

9405U

MANITOULIN BIBLE CAMP - 2003

THE FOUR FACES OF CHRIST

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Study #2: Mark - The face of the Ox.

Well, thank you brother chairman, and good morning, my dear brethren and sisters.

On page 7 of your handbook, in our study yesterday, I'm sorry if I didn't explain that the summary details were at the foot of the page, in case you wrote the details elsewhere. So let me just go over those summary points again, before we move on. At the bottom of page 7 then, **Matthew - the Summary** should read as follows: The face of the lion in Matthew is the face of the **perfect King**. And the next point is that Matthew depicts Christ from the standpoint of His **royal majesty and tender mercy**. Then the summary phrase is **that mercy which rules**, and hopefully, b&s, as we go about the fulness of these 4 studies, at least the first 4 studies, and those little summary phrases, you'll hopefully see the import of those when you see all of them together.

So now we turn to page 9 of our book, and to the gospel of Mark, which is, of course, the face of the **Ox**. So b&s, I want you to imagine now that you're in the field and face to face with an ox! an ox right up close again! Now if you were staring at an ox, what things do you think would spring to mind as being especially notable? and by the way, of course, I am taking a certain aspect of the ox in these studies, which I'm sure that we all appreciate; I'm not talking about being face-to-face with a raging bull! I'm being face-to-face with an ox. I think the following things would probably impress us: first of all, that the animal has large, soft eyes, these are not the gleaming eyes of the lion, they're altogether different, in fact, the whole face of the ox is different, it's got (and it's the only phrase that I can think of really) it has a bovine, docile expression about it. This is the cud-chewing face of the ox, and were the said animal that we are looking at so intently in the field, if the said animal were to open its mouth, we wouldn't hear the roar of the lion which terrifies, instead we'd hear the gentle lowing of the animal's service. Quite a different sound altogether, is it not?

So what does the **ox** stand for then in scripture? the first of our sections! what is the ox representative of in scripture? Well, the first thing is, it's a symbol of **power to work**; it's a symbol of power to work, in Proverbs 14 verse 4 it says, (we'll see if someone can finish the proverb for me) 'where no oxen are, the crib is clean, but much increase is by the strength of the ox'. So here is the principle that the ox represents power to work, 'much increase is by the strength of the ox'. The second thing is that, I think, the ox is a symbol of **willingness to serve**, of willingness to serve! Now come and have a look at

just this one reference in Job 39, it's a very interesting reference in the context of this symbology of the ox in scripture. In Job 39 reading from verse 9, we're told there, this is in the context of the animals that God refers to, whether Job knows these animals. It says this, 'Will the unicorn' (now most of you'll know that the unicorn of Job 39 is actually the wild ox. That's the particular creature that the chapter is talking about, but you see, it's the **wild ox** as opposed to the domesticated ox). This is the wild ox, but everything that's said about what the wild ox won't do in Job 39, I think by implication, it's what we'd expect a domesticated ox would do. So see what he says, Job 39 verse 9, 'Will the wild ox be willing to serve thee?' (oh, did you see that phrase, **willing to serve**, you see, that's what the ox that comes under the care of the householder is prepared to do; 'will he abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the wild ox with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? Or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?' Of course, the implication is that which the wild ox would not do, the household ox would; he's willing to serve, he's willing to devote his strength to, verse 11, he's willing to devote his strength to **labour**. This is the animal of **service**, and he's willing to serve. The last thing the ox is a symbol of in scripture is, **the spirit of sacrifice**; it isn't just the animal of service in the field, it's the animal of sacrifice because this very same word translated 'ox', it's the same word used of the bullock of the burnt offering in Leviticus 1 verse 5; used of the sin offering in Leviticus 4 verse 4; and used as the bullock for the peace offering in Leviticus 4 verse 10. Ah, yes, the **ox** (7794) stands for the spirit of **sacrifice** as well as **willingness to serve**.

So what about the '**ox**' in the tribe then? Well, let's come back to our promises of Jacob in Genesis 49; so now which tribe relates to the **ox**? Well, if you refer back to your page 1, you'll remember that the face of the 'ox' has reference to the tribe of **Ephraim**. Now when Jacob brings his blessing upon the 12 sons in Genesis 49, Ephraim is not yet, of course, so Ephraim is as yet in the loins of his father, Joseph; now see what it says of Joseph then in Genesis 49 verse 23, 'The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him' (do you know who I think 'the archers' were, b&s, of Genesis 49 verse 23?) I think it was his brethren, and the great lesson of Joseph's life is that he was a man who **suffered at the hands of his brethren**. Of course, you know what happened to Joseph, he was sent forth into Egypt to be a **servant**, and he was sold into slavery and he went in advance of them that he might first serve and then bring redemption for his brethren. Is that not true? In fact, come and have a look at Psalm 105; in Psalm 105 we are told this about Joseph from whom Ephraim sprang. Verse 16 for connection, 'Moreover He called for a famine upon the land: He brake the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a **servant**: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron', oh, b&s, the spirit of the **ox** is in the life of the tribe of Joseph, isn't it? a man who suffered as a servant on behalf of his brethren, that he might redeem them!

So now, what about the **ox** in the Prophet. Well, which prophet are we talking about? but the prophet **Jeremiah**, and is not Jeremiah the preeminent example amongst all the

prophets, b&s, of the suffering servant? This is the man who felt pain as a result of his labours in chapter 8 verse 21; this is a man who felt bitterness of spirit because of his faithfulness in chapter 15 verse 17; this is a man whose eyes watered with tears because of his despair in chapter 9 verse 1; this is a man who felt anguish of soul in chapter 20 verse 14, and if one was to ask what was the labours of Jeremiah? it was to preach and to suffer. He preached and he suffered, that's the life's circumstances of the prophet Jeremiah, b&s. Oh yes, the spirit of the servant and the face of the ox is to be seen in the prophet Jeremiah.

And so now we come to the opening of the gospel of Mark and to see if we can see the face of the ox, this animal of service, and of sacrifice in Mark's gospel. Well, Mark 1, let's look at the genealogy of the gospel of Mark. We've looked at the genealogy of Matthew and Matthew, of course, traces the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ to show that He's the rightful heir of David's throne, the royal Messiah King which was to come. So here's Mark's genealogy then for the face of the 'ox': verse 1 says, 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger', and the strange thing about Mark's gospel in the way it opens, b&s, is in effect, there is no genealogy, in fact, the Nestle translation of the Greek on which the RSV is based, delete's even the phrase 'the Son of God' from verse 1, it is simply the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and then the gospel begins. There is no genealogy! do you know why? b&s. Because servants have no genealogies! no background, no special credentials, no family lineage to boast in; the man of this gospel is just a servant nothing more. So there is no real genealogy in the gospel of Mark, in fact, the only thing it does tell us, the one thing it does tell us is that **He's the Son of His Father**.

'As it is written' says verse 2, 'behold I send My messenger before thy face'. Now that's very interesting, b&s, because in effect, what we're being told as Mark's gospel opens, is that Mark takes us back to what prophet? He bids us to think about what prophet? the prophet Malachi - let me just read two passages to you from Malachi; I'll read them then I'll give you the references, but we won't turn them up. You see, I think Malachi is deliberately quoted at the beginning of Mark's gospel to give us the spirit of the gospel. This is what Malachi says, 'A son honours his father and a servant his master; if I then be a Father where is mine honour, and if I be a Master, where is my fear?' says Malachi 1 verse 6. Then Malachi says towards the end of his prophecy, 'They shall be Mine, saith Yahweh of armies, in that day when I make up My jewels, and I will spare them as (oh, listen to this) as a man spareth his own son that serveth him', Malachi 3 verse 17. I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him, oh, yes, b&s, Malachi's the right prophecy to open this gospel, this is the Son who will be the **servant** of His Father; he doesn't just serve Him because He's a father, His Father is His Master, and He's come to fulfil His Master's bidding and that's the way the gospel of Mark opens; no genealogy, simply a reference to the book of Malachi and immediately the work of Christ as it were, begins.

In fact, come and have a look at Mark 1 again. You know, it's really interesting in terms

of when would you say the ministry of Christ begins in the first chapter of Mark's gospel? When would you say the ministry proper of our Lord Jesus Christ begins? Any thoughts on that? what verse of Mark 1 would you start it from in terms of His ministry beginning? I think we could start it earlier, quite right, I think that even at the longest we would probably begin it from verse 14, wouldn't we? after the baptism and the temptation in the wilderness, that once that period of testing for the Son of God has been completed, then He starts on His ministry proper which would be verse 14. Do you agree with that? It could be even shorter than that, but at the longest it would be verse 14; you know, b&s, the preparation to the beginning of the public service of Christ in the gospel of Matthew takes 76 verses before His public service begins. In Luke's gospel it takes 183 verses, but in Mark's gospel it only takes 13 verses till He's off and away. Once the servant starts His labours in the gospel of Mark, you'll never stop Him until the last breath is wrung out of Him on the cross in Mark 15. It's as if the ox here, is straining at the yoke ready to begin his labours. We're absolutely breath taken, b&s, by the sheer drive of the servant in this particular gospel because this is the story of **the mighty worker who conquers by the logic of His deeds**. The gospel of Mark is all about the deeds of Christ, and you remember how the gospel of Matthew was all about the speeches of Christ, well the gospel of Mark is all about the deeds of Christ, because He's a worker, He's a servant, He's a labourer, He's the ox, He will go forth, and He goes forth just as quickly as He possibly can as this first gospel page of Mark 1 opens the veil upon the face of the ox.

So **three notable inclusions** to have a look at to start with. In the discussion in Capernaum, we're told this in Mark 9 when the Lord spoke to His disciples about what they'd been discussing and in verse 35 of Mark 9 in the middle of that discussion in the house in Capernaum it says, 'He sat down, and called the 12, and said unto them, if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all'. Oh, did you notice that phrase? 'if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all'. By the way, that phrase is not unique to Mark's gospel but we would certainly expect it to be in Mark's gospel, wouldn't we? since this is the face of the ox and the face of labour and the face of service. So what's the lesson of verse 35? (and this is the one line summary) **the servant seeks no pre-eminence**; he who wants to be first will be last, that's the spirit of this gospel, and to be first in this gospel is to be the servant of others. A servant seeks no pre-eminence!

Come and have a look at Mark 10 and verse 42, a very similar reference but a very, very important one. In fact, I think this is the heart of Mark's gospel; in Mark 10 verse 42, it says, 'Jesus called them to Him and said unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many'. Now there are some terribly interesting things about these verses in Mark 10; the first thing is, did you notice the sense of **progression** in what the Lord says! What He says is this in verse 43, 'whosoever will

be great', as opposed to verse 44, 'whosoever will be chiefest (foremost, the first) the Greek word is 'protos' (4413), that which comes first in order, rank, time or importance, 'he who would be **great**, verse 43 , and 'he who will be **chief**, verse 44 , there's a progression. Then verse 43 says, 'whosoever shall be great **among you**', but ah, in verse 44 it's 'whosoever will be servant **of all**', not just among you, the disciples, but among **everybody**, verse 44. Then verse 43 says, 'whosoever shall be great among you, shall be your **minister**, and the word there is 'diakonos' (1249) which means an **attendant**; but in verse 44, 'but whosoever among you shall be the chiefest shall be the **doulos** (1401) the **bond slave of everyone**'. Now this is Mark's secret of greatness, you know, brother Islip Collyer wrote a marvellous passage in his book, The Guiding Light, concerning the principle of service, and how he put it was this way and said concerning really the spirit of this passage, he said: 'There is such a difference between the little man who with enlightened selfishness serves because he wants to become great, and the One who with enlightened self sacrifice served because He was great'. Oh, I like that, b&s, that's worthy of thought, isn't it? there is such a difference between the little man who serves because he wants to become great and the one who with enlightened self sacrifice served because he was great; and that's the theme and the spirit, you see, of Mark's gospel. Greatness, in Mark's gospel, says the Lord, is associated with **service** and if you want to be the greatest of all, says Christ, then you must become the bond slave of all!

'For, verse 45, even the Son of man came not be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many'. See those two phrases, b&s, **to minister** and **to give His life**, that will be the theme of Mark's gospel; we'll come back to that a little later. So what's our one line summary? **the servant ministers and suffers**, that's going to be the spirit of this passage and the spirit of this gospel. The servant ministers and suffers!

In Mark 14 (we won't turn this reference up) but you'll remember the story of a certain young man who visits the Lord in the garden of Gethsemane and disappears from the garden under somewhat awkward circumstances, shall we say; and I think one of the points of the story of the young man who flees from the garden naked and leaves his garment in the hands of the soldiers, is to contrast his **unfaithfulness** with the **faithfulness of Christ** on that occasion. That the Lord never deviated from His Master's will, but the young man did! The young man's faith collapsed, the young man was not a faithful servant, and I think that reference is there in Mark 14 to say, well, this man wasn't faithful but the Lord was, you see, He didn't run away. So our one line summary is, **that the servant is always faithful**, that's going to be the spirit of this man throughout the length and breadth of this gospel!

Now **three important omissions**, which I'm sure we can flash through with reasonable speed and alacrity. The first is the **visit of the Magi**, now remember we looked at this yesterday, in Matthew's gospel, the visit of the Magi, who come bearing gifts from afar. Why would that not be in Mark's gospel? why because **the servant receives no homage**. One doesn't come bearing gifts for a slave! so there's no mention of the visit of the Magi in Mark's gospel.

The second one is the **discourse on the plain of Luke 6 verses 17 to 49**. The Lord's discourse, very similar isn't it? to the language of the discourse on the mount, but it's Luke's discourse on the plain. Remember what the spirit of those speeches were of this particular speech! the Lord says, 'It hath been said of old time, but I say unto you', remember those words yesterday from the gospel of Matthew; that whole speech is absent from the gospel of Mark, do you know why? because, b&s, **the servant frames no laws**. The servant frames no laws, He's not there to tell other people what they can and can't do, he's just a servant. There's no such speech in Mark's gospel!

Lastly, the **matter of the woman taken in adultery** of John 8, there's no reference of this in Mark's gospel because what the Lord is asked to do in John's gospel is to make a decision in the matter, isn't He? and to pass judgment. The reason why it's not there, I think, in Mark's gospel is simply because **this servant passes no sentence**. The servant passes no sentence this is not his job, it's not his responsibility, it's not the spirit of a servant to make authoritative judgment on the lives of others, he's simply there to serve his own master and be responsible to him.

Three Special Features. Oh, these are interesting! Do you know, b&s, that throughout the length and breadth of the gospel of Mark, it's a strange thing, a peculiar thing, and I think it's quite deliberate in the record. Do you know, **there are 6 evenings mentioned in sequence**. I think, built around those 6 evenings, there are 7 days. I think those 7 days are deliberately there in the gospel of Mark, to take us back to the creative power of God in Genesis 1. You see, what this servant is going to do is He's going to watch his Father, and his Master, and whatever He sees his Father do, that's what He's going to do. This servant has come to actually begin a whole work of a new creation and He'll take 7 days to do it, b&s, and that's what His labours will be devoted towards. So the one line summary is **the servant works to create** because what He's seen His Master do, He will copy faithfully in the execution of His service.

Oh now, **the chapter openings**, oh yes, come and have a look at this! In Mark 2, just see how this works. In the Greek it is slightly different to the English, but it's pretty much the same, the opening Greek word of Mark 2 verse 1, is the Greek word 'kai'(2632) and it's the Greek word that we'd normally translate as '**and**'. Now what would you make then of Mark 2 verse 1 that begins with the word 'and', b&s, what would you make of that? what would that tell us do you think? If it begins with the word 'and' we're obviously being told that it's a continuation of whatever has happened in chapter 1, do you agree with that? I think it's a profoundly logical and reasonable conclusion. Now let show you what's interesting about the gospel of Mark, now just listen to this: Mark 2 verse 1, 'AND He entered into Capernaum'; chapter 3 verse 1, 'AND He entered again into the synagogue'; chapter 4 verse 1, 'AND He began again to teach by the seaside'; chapter 5 verse 1, 'AND they came over to the other side of the sea'; chapter 6 verse 1, 'AND He went out from thence'; chapter 7 verse 1....this servant never stops, once this gospel begins, He'll never stop. Although the word 'and' is not there for every chapter, you'll notice that most of them, most of the chapters begin with this common Greek

word 'kai'. Now some other chapters in some other gospels begin with the word 'kai' b&s, but none to the degree of Mark's gospel. This is the most common beginning of every chapter in Mark's gospel, so what happens is He starts in chapter 1: He gets baptized, He has the temptations, and He's offand away He goes running through Mark, He's gone! The ox is gone, there are furrows being ploughed everywhere, and it's one of the marvellous things about this gospel. Just read Mark all the way through with no interruptions and you'll be left breathless by the sheer energy of the Servant of this gospel. So what's our one line summary then? **the servant labours without ceasing.** That's the spirit of this gospel.

Now in Matthew's gospel we mentioned that Matthew was the gospel of speeches. But Mark pre-eminently, is the gospel of **emotions**. Now I'm going to give you therefore the emotions, that if you've got space, try and write them inside the boxes provided. The Lord shows in chapter 3 verse 5, the Lord shows **anger**. I'll go across the page! In chapter 4 verse 38, He shows **fatigue**; in chapter 6 verse 6, He shows **incredulity**; in chapter 6 verse 34, He shows **care**; in chapter 7 verse 34, He shows **empathy**; in chapter 8 verse 12, He shows **frustration**; in chapter 9 verse 36, He shows **tenderness**; in chapter 10 verse 21, He shows **love**; and in chapter 10 verse 32, He shows **resolution**. I think, b&s, what we're being told, especially in this gospel, that this is not a man who was untouched by the feelings of His labour, He is deeply involved in everything He does, He's touched by the circumstances of that which He's come to do! and the one line summary which might just fit alongside the phrase 'the gospel of emotions' is, **the servant serves with passion!** He's not cold, He's not stoical, He's not indifferent to the things He comes to do, He's a passionate, emotional man involved in His labours.

Three Old Testament references. In Jeremiah 25 it says this in verses 3 and 4, 'that I have spoken unto you, says God, rising early and speaking but you have not hearkened and Yahweh has sent unto you all His **servants**, rising early and sending them'. Do you know that that phrase is famous in the book of Jeremiah apart from one other place in the book of 2 Kings which is quoting from Jeremiah anyway, that particular phrase is only ever found in the prophecy of Jeremiah, 'rising early and sending them, rising early and sending them', God sent his servants, rising early and sending them', you know, b&s, there's only one gospel that ever tells us that our Lord rose early, and you'd never guess which gospel that might be, would you? In Mark 1 (as the reference says there) in Mark 1 verse 35 we're told that, 'in the morning rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place', that's right at the beginning of this gospel and right at the end of this gospel in chapter 16 verse 9 we're told, 'Now when Jesus was **risen early the first day of the week**', and Mark's gospel alone tells us of a man who rose early after the spirit of Jeremiah, when God sent His prophets rising early to send them to His people. So I think the one line summary is **the servant is always ready!** The servant is **always ready** when God sends him on his journey.

Do you remember how when the Lord rode into Jerusalem in Matthew's gospel, what reference did Matthew take us back to in Matthew 21; ah, Matthew said, 'that's a

fulfilment of Zechariah 9 which in turn is based on the Shiloh prophecy of Genesis 49 to say this is the King. Now come and have a look at Mark 11 and see what Mark says when the Lord rides into Jerusalem; it's the same episode but Mark takes us to a different reference. Mark says in verse 8 of Mark 11, 'They spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed them in the way. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the LORD: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest'. Where does that come from? that's Psalm 118, so Mark's gospel says when our Lord rode into Jerusalem, Mark doesn't say, 'oh, that's Zechariah 9, Mark says, oh, this is Psalm 118'. Do you know why I think that Mark says that, b&s? because the next verse of the psalm says, 'God is Yahweh which hath showed us light; bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar'; and the man who rides into Jerusalem in the gospel of Mark is not the King but the sacrifice, the servant who comes to be offered is the ox, a sin offering for His people! The one line summary would have to be **the servant comes for sacrifice**. He rides into Jerusalem for a different purpose in this gospel.

In Mark 12, we have the story of the interesting discussion that the Lord had with the scribes, do you remember this in Mark 12? the discussion about what was the great commandment and the scribe asked the Lord and the Lord said, 'Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with **all** thy heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy mind, and **all** thy strength', and the scribe said, 'Well, Master, Thou hast spoken the truth, because there is but one God and no other than He, and to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the soul and to love his neighbour as himself is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices', and he quotes from 1 Samuel 15 verse 22, when Samuel speaks to Saul on the matter of the Amalekites. 'Behold, to obey is better than **sacrifice**'. The scribe understands that the commandment to love God with all the heart, was the equivalent of the whole burnt offering. To give our life as a sacrifice! do you know what Jesus said to the scribe in Mark 12? Jesus says in verse 34, 'Jesus said when He saw that the scribe answered intelligently (as the word means in the Greek), He said, you're not far from the kingdom', because the scribe understood the spirit of this gospel, which is the spirit of sacrifice. **Wholly consumed in the service of God**, would be our one line summary.

Key Words. Well does anyone know what the word 'euteos' is translated as normally? It's the word that's usually translated in the English '**straightway**' (2112) and straightway is probably the key word of the gospel of Mark. It expresses (these are the words that need to go into that section) it expresses **the driving energy of the servant striving to fulfil His ministry**. It describes the driving energy of the servant striving to fulfil His ministry - it's the key word in the gospel, straightway and straightway this, and straightway that, and Jesus straightway did that, and straightway they reacted to Him; there's a sense of tremendous urgency about this key word. So here's the number of times it's used: 18 times in Matthew, 42 times in the gospel of Mark, 8 times in Luke and 7 times in John. That's a key word, isn't it? in that gospel, 42 times! that's the spirit of the servant in this gospel.

Here's the second key word, it's the word that we'd translate in the English as '**hands** - 'cheir'(5495) is the word 'hands' and these are references to Christ, laying His hands upon others for healing. That's what the little phrase should be in the box, references to **Christ laying his hands** upon others for healing because what the work of the servant is going to be pre-eminently in this chapter, b&s, is to actually reach out to touch other people with healing power. The servant comes to heal and restore! It's used 3 times in Matthew, 10 times in Mark, 4 times in Luke, and 0 times in John.

The last word, 'akathartos' (169) it's the English word '**unclean**'. The work of the servant was to confront sin and to remove it; one of the key things in the gospel of Mark, b&s, is the Lord casting out unclean spirits. He's busy all the time, casting out unclean spirits; this is the pre-eminent work of the servant in this gospel. In other words, sin has got to be confronted head on, and the work of the servant is to come to minister and to sacrifice that He might remove sin from amongst the people; that sin is an enemy that must be wrestled with, and the servant is come to do just that! The word is used 2 times in Matthew; 11 times in Mark; 6 times in Luke and 0 times in John. So the servant is busy about His labours, confronting sin and performing a new creation on behave of His Father.

Three unique passages. Well, I've mentioned here that **the parable of the seed** of Mark 4 is a unique parable. Actually I can think of 2 parables in the gospel of Mark, one of them is the parable of the seed mentioned here in Mark 4; and the other one is the **parable of the porter** in Mark 13 verse 34, that also is unique to Mark's gospel, and here's the one line summary for the parable of the seed; what the parable says, by the way, is that you put a seed in the ground and you water it and nothing seems to happen and then, all of a sudden, it comes up; you don't know how! and the lesson of the parable of the seed and our one line summary is, **the servant manifests quiet patience**. Sowing seeds and watering them, it takes time before fruit is brought forth, but what the spirit of the Servant is in this gospel is, that He manifests quiet patience.

The miracle of the deaf and dumb man in Mark 7 is the one in which He touches his lips and He looks up to heaven and He sighs and He says, (what does He say, by the way?) He says, **Ephphatha**, do you remember that? which means 'be opened' (2188) but the strange thing was that the problem wasn't the man's ears, it was his tongue; it says 'his tongue was tied and the Lord looks up to heaven and says 'be opened'. The lesson, by the way, of the parable is, **that before a man or woman can speak for God, they must have first have heard God's words**, and openly when the ears are open can the tongue speak divine principles (that's a digression, by the way, lovely parable) But I think the lesson of it is that **the servant is completely involved**; the Lord touches and He sighs, and He breathes a prayer, He puts His hands upon the man; everything the Servant does in His labours, He will be completely involved in His ministry.

Lastly, **the enquiry of the scribe!** Well look, we've already mentioned this in Mark 12,

the servant understands true sacrifice, is the one line summary. The servant understands true sacrifice, because after all that's the spirit of this gospel and the labours of the ox.

Three major themes. So we come then to our **three major themes** that are to be found then in the gospel of Mark. The first theme is (and here's the summary of the theme) **the humility of loyal service!** The humility of loyal service, just come and have a look at the first references that are shown there, and see if you can see what the puzzle is that's being unfolded here. In Mark 1 verse 34, I think is a particularly unique aspect of Mark's gospel. In Mark 1 verse 34 it says, 'And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; **and suffered not the devils to speak** (did you notice that?) He suffered not the devils to speak, it says. Now look at verse 44, having healed the man with leprosy it says in verse 44, 'He said unto him, Say thou nothing to any man'; now chapter 3 verse 12, 'He straitly charged them that they should not make Him known'; chapter 4 verses 11 and 12, explains that the Lord gave parables, so that 'those without should not understand, would not see what He was teaching and what He was saying'; Mark 5 verse 43 says, 'that when the little girl was raised from the dead, He charged them straitly that no man should know it'; chapter 7 verse 24 says, 'He went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon and entered into a house and would that no man should know it'; again in verse 36 of the same chapter it says, 'He charged them after healing the dumb man, He charged them that they should tell no man'; chapter 8 verse 26, 'He sent him away to his house, saying, neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town'. What's all this about, b&s? this is a key theme in the gospel of Mark. Well, here's the words that we need to add into the text! **a notable idea in Mark is the spirit of concealment in Christ's labours!** The servant is busy in His labours but He keeps on telling people, don't say anything about this, don't tell anyone, that which I do must be hidden. All classes of people are pledged to keep His works and words a secret; the healed, the leaders, the people, the disciples, and it's a key theme in this gospel; you'll never see that theme developed in another gospel as it is in Mark's. I think you see, that this is the spirit of the servant of whom a prophet once said, 'behold, My servant whom I uphold, He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets; a bruised reed shall He not break, and a smoking flax shall He not quench.'

The lesson you see is, in that next line, **the work of the servant was to be quiet and unobtrusive, without popular acclaim or prominence!** The work of the servant was to be quiet and unobtrusive, without popular acclaim or prominence; that which he does, b&s, he does in the secrecy of concealment and in the spirit of humility. He's just an ox labouring in His Master's field, and what's interesting therefore about that is this little bit at the end here, because can anyone tell me what the word 'kurios' means? it's the word normally translated either 'lord or master' (2962), those are the two common translations.

Now do you know what's interesting about the gospel of Mark? so by the way, you should put the word 'lord' there in front of 2962, so the number of times that Christ is

addressed as 'lord' in the gospel of Mark; well, let me give you all the numbers, now I should be very careful to clarify what I've said here. This is not the total number of times that the word 'kurios' occurs; it's the number of times (exactly what it says here) the number of times that **Christ is addressed as 'kurios' by another person**. Are you clear on that? Matthew's gospel -25 times; John's gospel -34 times; Luke's gospel- 21 times; Mark's gospel -twice; ah, but you see, I don't think that even those two ought to be there. Because see the first reference, I've given you the 2x underneath - Mark 7 verse 28 is when the Syrophenician woman comes to Him and she says to Him, 'yes, Lord', but I don't think when she used the work 'kurios' I don't think she was calling Him 'lord' at all. See, she didn't really know Him as 'lord'. In the references that are given, by the way, in John 4 verse 11, the woman at the well, can you remember a man who came to a woman at the well and asked for water, and she said to Him, 'Sir, the well is deep and thou hast nothing to draw with', I think when she called Him 'kurios', the woman at the well, she really meant not 'lord' and not 'master' but '**sir**'; kurios sometimes ought to be translated 'sir', and I think the woman of the well who didn't know, by the way, who it was she was speaking to again, simply is saying, 'sir, you have nothing to draw with'. Do you see that second reference in John 12 verse 21, that's the reference where it says the Greeks come to see Jesus and they found Philip and they said to Philip, 'Sir, we would see Jesus', do you think they were calling Philip 'lord', b&s? no I think not! They were simply addressing him in a respectful tone of someone who was associated with the Lord. 'Sir', they said to Philip, 'we would see Jesus'. So the little gap after Mark 7 verse 28 means **sir**, I think in Mark 7 verse 28 where the Syrophenician woman addressed Christ, I don't think she was using 'kurios' in the meaning of 'lord' at all, I think she was simply saying 'sir'; and the other reference in Mark 9 verse 24, is not in most Greek manuscripts and is therefore omitted in most translations, it's not there at all? in other words, b&s, what I'm suggesting is, I don't think that Christ is ever addressed as 'Lord' in Mark's gospel because that's not the title that belongs to a servant, is it? and that's the spirit of this gospel.

Now the **second theme**, the title for the theme is **the exhaustion of faithful labour**. Let me give you the text of the sentence first and then we can perhaps appreciate what's going on here! Such was the tremendous drain on the energies of the servant; such was the tremendous drain on the energies of the servant, that periods of activity were balanced with times of withdrawal to renew strength. Mark then, is the gospel of exhaustion from a service which reaches out to all. Here the servant withdraws too! Now we begin the set of references: here the servant withdraws too! and this is one of the amazing things about this gospel, b&s, is that all the way through this gospel, you've got this tremendous energy of this man, committed to the service of His Master and His Father, and there are moments when He just has to stop! It's almost like this ox which labours from dawn to dusk, and in the end he's so tired that this poor ox is fallen on his feet and he has to be lead away and popped in the crib for just a while to recruit his energies, or he'll collapse in the field. He's just run out of any energy whatsoever and Mark is the gospel of **the Lord withdrawing** over and over again. Do you see this, He withdraws to the outskirts of Capernaum; He withdraws to the wilderness place; to the shores of Gennesaret; to the villages of Galilee; to the wilderness of Bethsaida; to

the mountains of Gaulanitus; to the borders of Tyre; to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; to the heights of Hermon; to the garden of Gethsemane; and then in the last chapter, b&s, the servant finally withdraws into heaven itself because His labours are now ended. It's the gospel of withdrawal and there's a lesson there for all of us, isn't there, b&s? For in our service for the truth, there are times when we need to refresh our spiritual energies and recruit our abilities for further labours. We can't go on endlessly, there must be times where we stop and withdraw and that's what the Lord does in this gospel. It's a special theme, you see! You see, every one of these themes are quite special to that gospel, you'll not find these things in the other gospels; they are peculiarly relevant to the face that this particular writer is painting the portrait of!

Well, that takes us to our last theme which is the third theme, and it is the dedication of complete sacrifice. **The dedication of complete sacrifice**, in fact, the breakup of the whole of this gospel (remember how we said that the gospel of Matthew is built around the speeches of Christ) well the gospel of Mark is built very simply around that key phrase in Mark 10, 'the Son of man came to minister and to give His life a ransom'. He comes to **serve and to sacrifice**, and pretty much the first half of the gospel through to about chapters 8, 9, and 10, He comes to serve, and the balance of the gospel He comes to sacrifice. That's really the breakup of the gospel of Mark. Now the interesting thing is and here's the first point in this theme, is that the section on the journey to the cross in Mark's gospel is the longest in proportion of all the gospels. From the beginning of the journey, that last journey to Jerusalem to the offering of Christ is the **longest** in this gospel, in fact, so long in proportion, b&s, that some have described the gospel of Mark as a 'passion' gospel with a short introduction added to the front of it. That's how they see the theme of this gospel, it's so strong.

There are three unique references to Christ being (so you see this phrase here?) 'en to hodos' (3598) which literally means **on the way**, so that's the meaning of that phrase. That Christ is on the way! Now what's interesting about these three passages when Christ is **on the way** is that each of these is linked to a specific prediction of His suffering and His death. So let's just take a look at these! in Mark 8 verse 27 we're told this, 'And Jesus went out, and His disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and on the way (en to hodos) He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I am? And they say, John the Baptist and others Elijah and others, one of the prophets. And He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto Him, Thou art the Christ. And He charged them that they should tell no man of Him. And He began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again'. When He was **on the way**, verse 27, He said that He would suffer and die, verse 31.

Now the second passage in chapter 9 and verses 30 to 35, 'The departed thence, and passed through Galilee, says verse 30, and He would not that any man should know it. For He taught His disciples and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third

day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him. And He came to Capernaum: and being in the house He asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves **on the way** (en to hodos)?' But on the way, b&s, back in verse 31, He had told them He would die, so He's on the way, and He predicts His death.

Then the third reference is in chapter 10, so you see how these three chapters 8, 9, and 10, is clearly the point where the gospel turns over, as it were, from the first half of service to the second half of sacrifice. In Mark 10 verse 32 it says, 'And they were **in the way, on the way, (en to hodos)** going up to Jerusalem and Jesus went before them; and He took again the 12 and said, verse 33, Behold we go to Jerusalem and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles and they shall mock Him and scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him and shall kill Him and the third day He shall rise again'. Three statements that Jesus is **on the way**, three predictions of His suffering and death. So here's the next line then of our notes, **So the way of the servant then is the way of sacrifice**, isn't that what we're being told in Mark's gospel? that the way of the servant, what is the way of the servant? when Christ is on the way, what **way** is that? The way of the servant is the way of sacrifice, in fact, Mark 10 actually echoes a previous experience; what was that key word in Mark's gospel, by the way? 'eutheos' or **straightway**; just listen to these words out of Proverbs 7 verse 22, 'He goeth after her **straightway**, as an **ox** goeth to the slaughter', and you see, that echoed the experience of Jeremiah, because in Jeremiah 11, of course, Jeremiah is our prophet for the gospel of Mark and in Jeremiah 11 it says this in verse 19, 'But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter and I knew not that they had devised devices against me; I was like an ox lead to the slaughter' says Jeremiah 11 verse, and I knew not that they had devise devices against me; I was like an ox lead to the slaughter, says Jeremiah 11 verse 19. I think that's all being echoed here in the gospel of Mark 10. So let me just put the words in first of all and then I can come back to it!

So what this section showed really is **it echoes Jeremiah's experience; compare Jeremiah 11 verse 19; but the difference between the two, b&s, is whereas Jeremiah did not know that they were leading him as an ox to the slaughter, Christ did!** The set of His face indicated the burden of a determined purpose that was frightening in its intensity. I'll read that again! Christ knew, the set of His face indicated the burden of a determined purpose that was frightening in its intensity! Now come back and read Mark 10 verse 32 again, because here it is! now just read it and see the face of the ox! Verse 32, 'And they were **on the way** going up to Jerusalem: and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid'. Now what was it, b&s, on that day when the Lord was walking to Jerusalem, and His disciples were there, what was it that terrified them about the face of Christ as He strode out before them on the way to Jerusalem? What was it that frightened the disciples so that day? I know what it was, b&s, it was **the face of the man who knew He was marching to His death!** because He knew that He was the ox, He knew that He was walking to a sacrificial offering, and He was absolutely focussed with

determination on doing that, and so resolute was that focus of the ox being lead to the slaughter, that His disciples were terrified by the determination and the set of His face on that day! Do you know, b&s, that only Mark's gospel gives us that moment in verse 32, unique to Mark's gospel, only Mark describes that moment when He terrified the disciples marching on ahead of them. Oh, yes, b&s, this is the ox on His final journey to be offered, and Christ knew that He was!

If you come back to maybe just those last two references, if we could just hold our hands in both places, so the right hand in Mark 15 and the left hand in Mark 1, and let's just compare these two places. When the gospel opens it says that the Lord was baptized, Mark 1 verse 10 says, 'And straightway coming up out of the water' (oh, **straightway**, there's our first occurrence of 'eutheos' (2112) by the way) and **straightway** coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opened'. Now do you see that word 'opened', in the margin it says, 'cloven or rent' and that's exactly what it does mean in the Greek; it's a very powerful word, the word means literally 'torn open' (4977) so in the notes there we should write, **the way from heaven is torn open to announce the Son of God at the beginning of this gospel.** The way from heaven is torn open that the world may behold the Son, who comes to serve His Master. If you were to ask the question, b&s, in this gospel, 'well who is the Son?' who is the Son of this gospel who comes to serve? the answer is, well he's the man of Mark 15. Because now in Mark 15 verse 38 it says at the time of the death of Christ, 'And the veil of the temple was' (and now we've got exactly the same word that's translated 'torn asunder' or 'rent asunder in Mark 1), used again now at the end of Christ's life in Mark 15 verse 38, 'the veil of the temple **was torn** asunder. The way into heaven is **torn open to conform the Son of man** at the end, and you come over the page, b&s, and this is what happens! Verse 39 says, 'and the centurion which stood over against Him, when he saw that He so cried out, and gave up the spirit, he said, Truly this man **was the Son of God.**' Ah, so the Son of this gospel, b&s, as it says at the end of the passage there, **the Son of God in Mark therefore, is the suffering servant, who finally hangs upon the cross as the slain bullock.** Do you know what was remarkable about verse 39 of Mark 15? b&s, well, it was this, you see, when a man was crucified (you'll probably know this) the crucifixion made it impossible for them to do something, does anyone know what it was? the act of crucifying a body and the arching of the body on the cross made it impossible for them to do what? breathe in and in particularly they could not exhale properly. They couldn't breathe out properly and what the centurion saw, b&s, in verse 39, was the last act of service of the servant, because it says that when Jesus was there on the cross, and 'when the centurion saw that He **so cried out, and gave up the spirit**', you see, there was effort and labour even in this last exhalant, exhausted cry of the servant; that which was not possible to do on the cross, when the centurion saw that, and he saw the cry of this man, he said, 'truly this was the Son of God'. This is the man of this gospel, b&s. This is the face of the ox, is it not? who serves to the very end even to the point of His death, as the sacrificial offering.

You know, b&s, I am really full of wonder at the wisdom of God, at how gospels could be written so! Even though this is the same life of Christ as Matthew tells us, it's not the

same story really, is it? A different face has been painted, and we will learn some different lessons from that face.

So let's turn over the page then to our summary on page 13. At the bottom of the page, **Mark the Summary**, and collect our final thoughts together. So the face of the ox in Mark is the face of the **perfect servant**. For Mark depicts Christ from the standpoint of His loyal service, and dedicated sacrifice. **His loyal service and His dedicated sacrifice**. What was the summary phrase for Matthew? **that mercy which rules!** Here's Mark's then, the summary phrase for Mark, **that humility which serves**. In the words of a hymn, b&s:

Behold My servant, see Him rise,
Exalted in My might;
Him have I chosen, and in Him,
I place supreme delight.