Man will come with great power, *to gather the elect* (13:26-27)
  - Learn a lesson from the fig tree, so you know when the Son of Man is near (13:28-29)
- **Concl. B')** Jesus' answer to the question, **When?:** "**No one knows the day nor hour**" (13:30-32)
- **Concl. A')** Jesus' final call: **Watch**, since you don't know the time; Parable of the Doorkeeper (13:33-37)

## The Passion, Death, and Burial of Jesus (Mark 14:1—15:47)

- **Two Days before the Passover (14:1-11)**
  - The chief priests and scribes plan to arrest and kill Jesus (14:1-2)
  - Jesus is anointed at Bethany by an anonymous woman (14:3-9)
  - Judas arranges to betray Jesus to the chief priests (14:10-11)
- **The Passover Feast / Last Supper (14:12-31)**
  - *On the day before*, Jesus sends two disciples to prepare for the Passover meal (14:12-16)
  - *In the evening*, during the Passover meal, Jesus foretells his betrayal (14:17-21)
  - While at supper, Jesus blesses bread & wine, saying it is his body & blood (14:22-25)
  - After the meal, on their way to the Mount of Olives, Jesus foretells Peter's denial (14:26-31)
- **Jesus' Prayer and Arrest at Gethsemane (14:32-52)**
  - Jesus prays to his Father, and three times speaks to his disciples (14:32-42)
  - Judas arrives with an armed mob, and Jesus is arrested (14:43-50)
  - A young man wearing a linen cloth is captured, but runs off naked (14:51-52)
- **The Initial Interrogation of Jesus, and the Denials of Peter (14:53-72)**
  - During the night, Jesus is led away to the high priest's house (14:53)
  - Peter enters the courtyard of the high priest's house (14:54)
  - Jesus is interrogated by the high priest and condemned for blasphemy (14:55-65)
  - Peter three times denies knowing Jesus, before the cock crows (14:66-72)
- **Jesus' Trials before the Sanhedrin and before Pilate (15:1-15)**
  - *In the morning*, the whole Sanhedrin condemns Jesus and delivers him to Pilate (15:1)
  - Jesus is questioned by Pilate and accused by the chief priests (15:2-5)
  - Pilate asks the crowds about releasing Jesus or Barabbas? (15:6-14)
  - Pilate orders Barabbas to be released, and Jesus to be crucified (15:15)
- **Events before the Crucifixion (15:16-23)**
  - Jesus is mocked and mistreated by the soldiers (15:16-20a)
  - Jesus is led out to Golgotha; Simon of Cyrene is compelled to carry the cross (15:20b-22)
  - Jesus is offered drugged wine, but refuses to drink (15:23)
- **The Crucifixion of Jesus (15:24-32)**
  - *At nine o'clock in the morning*, Jesus is crucified, and the soldiers divide his garments (15:24-25)
  - The inscription of the charge reads, "The King of the Jews" (15:26)
  - Two criminals are crucified along with Jesus (15:27[+28])
  - Jesus is derided by passersby, by the chief priests and scribes, even by the criminals (15:29-32)
- **The Death of Jesus (15:33-41)**
  - *From noon until three o'clock* in the afternoon, darkness covers the land (15:33)
  - *At three o'clock*, Jesus cries out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (15:34)
  - Bystanders think he is calling for Elijah; someone offers Jesus a sponge with vinegar (15:35-36)
  - Jesus cries aloud and breathes his last (15:37)
  - Three witnesses to the Crucifixion: temple curtain, centurion, women from Galilee (15:38-41)
- **The Burial of Jesus (15:42-47)**
  - *In the evening*, Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for Jesus' body (15:42-45)
  - Joseph buries Jesus in a tomb hewn out of rock; some women witness the burial (15:46-47)

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## The Resurrection of Jesus (Mark 16:1-8; and 16:9-20, *added later*)

- **The Empty Tomb Narrative (16:1-8)**
  - Mary Magdalene and two other women go to the tomb early on the first day of the week (16:1-4)
  - A young man appears to tell them, "He has been raised... Go, tell his disciples..." (16:5-7)
  - They flee from the tomb and say nothing to anyone, because they were afraid (16:8)
- **Later Endings Added to Mark's Gospel [16:9-20]**
  - Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene [Mark 16:9-11; cf. Matt 28:9-10; John 20:11-18; Luke 8:2; Luke 24:9-11]
  - Jesus appears to two disciples walking [Mark 16:12-13; cf. Luke 24:13-35]
  - Jesus appears to the eleven and commissions them to go preach [Mark 16:14-18; cf. Luke 24:36-43; Acts 10:41; Matt 28:19; etc.]
  - Jesus ascends to heaven, and the disciples go out to preach [Mark 16:19-20; cf. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:2-11]

## Quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament

*compiled by Felix Just, S.J., Ph.D.*

Many of the references in table are direct quotations; others are paraphrases or close allusions to scriptural texts.

| NT Passage     | OT Source     |
|----------------|---------------|
| Matt 1:3b-6a   | Ruth 4:18-22  |
| Matt 1:23a     | Isa 7:14      |
| Matt 1:23b     | Isa 8:8, 10   |
| Matt 2:6       | Micah 5:2     |
| Matt 2:15      | Hosea 11:1    |
| Matt 2:18      | Jer 31:15     |
| Matt 2:23      | Isa 11:1      |
| Matt 3:3       | Isa 40:3      |
| Matt 4:4       | Deut 8:3      |
| Matt 4:6       | Ps 91:11-12   |
| Matt 4:7       | Deut 6:16     |
| Matt 4:10      | Deut 6:13     |
| Matt 4:15-16   | Isa 9:1-2     |
| Matt 5:21      | Exod 20:13    |
| Matt 5:21      | Deut 5:17     |
| Matt 5:27      | Exod 20:14    |
| Matt 5:27      | Deut 5:18     |
| Matt 5:31      | Deut 24:1     |
| Matt 5:33      | Lev 19:12     |
| Matt 5:33      | Num 30:2      |
| Matt 5:38      | Exod 21:24    |
| Matt 5:38      | Lev 24:20     |
| Matt 5:38      | Deut 19:21    |
| Matt 5:43      | Lev 19:18     |
| Matt 8:17      | Isa 53:4      |
| Matt 9:13a     | Hosea 6:6     |
| Matt 10:35-36  | Micah 7:6     |
| Matt 11:10     | Malachi 3:1   |
| Matt 11:23a    | Isa 14:13, 15 |
| Matt 12:7      | Hosea 6:6     |
| Matt 12:18-21  | Isa 42:1-4    |
| Matt 12:40     | Jonah 1:17    |
| Matt 13:14-15  | Isa 6:9-10    |
| Matt 13:35     | Ps 78:2-3     |
| Matt 15:4a     | Exod 20:12    |
| Matt 15:4a     | Deut 5:16     |
| Matt 15:4b     | Exod 21:17    |
| Matt 15:8-9    | Isa 29:13     |
| Matt 18:16     | Deut 19:15    |
| Matt 19:4      | Gen 1:27      |
| Matt 19:4      | Gen 5:2       |
| Matt 19:5      | Gen 2:24      |
| Matt 19:7      | Deut 24:1     |
| Matt 19:18-19a | Exod 20:12-16 |
| Matt 19:18-19a | Deut 5:16-20  |
| Matt 19:19b    | Lev 19:18     |
| Matt 21:5      | Isa 62:11     |
| Matt 21:5      | Zech 9:9      |

| Matt 21:9     | Ps 118:25-26          |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| Matt 21:13    | Isa 56:7              |
| Matt 21:16b   | Ps 8:2/3              |
| Matt 21:42    | Ps 118:22-23          |
| Matt 22:24    | Deut 25:5             |
| Matt 22:32a   | Exod 3:6, 15          |
| Matt 22:37    | Deut 6:5              |
| Matt 22:39    | Lev 19:18             |
| Matt 22:44    | Ps 110:1              |
| Matt 23:39    | Ps 118:26             |
| Matt 24:15    | Dan 9:27b;11:31;12:11 |
| Matt 24:29    | Isa 13:10             |
| Matt 24:30    | Dan 7:13              |
| Matt 26:31    | Zech 13:7             |
| Matt 26:64a   | Ps 110:1              |
| Matt 26:64b   | Dan 7:13              |
| Matt 27:9-10  | Zech 11:12-13         |
| Matt 27:46    | Ps 22:1               |
| NT Passage    | OT Source             |
| Mark 1:2      | Malachi 3:1           |
| Mark 1:3      | Isa 40:3              |
| Mark 4:12     | Isa 6:9-10            |
| Mark 7:6-7    | Isa 29:13             |
| Mark 7:10a    | Exod 20:12            |
| Mark 7:10a    | Deut 5:16             |
| Mark 7:10b    | Exod 21:17            |
| Mark 10:4     | Deut 24:1, 3          |
| Mark 10:6     | Gen 1:27              |
| Mark 10:6     | Gen 5:2               |
| Mark 10:7-8   | Gen 2:24              |
| Mark 10:19    | Exod 20:12-16         |
| Mark 10:19    | Deut 5:16-20          |
| Mark 11:9-10  | Ps 118:25-26          |
| Mark 11:17    | Isa 56:7              |
| Mark 12:10-11 | Ps 118:22-23          |
| Mark 12:19    | Deut 25:5             |
| Mark 12:26    | Exod 3:6, 15          |
| Mark 12:29-30 | Deut 6:4-5            |
| Mark 12:31    | Lev 19:18             |
| Mark 12:32a   | Deut 6:4              |
| Mark 12:32b   | Deut 4:35             |
| Mark 12:32b   | Isa 45:21             |
| Mark 12:33a   | Deut 6:5              |
| Mark 12:33b   | Lev 19:18             |
| Mark 12:36    | Ps 110:1              |
| Mark 13:26    | Dan 7:13              |
| Mark 14:27    | Zech 13:7             |
| Mark 14:62a   | Ps 110:1              |
| Mark 14:62b   | Dan 7:13              |

| Mark 15:34    | Ps 22:1           |
|---------------|-------------------|
| NT Passage    | OT Source         |
| Luke 2:23     | Exod 13:2, 12, 15 |
| Luke 2:24     | Lev 12:8          |
| Luke 3:4-6    | Isa 40:3-5        |
| Luke 4:4      | Deut 8:3          |
| Luke 4:8      | Deut 6:13         |
| Luke 4:10-11  | Ps 91:11-12       |
| Luke 4:12     | Deut 6:16         |
| Luke 4:18-19  | Isa 61:1-2        |
| Luke 4:18     | Isa 58:6          |
| Luke 7:27     | Malachi 3:1       |
| Luke 8:10     | Isa 6:9           |
| Luke 10:27a   | Deut 6:5          |
| Luke 10:27b   | Lev 19:18         |
| Luke 13:35    | Ps 118:26         |
| Luke 18:20    | Exod 20:12-16     |
| Luke 18:20    | Deut 5:16-20      |
| Luke 19:38    | Ps 118:26         |
| Luke 19:46    | Isa 56:7          |
| Luke 20:17    | Ps 118:22         |
| Luke 20:28    | Deut 25:5         |
| Luke 20:37    | Exod 3:6          |
| Luke 20:42-43 | Ps 110:1          |
| Luke 21:27    | Dan 7:13          |
| Luke 22:37    | Isa 53:12         |
| Luke 22:69    | Ps 110:1          |
| Luke 23:30    | Hosea 10:8        |
| Luke 23:46    | Ps 31:5           |
| NT Passage    | OT Source         |
| John 1:23     | Isa 40:3          |
| John 2:17     | Ps 69:9           |
| John 6:31     | Ps 78:24          |
| John 6:45     | Isa 54:13         |
| John 10:34    | Ps 82:6           |
| John 12:13    | Ps 118:25-26      |
| John 12:15    | Zech 9:9          |
| John 12:38    | Isa 53:1          |
| John 12:40    | Isa 6:10          |
| John 13:18    | Ps 41:9           |
| John 15:25    | Ps 35:19          |
| John 15:25    | Ps 69:4           |
| John 19:24    | Ps 22:18          |
| John 19:36    | Exod 12:46        |
| John 19:36    | Num 9:12          |
| John 19:37    | Zech 12:10        |

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# The Passion and Death of Jesus, according to the Four Gospels

## THE LAST SUPPER: WHAT is the significance of Jesus' last meal with his disciples?

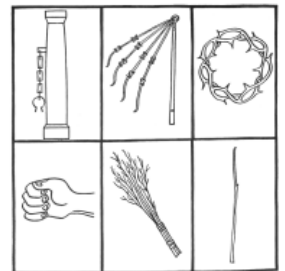
- **The Synoptic Gospels:**
  - The Last Supper is a *Passover Meal*, commemorating the Exodus of the Jews (Mark 14:12; Matt 26:17; **Luke 22:7-8, 15**).
  - While speaking the blessing prayers, Jesus says the bread and wine is his own body and blood (Mark 14:22-25 & par.).
  - Only in **Luke** does Jesus explicitly say, "*Do this* in remembrance of me" (**Luke 22:19b**; cf. 1 Cor 11:24-25).
  - Only **Luke** gives evidence of the Passover tradition of blessing *multiple* cups of wine (**Luke 22:17, 20**).
  - **Luke** also has much more dialogue *during* the Last Supper, including Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial (22:31-34).
- **The Fourth Gospel:**
  - The Last Supper is just *before* the Feast of Passover (John 13:1), so it is *not* a Passover Meal itself.
  - The "Eucharistic" words of Jesus are not recorded here, but were already spoken *earlier* (John 6:22-59).
  - *During* this final meal in John's Gospel, Jesus washes all of his disciples' feet (John 13:2-16).
  - Then he tells them, "I have given you an example, that *you also should do* as I have done to you" (John 13:15).
  - During the meal, Jesus foretells *Judas' betrayal* (John 13:21-30) and *Peter's denial* (13:36-38).
  - During the meal, Jesus also gives a "Farewell Discourse" (13:31--16:33) and addresses a long prayer to God (17:1-26).
  - Jesus will *die* on the same afternoon that the Passover Lambs are slaughtered (cf. John 19:31-37).

## THE AGONY AND ARREST IN THE GARDEN: WHERE and HOW was Jesus captured?

- **The Synoptic Gospels:**
  - After the Passover meal, Jesus and his disciples go out to the "Mount of Olives" (Mark 14:26; Matt 26:30; **Luke 22:39**).
  - The place where Jesus prays is called "Gethsemane" (Mark 14:32; Matt 26:36), but is not explicitly called a "garden."
  - **Luke** greatly shortens Jesus' prayer and his challenges to the disciples (11 verses in both Mark & Matt; only 6 verses in **Luke**).
  - In all three Synoptics, Judas identifies Jesus with a kiss, but only in **Luke** does Jesus ask him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" (**Luke 22:48**).
- **The Fourth Gospel:**
  - After Jesus finishes his discourses and prayer, they go "across the Kidron Valley" and enter a "garden," but this is not explicitly identified as "Gethsemane" (John 18:1).
  - There is no "agony" or any prayer of Jesus in this garden; it is only the scene of Jesus' arrest (18:2-12).
  - Jesus remains in control of the scene; the soldiers hesitate to arrest Jesus when twice he says "I am" (18:6, 8).
  - All four Gospels say that one of Jesus' disciples cut off the ear of the high priest's slave; but only in John are these two individuals explicitly named: Simon Peter and Malchus (18:10).

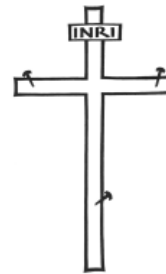
## THE ACCUSATIONS AND CHARGES: WHY was Jesus killed, and by whom?

- **The Religious Trial:** The Jewish High Priest and Sanhedrin (council of elders) find Jesus guilty of "blasphemy."
  - The word "*blasphemy*" in ancient Greek literally means "insulting or saying bad things about God."
  - The punishment prescribed in the Hebrew Bible for blasphemy is to be *stoned* to death (Lev 24:10-23).
  - Jesus directly admits that he is the "*Son of God*" (Mark 14:61-64 & par.; cf. Mark 15:39; John 19:7).
- **The Political Trial:** The Roman governor (Pontius Pilate) finds Jesus guilty of sedition, rebellion or treason.
  - **Luke's** Gospel describes the nature of the *charges* against Jesus in the greatest detail (**Luke 23:2, 5, 14**).
  - Jesus is accused of calling himself and/or letting others call him "*King of the Jews*" (Mark 15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26, 32, and parallels; cf. also John 18:33-37; 19:12-15).
  - **Luke** and John repeatedly stress Jesus' *innocence* (**Luke 23:4, 14-15, 22**; John 18:38b; 19:4, 6, 12; cf. Matt 27:24-25).



## THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH: HOW was Jesus' execution carried out?

- **Condemnation to Death:**
  - In lands occupied by the Romans, the death penalty could *only* be carried out with the approval of the local Roman governor.
  - Mark and Matthew clearly show Jesus handed over to *Roman* soldiers to be crucified; but **Luke** and John make it sound like Pilate hands Jesus over to the *Jewish* authorities to carry out the crucifixion (**Luke 23:25**; John 19:16).
- **Beatings and Scourging:**
  - Before being crucified, prisoners were often beaten, scourged, mocked, and mistreated in other ways.
  - Prisoners might already die from this maltreatment, so Jewish law limited floggings to thirty-nine lashes (cf. 2 Cor 11:24).
  - Since Jesus was condemned for claiming to be "King of the Jews," the soldiers mock him with the symbols of royal power and authority, including a scarlet (or purple) cloak, a crown (of thorns), and a reed (instead of a scepter).
- **Road to Golgotha:**
  - Condemned persons would usually be forced to carry their own cross beams to the place of their crucifixion.
  - Only **Luke** tells of Jesus speaking with women along the way to the cross (**Luke 23:27-31**), but none of the Gospels contains the full fourteen "Stations of the Cross" popular in later Christian devotions.
  - Golgotha, meaning "Place of the Skull," was probably an abandoned stone quarry just outside of Jerusalem.



- **Manner of Crucifixion:**
  - The cross was usually T-shaped, with the cross beam placed on top of an upright post already set in the ground.
  - The victim might be tied and/or nailed to the cross beam and to the upright post, but would still be guarded by soldiers.
  - The charge would often be affixed over the head of the condemned criminal, to serve as a warning to any onlookers:
  - **INRI** = **I**esus **N**azareus **R**ex **I**udaeorum (Latin for "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"; John 19:19-22; cf. Mark 15:26).
- **Cause of Death:**
  - Some victims would bleed to death fairly soon, but sometimes they could survive for several days before succumbing to a combination of dehydration and asphyxiation.
  - To prolong the victims' agony, their feet would be nailed or tied to the post, so that they could push themselves up to breathe.
  - To hasten the victims' deaths, their legs could be broken, so that they could no longer breathe.
- **The "Seven Last Words of Christ"** (acc. to traditional Good Friday Devotions):
  - Regarding those crucifying him: "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)
  - To his mother: "Woman, here is your son"; and to the beloved disciple: "Here is your mother." (John 19:26-27)
  - To the repentant thief: "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)
  - At the ninth hour: "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" = "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34; Matt 27:46)
  - In order to fulfill scripture: "I am thirsty." (John 19:28)
  - After receiving a drink of vinegar: "It is finished." (John 19:30)
  - As Jesus is dying: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." (Luke 23:46)
- **The Witnesses to the Crucifixion:**
  - In the Synoptics, women who followed Jesus from Galilee were "looking on from afar" (Mark 15:40; Matt 27:55; cf. Luke 23:49).
  - Mark names three women (Mary Magdalene; Mary the mother of James and Joses; and Salome); Matthew names the same three (?) slightly differently (Mary Magdalene; Mary the mother of James and Joseph; and the mother of the sons of Zebedee); but in Luke the women remain anonymous.
  - A Roman centurion declares, "Truly this man was *the son of God*" (Mark 15:39; Matt 27:54), or "...was *innocent*" (Luke 23:47).
  - In John 19:25-26, four women (his mother; his mother's sister; Mary the wife of Clopas; and Mary Magdalene--or three, if #2 = #3 ?) as well as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (not named, but called "son") are "standing by the cross" (i.e. very close to it).

#### THE BURIAL: WHEN and BY WHOM and HOW and WHERE was Jesus buried?

- **When?**
  - After making sure Jesus is dead, from the centurion's testimony (Mark 15:44-45) and/or piercing Jesus' side (John 19:31-37).
  - Friday afternoon before sundown [when Sabbath begins], so the burial was done hurriedly (Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:42).
  - After securing permission to retrieve Jesus' body from Pontius Pilate (Mark 15:43 & par.).
- **By Whom?**
  - By a "rich man" named Joseph (Matt 27:57) from the Judean town of Arimathea (Luke 23:50; exact location unknown).
  - Joseph was a "respected member of the council" (Mark 15:43), or a "secret disciple" of Jesus (John 19:38).
  - Only John 19:39 mentions that Nicodemus, who had previously encountered Jesus (cf. 3:1; 7:50), also helped with the burial.
  - Only Matt 27:62-66 says that some soldiers were stationed to guard the tomb, lest the disciples steal Jesus' body (cf. 28:11-15).
- **How?**
  - By wrapping Jesus' body in a linen cloth (Mark 15:46 & par.), placing it in a rock-hewn tomb, and rolling a large stone against the entrance (Mark 15:46 & par.).
  - In John 19:40, they also wrapped the body with a large mixture of spices (myrrh & aloes), according to Jewish burial customs.
  - But in the Synoptics, they did not use spices right away (evidently for lack of time before sunset); rather, the women prepare spices after going home (Luke 23:56), and intend to embalm the body properly after the Sabbath (Mark 16:1).
- **Where?**
  - The Synoptics do not mention the location of the tomb, but only say that it was hewn out of rock (Mark 15:46 & par.)
  - Luke 23:53 says no one else had been buried in this tomb before; Matt 27:60 claims it was Joseph of Arimathea's own new tomb.
  - Only John 19:41-42 says that the tomb was in a "garden" near to where Jesus had been crucified.

#### A Comparative Overview of the Events of the Passion:

| Pericope  | Mark     | Matthew  | Luke      | John     |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| The Chief Priests and Scribes Plan to Kill Jesus    | 14:1-2   | 26:1-5   | 22:1-2    | --       |
| Jesus Is Anointed in Bethany by an Anonymous Woman  | 14:3-9   | 26:6-13  | [7:36-50] | [12:1-8] |
| Judas Arranges to Betray Jesus to the Chief Priests | 14:10-11 | 26:14-16 | 22:3-6    | --       |

|   | Mark            | Matthew         | Luke             | John                |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>The Last Supper</b>  | <b>14:12-25</b> | <b>26:17-29</b> | <b>22:7-38</b>   | <b>13:1--17:26</b>  |
| Jesus Sends Disciples to Prepare for the Passover Meal          | 14:12-17        | 26:17-20        | 22:7-14          | --                  |
| { <i>During the Meal, Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet</i> }    | --              | --              | --               | 13:1-20             |
| During the Meal, Jesus Foretells His Betrayal                   | 14:18-21        | 26:21-25        | [22:21-23]       | 13:21-30            |
| The Last Supper of Jesus with His Disciples                     | 14:22-25        | 26:26-29        | 22:15-20         | --                  |
| The Disciples Argue about Who Is Greatest                       | [10:41-45]      | [20:24:28]      | 22:24-30         | --                  |
| { <i>Jesus Gives His Disciples a New Commandment of Love</i> }  | --              | --              | --               | 13:31-35            |
| Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial ( <i>during</i> the Last Supper) | (cf. below)     | (cf. below)     | 22:31-34         | 13:36-38            |
| Preparing for the End: The Two Swords                           | --              | --              | 22:35-38         | --                  |
| { <i>The Farewell Discourses, according to John</i> }           | --              | --              | --               | 14:1--16:33         |
| { <i>The Great Prayer of Jesus, according to John</i> }         | --              | --              | --               | 17:1-26             |
| Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial ( <i>after</i> the Last Supper)  | 14:26-31        | 26:30-35        | (cf. above)      | (cf. above)         |
| Jesus Prays at Gethsemane                                       | 14:32-42        | 26:36-46        | 22:39-46         | [12:27]             |
| Jesus Is Arrested   | 14:43-50        | 26:47-56        | 22:47-53         | 18:1-12             |
| The Young Man with a Linen Cloth                                | 14:51-52        | --              | --               | --                  |
| Jesus Is Led Away to the House of the High Priest               | 14:53           | 26:57           | 22:54a           | 18:13-14            |
| Peter Denies Knowing Jesus                                      | 14:54, 66-72    | 26:58, 69-75    | 22:54b-62        | 18:15-18, 25-27     |
| Jesus Is Interrogated by High Priest and the Sanhedrin          | 14:55-64        | 26:59-66        | 22:66            | 18:19-24            |
| Jesus is Mocked and Beaten by the Guards                        | 14:65           | 26:67-68        | 22:63-65         | [18:22]             |
| Jesus Delivered to Pilate                                       | 15:1            | 27:1-2          | 23:1             | 18:28               |
| The Death of Judas  | --              | 27:3-10         | --               | --                  |
| <b>The Trial of Jesus before Pilate</b>                         | <b>15:2-15</b>  | <b>27:11-26</b> | <b>23:2-25</b>   | <b>18:29--19:16</b> |
| The Accusations against Jesus                                   | [15:3]          | [27:12]         | 23:2, 5, 14      | 18:29-32            |
| Pilate's Initial Questioning of Jesus                           | 15:2-5          | 27:11-14        | 23:3             | 18:33-38a           |
| Jesus Is Brought before Herod                                   | --              | --              | 23:6-12          | --                  |
| Pilate Declares Jesus Innocent                                  | --              | [27:24-25]      | 23:4, 13-16, 22  | 18:38b; 19:4, 6, 12 |
| The Release of Jesus or Barabbas?                               | 15:6-14         | 27:15:23        | 23:17-23         | 18:39-40            |
| { <i>The Trial before Pilate Continues: "Behold the Man!"</i> } | --              | --              | --               | 19:1-15             |
| Barabbas is Released  | 15:15a          | 27:26a          | 23:24-25a        | --                  |
| Jesus Is Scourged   | 15:15b          | 27:26b          | [23:22b]         | [19:1]              |
| Pilate Delivers Jesus to be Crucified                           | 15:15c          | 27:26c          | 23:25b           | 19:16               |
| Jesus Is Mocked by the Soldiers                                 | 15:16-20a       | 27:27-31a       | [23:36]          | [19:2-3]            |
| The Road to Golgotha  | 15:20b-22       | 27:31b-33       | 23:26-33a        | 19:17               |
| <b>The Crucifixion</b>  | <b>15:23-41</b> | <b>27:34-56</b> | <b>23:33b-49</b> | <b>19:18a-37</b>    |
| Jesus Is Offered Drugged Wine, but Refuses to Drink             | 15:23           | 27:34           | --               | --                  |
| Jesus Is Crucified  | 15:24a          | 27:35a          | 23:33b           | 19:18a              |
| Jesus Forgives Those Who Crucify Him                            | --              | --              | 23:34a           | --                  |
| The Soldiers Divide Jesus' Garments                             | 15:24b-25       | 27:35b-36       | 23:34b           | [19:23-25a]         |
| The Inscription with the Charge: "King of the Jews"             | 15:26           | 27:37           | [23:38]          | 19:19-22            |
| Two Criminals Are Crucified along with Jesus                    | 15:27 [+28]     | 27:38           | [23:33c]         | [19:18b]            |
| Jesus Is Derided on the Cross, even by the Criminals            | 15:29-32        | 27:39-44        | 23:35-37, 39     | --                  |
| The Repentant Thief   | --              | --              | 23:40-43         | --                  |
| Darkness Covers the Land  | 15:33           | 27:45           | 23:44-45         | --                  |
| Jesus Cries Out to God: "Eloi, Eloi..."                         | 15:34-35        | 27:46-47        | --               | --                  |
| Someone Offers Jesus a Sponge Full of Vinegar                   | 15:36           | 27:48-49        | [23:36]          | 19:28-30a           |
| Jesus' Last Cry and His Death                                   | 15:37           | 27:50           | 23:46            | 19:30b              |
| The Curtain of the Temple Is Torn in Two                        | 15:38           | 27:51a          | [23:45]          | --                  |
| The Earthquake and the Open Tombs                               | --              | 27:51b-52       | --               | --                  |
| The Witness of the Centurion                                    | 15:39           | 27:54           | 23:47            | --                  |
| The Bystanders Return Home Beating Their Breasts                | --              | --              | 23:48            | --                  |
| The Women Who Witness the Crucifixion                           | 15:40-41        | 27:55-56        | 23:49            | [19:25b-27]         |
| { <i>Jesus' Side Is Pierced</i> }                               | --              | --              | --               | 19:31-37            |
| <b>The Burial of Jesus</b>                                      | <b>15:42-47</b> | <b>27:57-61</b> | <b>23:50-56</b>  | <b>19:38-42</b>     |
| Guards Are Placed at the Tomb                                   | --              | 27:62-66        | --               | --                  |



# Christological Titles in the New Testament

by Felix Just, S.J., Ph.D.

## Introduction:

In ancient Israel, most people had only one name, what we think of as a "first name" (or "given name"), but not also a "last name" (or "family name" or "surname"). Thus, the well-known man born about 2000 years ago was simply named "**Jesus**" (*note*: "Christ" is *not* his last name!). Actually, his name in Hebrew was probably *Yeshua* (equivalent to "Joshua"), which in the NT is translated by the Greek  $\text{Ιησους}$  (or *Iesous*), from which we get Latin *Iesus* and English "Jesus." Moreover, just as most biblical names have specific meanings, so "Joshua/Jesus" simply means "**God saves**" (cf. Matt 1:21).



*Note*: Some people think **IHS** means "In His Service," or that it comes from the Latin *Iesus Hominum Salvator* ("Jesus the Savior of Humankind") or *In hoc signo* ("By this sign you shall conquer"; spoken to Emperor Constantine before the Battle at the Milvian Bridge, 312 AD). Yet it originally comes from the *first three letters* in the **Greek spelling of Jesus' name** (Iota-Eta-Sigma). Thus, IHS (sometimes combined with a cross or other symbols) functions as a "monogram" (a symbolic abbreviation) for the name of Jesus.

To distinguish similarly named people from one another, individuals were further identified either by their geographical origin ("Jesus of **Nazareth**" or "Jesus **the Nazarene**" - Mark 1:24; 10:47; etc.; "Jesus **the Galilean**" - Matt 26:69), or their occupation ("**the carpenter**" - Mark 6:3). They were also often associated with relatives: usually their fathers ("Jesus, the **son of Joseph**" - Luke 3:24; John 1:45; 6:42; "the **carpenter's son**" - Matt 13:55), sometimes their siblings ("the **brother of James and Josés and Judas and Simon**" - Mark 6:3), or more rarely their mothers ("Jesus, **son of Mary**" - Mark 6:3; cf. Matt 13:55).

In contrast, "titles" are significantly different from names. Just as "important people" often have titles today (President, Senator, Judge, Doctor, Professor, etc.), so also in the ancient world, certain people were given titles to designate their specific roles or responsibilities. Although *more than one title* can be attributed to the *same person*, each title usually has a particular origin and a specific meaning. Thus, even though all of the following titles are attributed to the same person, *Jesus of Nazareth*, it is important to know that they all have *significantly different origins* and *very different meanings*.

## Christological Titles Explained Below:

|                                  |                              |                                  |                                   |                                    |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Messiah / Christ</a> | <a href="#">Son of God</a>   | <a href="#">King of the Jews</a> | <a href="#">Suffering Servant</a> | <a href="#">Great High Priest</a>  |
| <a href="#">Lord / LORD</a>      | <a href="#">Son of Man</a>   | <a href="#">Prophet</a>          | <a href="#">Emmanuel</a>          | <a href="#">Advocate/Paraclete</a> |
| <a href="#">Holy One</a>         | <a href="#">Son of David</a> | <a href="#">Rabbi / Teacher</a>  | <a href="#">Logos / Word</a>      | <a href="#">Alpha &amp; Omega</a>  |
| <a href="#">I Am</a>             | <a href="#">Son of Mary</a>  | <a href="#">Savior</a>           | <a href="#">Lamb / Shepherd</a>   | <a href="#">OTHER TITLES</a>       |

## Messiah / Christ

These two titles are equivalent, both meaning "anointed one," from the Hebrew verb *MASHAH* ("to anoint, smear with oil, pour oil over someone") and the Greek verb *CHRIO* (same def.). Many different people were called "anointed":

**OT**: "The Messiah of the LORD" frequently refers to *currently reigning or past* kings, esp. Saul (1 Sam 16; 24; 26) and David (2 Sam 12; 19; 22), and less often to a high patriarch, prophet, or priest (e.g. Lev 4). The title is applied to an expected *future* "anointed" leader only in Dan 9:25 and in non-biblical writings from Qumran. Early Judaism had a variety of different expectations as to what kind of a leader this "Messiah" would be: **royal** (a king like David to lead the nation politically and militarily), **priestly** (a high priest or religious leader to reform the temple worship), **prophetic** (a prophet like Moses or Elijah or others, to call the people to moral and spiritual reform), or some combination of these.



**NT**: A transliteration of the Hebrew *MESSIAS* is used *only* in John 1:41 & 4:25. Everywhere else the NT always uses the Greek translation *CHRISTOS* ("Christ"), although the NRSV more loosely translates it as "Messiah" 68 times. In the NT, the title refers only to Jesus, fairly often in the Gospels (7 Mk; 16 Mt; 12 Lk; 19 Jn), and very frequently in Paul's letters (382 times). Paul uses "Christ Jesus," "Jesus Christ," or even "Christ" alone as if it were a proper name. In Luke 4:18, Jesus quotes the scripture: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because *he has anointed me* to preach good news to the poor..." Christians later used the **Chi-Rho symbol** (first two letters of "Christ" in Greek) as a monogram for Jesus.

## Lord / LORD

Originally it was a title of respect used for people superior to yourself, so it simply meant "Sir" or "Master," just like *Señor* in Spanish, *Herr* in German, or "Lords and Ladies" in British. Later it is often also used for gods or God.

**OT:** The Hebrew title *ADONAI* simply means "lord" or "master," and is often used for humans and/or for God. Although God's name in Hebrew (YHWH) is very *often written* in the Bible, it was *rarely pronounced* after the Babylonian exile. Instead, people substituted the title *Adonai*. To distinguish between the two uses of *Adonai*, many English Bibles print this title in small capitals (LORD) when it substitutes for God's name, and in regular letters (Lord) otherwise.

**NT:** The Greek word *KYRIOS* is very frequent (80 Mt; 18 Mk; 104 Lk; 52 Jn; 107 Acts; 274 Paul; 717 total), with a variety of meanings. It sometimes refers to God or to humans, but usually to Jesus. Some people (esp. foreigners) call Jesus *Kyrie* simply as a sign of respect ("Sir" - Mark 7:28; John 4:11; etc.), while his disciples usually refer to him as their "master"; in later texts, calling Jesus "Lord" is an indication of his messianic or divine status (Acts 2:34-36). In Luke, the disciples also address Jesus as an *Epistates* ("master") seven times. In Paul, "the Lord" is often a substitute for Jesus' name. Note also "the Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10), "the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor 11:20), etc.

## Holy One

Originally a common circumlocution for God (a phrase used to avoid speaking God's name), it is later also applied as a title for Jesus or other "saints."

**OT:** In the singular, "Holy One" always and only refers to God (1Sam 2:2; Job 6:10; etc.), often also called "Holy One of Israel" (2Kgs 19:2; Isa 1:4; etc.). In the plural, "holy ones" can also refer to human or angelic beings that are close to God (Deut 33:2-3; Ps 16:3; 34:9; etc.)

**NT:** Jesus is called the "Holy One of God" by unclean spirits (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34) and by Peter (John 6:69). Acts 2:27 and 13:35 quote Ps 16 to call Jesus the "Holy One"; the title is also used of Jesus in Acts 3:14; 1John 2:20; Rev 3:7; 16:5.

## I AM

**OT:** God's name (*YHWH*) is revealed to Moses in the story of the burning bush. It means something close to "I am" (see Exod 3:14; 6:2-3; Deut 32:39; Isa 43:25; 51:12; etc.; cf. Matt 22:32). It is simply called "the Name" by Jews, and is also known as the Tetragrammaton (lit. "four letters" in Greek). Ancient and modern Jews revere God's name so highly that they dare not speak it aloud, instead substituting circumlocutions such as "the Name" or simply "God" or usually "the Lord" (Heb. *Adonai*).



**NT:** In the Synoptic Gospels, the phrase "I am" is used only a few times by Jesus (Mark 14:62; Luke 22:70; 24:39), especially when Jesus walks on the water (Mark 6:50; Matt 14:27; cf. John 6:20), a story that functions as a "theophany" (appearance of a god). Messianic pretenders may also deceive people by saying "I am" (Mark 13:6; Matt 24:5; Luke 21:8). In John's Gospel, Jesus himself says "I Am" (Greek *EIMI*) fifty-four times. Twenty-four of these are emphatic (explicitly including the pronoun "EGO" for "I"), including some well known metaphorical images, when Jesus calls himself the bread of life, the light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way and the truth and the life, and the true vine. For more details, see the ["I Am"](#) webpage.

## Son of God / God's Son

This title originally did *not* imply full *divinity*, but simply a person's special relationship with God. As Christian theology developed, it took on more exclusively divine connotations.

**OT:** In the singular or plural, God's "son" or "sons" can refer to angels (Gen 6:2), kings (Ps 2:7), good people (Wis 2:18), or the people of Israel overall (Exod 4:22), but it did not refer to a messianic figure until the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, nor did it imply divinity.

**NT:** The historical Jesus referred to God as *Abba* ("Father"), but probably never called himself the "Son of God" in a divine sense. Such language developed only gradually in early Christianity (rare in Mk, a bit more in Mt & Lk & Paul, common only in Jn). In Mark, only the Evangelist (1:1), unclean/ demonic spirits (3:11; 5:7), and a Roman centurion (15:39) directly call Jesus "Son of God," while the voice from heaven (1:11; 9:7), more demons (1:24), and the high priest (14:61) use *equivalent expressions* ("my beloved Son"; "Son of the Blessed One"; etc.). In Matthew & Luke these titles for Jesus are also used by Satan, the Holy Spirit, or Jesus' disciples, while Jesus himself calls some of his followers "sons/children of God" (Matt 5:9; Luke 20:36). Paul calls Jesus the "Son of God," and calls all Christians "sons/children of God" in a few important passages (esp. Rom & Gal). John has much more "Father/Son" language, and is the first to call Jesus the "*only-Son*" of God (Gk. *monogenes*, lit. "the only-begotten one"; John 3:16, 18; cf. 1:14, 18; 1John 4:9; similarly also Heb 1:5; 5:5).

# Christology in Mark's Gospel

## Introduction:

- **Initial Questions for Your Reflection:**
  - What is Mark's main message about Jesus?
  - How does this Evangelist portray Jesus?
- **Identity of Jesus:** From the very first verse, this Evangelist knows and proclaims who Jesus is: the Christ, the Son of God (1:1). The characters within the story, however, struggle to understand who Jesus is, where he has come from, and what he is all about. This can be seen in the variety of questions that people ask about Jesus:
  - "What is this? A new teaching--with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." (1:27)
  - "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (2:7)
  - "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (2:12)
  - "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (4:41b)
  - "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! / Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" (6:2-3)
  - "Who do people say that I am?" (8:27); "But who do you say that I am?" (8:29)
  - "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?" (11:28)
  - "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" (14:61)
  - "Are you the King of the Jews?" (15:2)

## I) Christology expressed in TITLES attributed to Jesus:

- Many different titles are used for Jesus throughout Mark's Gospel, with slightly *different origins* and *different meanings*:
  - The evangelist **Mark** seems to prefer "Christ" and "Son of God"; **Jesus** more often calls himself "Son of Man";
  - **Other characters** in Mark's Gospel frequently call Jesus "teacher" or a variety of other titles.
  - Jesus is occasionally also identified as "the carpenter," the "son of Mary," and as being "from Nazareth."
- **Christ ("Anointed One");** although Mark only uses Greek *Christos*, modern English Bibles often translate this "**Messiah**")
- **Son of God and related terms** (caution: *do not assume* this means "fully divine" yet):
- **Son of Man** ("son of the human being"? - **used only by Jesus**, as quoted directly or indirectly by the Evangelist):
- **Teacher (the most common title other characters in Mark's Gospel use to address Jesus):**
- **Rabbi & Rabbouni** (another common title of respect, lit. meaning "my great one");
- **Prophet** (lit. a "spokesperson" for God)
- **Kyrios = Lord, Master, Sir**
- **Son of David** (directly attributed to Jesus only by Bartimaeus; is it a "royal" or "messianic" title?):
- **King of the Jews & King of Israel (used only during Jesus' trial before Pilate):**
- **The Carpenter, the Son of Mary**
- **Jesus of/from Nazareth**

## II) Christology expressed in ACTIONS that Jesus performs:

- **Jesus Preaches the "Reign of God" (*basileia tou theou*)**
  - **Note:** Jesus and others also speak of earthly "kingdoms" in 3:24; 6:23; and 13:8.
  - Compare what the crowds say as Jesus enters Jerusalem in Mark 11:10 – "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"
- **Jesus Acts with "Authority" (*exousia*)**
  - Jesus teaches, forgives, and performs exorcisms, healings and other miracles:
  - Jesus also gives "authority" to his apostles:
- **Jesus argues with the religious authorities, besting any human "opponents"**
- **Jesus displays human emotions**
- **Jesus foretells & accepts his upcoming suffering**

## III) Summary: WHO knows and professes WHAT about Jesus in Mark's Gospel?

- **Characters in the Narrative**
  - John the Baptist; Voice from heaven; Unclean spirits & demoniacs;
  - Apostles & disciples; Jesus' family; Jewish authorities; Roman authorities
- **The Evangelist and the Readers:**
  - **Evangelist** - as an omniscient narrator, gives readers hope and encouragement through "inside knowledge"
  - **1st-century readers** - a religious minority (persecuted & ostracized), encouraged to persevere through difficulties
  - **21st-century readers** - great variety, from different cultures, living in great varieties of places and circumstances

# Discipleship in Mark's Gospel

## I) Calling & Following:

- **Key Vocabulary:**
  - *kalein & proskalein* = to call, summon
  - *akolouthein* = to follow
  - *opiso* = behind
  - *ho hodos* = the way/road
- **First three “call” stories:**
  - **1:16-20** – Jesus encounters **Simon & Andrew; James & John:**
  - **2:14** – Jesus encounters **Levi, a Tax Collector**
  - **3:13-19** – Jesus calls & appoints **twelve “apostles”** to be sent out (somewhat later) *Note:* Jesus does not actually “send out” these twelve until 6:7-13, a mission from which these “apostles” return in 6:30.
  - **Other references to “the twelve” in Mark**
  - **Question:** Were “the twelve” always with Jesus? Were they the only disciples faithful to Jesus?
- **More uses of “call/follow/behind” in Mark’s Gospel:**
  - **Disciples & crowds follow Jesus:**
  - **Peter (with James & John)**
  - **A woman with a flow of blood** (5:25-34)
  - **Another exorcist** (9:38-40)
  - **A rich man** (10:17-22)
  - **Bartimaeus** (10:46-52)
  - **A young man at Gethsemane** (14:51-52)
  - **Galilean Women at the Cross** (15:40-41)
- **See also the frequent use of “disciple”** (46 times) **and “way/road”** in Mark (1:2-3; 2:23; 6:8; 8:3, 27; 9:33-34; 10:17, 32; 10:46, 52; 11:8; 12:14).

## II) Missioning & Sending:

- **Key Vocabulary:**
  - *apostelein* = to send out
  - *hypagein* = to go
  - **Note:** Not only the apostles are “sent out” by Jesus or told to “go” on a specific mission in Mark’s Gospel. Several other characters also are.
- **The cleansed leper (1:40-45)**
- **The Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20)**
- **The twelve apostles (6:7-13)**
- **The blind man at Bethsaida (8:22-26)**
- **Two disciples sent to obtain a colt for Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem (11:1-7)**
- **Parable of the Wicked Tenants: Sending servants & a beloved son (12:1-12)**
- **Two disciples sent to prepare the Last Supper (14:12-16)**
- **The women at the empty tomb (16:1-8)**
- **Note:** Since *apostelein* is a common Greek verb, other characters are also “sent out” in other contexts in Mark.

## III) Explicit Instructions on Discipleship

- **8:34-38** (after the 1st Passion prediction)
- **9:33-37** (after the 2nd Passion prediction)
- **10:35-45** (after the 3rd Passion prediction)
- **Other teachings related to discipleship:**
  - Leave everything to follow Jesus (10:28-30)
  - Keep awake and pray (14:32-42)

## IV) The MIS-understandings and Failures of Jesus’ Disciples

## V) Role Models, esp. for Faith/Belief

## VI) Who Are the Best Role Models for Discipleship in Mark’s Gospel?