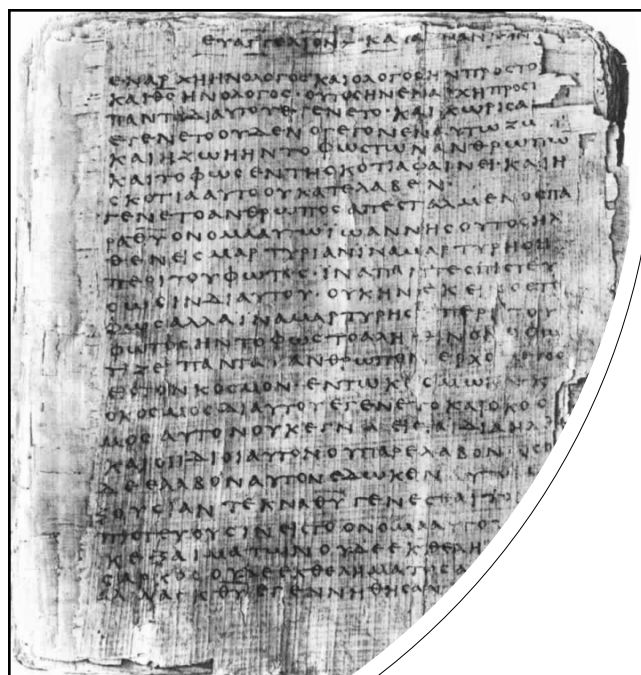


Understanding the New Testament

■ Getting to Know Some Folks...

- Name?
- From?
- Favorite Gospel?



Understanding the New Testament

The Gospels and Mark

Opening Hymn

■ The Kingdom of God (Taizé)

The kingdom of God is justice and peace

And joy in the Holy Spirit.

Come, Lord, and open in us the gates of your kingdom.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruiYkscbIkC>

Ostinato Refrain The Kingdom of God 637

The king - dom of God is jus - tice and peace and
joy in the Ho - ly Spir - it. Come, Lord, and
o - pen in us the gates of your king - dom.

Last time

Text: Community of Taizé
Tune: Community of Taizé
© 2001, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent

Opening Prayer

■ Day by day,
O dear Lord,
three things I pray:

■
to see thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly,
follow thee more nearly,
day by day. Amen.

-Richard of Chichester, 13th c. / Godspell, 20th c.



What is a Gospel? Some Terms



- Gospel < O.E. godspel = "good news"
 - The good news/message preached by Jesus
 - The good news/message preached about Jesus
 - The written document narrating Jesus' life and teachings

- Authors called
 - Gospel writers
 - Evangelists
 - Narrators

What is a Gospel? Definition



- A type of ancient biography?
 - Different from modern
 - Purpose: a life to imitate (or not)
- But more... and different
 - Scripture? the story of Israel continued? theological history?
 - Martin Kähler: "a Passion narrative with an extended introduction"
 - Proclamation!
- MJG: An intertextual narrative interpretation of the coming, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus as the ultimate saving act of Israel's God
 - Jesus: remembered, narrated, present; something to be performed, heard, experienced

What is the Spiritual Purpose of a Gospel?



- Proclaim Jesus
- Subvert the status quo
- Form communities of missional disciples

A Gospel: The Parts and the Whole



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Some of the parts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bir – Par – Tea – Mir – Ex – Con – Pass – App | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – All history is interpreted history – Each has a point of view = four different takes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FOUR ARE BETTER THAN ONE ▪ EX: Jesus' birth, death – Good story: structure, plot, characters – Focus: Jesus, discipleship – Audience: both local and beyond |
|---|---|

Four Gospels: Three "Synoptic" Gospels + John



■ Matthew

- demanding but merciful, teaching Son of God
- heartfelt obedience

■ Luke

- compassionate, liberating Son of God
- prophetic witness

■ Mark

- powerful but suffering Son of God
- sacrificial service

■ John (Fourth Gospel)

- incarnate, life-giving Son of God
- abiding and being sent

Four Gospels: Three "Synoptic"* Gospels + John



■ Matthew: Lectionary Year A

■ Luke: Lectionary Year C

■ Mark: Lectionary Year B

■ John



- *synoptic = "seen or seeing together"

How were the Gospels Formed?



- 1. The words and deeds of Jesus
 - late 20s? to early 30s
 - ear- & eyewitnesses
- 2. Oral transmission
 - 30s to 60s and beyond
 - memory and interpretation
- 3. Early written sources
 - 40s? and beyond
 - collection and interpretation
- 4. Written gospels
 - 50s or 60s to 90s
 - interpretative writing of the whole story

The Synoptic Problem / Phenomenon (1)

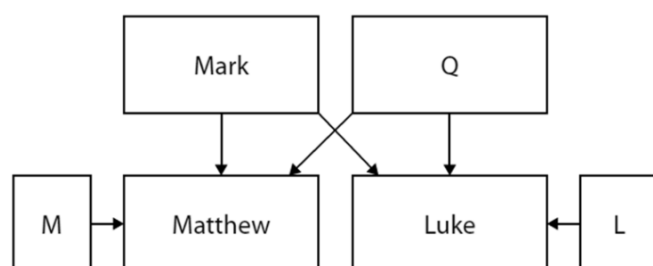
- Similarities and Differences among Matthew, Mark, Luke

Matt 3.13-17	Mark 1.9-11	Luke 3.21-22
Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus had been baptized,	In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee	Now when all the people were baptized,
just as he came up from the water, suddenly <u>the heavens were opened</u> to him and he saw <u>the Spirit of God descending like a dove</u> and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."	and <u>was baptized</u> by John in the Jordan. 10 And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw <u>the heavens torn apart</u> and <u>the Spirit descending like a dove on him.</u> 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."	and when Jesus also <u>had been baptized</u> and was praying, <u>the heaven was opened,</u> 22 and <u>the Holy Spirit descended upon him</u> in bodily form <u>like a dove.</u> And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

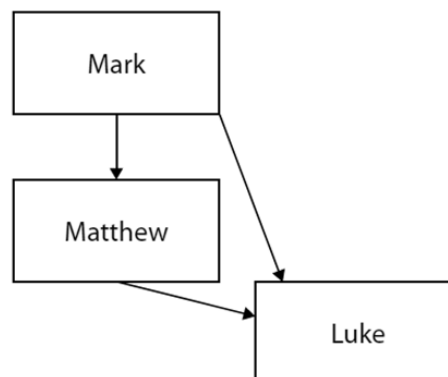
The Synoptic Problem/Phenomenon (2)



- 1. Markan priority + Q (Quelle = German for "source")



- 2. Markan priority but no Q



Mark: An Outline



- 1:1—8:26 In Galilee:
The Coming of the Kingdom through Power
- 8:27-30 Peter's Confession (literary fulcrum)
- 8:31-15:47 To Jerusalem:
The Coming of the Kingdom through Suffering
- 16:1-8 Resurrection: Vindication and Invitation

Mark in 300 Words (1)

According to most scholars, the Gospel of Mark is the earliest of the four Gospels and dates from just before or after 70 CE. It is the shortest, lacking much of the teaching material found in the other Gospels, and it contains no birth or post-resurrection appearance narratives. Rather, Mark is an action-packed story about the advent of the kingdom of God, a story that falls into two main sections. The first half reveals the power of Jesus in bringing the kingdom as healer and exorcist. The second half (beginning at 8:27–30, Peter's confession of Jesus as Messiah at Caesarea Philippi) paradoxically stresses the death of Jesus, who takes on the role of Suffering Servant as the ultimate purpose of his own coming, the paradigm of discipleship, and the ultimate manifestation of divine power.



Mark in 300 Words (2)

Mark's audience should therefore expect to suffer like Jesus and to serve others, including the marginalized, such as children. It must reject the imperial values of power and domination. In addition, those who encounter this Gospel will likely find themselves mirrored in the descriptions of the disciples, who constantly do not "get it," for a suffering Messiah and costly discipleship are not easily accepted. Nevertheless, the disciples are explicitly commissioned early in the Gospel to share Jesus' mission, and they are encouraged to persevere. Moreover, when the Gospel ends surprisingly—without any public testimony to Jesus' resurrection—the readers/hearers are implicitly invited to bear that testimony themselves.



Mark in 300 Words (3)

Traditional identifications of “Mark” as the John Mark of Acts (and a few Pauline letters), who was Peter’s interpreter, are debated today. Most scholars, however, find credible the traditional association of this Gospel with Rome, though some argue that it was written in Galilee or Syria.



Mark as Storyteller

- Abrupt beginning and ending
- Quick and vivid: Jesus as doer
 - “Immediately”: 11x in ch. 1, 42 total
 - Historical present
- “Sandwich” technique (ex.: 5:21-43)
- Governing question: who is this person?
 - Son of God: 1:1; 1:11 (baptism); 9:7 (transfiguration)
 - Dense disciples, but demons know
 - Messianic secret
 - Bookends: 1:9-11; 15:33-39



Mark 8:27—9:1



- ²⁷Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" ²⁸And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." ²⁹He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." ³⁰And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Mark 8:27—9:1



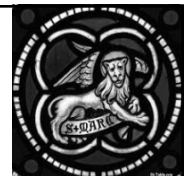
- ³¹Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Mark 8:27—9:1



- ³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For 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. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." 9 ¹And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power."

Mark 16



- ¹When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Mark: Major Spiritual Lessons

- Jesus is the Son of God who brings God's kingdom by conquering evil and dying for sins.
- Jesus subverts and inverts the dominant cultural values, redefining power in terms of service.
- To follow a subversive, suffering Messiah means to bear witness to him as crucified and risen, embody his subversive teachings/values, and expect suffering.
- Jesus, by the Spirit, is present for and with the suffering disciples.
- Disciples are human and will sometimes fail; they can expect this and start over/succeed with the Spirit's help.



Hymn



When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me
most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.