

Mark 1:14-45

A. Introduction

1. As we learned last week, each of the Gospel writers had a different purpose in writing and Mark's purpose is to reveal Jesus as Messiah and the Son of God
2. The prologue to his gospel is found in the first 13 verses and shows the reality of these two claims through the ministry of John the Baptist (the Elijah-like prophet that would prepare the way for the Messiah) and the baptism of Jesus (where God declares Jesus as the Son in Whom He is well pleased)
3. John's Gospel reveals that Jesus actually spent the very first part of His 3.5 year ministry mostly in Judea to the south:
 - a. He performed his first miracle at Cana (changing water into wine)
 - b. He made a trip to Jerusalem for Passover where He ran the money changers out of the Temple the first time (there are two instances when He did this)
 - c. He met Nicodemus at this time
 - d. On His way back to Galilee he spent some time in Samaria (where He met the woman at the well)
4. Mark (along with Matthew and Luke) begins his account of Jesus ministry after Jesus returned from Judea and arrived in back Galilee:
 - a. There's no indicator why the Synoptic Gospels don't include the initial Judean ministry
 - b. It's possible that Matthew, Mark and Luke all saw the return to Galilee as the true beginning of Jesus public ministry
 - c. Prior to that John was still preaching a baptism of repentance in preparation for the Messiah, and it appears Jesus' disciples were doing the same (ref. John 3:26; 4:1)
 - d. The arrest and captivity of John the Baptist seems to be the turning point fulfilling John's words, "**He must increase, but I must decrease**" (John 3:30)
 - e. Mark also appears to present Jesus' ministry as a journey from Galilee to Jerusalem as a means to reveal Him as the Christ

B. Jesus came with a new message (14-15)

1. After the arrest of John, Jesus returned to Galilee, "**Preaching the gospel of God**" (14):
 - a. Remember, gospel is more literally "good news" which means that Jesus came preaching the good news of God
 - b. Jesus says later in our passage that He came for this purpose (READ 35-39)
 - c. So, what was this "good news" that He preached? Well, He tells us (15): "**The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand**"
 - 1) "**The time is fulfilled**" refers to a specific time, event or occasion that has been made full or complete—this is a direct reference to the coming of God's Son to redeem those under the Law (Galatians 4:1-5)
 - 2) "**kingdom of God**" is an abstract reference to the kingship or rule of God so it refers to a new era in God's rule or governance over His creation
 - 3) Both of these are referenced in the perfect tense which refers to things that begin but continue into the future (e.g. "I began riding my bike when I was 3" implies that I started when I was 3 but continue to ride my bike today)

- 4) So, the good news that Jesus preached was that God had now begun to bring about the fulfillment of His redemptive plan for mankind by sending the Messiah, and began a new era of His kingship and rule over Creation
2. Jesus also preached that this good news demands a response (imperative mode; 15c):
 - a. **“Repent”**—literally means to change one’s mind but Biblically it refers to a complete change in attitudes and thoughts in regard to sin and righteousness that ultimately leads to turning away from those things
 - b. **“Believe in the gospel”**—the essence of faith is to believe the Gospel which reveals Jesus as the Savior
 3. The reason I say this is a new message is because prior to the coming of Jesus, God’s complete redemptive plan was still a bit of a mystery:
 - a. READ Romans 16:25-27
 - b. Up until the birth of Jesus, most of God’s redemptive plan focused on God’s covenant and relationship with Israel
 - c. With the arrival of Jesus, however, God revealed His plan more fully as He began to bring it to fulfillment

C. Jesus came with a new mission (READ 16-20)

1. Prior to Jesus’s ministry, God’s redemptive plan focused on Israel:
 - a. When God revealed His plan to Abraham, He said He was going to do two things:
 - 1) The first is that God would make Abraham the father of a great nation—we see this play out in the OT where God’s redemptive plan unfolds primarily through His interactions and relationship with Israel
 - 2) The second is that God would ultimately bless the nations (e.g. the world) through Abraham but we don’t see this play out until after Jesus arrives
 - b. The first part of God’s plan focused on the first promise: the creation of the nation of Israel as a separate people dedicated to Him:
 - 1) God called Israel out from among the nations to be a separate and Holy people unto Himself
 - 2) Gentiles were not excluded, but God’s covenant was with Israel and His redemptive plan focused on them
2. However, Jesus ushered in a new era which focused on the second part of God’s plan, blessing the nations:
 - a. Israel’s purpose in the OT was not directly evangelistic
 - b. However, Jesus’s new mission was—He was going to raise up **“fishers of men”** to take the good news of God to the ends of the earth
3. Jesus calls the first apostles:
 - a. This isn’t the first time Jesus met Simon, Andrew, James and John—He originally met them in Galilee prior to departing to Judea and called on them to follow Him
 - b. They did, but returned to fishing when He left for Judea

- c. This time, however, the call of Jesus implies more than simple discipleship—they would play a vital role in His mission as He would make them “fishers of men” who would take the Gospel to the ends of the earth
- d. See 3:13-19; 6:7-13; 16:15, 20

D. Jesus came with new authority (21-28)
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1. Jesus’s first recorded teaching in the synagogue (found in Luke 4) didn’t go very well:
 - a. It was in his home town (where He proclaimed that no prophet was welcome in his home town)
 - b. They ran Him out of the synagogue and tried to kill Him by tossing Him off a cliff

2. Mark presents a very different response when Jesus preached in the synagogues in and around Galilee (21-22): **“They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach. 22 They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”**
 - a. The scribes were the OT scholars and professional teachers of the Law
 - b. Tradition suggests they derived their authority from the writings of other scribes, often quoting what others said about the Law
 - c. When Jesus taught, people were “amazed” because unlike the scribes He taught them **“as one having authority”**
 - d. Mark doesn’t provide much detail on this right here, but he does in Mark 7:5-8:
 - 1) They honored God with their lips (e.g. what they taught) but not their hearts (e.g. what they valued and did)
 - 2) They taught the precepts of men as the doctrines of God (e.g. they preached man’s word not God’s Word)
 - 3) They held to the traditions of men and neglected God’s commands
 - 4) In fact, he said they were **“experts”** in this

3. When Jesus taught, however, it projected a genuine sense of authority:
 - a. We don’t have time to turn there, but the Sermon on the Mount is probably the best example of the authority with which Jesus taught God’s Word
 - b. That sermon ended with the same response from the crowd (Matthew 7:28-29): **“When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; 29 for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.”**

4. Not only did Jesus teach with authority, but His authority was revealed in another way: He cast out demons (READ 23-26):
 - a. Mark records four different instances where Jesus cast out demons and in each it revealed Jesus’s authority and power over the spiritual realm
 - b. It also served to validate His teaching—this is the reason Jesus gave the 12 the ability to cast out demons when He sent them out (Mark 6:13)
 - c. We can see that right here in our passage today (1:27): **“They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying ‘What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.’”**

E. Jesus came with a new compassion (29-45)

1. For the sake of time, I won't be able to spend much time on this last section but will do my best to summarize
2. This section reflects primarily on Jesus's ability and willingness to heal
 - a. The first is Peter's mother-in-law who was sick in bed with a fever (29-31)
 - b. The second episode involves "the whole city" bringing their sick and demon possessed to Jesus to be healed (32-39)
 - c. The third involves a leper (40-45)
3. I believe part of Mark's purpose in sharing these with us is to reveal the compassion with which Jesus ministered—something that stood in stark contrast to Israel's leadership:
 - a. When Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law He did it on the Sabbath—something Israel's leaders condemned because they honored their man-made rules over compassion for God's people
 - b. The crowds that were brought to Him that evening were considered the outcasts of society who wouldn't have received the time of day from most of the religious leaders because of their diseases and possession by demons, yet Jesus healed them late into the night
 - c. The same is the case with the leper, someone shunned by the rest of society, but not by Jesus

F. Conclusion

1. Mark's introduction to Jesus's earthly ministry starts with Jesus ushering in a new era in God's redemptive plan and preaching a new message: the kingdom of God is at hand
2. Jesus brought a new mission to reach beyond the borders of Israel and take the Gospel to all the world
3. He came with a new authority that stood in stark contrast to Israel's leadership
4. And He came with a new compassion for God's people and the world