**Survey of New Testament**

**Gospel of Mark**

Mark lived in Jerusalem with his mother Mary (Acts 12:12), who was a leader in the Jerusalem church. Some scholars think he was the young man who fled in the garden when Jesus was arrested (Mark 14:51–52). John Mark accompanied his cousin Barnabas (Col. 4:10) and Paul on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:5), but left them at Perga and returned home (Acts 13:13). This later caused a division between Barnabas and Paul and led to Barnabas taking Mark under his wing (Acts 15:36–41). However, before he died, Paul acknowledged Mark’s ministry and spoke highly of him (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11). Peter called Mark “my son” (1 Peter 5:13), which may indicate that it was Peter who brought John Mark to faith in Christ. Mark's purpose is to reveal Jesus as a servant. The first eight chapters reveal who Jesus is and the later eight reveal who man is.

**Mark 1:1–39**

1. **Mark 1:1-8 Announcement** Mark declares from the outset that Jesus is the Son of God, a testimony that he gives throughout the book (1:11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 12:6; 13:32; 14:61–62; 15:39). Mark quoted Mal. 3:1 in v. 2, and Isa. 40:3 in v. 3, both of which refer to John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the Lord.
2. **Mark 1:9-13 Acknowledgment** Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist revealing to John, Jesus was the Christ. The voice of the Father and the presence of the Spirit as a dove both acknowledged the deity of the Servant.
3. **Mark 1:14-39 Authority** Jesus came to Galilee as a preacher, sharing the Good News that God’s kingdom had come to men in the person of the Servant of God. **(1) Authority over destiny (vv. 16-20).** Peter, Andrew, James, and John had met Jesus and trusted Him some months before (John 1:35–49), but this was their call to full-time ministry as disciples. At least seven of our Lord’s disciples were professional fishermen (John 21:1–2).    **(2) Mark Authority over demons (vv. 21–28).** Jesus made Capernaum His “headquarters” (2:1; 9:33) and went out from there to various parts of the country to minister. He often taught in the local synagogues, and on this particular Sabbath He delivered a man from the power of a demon.                **(3) Authority over disease (vv. 29–34, 40–45)**. Peter’s house became a place of healing for the whole city! How important it is for us to “take Jesus home with us” after we have worshiped. It was illegal for lepers to approach others; they had to keep their distance and cry out, “Unclean, unclean!” (See Lev. 13:44–46.) But this man had heard about Jesus and was certain that He would heal him. **(4) Authority in prayer (vv. 35–39).** No matter how much the Servant labored to help others, He still took time early in the morning to meet with His Father. This was the source of His power, for Jesus served on earth just as you and I must serve: by faith, depending on the power of the Spirit.

**Mark 2**

Jesus had become a “popular” person, for the people wanted to be with Him and watch His miracles. Mark often mentions that great crowds followed the Lord (2:2, 13; 3:7–9, 20, 32; 4:1, 36; 5:31; 7:33; 8:1–2; 9:14, 17). Our Lord’s popularity attracted the attention of the Jewish religious leaders, and this sometimes led to disagreement and questions. Mark describes four such disagreements.

1. **Disagreement about Forgiveness (2:1–12)** The house was full where Jesus was preaching. The four men bring their friend to Jesus. We must commend them for their love for their friend, their concern to get him to Jesus. “Your sins be forgiven,” were the words Jesus spoke to the man. The scribes knew that Jesus was claiming to be God, and this was the beginning of their opposition to His message.
2. **Disagreement about Fellowship (2:13–17)** The call of Levi (Matthew means “the gift of God”) shocked the official religious leaders, for what rabbi would want a tax collector as a disciple? But Jesus went even further and fellowshipped with Matthew and his “sinner” friends! Jesus sees sinners as sick people who need a physician, and He is that physician (Ps. 107:20).
3. **Disagreement about Fasting (2:18–22)** In Eastern lands in that day, to eat with a person meant to seal a solemn bond of friendship. How could Jesus and His disciples enjoy feasts when other religious people were fasting? Jesus had compared Himself to a physician; now He pictured Himself as a bridegroom (John 3:29; Eph. 5:32). Now that Jesus is no longer on earth, His people may fast if they wish (Matt. 6:16–18; Acts 13:2–3; 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27).
4. **Disagreement about Freedom (2:23–28)** Jewish tradition said that there were thirty-nine acts that must not be performed on the Sabbath, among them harvesting grain. It was legal to take grain to eat from your neighbor’s field (Deut. 23:25), but not on the Sabbath. Jesus defended Himself and His disciples by referring to David’s experience (1 Sam. 21:1–6) and affirming that He was Lord of the Sabbath. This was the same as claiming to be God!

**Mark 3:1–30**

The crowds continued to follow Jesus and people were now having to make personal decisions about Him. Mark records five such decisions.

1. **“He Is a Lawbreaker” (3:1–6)** For the third time, Jesus deliberately violated the Jewish Sabbath traditions. The man with the paralyzed hand had no idea that Jesus would come to the synagogue to heal him. Jesus wanted to do more than merely heal a man; He wanted to teach the Pharisees (Luke 6:7) that God wanted His people to enjoy freedom and not suffer in religious bondage. Jesus knew what His critics were thinking and was angry at the hardening of their hearts.
2. **“He Is a Miracle Worker” (3:7–12)** Thousands of people came from all over either to be healed or to watch Jesus heal others. It is unfortunate that these people came only for physical help and not for spiritual.
3. **“He Is Our Master” (3:13–19)** Jesus went to a mountain alone and spend the night in prayer (Luke 6:12). When He came down the next morning, He selected twelve men and named them “apostles.” The word means “one who is sent with a commission.” Jesus had many followers, even fewer true disciples, but only twelve apostles. While the word “apostle” is sometimes used in the NT in the general sense of “a sent one” (Acts 14:14; Rom. 16:7), in its specific meaning, it refers to the Twelve and Paul. Ten times in his Gospel, Mark refers to “the Twelve” (3:14; 4:10; 6:7; 9:35; 10:32; 11:11; 14:10, 17, 20, 43).
4. **“He Is Beside Himself” (3:20–21, 31–35)** Our Lord’s own friends and family did not understand Him. Our Lord was not rude to His family; He simply used their concern as an opportunity to explain what it means to belong to the family of God. God’s children are closer to Jesus than even His own earthly family.
5. **“He Is in with Satan” (3:22–30)** Unwilling to submit to our Lord’s authority, the religious leaders had to explain His miracles in some way; so they said He was empowered by the devil. Jesus pointed out the folly of that argument; for if He were casting out demons by Satan’s power, then Satan would be fighting against himself! Satan’s kingdom and house would be divided! (Note that Satan does have a kingdom, for he is the “prince of this world.” See John 12:31, Eph. 6:10–20, and Col. 1:13.)

**Mark 4:1–41**

Mark introduced the word “parable” in 3:23 and used it seven times in this chapter (4:2, 10–11, 13, 33–34). Jesus used familiar images to help explain the spiritual truths in His message about “the kingdom”. The chapter presents four responsibilities of God’s people.

1. **Sowing (4:1–20, 30–34)** Jesus explained the parable and emphasized that knowing it was basic to understanding all parables (v. 13, and see Matt. 13:1–23). Unless our hearts are prepared to receive the seed of the Word, we cannot grow in grace or knowledge (2 Peter 3:18). Like seed, God’s Word is “living and powerful” (Heb. 4:12) and, when cultivated, can produce fruit.
2. **Shining (4:21–25)** The word “hear” is used thirteen times in this chapter and refers to the receiving of God’s truth into the heart, just the way soil receives the seed. We must be careful how we hear (Luke 8:18) and what we hear (v. 24); for this determines what we have to share with others. We do not receive the Word so we can enjoy it by ourselves. We receive that we might share, just as a lamp gives itself to provide light for the house. See Matt. 5:15–16 and Luke 11:33–36.
3. **Reaping (4:26–29)** This parable can be summarized in four words: sowing (v. 26), sleeping (v. 27), growing (v. 28), reaping (v. 29). All we can do is sow the seed; God alone can give the increase (1 Cor. 3:6–7). We cannot make the seed grow; in fact, we do not fully understand how the seed grows. Our task is to sow the seed and be alert when the harvest is ready (John 4:35–38). While sleeping is sometimes a picture of sin (Rom. 13:11–14; 1 Thes. 5:1–11), here it simply reminds us that hard-working people need their rest (see Mark 6:31).
4. **Trusting (4:35–41)** Jesus completed the lesson and then gave His disciples an unexpected examination! They had listened to the Word of God, and that Word should have increased their faith (Rom. 10:17). Alas, they failed the test! It is not unusual for terrible storms to come suddenly on the Sea of Galilee. The word “rebuked” in v. 39 is the same word Jesus used when dealing with the demons (1:25). Perhaps the enemy was trying to keep Jesus from arriving, where He would deliver two demon possessed men from Satan’s power.

**Mark 5:1–34**

Mark introduces us to three people who had one thing in common: they all were at the feet of Jesus (vv. 6 and 15, 22, 33).

1. **A Demoniac (5:1–20)** Matthew informs us that two demon possessed men met Jesus (8:28), but Mark and Luke focused on the one man who wanted to go with Jesus and be His disciple. The narrative describes the awful plight of these men who were drawn to Jesus and yet, because of the demons, feared Him (vv. 6–7). A Roman legion could be as many as 6,000 men! The demons feared that Jesus would send them into the abyss (Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1–2, 11; 20:1–3), which for them would mean eternal torment and the end of their liberty to serve Satan on earth.  Jesus chose to send them into the pigs, He accomplished several purposes. **First**, He demonstrated that the demons were real and that the deliverance was genuine. **Second**, He gave vivid proof that Satan is a destroyer (Rev. 9:11; John 10:10) and that, to Satan, a pig is as good as a man! If you surrender your life to Satan and sin, you end up living and dying like an animal. What a warning this was to those who saw it; but apparently they did not take it to heart, for they asked Jesus to depart from them.
2. **The Ruler of a Synagogue (5:21–23, 35–43)** It took a great deal of courage for Jairus to come to Jesus, for many of the religious leaders were bent on destroying Him. But his love for his dying daughter led him to go to Jesus. The ground is level at the feet of Jesus, for all who have burdens meet there. Jesus could have healed the girl from a distance (John 4:46–54; Matt. 8:5–13), but He chose to go with the worried father. By the time Jesus was through helping her, news came that Jairus’ daughter had died. Jesus encouraged Jairus with, “Be not afraid, only believe” (v. 36). When everything seems to be falling apart around us, and even our friends discourage us, all we can do is cling by faith to the promises of God. Jesus raised her from the dead and told them to give her something to eat!
3. **A Suffering Woman (5:24–34)** This woman’s affliction not only brought discomfort and discouragement, but it prevented her from worshiping at the temple (Lev. 15:19) and cost her all of her wealth. We must admire this woman’s faith, for she made her way through the crowd in order to get to Jesus. The Gk. text of v. 28 reads, “For she kept saying.” It was as though she encouraged herself as she made her way to Jesus. Her faith was rewarded! But Jesus was unwilling for her to experience a miracle and not have the opportunity to give glory to God (Ps. 107:2, 20–21). In tenderness, He encouraged her to tell what had happened; and then He sent her on her way in peace (v. 34).