

Tuesday Evening Bible Study  
Series #14: The Gospel of Mark  
Session #3: Chapters 3-4  
Tuesday, October 2, 2018

**Outline**

A. Part One: Ministry of Healing and Preaching in Galilee (1:1 – 8:26)

1. Authority and Power of Jesus (1:14 – 3:6)
  - a. Man with a withered hand (3:1-6)
    - Still healing on the Sabbath
    - V. 2 – “They watched him” uses the same verb that refers to medical observation or strict religious practices.
    - Last of the five Galilean controversies. Jesus shows anger (human emotion) and the Pharisees and Herodians conspire to kill him. (Note the irony: Jesus asks if it is lawful to do good and save a life vs. do harm and kill on the Sabbath. The Pharisees immediately went out to conspire about destroying him—on the Sabbath!) 1<sup>st</sup> of four references in Mark about the conspiracy to destroy Jesus.
2. Jesus around the Sea of Galilee (3:7 – 8:26)
  - a. Transitional Markan Summary (3:7-12)
    - 1) Messianic secret at v. 12
    - 2) But, Mark’s readers knew!
  - b. Jesus appoints the Twelve (3:13-19a)
    - The change of place = a new event
    - vv. 14, 16 – “whom he also named apostles” may not be original to the text. Some translations indicate it in brackets and some omit it altogether. (SP, p. 123)
    - Explanation of names in SP, pp. 124-5.
  - c. Jesus returns home (3:19b-36)
    - 1) Transition (3:19b)
    - 2) The Beelzebul controversy (3:20-30)
      - Jesus is accused of being possessed by Beelzebul and by his power casts out demons. However, the demons worship Jesus. The real fight will not be between Jesus and demons, but with those “outsiders” who misunderstand Jesus.
    - 3) Jesus’ biological family & his “true” family (3:31-36)
      - The gap between Jesus and his family is noted here.
      - V. 35 is about discipleship
  - d. Parables and sayings (4:1-34) – A sermon in parables
    - 1) Parable of the Sower (4:1-9)
    - 2) The purpose of parables (4:10-20)
      - v. 12 quotes Isaiah 6:9-10
      - This may be an insertion
    - 3) Lamp under a Bushel Basket (4:21-25)
      - The sayings derive from a collection of wisdom sayings and have parallels in Q and in the Gospel of Thomas.
    - 4) Parable of the Growing Seed (4:26-29)

- v. 29 – “at once he goes in with his sickle” is a translation of the Greek verb ‘*apostellō*’ which usually conveys the sense of being commissioned and sent out; here it presents overtones of eschatological urgency.
- 5) Parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32)
  - The mustard plant was well-known in the region of Galilee. Its seeds were used for flavoring and the plant was known to germinate rapidly and take over a garden, suggesting that the Kingdom of God is both hardy and intrusive.
- 6) The use of parables (4:33-34)
  - Explanations usually centered on things important to the Markan community, such as moral conduct, greed, and divorce.

### **Themes to look for**

#### **1. The Messianic secret.**

- On several occasions Jesus warns his disciples or others to keep silent about who he is or what he has done. (1:34, 44)

#### **2. Son of God.**

- Although Mark emphasizes the humanity of Jesus (3:5), he does not neglect his deity (1:1, 11).

#### **3. Eschaton**

### **Resources**

Notes from HarperCollins Study Bible (NRSV), 1989

“The Gospel of Mark” in *Sacra Pagina*, Daniel J. Harrington, ed. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2008)

[https://www.bible-history.com/maps/palestine\\_nt\\_times.html](https://www.bible-history.com/maps/palestine_nt_times.html)

