

THE GOSPEL OF MARK: STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

As the Gospel source being uniquely (the) Son of God, Jesus Christ creates the New Covenant family of God by a supernatural salvation, Part 3A

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Introduction: The Gospel accounts of Jesus Christ's life and ministry are not written as a daily diary or journal. While there are some time references and some day by day sections, e.g. Passion Week, for the most part the Gospels give episodes in the life of Jesus by narrative stories and preaching/teaching excerpts rather than psychoanalytic reports, i.e. factors contributing to a messianic personality identity. In the Gospel of Mark chapter 3 the shocking conflict of Jesus' truthful Messianic identity is made public and well illustrates the summary formulated by C.S. Lewis that Jesus was either a liar/deceiver, a lunatic/crazy, or the LORD Christ, the incarnate Son of God.

While chapter and verse markers were not part of the original texts, they are useful and often reflect textual/grammatical transitions in the narrative. The division between the end of chapter 2:23-28, Jesus' disciples plucking and eating grain on the Sabbath, and the beginning of chapter 3:1-6, Jesus healing a man's hand in the synagogue on the Sabbath, is a useful example. Both passages are about Sabbath controversies the Pharisees picked with Jesus; however, each story belongs to a different theme in context.

In 2:23-28, Jesus identifies Himself as the divine Son of Man and Lord of the Sabbath with heavenly authority/power on earth to reclaim the Sabbath as a gift for soul-rest by New Covenant fulfillment and reconciliation through the Gospel, because He is the Messianic King-Priest-in-waiting authorizing a New Covenant Gospel Sabbath-in-waiting.

In chapter 3, Mark continues with straight talk about Jesus Christ as the Gospel source being uniquely (the) Son of God, Jesus Christ creates the New Covenant family of God by a supernatural salvation.

3:1-6. A New Covenant life starts with a saved life by supernatural power over death...

3:7-12, A New Covenant life, not by human bloodline, i.e. not your people or where you are from, but by the Holy Spirit's Adoption through new birth being a supernatural power greater than unclean spirits...

3:13-19, A New Covenant people commissioned under 12 Apostles superseding the Old Covenant 12 Tribes of the Patriarchs of Israel...

3:20-35, A New Covenant royal family of faith confessing by the witness of the Holy Spirit that Jesus is divine Savior and Lord who supernaturally destroys the kingdom of the Satan...

Before expounding through each of the stories in chapter 3, it will be useful to recognize the theme that connects them together as more than unrelated episodes:

*Soul-rest by salvation through reconciliation with the Creator-God is the pledge of the New Covenant Gospel Sabbath which Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath demonstrates by supernaturally doing good, i.e. saving life as opposed to doing evil, i.e. killing life... (cf. 3:6),

*Jesus' salvation purpose means individually saving people of all kinds from sin's death in this world (cf. Ephesian 2:1-22), "He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to an open shame, by triumphing over them..." (Colossians 2:15, cf. Psalm 68:18//Ephesians 4:8),

*Jesus' salvation purpose creates a New Covenant Gospel people/nation, i.e. "the Israel of God" (Colossians 6:15-16) to be "...a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but *now* have obtained mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10); this New Covenant Gospel nation is under Christ's headship commissioned by His office gifts of "apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and [Gk= which are] teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-12),

*Jesus' salvation purpose transcends earthly relationships of family ties but also sanctifies New Covenant families with better promises by the witness and power of the Holy Spirit to the Gospel with a fuller and clearer testimony of God's will revealed through the person and work of Jesus Christ by whom Christian believers are made co-heirs in the royal family and Kingdom of God/Heaven, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of Adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba Father.' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." (Romans 8:14-17)... "I appeal to you [all] therefore, brothers [and sisters], by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you [all] may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:1-2)