A Servant's Life

The Gospels are four different presentations of the Messiah, which together form a complete picture. The four major characteristics of Jesus revealed in the Gospels are:

1. Matthew: the king
2. Mark: the servant
3. Luke: the man
4. John: the Son of God

While every Gospel encompasses all of these characteristics of Jesus Christ, each Gospel specifically emphasizes one of them. No one Gospel could completely state Jesus Christ's wide-ranging ministry with the full credit it deserves. This is why four Gospels were necessary to fully reveal the greatness of Jesus Christ's earthly life and ministry.

The Gospel of Mark emphasizes the servant qualities that Jesus exhibited while on earth. Mark highlights Jesus' actions of serving God and helping his fellow man. There is no genealogy mentioned like in the Gospels of Matthew and John, because the history of servants was never kept.

Let's observe a section in the Gospel of Mark to see the servant qualities that are presented there. Chapters in the Bible have all been added by man. They are great for reference points, but are devoid of divine authority.

Chronologically, Luke 6:17 – 8:3 can be inserted in the middle of verse 19 of chapter 3. I've marked the spot with an [*].

> Mark 3:1-2:
> And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.
> And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

This states the purpose the Pharisees had. They didn't care about the man who had a need.

> Mark: 3:3-5:
> And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.
> And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.
> And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

Jesus Christ got angry, but it was a righteous anger. Sometimes men of God have to take a stand against those who are obstructing the power of God.

This man believed what Jesus Christ spoke to him, and stretched forth his hand. He was healed. He received deliverance at that instant. Jesus Christ spoke what the Father wanted him to speak. The man believed his word, and when he believed, he acted and was healed.

Some of the religious leaders belonging to the sect of the Pharisees had witnessed the healing, which was done on the Sabbath. They were just there looking for an excuse to accuse Jesus Christ. One would think that if they were the religious leaders, they would have spent their time trying to learn how to walk with the power of God, rather than trying to figure out ways to prevent Jesus Christ from completing his ministry.

We are today, in our walk with God, what we are and where we are because of our believing of God's Word.

> Mark 3:6:
> And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

These were two of the ruling parties in Israel at that time. The Herodians were Jews who favored the worldly Herodian rule; while the Pharisees were ultra strict followers of the Jewish law. They didn't agree on much, but they did agree together that they did not like what Jesus was doing.

> Mark 3:7:
> But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judaea,

Jesus had to withdraw himself and his followers to the Sea of Galilee. He was not welcome in the synagogue of the ruling class. However, the people didn't seem to mind. They wanted deliverance. Deliverance that these two political parties weren't giving them.

> Mark:3:8:
> And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

People who had heard Jesus teach and got delivered told others. These then came to see and hear and get delivered by Jesus.

> Mark 3:9:
> And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

Jesus had a backup plan in place, an escape route if he needed it.

Mark: 3:10-12:
For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.
And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.
And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

He preached God's Word of deliverance to the people. They believed what he had to say and came thronging him for deliverance from many causes.

Next he goes onto a mountain and ordains the twelve apostles. Twelve men that he could teach, and mould spiritually into leaders to carry on God's work once his mission on earth was completed.

Mark: 3:13-15:
And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him.
And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,
And to have power [*exousia* – authority] to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

He ordains these twelve to be with him, so that they can learn how to do the same works he is doing; preaching God's Word, healing the sick, casting out devil spirits. He gives them the authority to do what he is doing.

Mark 3:16-19:
And Simon he surnamed Peter;
And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:
And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,
And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: [*] and they went into an house.

Jesus now has an entourage, a posse, dedicated close followers. These twelve are not afraid of the religious parties that want to kill Jesus. They are seen in public with him. They don't mind being identified with Jesus.

Mark 3:20-21:
And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.
And when his friends [kinsman, relatives] heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

When his relatives hear about what he is doing they want to take him away and have him committed to an insane asylum. Relatives in that culture were very close to each other. His own extended family wanted to snatch him and drag him away against his will.

Mark 3:22:
And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

The scribes were the scholars, learned teachers, interpreters of the Law. They were to understand the Scriptures so as to be able to teach it to others. They were to arbitrate cases and make decisions based on what the Law said. Thus they had to be extremely knowledgeable of the Scriptures.

Instead of believing what the Scriptures said about the Messiah, the scribes started a verbal assault campaign against Jesus, accusing him of doing what they were guilty of, casting out devils by utilizing the power of the devil. However, Jesus had the right answer to these charges.

Mark 3:23-30:
And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?
And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.
And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.
And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.
No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.
Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:
But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:
Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

Jesus boldly addresses his critics. He explains that he is utilizing the power of the true God, not like them who utilize Satan's power to get results.

Now, his immediate family comes looking for him to take him home. After all, he is not making any friends among the rulers of the country. This can only cause more problems.

Mark: 3:31-35:
There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.
And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.
And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?
And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!
For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

What a revolutionary statement! He is informing all who care to listen that spirit is thicker than blood. That those who want to do the will of God are the true blood kin of the son of God.

None of these distractions stop or even slow down the movement of God. Jesus knew what his mission was, to do the will of the Father, and he didn't let anything get in his way. He did not stop for religious leaders of note. He did not stop for family. He did not let slander slow him up. He kept focused on his goal, teaching God's Word and paralyzing the kingdom of the Devil. He keeps forging ahead.

> Mark 4:1-2:
> And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.
> And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

Earlier in the Gospel of Mark there is evidence on how he kept moving, a pattern that kept him in touch with his Father God.

> Mark 1:22:
> And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus must have studied the scrolls extensively to be able to teach like he did. He taught the Word of God like it had never been taught before, with authority, with conviction. Then he utilized the power of God. He confirmed that God was truly with him by operating God's power to deliver people.

> Mark 1:23-28:
> And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,
> Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.
> And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.
> And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.
> And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.
> And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

When people got delivered they told others about Jesus.

Another practice that Jesus had was that he stayed in touch with his heavenly Father. He continuously sought God's will.

Mark 1:35:
And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Jesus talked things over with his Father. He always did the will of his Father. He took the necessary time to get away and talk things over with God, even if he lost a little sleep.

Today we have been given the opportunity to do what Jesus Christ did and more. He told his disciples what to expect.

John 14:12:
Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

The greater works than what Jesus did was to get people born again of God's Spirit. It was not available until the Messiah completed his mission. Then from the day of Pentecost and following, God's people could be born again of incorruptible seed.

I Peter 1:23:
Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Today we have been given the servant's responsibility of leading men and woman to God. Today we preach God's Word. We heal the sick. We cast out devils. We teach God's Word about the accomplishments of Jesus Christ. We share that Jesus is the Lord and that God really did raise him from the dead. That he is seated at God's right hand making intercession for the saints. That there truly is power in the new birth and we have the right and the ability to operate it.

II Corinthians 5:20:
Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

This function has been given to us in this day and time. It is up to us to not let friends, families, slanderers, government leaders, religious leaders, scribes [people who think they know God's Word] deter us in our mission. It is very profitable to us then to learn and to do the will of our Father in heaven.

Hebrews 6:10-12:
For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.
And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:
That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.