

Book Survey: Gospel of Mark

(abbreviated for sake of space)

1.20

I. Identify main units and subunits (see separate diagram)

II. Primary Structural Relationships and Interpretive Questions

1. Preparation/Realization (or Introduction) with Comparison

1:1–15	⇒	1:16–16:8
Preparation		Realization

These events (1:16-16:8) = those spoken of by Isaiah (1:1-3 especially)

What are the key elements of the preparation statement and what does each mean?
(identify/definition)

What are the key elements of the realization section and what does each mean?
(identify/definition)

How do these elements of the preparation statement help us understand how they are realized later in the narrative? (means)

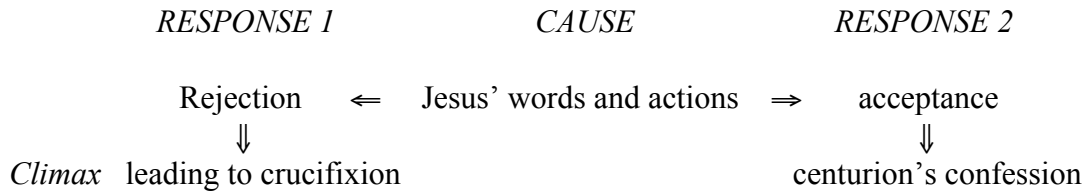
How do the key elements of realization help us understand the key elements of the preparation? (means)

Why does the author use this preparation/realization structure in this work? (reasons)

What are the full implications of the answers to these questions? (implications)

What questions would you ask about the Comparison?

2. Recurrence of Causation and Contrast with Climax



(climax)

What are the key elements leading up to the climax? (identify)

What does each mean? (definition)

What are the key elements leading up to the climax? (identify)

What does each mean? (definition)

How do these elements lead from lesser to greater to greatest? (means)

Why does the author use this development toward climax? (reasons)

What are the full implications of this climactic movement for the original listeners?

For us? (implications)

(recurring cause-effect with contrast)

What are the key elements of the recurring causal elements and what does each mean?

(identify/definition)

What are the key elements of the recurring contrasting effects and what does each mean?

(identify/definition)

How do these particular causes lead to these particular effects? (mode)

How do these particular effects flow from these causes? (mode)

How do the contrasting responses differ? (mode)

Why do these causes lead to contrasting effects? (reasons)

Why does the cause with contrasting effects structure relationship recur? (reasons)

What are the full implications of the answers to these questions? (implications)

3. Question and Answer with Particularization

The key question falls as 8:29a: “Who do you say that I am?”

Peter answers in 8:29b: “You are the Christ.” But the context (8:31-33) makes it clear that Peter doesn’t fully understand what that means, nor do the disciples (e.g., 9:33-37).

The gospel of Mark, from the very beginning to its end, defines the meaning of the claim, “Jesus is the Christ for us.

Now YOU go ahead and write out a series of questions, in the right order, about this structure!

4. Pivot

8:27–29

1:1–8:26

In the first half of Mark, everything is upbeat, Jesus attracts crowds and is popular; action moves quickly

8:30–16:8

After the questions of 8:27/29 Jesus predicts his death in Jerusalem the mood becomes notably more somber, less popularity and crowds, pace of action slows considerably

What are the key elements on each side of the pivot? What does each mean?

(identify/definition)

What are the key elements of the pivot itself? What does each mean?

(identify/definition)

How do the elements of each side of the pivot differ? (means)

How do the elements on the first side of the pivot lead to the pivot statement itself?

(means)

How do the elements on the second side of the pivot flow from the pivot statement itself?

(means)

Why does the narrative pivot at this point? (reasons)

Why does the author use this pivot relationship? (reasons)

What are the full implications of this pivot for the original listeners? For us?

(implications)

5. **Recurrence** (here for the sake of space I leave out interpretive questions)

- a. a recurring focused attention on the person of Jesus Christ
throughout e.g. 1:1, 14–15, 22, 24, 34
2:10, 12, 17, 19, 22, 28 etc.
- b. confession of Jesus as “Son of God” (or “my beloved Son”)
1:1, 11 9:11 15:39
(selected because it spans the book as a whole, it occurs in strategic places, and in the first two instances is spoken by a voice from heaven)
- c. “king/kingdom/kingdom of God”
Note the strategic locations for these references:
1:15 as a summary of Jesus’ message
Prominent in the trial/crucifixion narrative 15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26, 32; key charge against Jesus that Mark ironically affirms
Also 3:24; 4:11, 26, 30; 6:23; **9:1 (Transfiguration scene)**, 47: 10:14, 15, 23, 24, 25; 12:34; 13:8; 14:25; 15:43
- d. “way” or “way of the Lord”
14x in Mark
1:2, 3 strategic location
2:23; 4:4, 15; 6:8; 8:3
7x in the central section of Mark 8:27; 9:33, 34:12:17, 32, 46, 52
11:8; 12:14

III. Strategic areas

1. 1:1–3, 14–15 (esp. 1:1) *preparation* (note that I have specifically tied my selection to a primary structure) for the entire gospel
2. 8:29 the key confession that marks the *pivot* in the gospel as a whole and provides the key *question* the gospel wants us to ask as well as the basic *answer* the gospel wants us to understand in response to that question (note that I have specifically tied my selection to a primary structures)
3. 15:39 Roman centurion's confession that Jesus is "son of God"; only human character in the story who recognizes Jesus by this title; earlier stated by heavenly voice only; this constitutes the *climactic*, model confession of a positive response to Jesus (need I say that I have specifically tied my selection to a primary structure)

IV. Observations

1. locations seem important, at least Jesus movements noted, esp in first 8 chapters

“and they came to . . .”

1:4 John in wilderness

1:9 Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee

1:12 Spirit drives J into wilderness

1:14 J comes into Galilee

1:16 passing by sea of Galilee

1:21 Capernaum

1:35 throughout all Galilee

2:1 returned to Capernaum

2:13 again beside sea

4:35 across sea

5:1 other side of sea; country of Gerasenes

5:20 other side of sea again

6:1 to his own country

6:32– somewhere along sea

6:45 go to other side, to Bethsaida

6:53 arrived other side, at Gennesaret

7:24 went away to region of Tyre and Sidon

7:31 returned from region of Tyre, went through Sidon to Sea of Galilee
through the region of the Decapolis

8:10 into boat went to district of Dalmanutha

8:22 they came to Bethsaida

8:27 to villages of Caesarea Philippi

9:2 Jesus, James, Peter, John only to high mountain

9:30 through Galilee

9:33 to Capernaum

10:1 to Judea

10:32 on road to Jerusalem

10:46 arrive at Jericho (on road to Jerusalem)

11:1 near Jerusalem, at Bethpage and Bethany, Mount of Olives; the rest of the
gospel takes place in and near Jerusalem

11:11 entered Jerusalem

11:11 back to Bethany

11:12, 15 to Jerusalem

11:27 arrive Jerusalem

12:34 in Temple

13:1 outside Temple

13:3 Mount of Olives

14:3 Bethany

all else in Bethany, Jerusalem vicinity

Summary

Up through Peter's confession, all action takes place in Galilee or across the lake
 After Peter's confession, Jesus begins (immediately) talking about Jerusalem and what must happen there.

At 10:1 they go to Judea

At 11:1 they arrive near Jerusalem and remain there for duration (though an angel tells Mary Magdalene and Mary mother of James & Salome to instruct disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee after resurrection 16:7)

There seems, then to be a geographic element to the pivot structure cited above.

2. mentions of Jesus' "teaching" prominent, but not much content of that teaching is provide (only chs. 4 and 13 contain much content). See the following passages

1:21–22

1:27 Jesus' teaching equated with Jesus' actions

4:1 beside sea

(here I would continue as above)

3. secrecy

1:34 demons not permitted to speak

1:43 healed leper\

5:19 ANTI-SECRET go tell your friends

5:43 he strictly charge them that no one should know this (synagogue ruler's daughter)

5:35 labeled "Teacher"

6:6b went about among the villages teaching

7:36 he charged them to tell no one

8:30

(here I would continue as above)

4. confessions play a significant role

1:24 man w/unclean spirit "holy One of God

5:6–7 Gar demoniac worshipped, Son of the Most High God

9:7 Jesus is "my beloved son"

(here I would continue as above)

5. misunderstanding

8:21 Do you not understand?

9:32 The disciples did not understand Jesus

(here I would continue as above)

6. amazement at teaching

1:22, 27–28 astonished at authority; new teaching!

2:12 we never saw anything like this

4:41 at calming wind and sea

6:2 in own country; many astonished (yet taken as offense)

7:37 astonished at healing

(here I would continue as above)

7. Jesus' popularity

1:28, 39 throughout all surrounding region of Galilee

1:45 come from every quarter

2:4 crowd inhibits carried paralytic

3:8 great multitude

4:1 large crowd gathered

5:21 great crowd beside sea

5:24 great crowd

6:30 many going and coming after disciples return

6:45 dismissed large crowd

6:55–56 crowds bringing sick

8:1 great crowd had gathered

(here I would continue as above)

8. atmosphere

Peter's confession at 8:29 marks a turning point; up to this point the atmosphere has been largely upbeat with Jesus' popularity growing (though not exclusively). At this point the narrative turns from Galilee toward Jerusalem where Jesus will be rejected and killed (though there is some popularity here)

9. Mark is narrative throughout, with some embedded discourse as part of the narrative (e.g., Mark 4, 13)

V. Information from SECONDARY SOURCES.

Remember the definition of secondary sources: *Anything* other than the Greek New Testament, one of our recommended translations, or a concordance. In this section my goal is to *interact with* how scholars *see the structure of the unit* I am studying. In other words, I want to do more than just list information gleaned from secondary sources. I also want to avoid chasing information on details in the unit. My concern is how scholars see the unit structured. Keep in mind they will not likely use IBS terminology. But scholars will provide some sort of outline and description of how the unit holds together. I would check 2-3 scholarly sources per Survey.

Strauss, Mark L. *Mark*. ECNT. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.

- S outlines approaches that 1) divide Mark into two basic major sections based on Peter's confession in ch. 8 as a major *theological* turning point and 2) divide Mark into three major sections based on *geographical* considerations involving Galilee, travel to Jerusalem, and Jerusalem. Pp. 44-45
- S opts for the former though he doesn't really argue *for* this approach other than to say it's Christologically-based. On both pp. 44 and 45
- Rather he argues against a threefold division for reasons I find lacking
 - Basically, he accuses the geographical approach because it "conflicts at various points with Mark's two-stage christological presentation" (45). But he gives no reason for prioritizing the Christological. Agreed, there is

some conflict. But that in and of itself is not an argument *for* the christological approach. 45

- Furthermore, he criticizes his example of the geographical approach (William Lane) on the basis of Lane's labels for parts of the Galilee section. Although the criticism of Lane may be valid, it is not an argument *for* S's alternative. 45
- In all, his identification of two basic approaches to Markan structure are helpful, he offers little in the way of argument.

You would do this with 2-3 academic sources (approved commentaries, monographs, or the *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*), *interacting* with the author's key arguments.

VI. BOOK SURVEY ONLY Higher Critical Issues (historical, theological, literary) I do not do this in my Survey work on smaller Units of text within Mark.

Here I would list information I found in introductions to commentaries or in dictionary articles. What issues do commentators see as important for understanding Mark? These matters may be historical (authorship, date of composition, original audience and setting), theological (Mark's Christology, the role of the disciples, unique features of Mark such as the "Messianic Secret"), or stylistic (Markan "sandwiches, Mark's use of irony), etc.

The list of items I would describe here could on in some detail. I have not written out my information found in secondary sources in this document in order to keep the document from getting too long.

I will cover these issues in a separate lecture.