

Characteristics and the theological aims of marks gospel religion essay



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Mark's gospel is known to be the earliest and shortest of the synoptic gospels and its purpose was to impart a written declaration of the redemption brought about through Jesus with an importance appropriate for Gentile Christians. Though it contains very few of Jesus' parables compared to the other gospels, Mark tried to identify with Jesus through what he did rather than what he said. John Kilgallen wrote, "If we are to know the events of Jesus' life, we are brought to them only through Mark's story telling." This essay is going to examine the characteristics and theological aims of Mark's gospel, and further analyse and evaluate the discussions in order to find out in what ways they should influence the church's teaching.

Mark's gospel is symbolised with a lion which represents the sovereign authority and the effectual power of the son of God and perhaps that's why it is fully packed with action in regards to Jesus' ministry. Referring to the prophecy in Isaiah, presumably Mark did not want his listeners to doubt about the testimony of Jesus who was on earth to complete the mission of redemption for mankind. The purpose and whole ministry of Jesus, according to Mark was to die and save sinners. (1: 14-15) "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

The fact that Mark explained the meanings of Jewish custom and translated some Aramaic words shows that his gospel was intended for the non Jewish audience and one could argue that he wanted to express a clearer message of the Gospel, with no obstruction of understanding the purpose of Jesus on earth. This implicated the importance of discipleship (1: 17) Jesus said to

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them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.', and faith in The Son of God being crucial to those who believed as in the case of the paralytic man who was brought to Jesus to be healed, but because of the massive crowd they showed the extremity of their faith when they broke through the roof in order to get the sick man in Jesus' presence. May be that is why Mark recorded such high numbers of miracles compared to the other synoptic gospels.

An illustration of the kind of opposition Jesus experienced from some of His family members, friends, followers, religious leaders and political figures was also expressed in Mark's gospel, but Jesus took carriage and did not deviate from His purpose according to Mark who told of the many places that Jesus went to deliver His message. This shows that Jesus was always on the move. He indicated the major roles of Jesus' ministry were to serve and suffer through his sacrificial love

Mark's intention could broadly be interpreted as a pastoral mission, that had a purpose of teaching and building up the faith of his listeners by showing the relevance of Jesus' teachings in their own lives as it is in the church today. (3: 14-15) "And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and to have authority to cast out demons. Jesus entrusts His followers with the proclamation to all nations to the end." As Jesus gave authority then, it is the same authority given to the church today until the good news is proclaimed to all nations.

Overall, the characters and theological aim in Mark's gospel can still be addressed in the church as a continuation of what Jesus started when He announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Therefore the call of repentance and belief should still be the theme in the church. Jesus came to serve not to be served, and he sacrificed his life for all mankind, so the church should illustrate this kind of servant hood as emphasised by Lightfoot, " The purpose of the Lord's manifestation in the future is not so much to introduce a new order of things, but rather to complete that which already exists."

The church can be transformed through the influence of Mark's gospel by compelling to a divine mission of not our own agenda but that of Christ and acknowledging for who He is (8: 29) He asked them, ' But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, ' You are the Messiah. Dependency on God is a requirement today as much as interdependency to each other working in unity in order to continue reaching out with the gospel regardless of criticism and opposition as according to Mark.

******Jesus often warned His disciples of the hardship and suffering that they would encounter as He did. The Church still faces persecution as in the days of Mark, but we are encouraged to remain steadfast in our faith as then.

The characteristics and theological aims, of Mark's Gospel teach the church, representative of Christ, to continue spreading the word of God. Discipleship is a part of life for Christians as clearly demonstrated in Mark. Known as missionaries today, discipleship duties of servant hood is still the core that is required, and through the teachings of Jesus who encountered both the sick

and the sinful in this gospel transformation is relevant and still acts as a model for the church. Jesus has always been the representation of the just man, who was treated unjustly, but he responded with patience and he did not lose hope and trust in God.

The theological aim of evangelism should be another influence in church as expressed in the first verse of Mark, to proclaim that Jesus is son of God and saviour. The need to lose one self remains as necessary and true now as it was then. In terms of discipleship it is from Jesus that discipleship started and that is still a relevant characteristic in church to follow the example of Jesus, which is another influence in understanding of Christian faith.

Mark expressed a high degree of honesty in the disciples of Jesus then by giving an account about their misunderstanding of what Jesus was telling them and the fearful reaction of the events that surrounded the resurrection which mirrors the weakness in the church. Consumed by pride of who is the greatest and not confronting the fear of being misunderstood, has overwhelmed the church of the twenty first century.

The church should continue to teach that true discipleship is only possible after the resurrection as stated in Mark, and that's when the full significance of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus can be known. The church today has no excuse than those first followers if it does not teach the believers to take up the cross and follow Jesus.

The Gospel of Mark strengthened his listeners to stand strong in their faith even through a period of persecution as Jesus did; it is a characteristic that still needs to influence the church as it has never stopped being persecuted <https://assignbuster.com/characteristics-and-the-theological-aims-of-marks-gospel-religion-essay/>

even in this 21st century. The importance of faith is stressed as the ambience in which Jesus mighty works were performed (6: 5, 6)

From the analysis of the main features in Mark's gospel, it becomes possible to draw certain conclusions in regards to his intention. Jesus prepared himself to total obedience to God as introduced by Mark 'The Son of God'. The church should continue to have total faith and obedience in God as Jesus did in order not to deviate from the truth. It could be argued to a certain extent that the teaching and actions of Jesus have a continuing value in both Christian life and death and that the death of Jesus was not in vain. Therefore, according to the examination of the above characteristics and theological aims in Mark's gospel, the church should still be strongly influenced, by that same message of redemption by following the example of Jesus who was a servant of the Lord regardless of deeds of suffering, strengthening in the faith and continue to spread the good news according to the gospel of Mark. (10: 44-45) " And whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."