ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THROUGH THE EYES OF THE BLIND: SEEING THE CROSS IN DISCIPLESHIP

(AN INDUCTIVE STUDY OF MARK 8:22–10:52 AS A LITERARY UNIT)

A Thesis Presented to

The Faculty of Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Theology

BY

JOMER ANTHONY S. CLEMENTE

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ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

WE HEREBY APPROVE THE THESIS SUBMITTED BY

JOMER ANTHONY S. CLEMENTE

ENTITLED

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FOR THE DEGREE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN THEOLOGY

WITH CONCENTRATION ON BIBLICAL STUDIES—NEW TESTAMENT

Dr. David Ackerman _____
Thesis Adviser, Academic Dean — Date

Dr. Phillip Davis _____
Program Director — Date

Dr. Mitchel Modine _____
Faculty Reader — Date

Dr. Kent Brower _____
External Reader — Date

Dr. Larry Bollinger _____
APNTS President — Date

ABSTRACT

Seeing through the Gospel of Mark, specifically the literary unit of 8:22 to 10:52, this research uncovers profound theological insights into discipleship. Central to this study are the evocative narratives of two blind men healed by Jesus (8:22–26; 10:46–52) and the Twelve's struggle to comprehend His Messianic mission (8:27–10:45), particularly the essence of the cross in discipleship (8:34). The core inquiry investigates the theological dimensions of discipleship gleaned from an inductive study of this pivotal division in Mark.

This exploration examines how 8:22 to 10:52 integrates within Mark's overarching narrative, the literary role of the healing stories as thematic bookends accentuating the Twelve's spiritual blindness, and how these miracles illuminate Jesus' Messianic mission. Employing an inductive approach, the research meticulously delves into the thematic depth and structural dynamics of this portion, charting the disciples' transformative journey from misunderstanding to spiritual enlightenment.

The findings reveal that discipleship in Mark's Gospel is depicted as a transition from spiritual blindness to vivid insight into Jesus' identity and mission, demanding self-denial, and a willingness to embrace the cross through unwavering faith. Jesus, the Crucified Messiah, exemplifies this journey, calling His followers to emulate His way with wholehearted devotion.

The two-stage healing in the Bethsaida miracle introduces the realities of the disciples' spiritual blindness, as well as their need for restoration and hope for spiritual clarity. The stark contrast between the Twelve's initial lack of understanding and

Bartimaeus' immediate healing underscores the crucial need for spiritual discernment and trust.

This emphasizes the critical role of personal transformation, faith, humility, and sacrificial service in following Jesus. Ultimately, this study enriches the understanding of Mark’s portrayal of discipleship, illuminating the gracious path from spiritual blindness to having spiritual eyes—not blinded by the matters of the world, but seeing clearly the will of the LORD.

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DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Jomer Anthony Santarina Clemente — April 09, 2025

(Researcher) — (Date)

DEDICATION

To God, whose immeasurable grace empowers every step of this journey. To my family, whose unwavering support has been my anchor through it all. To my fiancée, my *sinta*, Marisha May, whose steadfast love continually inspires me to persevere.

And to all faithful Christians bearing the cross of discipleship, especially those navigating physical challenges and embracing life as differently abled individuals, strengthened by God's providence and enabling power.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer aptly stated, “The cross is laid on every Christian.”

Embarking on this journey demanded significant sacrifices and unwavering commitment. Completing an opus of manifold pages, comprising six chapters of inductive study, was undeniably rigorous, culminating in an intense two-hour oral defense. Nevertheless, I stood resolute in my dedication to producing work that honors God—loving Him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. He deserves nothing less than our wholehearted devotion in every endeavor, making this process profoundly fulfilling.

Even so, the ultimate source of my fulfillment does not lie in the accolades but in the assurance that, by His sustaining grace, I gave my utmost for the Highest—Soli Deo Gloria!

This journey was not without its challenges. Earlier this year, I experienced a rapid deterioration of my vision and heightened vulnerability to infection. This necessitated emergency eye surgery on February 12, followed by another major operation on March 5. And up until the day of my thesis defense on March 31, I remained under intensive monitoring and medication, with sutures on my eye. Even amid these trials, I cannot help but glorify God for His providence and faithfulness throughout this experience.

I offer my heartfelt gratitude to the LORD and my family—my parents, Antonio and Mercedes Clemente; my siblings, Colleen, Jeric, and Justin; to the Galapon Family, especially to my future in-laws, Samuel and Noemi Galapon; and everyone who supported me along the way.

I am also sincerely appreciative of APNTS for its dedication to upholding high-quality global research standards and for inspiring students to strive for excellence for the

glory of God. My deepest thanks go to my amazing Program Director, Dr. Phillip Davis; my diligent thesis mentor, Dr. David Ackerman; and all of my exceptionally gifted professors.

Moreover, I am truly indebted to the individuals and organizations that played a pivotal role in supporting my studies as a scholar—particularly the Union Church of Manila and everyone in the Wesleyan community, especially in the Central Plain of Luzon District.

Finally, I am forever grateful to my beautiful fiancée, Rev. Marisha May P. Galapon, whose unconditional love has been a constant source of encouragement and strength.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESV: English Standard Version

KJV: King James Version

NIV: New International Version

NT: New Testament

OT: Old Testament

TDNT Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

IBS: Inductive Bible Study

IQ(s): Interpretive Question(s)

IWM: Inference Weighing Model

GH: General Heading

MU(s): Main Unit(s)

MU#: Book division

MU#-#: Book section

MSR(s): Major Structural Relationship(s)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Known for its unique perspective, the Gospel of Mark offers a distinctive position within the four Gospels. Despite being second in precedence in the New Testament canon, Mark remained largely overlooked by the patristic eyes. Lane astutely describes that Mark was unremarkable during Christianity in antiquity, existing on the periphery of early church attention.[1] Subsequently, as reported by Smith, Victor of Antioch lamented the conspicuous absence of commentaries on Mark during the late 5th century. In his compilation of earlier exegetical opuses, Victor included writings by Origen, Titus of Bostra, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Chrysostom, and Cyril of Alexandria. These scholars had occasionally commented on Mark while expounding on the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John.[2]

[1] William L. Lane, *The Gospel according to Mark: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), 3.

[2] H. Smith, "The Sources of Victor of Antioch's Commentary on Mark," *Journal of Theological Studies* 19 (1918): 350–370.

Thereafter, passing the time of Victor of Antioch (ca. 400 A.D.),[3] several literary-critical investigations concluded that Mark was the first written Gospel,[4] which led scholars to have a second look at it during the era of modern criticism in the 1800s.[5] Notably, Strauss highlights a pivotal shift in the 19th century—the rise of historical criticism.[6] Soulen elucidates that historical criticism seeks to uncover 'the world behind the text' by delving into the historical context of ancient writings.[7]

As the 20th century dawned, Strauss further notes the impact of seminal works such as Martin Kähler's *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ* (1892), Albert Schweitzer's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1901), and William Wrede's *The Messianic Secret in the Gospels* (1901), which propelled renewed interest in the study of Mark.[8] This expanded scrutiny underscores the enduring message and richness of the Markan narrative, inviting ongoing exploration into its profound depths.

Remarkably, Mark's significance has transitioned from obscurity to prominence. Initially overlooked, Mark is now bathed in scholarly light. Since the third century, with increasing clarity through the lens of various 19th and 20th-century scholars, Mark's

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[3] John McClintock and James Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, vol. 4: s.v. "Victor of Antioch," 370.

[4] Several literary-critical investigations include the argument from order, redactional patterns, and the Q hypothesis.

[5] William L. Lane, "From Historian to Theologian: Milestone in Markan Scholarship," *Review & Expositor* 75, no. 4 (1978): 601.

[6] Mark L. Strauss, *Mark: Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 21.

[7] Historical criticism is also referred to as "higher criticism" or "historical-critical method"; Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3rd ed., rev. & expanded (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2001), 78.

[8] See Martin Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*, trans. Carl E. Braaten (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964); Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, 1st ed. (London: A. & C. Black, 1910); William Wrede, *The Messianic Secret in the Gospels*, trans. J.C.G. Greig (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1971), as cited in Strauss, *Mark*, 21–22.

relevance has become brilliantly evident. What insights, then, can we glean from this Gospel?

Background of the Study

Contrary to the views held by early church fathers and some later scholars on Mark, my initial encounter with it left a profound impact. In 2015, following my visual impairment, I embraced the Christian faith at a Summer Camp designed for young Filipinos with vision disabilities. It was during this transformative period that I embarked on an aural exploration of the Bible—listening intently to the Gospels in the New Testament. However, as a teenage Gentile new to the Scriptures, I was less interested in the lengthy genealogies and infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke. John's enigmatic prologue, though intriguing, did not fully engage me either. Nonetheless, Mark was different. Its action-packed beginning immediately drew me in, compelling me to diligently examine the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. France, in his commentary on Mark, aptly notes that:

> The style and content of the story arouse a feeling of otherness, a feeling that this is not a history like other histories, not a biography like other biographies, but a development of the actions, sayings, and suffering of a higher being on his way through this anxious world of human beings and demons.[9]

Lane suggests that Mark's intended audience may include readers who have faced similar crises to those encountered by Jesus.[10] This assessment resonates deeply with me. I sincerely appreciate Mark's portrayal of Jesus accepting His inevitable affliction, as I took to heart my own circumstances as a person with impaired eyesight.

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[9] R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 6; L. Grollenberg, *Messiah* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1978), 59–60, translating Zuntz's account from H. Cancik, ed., *Markusphilologie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1984), 207.

[10] Lane, *Gospel according to Mark*, 1.

And as I looked closer into Mark, I found myself contemplating the significance of this depiction of Jesus as the 'Crucified Messiah' within the context of discipleship. My focus centered on 8:34, where Jesus addresses the crowd and His disciples, saying, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (ESV). The term 'cross' (Gk. *stauros*) appears four times in Mark: first, in 8:34, where Jesus discusses the cost of discipleship, and subsequently, during the accounts of Jesus' actual crucifixion (15:21, 30, 32). This juxtaposition of the Crucified Messiah with the core concept of cross-bearing in Mark prompted me to further explore its far-reaching implications for understanding discipleship.

Mark has a dramatic and fast-paced writing style. Even though he calls Jesus a 'Teacher' a lot,[11] Mark emphasizes actions over in-depth instructions in his Gospel.[12] Revisiting the Gospel, I perceive Jesus' ministry as profoundly engrossing. His preaching about the Kingdom of God, teachings, and exorcisms all leave an indelible mark. However, it is Jesus' acts of healing that capture me the most. Specifically, I am drawn to two miracle stories involving blind men.

The first account takes place in Bethsaida (8:22–26), where a blind man experiences a two-stage healing—an event unique to Mark. The second features Bartimaeus, a blind man in Jericho (10:46–52), who receives immediate recovery. These two miracle stories not only evoke empathy due to my own vision loss but also appear to serve as powerful tunnels of light for conveying an enduring message from the Markan narrative.

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[11] 4:38; 5:35; 9:17, 38; 10:17, 20, 35; 12:14, 19, 32.
[12] Strauss, *Mark*, 17.

Each of these two healing accounts (8:22–26; 10:46–52) comes before a confession of Jesus' Messianic identity. The two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida precedes the confession of Peter in 8:29: "… 'You are the Christ" (ESV). Likewise, aside from the direct confession of the blind man in Jericho in 10:47–48: "… 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! … Son of David, have mercy on me!'" (ESV), this declaration precedes the Jerusalem crowd's confession during the Triumphal Entry in 11:9–10: "… 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our Father David! Hosanna in the highest!'" (ESV). However, I became particularly inquisitive about the apparent connection of these two restoration of sight narratives to the emphasis on the Twelve's failings to truly see Jesus as the Crucified Messiah, vividly depicted from 8:27 to 10:45 (see Figure 1.1).[13]

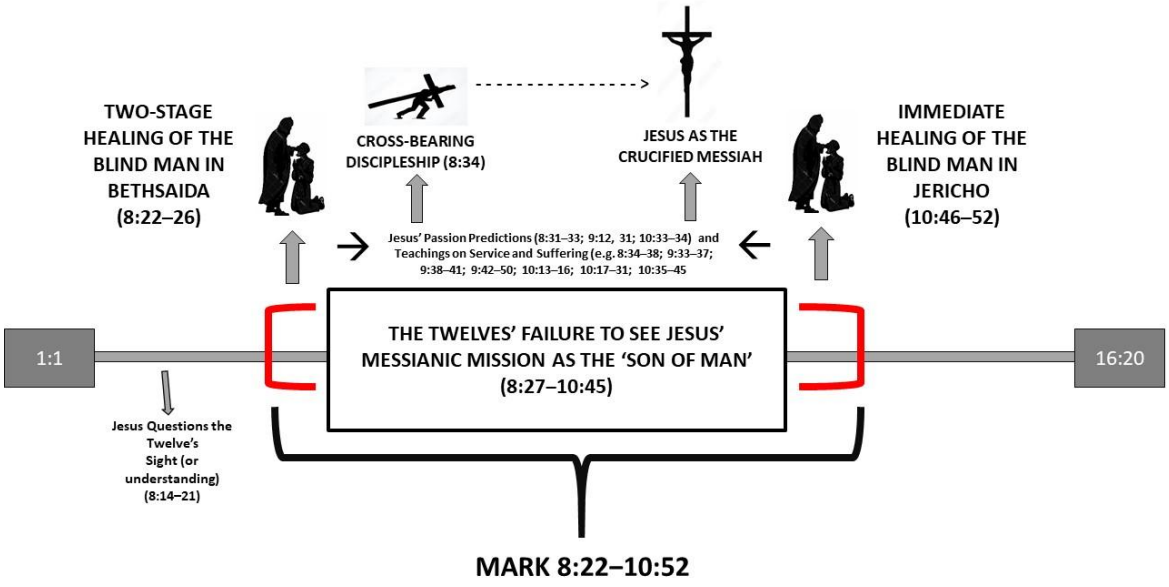

Figure 1.1 Initial Observation on Mark 8:22–10:52

[13] The 'Twelve' (whom Jesus' also named apostles) includes: "Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him." *Mark 3:14–19, ESV*.

Figure 1.1 illustrates my initial observation. At this point, I noticed that the theme of the apostles' misperception of Jesus permeates Mark. Notably, the two restoration of sight narratives (8:22–26; 10:46–52) enclose a series of failures by the Twelve, particularly in recognizing the essence of Jesus' mission as the Messiah. This section spans from Peter's rebuke to James and John's request (8:27–10:45) and presents dialogues between Jesus and the disciples, highlighting their shortcomings as they continue their ministry and journey to Jerusalem.

In addition, Mark 8:22–10:52, as a cohesive division, features Jesus' passion predictions as the Son of Man (8:31–33), which He repeats several more times to His disciples (9:12, 31; 10:33–34). Along with these are Jesus' intentional teachings on service and suffering, beginning with the cost of discipleship (8:34–38), and followed by more instructions (e.g. 9:33–37; 9:38–41; 9:42–50; 10:13–16; 10:17–31; 10:35–45).

Thereupon, this portion culminates with Jesus elucidating His Messianic mission to the Twelve, providing the paradigm of the Son of Man who came not to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many (10:42–45). Strikingly, even Peter, James, and John, those in Jesus' 'inner circle,' struggled to see Him as the Messiah nailed on the cross (Peter in 8:31–33) but envisioned Him as the Messiah seated on the throne (James and John in 10:35–39).

Looking back to the two healing accounts of the blind (8:22–26; 10:46–52), framing 8:27–10:45, I asked: Does Mark intend a certain literary function more than a straightforward chronological report of these miracle stories? Saliently, Mark's use of sight to symbolize understanding is apparent before the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida, when Jesus questions the Twelve. In the preceding text (8:14–21), when Jesus cautioned the

apostles about the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod, they failed to discern. Jesus responded: "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Are your hearts hardened?" (v. 17); "Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?" (v. 18); "Do you not understand?" (v. 21).[14]

These observations led me to adopt an inductive approach to Mark, focusing on the significance of 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit within the broader Markan narrative. In this endeavor, I investigate the relationship of 8:22–10:52 as a division with the rest of the Gospel, the structure of 8:22–10:52 itself, looking at the dynamics of the two restoration of sight narratives (8:22–26; 10:46–52) as they enclose a section highlighting the Twelve's failures to see Jesus' Messianic mission (8:27–10:45). Correspondingly, I seek to analyze how the passages within 8:27–10:45, in light of the two healing accounts (8:22–26; 10:46–52), relate and connect to the concept of cross-bearing discipleship (8:34). Ultimately, I aim to infer theological implications about Markan discipleship, raising and addressing several interpretive questions based on the observations made in this study.

Statement of the Problem

This study focuses on the Gospel of Mark, particularly on the pertinence of 8:22–10:52 as a cohesive unit. The researcher probes the relationship between the two narratives about the restoration of sight (8:22–26; 10:46–52), framing the apostles' inability to perceive Jesus' Messianic mission (8:27–10:45) and see the cross in discipleship (8:34). The primary

[14] Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV)

research question is: What theological implications about discipleship can be inferred from an inductive study of Mark 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit?

To address this central inquiry, the following sub-questions are considered:

1. How does 8:22–10:52, as a literary unit, integrate with Mark's overall narrative structure and logical flow?

2. How does Mark use the two narratives about the restoration of sight (8:22–26; 10:46–52) as literary brackets for the Twelve's failure to see Jesus' service and suffering as the Messiah (8:27–10:45)?

3. How do the healings of the two blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52) illuminate Mark's thematic emphasis on understanding the Messianic mission of Jesus?

4. How do the passages within 8:27–10:45, in light of the two miracle stories in 8:22–26 and 10:46–52, relate to the concept of taking up the cross as Jesus' disciples in 8:34?

5. How does observing and interpreting 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit help infer theological implications on discipleship?

Significance of the Study

This thesis is significant because it seeks to uncover Mark's inherent rhetorical and theological intentions through an inductive examination of 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit. This division explores the relationship between the differing healing accounts of two blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52) and the disciples' need for spiritual sight to see Jesus' service and

suffering as the Messiah (8:27–10:45). Additionally, it assesses how the Gospel is structured to enlighten the notion of bearing the cross as Jesus' followers (8:34). Thus, this study aims to add to the discourse of the relevance of 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit of Mark in discussing the nature of discipleship communicated in the Markan narrative for his audience.

Furthermore, the interpretations and answers to several observations and questions related to the structure and logical flow of 8:22–10:52 may infer theological implications for the followers of Jesus pertinent to contemporary issues. Through this approach, it may enhance the reading and understanding of Mark in light of seeing and following Jesus as the Crucified Messiah. Therefore, this research may contribute to the scholarly conversation on the purpose and structure of Mark and offer practical applications for current readers, particularly in grasping and recognizing the way of being Jesus' disciples.

Scope and Delimitations

The researcher examines the Gospel of Mark, particularly 8:22–10:52, using the original language and various English translations, mainly the ESV, as primary sources. Also, the researcher utilizes concordances, lexicons, dictionaries, commentaries, and other secondary sources relevant to the inductive approach. The focus is on drawing theological implications for discipleship, with special attention to the meanings and purposes of the restoration of sight narratives (8:22–26; 10:46–52), as well as the call to cross-bearing discipleship (8:34) within a section stressing the failures of the Twelve to see Jesus' Messianic mission. Thus, the structural relationships and contextual connections between these literary parts are central to this study.

Employing Inductive Bible Study (IBS) as the hermeneutical method, the researcher follows its core tenets. Fuhr and Köstenberger establish that when studying the Bible inductively, interpretation of the text and drawing application occurs only after gathering all the relevant evidence through observation. In doing so, the inductive method is an evidence-based process, determining the significance of Scriptural proofs, as the bedrock of inferences.[15] Consequently, Bauer and Traina contend that:

> Inductive Bible Study is essentially a comprehensive, holistic study of the Bible that takes into account every aspect of the existence of the biblical text and that is intentional in allowing the Bible in its final canonical shape to speak to us on its own terms, thus leading to accurate, original, compelling, and profound interpretation and contemporary appropriation.[16]

Rowland argues that literal exegesis of Scripture requires consulting the foremost manuscripts and accurately interpreting and translating passages in the original language. This enables a deeper understanding of the text's fundamental meaning.[17] Since God gave the Bible in written form to address tangible realities, attention to the specific shape God inspired these writings is crucial.[18] Akin to this, Keener stresses that the message the Spirit originally inspired should be consistent with the message that the Spirit communicates to the contemporary readers of the Bible.[19] In this sense, the movement between the original text and contemporary interpretation mirrors the ongoing dialogue between past revelation and present understanding, a sacred exchange that demands precision and reverence.

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[15] Richard Alan Fuhr Jr. and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study: Observation, Interpretation, and Application through the Lenses of History, Literature, and Theology* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016), chap. 2, ePub.

[16] David R. Bauer and Robert Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), chap. 1, ePub.

[17] Christopher Rowland, "The Literature of the Bible," in *The Blackwell Companion to the Bible in English Literature*, edited by Rebecca Lemon and others (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 18.

[18] Craig S. Keener, "The Spirit and Biblical Interpretation," *Spiritus* 4, no. 1 (2019): 20.

[19] Keener, "The Spirit and Biblical," 20.

Köstenberger and Patterson highlight that hermeneutical errors often stem from neglecting the context, such as proof-texting and eisegesis. They point out that:

> The "golden rule" of interpretation requires that we extend the same courtesy to any text or author that we would want others to extend to our statements and writings. This calls for respect not only for the intentions of the human authors of Scripture but ultimately for God who chose to reveal himself through the Bible by his Holy Spirit.[20]

In connection to this, Terry's principle of grammatical-historical exposition states that a word or sentence can have only one meaning within a single context, preventing ambiguity and speculation.[21] Additionally, Kimble notes that understanding biblical revelation is foundational for sound hermeneutical grounds and accurate interpretation.[22] Goheen, then, underscores that the Bible presents a single, universally valid story of God's plan and act of redemption against the backdrop of creation and humanity's fall.[23] Thus, it is through the lens of divine intentionality that this study engages with the Scripture—a unified account that resists fragmentation, holding together the truths in a seamless theological arc.

Following the frame of IBS, this study is guided by Fuhr and Köstenberger's seven principles for scriptural interpretation (see Table 1): (1) Literal Principle, (2) Contextual Principle, (3) One-Meaning Principle, (4) Exegetical Principle, (5) Linguistic Principle, (6) Progressive Principle, and (7) Harmony Principle.

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[20] Andreas J. Köstenberger and Richard D. Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: The Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2011), chap. 1, ePub.

[21] Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, n.d.), 205.

[22] Eugene Kimble, "Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Principles of Progressive Revelation" (Biblical Studies Ministries International, September 26, 2003), 1–13, http://bsmi.org/download/kimble/Biblical_Theology_Hermeneutical_Principles_20020926.pdf.

[23] Michael W. Goheen, "The Urgency of Reading the Bible as One Story in the 21st Century" (PDF lecture, Regent College, Vancouver, Canada, November 2, 2006), 2, https://missionworldview.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ea8a85_b04265dbb2574e5eaa9400b3f8bb8936.pdf.

Table 1. Seven Principles in Thinking through Scripture, adapted from Fuhr and Köstenberger, 2016.

PRINCIPLES	DESCRIPTIONS
Literary Principle	taking the words of the Bible at face value
Contextual Principle	striving to understand the text within the confines of its historical, literary, and theological contexts
One-Meaning Principle	having one correct interpretation of the text, although there are multiple applications
Exegetical Principle	the meaning of the text must be drawn from the text and not ascribed to the text
Linguistic Principle	always taking precedence to the original language of the Bible over any given translation
Progressive Principle	believing that later revelation may clarify, complete, or supersede earlier revelation
Harmony Principle	agreeing that any given portion of the Bible can have only that meaning which harmonizes with the doctrine of the Bible as a whole, having continuity between books of the Bible.

Table 1 indicates several principles that help the researcher address various hermeneutical issues and ensure a coherent understanding of the Bible.[24] In this way, the IBS approach offers a structured pathway through the rich terrain of Scripture, allowing each text to unfold its layers in alignment with its original meaning and context while respecting its place within the grander narrative of God's revelation.

In addition, the researcher acknowledges that the Bible reader should not overlook the necessity of maintaining an open and exploratory mindset in IBS, which is fundamental to the inductive process.[25] This mindset is an intrinsic aspect of the inductive methodology, aiming to be nondogmatic and receptive to debate and disagreement. Such openness arises from a genuine desire to learn from the text, regardless of personal opinions.[26] Thus, this

[24] Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive*, chap. 2.
[25] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 1.
[26] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 1.

study fosters a continual dialogue with the Markan narrative, enriching understanding through non-rigid perceptions.

Subsequently, it is essential to note that "IBS is primarily book-centric."[27] In this regard, observation of a book, as proposed by Bauer and Traina, involves three levels (see Figure 1.2): (1) Survey of the Books-as-Wholes; (2) Survey of Parts-as-Wholes; and (3) Focused Observation.[28]

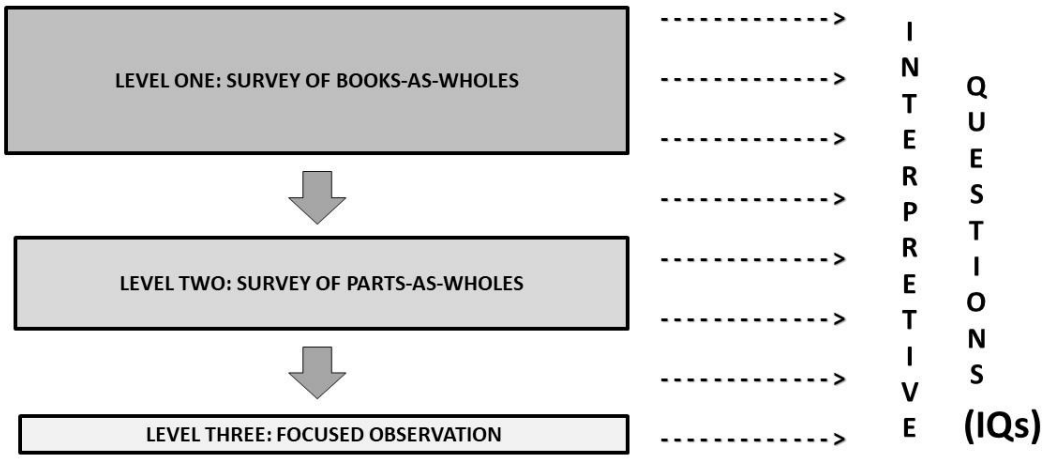

Figure 1.2 Three Levels of Observation, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

Figure 1.2 shows the ternary stages of observation of IBS the researcher considers in this inductive approach to Mark. During these procedures, various interpretive questions (IQs) are raised, but this study's primary focus is on selected questions that address the main

[27] Rick Boyd, "Allowing the Final Form Full-Voice: Inductive Bible Study Method," *Religions* 14, no. 1128 (2023): 2.

[28] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 10.

problem and sub-problems. Therefore, this thesis does not seek to answer every IQ posed throughout the induction process.

In inferring theological implications on discipleship by addressing selected IQs, the researcher employs the process of inferential logic used in inductive reasoning.[29] Bauer and Traina assert that one can describe each piece of selected evidence and incorporate it into premises to make inferences that could affect the response to the IQ after identifying pertinent proofs.[30] It ensures that each inference is rigorously tested against the evidence, strengthening the theological conclusions drawn.

The capacity of the human mind to think, understand, and form logical conclusions is known as reason, defined as "the application of logical principles and the power of thought to make decisions in the mind."[31] Christianity and reason necessarily go hand in hand. Without logic, drawing conclusions from the genuine claims of the Bible—the final authority for Christians—becomes challenging.[32] Outler explains that John Wesley recognized the value of critical reason in conjunction with Scripture, tradition, and Christian experience, collectively referred to as the 'Wesleyan Quadrilateral.' Wesley demanded logical consistency and the role of an official arbiter in any dispute involving opposing viewpoints or arguments.[33] Additionally, Wesley believed that Scripture is of utmost importance, but he

[29] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 15.
[30] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 15.
[31] Donald K. McKim, *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms: Second Edition Revised and Expanded* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 263.
[32] Jonathan D. Safarti, "Loving God with All Your Mind: Logic and Creation," *Journal of Creation* 12, no. 2 (1998): 142–151.
[33] Albert C. Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral — In John Wesley," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 20, no. 1 (1985): 9.

also valued philosophy and the sciences.[34] Thus, integrating reason within Christian thought enriches and clarifies the interpretation of Scripture and doctrine.

Concerning contemporary Biblical exegesis, Boaheng concludes that applying the crucial discipline of reason evaluates the reliability of every interpretation.[35] Similarly, this study embraces the essentiality of reason and logical process as fundamental pillars of both hermeneutics and theology.

Definition of Terms

Disciple, Discipleship. The term 'disciple' refers to a follower of Jesus during His earthly ministry and the early church era. It underscores a key theological theme in the Gospels and Acts, encompassing the covenantal relationship seen in the Old Testament between God and Israel, and in the New Testament between Jesus and His disciples. Discipleship entails following Jesus with personal commitment, aiming for transformation into Christlikeness, embracing servanthood, and fulfilling the Great Commission.[36]

Exegesis. It involves uncovering the author's intended meaning as expressed in the text, rather than imposing an interpretation onto it.[37] In the twenty-first century, exegesis remains vital for accessing, transmitting, reinterpreting, and understanding divine wisdom

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[34] Isaac Boaheng, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral and Contemporary Biblical Exegesis," *Journal of Mother-Tongue in Biblical Hermeneutics and Theology* 2, no. 3 (2020): 91.

[35] Boaheng, "Wesleyan Quadrilateral and Contemporary," 95.

[36] Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1997), s.v. "Disciple, Discipleship."

[37] Fuhr, Jr. and Köstenberger, *Inductive*, chap. 2.

through the Spirit. It seeks contemporary relevance for the Church while respecting cultural and historical contexts, continuing to be transformative in its application.[38]

Inclusio. It involves the recurrence of words, phrases, or concepts at both the beginning and end of a literary unit, resulting in a bracket effect. At its edges, *inclusio* defines the central idea of the literature or a specific text within a larger body of work.[39]

Induction. In the humanities, particularly in literature and history, induction involves a commitment to letting the evidence within and around the text guide its interpretation, regardless of preconceived notions.[40] It is a method of discovery appropriate for the Bible,[41] an external entity with a message grounded in its social, linguistic, and historical context.[42]

Inductive Bible Study (IBS). IBS is a comprehensive approach to Scripture that examines every aspect of the text's existence, allowing the Bible in its final canonical form to speak meaningfully to readers. This method yields precise, unique, captivating, and profound interpretations, fostering relevant appropriation of Scripture.[43]

Inference. An inference, synonymous with conclusion, results from synthesizing additional evidence with premises to arrive at a plausible response to an interpretive question posed.[44]

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[38] Dirk van der Merwe, "Reading the Bible in the 21st century: Some hermeneutical principles: Part 2," *Verbum Ecless. (Online)* 36, no. 1 (2015): 1–8, http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/VE.V36I1.1392.

[39] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11; *inclusio* is often written in italics.

[40] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 1.

[41] Fuhr, Jr. and Köstenberger, *Inductive*, chap. 2.

[42] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 1.

[43] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 1.

[44] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 15.

Interpretation. It seeks to grasp the text's meaning at the exegetical level—what the original author intended the audience to understand.[45] It addresses the fundamental question: What does the author mean?

Interpretive question (IQ). It is an inquiry or set of inquiries that acts as a link between observation and interpretation. These questions emerge from observation levels of IBS and lay the groundwork for interpretation.[46]

Literary unit. A literary unit in the Bible denotes a cohesive and significant portion, ranging from a single verse to a chapter or more, crafted intentionally to convey specific messages, themes, or narratives with purpose, logic, and order.[47]

Major Structural Relationship (MSR): A framework within a text that reflects how its parts relate to each other. These relationships guide the breakdown of literary parts, creating cohesiveness that reinforces major shifts in emphasis within the text.[48]

Main Unit (MU): Major divisions within a book that encompass broad, overarching themes. These units reflect natural shifts in emphasis and are as expansive as the material allows, ensuring focus on the book's primary structure over specific details.[49]

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[45] Fuhr, Jr. and Köstenberger, *Inductive*, chap. 2.

[46] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[47] Peter Krol, "Help for Identifying Literary Units," *Knowable Word*, March 3, 2021, https://www.knowableword.com/2021/03/03/help-for-identifying-literary-units/.

[48] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[49] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

Narrative. Biblically, narratives transcend mere recounting of events, serving as masterfully written accounts that guide readers toward theological insights through literary elements.[50]

Observation. It aims to establish a foundational understanding of the text's message and identify topics warranting deeper examination.[51] It addresses the question: What does the author say?

Theological implication. These implications arise from profound spiritual insights and connections derived from Biblical study, delving into deep truths about God, humanity, salvation, and Christian living that surpass mere comprehension.[52]

Theology. It involves the systematic study of God, His attributes, and the divine-human relationship, with practical application to the real world.[53] In IBS, it embodies a synthetic approach to Scripture, correlating individually observed, interpreted, and applied texts.[54]

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[50] Suzane Nicholson, "The Two Spotlights of Inductive Bible Study and Narrative Criticism," *The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 8, no. 1 (2021): 7.

[51] Fuhr, Jr. and Köstenberger, *Inductive*, chap. 2.

[52] "Inductive Bible Study: A Step-by-Step Guide," *BibleStudyTips*, accessed March 2024, https://biblestudy.tips/inductive-bible-study/.

[53] Albert C. Outler, *The Works of John Wesley Volume 1: Sermons I (1-33)* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 1–2.

[54] Fuhr, Jr. and Köstenberger, *Inductive*, chap. 15.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Two Blind Men and Mark 8:22–10:52

In an inductive exploration of the structure of Mark, the researcher focuses on the contiguous verses from 8:22 to 10:52 as a coherent literary unit. This division is framed by the two healings of the blind (8:22–26; 10:46–52). These restoration of sight narratives enclose a section highlighting the disciples' misunderstandings of Jesus' Messianic mission, from 8:27 to 10:45. How might this portion align with scholarly views of the narrative framework of Mark?

Exploring the structure of a book of the Bible is a rigorous task. Tannehill notes, "Outlining narratives is not a neat endeavor,"[55] a sentiment clearly reflected in the study of Mark. For Nineham, he comments, regarding the Markan structure, that "scholars are looking for something that is not there and attributing to the Evangelist a higher degree of self-

[55] Robert C. Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role," *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1995): 170.

conscious purpose than he in fact possessed."[56] In contrast, Achtemeier argues that the organization of a narrative, including Mark, indicates theological intent.[57] Similarly, Schweizer claims that by evaluating Markan structure, one can learn more about his purpose for writing, his approach, and his message depicting faith.[58] This divergence in scholarly opinions emphasizes the complex nature of analyzing Mark's design.

Scholars find several considerations in framing Mark. Through geographical elements, Taylor outlines Mark into five divisions, excluding the introduction (1:1–13) and the Passion/Resurrection (14:1–16:8): (1) 1:14–3:6, Galilean ministry; (2) 3:7–6:13, Height of Galilean ministry; (3) 6:14–8:26, Ministry beyond Galilee; (4) 8:27–10:52, Journey to Jerusalem; and (5) 11:1–13:37, Ministry in Jerusalem.[59] In light of theological themes, Peace argues that there should be two main divisions of Mark at 8:30, each with three units concentrating on different titles of Jesus (teacher, prophet, Messiah, Son of Man, Son of David, Son of God, etc.), which presents the disciples' progressive Christological illumination.[60] Concerning literary factors, Witherington explores the 'who' and 'why' questions in Mark, indicating that after addressing the identity of Jesus in 8:27–30, the reason, which the Messianic mission, is revealed in 8:31–10:52, and its fulfillment comes in 11–16.[61] As shown, various scholars propose different frameworks to elucidate Mark's narrative approach, reflecting diverse perspectives on its structure and thematic development.

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[56] Dennis Nineham, *Penguin New Testament Commentary: The Gospel of St. Mark* (NY: Penguin Books, 1963), 29.

[57] Paul Achtemeier, *Mark*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1989), 30.

[58] Eduard Schweizer, "The Portrayal of the Life of Faith in the Gospel of Mark," *Interpretation* 32, no. 4 (1978): 387.

[59] Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1969), passim.

[60] Richard Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 110–156.

[61] Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 38.

However, none of the suggestions above explicitly determine 8:22–10:52 as a concrete literary unit of Mark. Nonetheless, Breytenbach considers 8:22–10:52 as the second portion of Mark, while 1:16–8:21 and 11:1–16:8 are the first and third parts, with 1:1–15 as the general introduction.[62] In these three divisions of Mark, Breytenbach notes that the first section (1:16–8:21) is mostly set in Galilee in the latter half of Herod Antipas' rule (4–39 AD), beginning just before John the Baptist was murdered by this Roman vassal and Herod the Great's son (1:14). Meanwhile, the third section (11:1–16:8) takes place in Jerusalem, in the Roman province of Judea, where Jesus was crucified by the fifth prefect, Pontius Pilate (26–36 AD).[63] Consequently, these portions of Mark reflect a geographical and chronological organization that underscores the Gospel's storyline.

In shaping 8:22–10:52, Breytenbach observes that its literary construct is bookmarked by two episodes, letting the audience know that at the start of the journey (8:22–26) and the end (10:46–52), Jesus healed a blind man. From the beginning to its conclusion, the healing of these two blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52) serves as a framework for the idea that there is something to see or understand.[64] This framing technique emphasizes the thematic significance of spiritual sight throughout this division.

On a similar note, Lee and van der Watt explain that Jesus' instructions on discipleship (8:27–10:45) are 'sandwiched' between the healings of a blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26) and a blind man in Jericho (10:46–52), highlighting the significance of spiritual

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[62] Cilliers Breytenbach, "Incomprehension *en route* to Jerusalem (Mark 8: 22–10: 52)," in *The Gospel according to Mark as Episodic Narrative*, ed. Chiara Ferella and Cilliers Breytenbach (Leiden, Netherland: Brill, 2021), 234.

[63] Breytenbach, "Incomprehension *en route*," 234.

[64] Breytenbach, "Incomprehension *en route*," 235.

perceptiveness or insight as a requirement for being Jesus' disciples.[65] In the same way, Rumple states that the placement of these miracle stories within this literary unit (8:22–26; 10:46–52) is noteworthy. These events successfully structured a section in which Jesus aims to heal His disciples' own spiritual blindness regarding His role as the Messiah. Thus, the sight restoration narratives serve as tangible representations of Jesus' spiritual goal for His followers.[66] Consequently, the healing of the blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26) and the healing of the blind man in Jericho (10:46–52), according to Strass, constitute an *inclusio*.[67] Therefore, this 'sandwich' composition not only frames but also enriches the understanding of discipleship and spiritual insight within the Markan narrative.

Strauss indicates that these two miracle stories, being 'enacted parables,' set the scene for the main portion of 8:22–10:52, where Jesus attempts to open the disciples' eyes by teaching them about the way of the cross, foretelling His death three times.[68] Blomberg contends that the Gospel miracles and the parables attributed to Jesus in the New Testament exhibit remarkable parallels. These parallels extend not only to their overarching purpose but also to specific elements within their narratives.[69] In his assertion, Blomberg underscores the interconnectedness of the miracles and parables as forms of communication, shedding light on their shared theological significance and interpretive depth.[70] Thus, perceiving these miracle stories more than mere historical accounts deepens one's appreciation of their role in elucidating Jesus' teachings and mission.

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[65] Sug-Ho Lee and Jan G. van der Watt, "The Portrayal of the Hardening of the Disciples Hearts in Mark 8:14–21," *HTS Teologiese* 65, no. 1 (2009): 145–149.

[66] John Glenn Rumple, "'Take Up the Cross' (Mark 8:34 and Par.): The History and Function of the Cross Saying in Earliest Christianity" (PhD dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2008), 69–70.

[67] Strauss, *Mark,* 465.

[68] Strauss, *Mark,* 351.

[69] Craig L. Blomberg, "The Miracles as Parables," *Gospel Perspectives* 6, (1986): 327.

[70] Blomberg, "The Miracles as Parables," 327.

Consequently, Piland argues that the healing of the blind man in Bethsaida functions as a parable, explaining the two-stage healing process through symbolism and analogy.[71] Additionally, the unique recording of this event by Mark highlights the Twelve's misunderstanding of Jesus. Despite their vague perception, the miracle story implies that they will eventually gain full insight.[72] Similarly, Strauss notes that as an enacted parable, the two-stage healing in 8:22–26 represents the apostles' gradual progression toward spiritual understanding.[73] In this way, the two-stage healing serves as a symbolic representation of the disciples' journey from spiritual blindness to enlightenment.

With regard to the healing of the blind man in Jericho (10:46–52), Huculak perceives several motifs. The necessity of spiritual awareness comes first. The second is that in answering the call to discipleship, one must walk in the path of the cross. Thirdly, it reaffirms that appreciating everyone's worth is a must, both in terms of their ability to approach God and adhere to Christ as a disciple.[74] According to Menken, 10:46–52, being a miracle story, has most of the characteristics of a call narrative and others that are uncommon in a Synoptic healing miracle.[75] Therefore, the Jericho healing episode not only concludes the Gospel's trajectory but also reinforces key discipleship themes.

Furthermore, Strauss emphasizes that in addition to bringing together several significant Markan threads, the healing of the blind man in Jericho is a fitting capstone to

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[71] Jason Piland, "Mark 8:22–26: Jesus the Parable-Worker or The Healing of the Blind Man at Bethsaida as a Parable of the Disciples' Faith," lecture, NT 508: Gospels, Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, 2016, PDF, 26, https://cdn.rts.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Gospels-Paper-Mark-8.22-26-as-Parable_Piland.pdf.

[72] Piland, "Mark 8:22–26," 26.

[73] Strauss, *Mark,* 351.

[74] James Huculak, "The value of the physically challenged, the neglected, those without Christ (Mark 10:46-52)" *Journal of Asian Mission* 3, no. 1 (2001): 21.

[75] Maarten J. J. Menken, "The call of blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10: 46-52)" *HTS: Theological Studies* 61, no. 1_2 (2005): 273.

Jesus' journey on the way to Jerusalem.[76] He concludes that Mark might have included the restoration of sight narratives (8:22–26; 10:46–52) for chronological and geographical context, but also to advance literary and theological purposes. This contrasts the spiritual blindness of the religious leaders and the Twelve's poor vision of Jesus with the two blind men who had their sight restored, framing 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit.[77] Ultimately, this *inclusio* not only provides a cohesive narrative structure but also highlights the broader theological implications of the Gospel's portrayal of spiritual sight.

Spiritual Blindness of Jesus' Disciples in 8:27–10:45

Probing the recurring failures of the Twelve in Mark, particularly evident within 8:22–26 and 10:46–52, sheds light on their profound need for renewed spiritual sight. This narrative section underscores their journey toward comprehending Jesus' sacrificial service and suffering on the cross, His Messianic mission, in 8:27–10:45.

The misunderstandings of the apostles regarding Jesus' redemptive work as the Messiah are apparent throughout Mark. Tyson contends that Mark uses the Twelve's spiritual blindness as a plot device to illustrate the Messianic secret motif.[78] According to Wrede, the Messianic secret is a theme throughout Mark. In this pattern, Jesus commands individuals to keep quiet about His Messianic identity.[79] Commenting on Mark 4, France and Tolbert note that the secret is given to the Twelve, but for outsiders, it remains an unexplained riddle.[80] However, Beavis observes that despite their privileged knowledge of Jesus' parables, the

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[76] Strauss, *Mark*, 466.
[77] Strauss, *Mark*, 465.
[78] Joseph B. Tyson, "The Blindness of the Disciples in Mark," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1961): 261.
[79] Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, passim.
[80] France, *Mark*, 269; M.A. Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's world in literary-historical perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989), 235.

apostles still fail to understand.[81] Hur argues that to explain the Twelve's confusion when Jesus foretells His death, Mark creates several passages that depict their ignorance.[82] This progression of misunderstanding unveils the layers of complexity in the disciples' development, where intellectual knowledge does not always translate into spiritual insight.

In addition, Lee and van der Watt point out that as the story approaches its climax in Mark, the Twelve make no meaningful progress in their faith and understanding, in contrast to Jesus' teaching on the nature of true discipleship. Instead, they are inappropriately preoccupied with their own status within the coming kingdom. However, from a literary perspective, it is intriguing how the apostles' lack of perception (1:1–8:26) seems to grow, leading to misunderstanding (8:27–10:45), and ultimately to denying Jesus (chs. 14–15).[83] In this literary arc, the gradual deepening of their blindness mirrors their internal struggle to reconcile worldly ambition with the call to self-denial.

On the other hand, Blackley argues that the presentation of the Twelve in Mark is influenced by their resistance and opposition to the Gentile mission, causing them to fail to see the universal scope of Jesus' Messianic mission.[84] Nevertheless, Rumple suggests that with Jesus' passion predictions, Mark intends readers to identify with the apostles' inability to perceive Jesus' purpose as the Messiah and display on their roles as His followers.[85] The

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[81] M.A. Beavis *Mark's audience: The literary and social setting of Mark 4:11–12* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 107.

[82] Unsok Hur, "The Disciples' Lack of Comprehension in the Gospel of Mark," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 49, no. 1 (2019): 41.

[83] Lee and van der Watt, "Portrayal of the Hardening," 145–149.

[84] J. Ted Blakley, "Incomprehension or Resistance? The Markan Disciples and the Narrative Logic of Mark 4:1–8:30" (PhD diss., University of St. Andrews, 2008), 326–327.

[85] Rumple, "'Take up the Cross,'" 68.

disciples' shortcomings reflect the tension between the familiar and the radical newness of Jesus' mission—a mission that extends beyond the confines of their expectations.

Noting Peter as representative of the Twelve, his confusion despite his confession of Jesus as the 'Christ' (8:29, 32) is immediately corrected by Jesus, who addresses Peter as 'Satan' (8:33). Keith further expounds that Peter is unable to accept that the expected Messiah-King will have to suffer inevitable death, which connotes a total defeat.[86] Referring to the apostles' erroneous conceptions of Jesus' Messianic mission, Rumple describes their story as leading to a "demoralizing end for the disciples in view of their failure to remain faithful to Jesus amidst His passion (14:28), albeit with a glimmer of hope for a resolution (16:7)."[87] This interplay between failure and hope paints a dynamic portrait of discipleship, where moments of misstep are woven into the larger redemptive theme of the Markan narrative.

Throughout the Gospel, especially in 8:27–10:45, Lee and van der Watt conclude that by offering the reader an occasionally unfavorable example of being a disciple, these episodes shed light on various facets of Markan discipleship. The negative portrayal of the Twelve is only one component of its larger composite, which also includes Jesus as the ultimate paradigm and Mark's use of other characters as model disciples.[88] Thus, the apostles' failings, rather than diminishing their significance, instead emphasize the profound contrast between human frailty and divine purpose, a tension central to Mark's vision of following Jesus Christ.

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[86] Chris Keith, "The Markan Portrayal of Jesus' Identity," *Leaven* 19, no. 1 (2011): 21.
[87] Rumple, "'Take up the Cross,'" 68.
[88] Lee and van der Watt, "Portrayal of the Hardening," 145–149.

Similarly, Gatawa views Mark's presentation of Jesus, His followers, and other characters as a dramatization of an ideological conflict that would have facilitated the formation of a social identity within the Markan community.[89] Consequently, Tannehill claims that the narratives of the Twelve's failures serve as a tool to shatter and split apart convictions of being sufficient followers. Participating in the story helps Christians see the difference between who we are supposed to be and what we can accomplish—represented by Jesus—and who we are in reality—represented by the apostles.[90] In this self-reflective engagement, Mark invites the audience to grapple with their own limitations and the ever-present need for grace as they walk the path of discipleship.

Mark's Portrayal of Jesus as the Crucified Messiah

Seeking to uncover the connection between the restoration of sight narratives (8:22–26; 10:46–52) and a section featuring apostles' blunders as disciples (8:27–10:45), this study analyzes how these episodes highlight the Twelve's struggle to perceive Jesus' Messianic mission. Mark's depiction of Jesus' affliction and crucifixion as the Messiah, as seen through His passion predictions in 8:31–33; 9:31–32; and 10:32–34, among other texts, forms a critical backdrop. Through these scenes, Mark draws the reader into a deeper exploration of what it means to see who Jesus is as the Messiah.

As a Gospel, Mark naturally presents the story of Jesus. Petersen suggests that the 'ideological' perspective of Mark as a narrator is seen through the depiction of Jesus as the main protagonist, whom he introduces as a trustworthy character.[91] In 1:1, Jesus is vividly

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[89] Laurence Gatawa, "Comparative Characterizations of Jesus and the Disciples in the Gospel of Mark, with Special Reference to Ancient Oral Narration" (PhD diss., University of Middlesex, 2016), 259.

[90] Robert C. Tannehill, "Reading It Whole: The Function of Mark 8:34–35 in Mark's Story," *Quarterly Review* 2 (1982): 76.

[91] Norman Petersen, "Point of View in Mark's Narrative," *Semeia* 12 (1978): 97–121.

identified as "… Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (ESV), which is affirmed by a voice from heaven in 1:11: "… You are my beloved Son" (ESV). Regarding Jesus' identity, Keith mentions that Mark gives considerable attention to presenting who Jesus is, who He is not, and how to know who He really is.[92] Mark's direct introduction of Jesus as the highly anticipated 'Christ' stirs up the Jewish expectations of a king who will deliver the Jews from foreign rule and reestablish a kingdom in Jerusalem under the reign of the God of Israel.[93] In doing so, Mark sets the stage for a dramatic unfolding of a Messiah unlike any the people envisioned at that time.

Furthermore, Jesus is also identified as the 'Son of Man' multiple times in Mark, all coming from dialogues of Jesus.[94] Chronis indicates that the 'Son of Man' sayings in Mark are generally structured in three manners: (1) relating to Jesus' earthly ministry at the beginning; (2) relating to Jesus' suffering and death towards the middle; and (3) relating to Jesus' future exaltation and return at the end.[95] Consequently, Breytenbach states that whenever Jesus speaks to the Twelve regarding His suffering and death as the Son of Man, He alludes to OT texts.[96] This careful progression of the Son of Man reveals Mark's deliberate weaving of past, present, and future into the narrative of Jesus' Messianic persona, embracing His mission.

Moule and Hooker contend that the affliction of the Son of Man in Mark can be derived from Daniel 7:21.[97] However, Marshall argues that it is difficult to perceive Daniel

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[92] Keith, "The Markan Portrayal," 20.
[93] Keith, "The Markan Portrayal," 20.
[94] Mark 2:10, 28; 8:31, 38; 9:9, 12; 10:33, 45; 13:26; 14:21, 41, 62.
[95] Harry L. Chronis, "To Reveal and to Conceal: A Literary-Critical Perspective on 'the Son of Man' in Mark," *New Testament Studies 51*, no. 4 (2005): 479.
[96] Breytenbach, "Narrating the Death," 154.
[97] C. F. D. Moule, *The Phenomenon of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1967), 82–99.; M. D. Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark* (London: SCPK, 1967), 108–109.

as the source of this presentation.[98] Marshall agrees along with France that the Son of Man sayings in Mark result from integrating it with the Servant of YHWH, clearly depicted as a suffering figure in Isaiah 53.[99] Likewise, Bond asserts that the most acknowledged view of Mark's source that interpreted Jesus' death on the cross is Isaiah's Suffering Servant.[100] This blending of prophetic traditions deepens the theological significance of Jesus' crucifixion in Mark's portrayal.

Contemporary readers of Mark describe Jesus' foretelling of His suffering and death as 'passion predictions,' found in 8:31–33; 9:31–32; and 10:32–34. However, Keith notes that in antiquity, the concept of the Crucified Messiah was an obstacle to the Jews and an absurdity to the Gentiles (1 Cor. 1:18ff).[101] Thus, in understanding the crucifixion of Jesus during the early church, Breytenbach believes that it should come before its interpretation.[102]

As Jesus announces His death (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34), He accepts His death upon Himself (14:36) as something that must occur by divine ordinance (8:31–33) and declares that as the Son of Man, He came to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (10:45). These points emphasize that the Christian interpretation of Christ's death presupposes His crucifixion.[103] Hence, seeing Jesus on the cross leads to the question of why it is necessary to

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[98] I. Howard Marshall, "The Death of Jesus in Recent New Testament Study," *Word and World* 3, no.1 (1983): 14.

[99] R. T. France, "The Servant of the Lord in the Teaching of Jesus," *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968); 26–52; Marshall, "The Death of Jesus," 14.

[100] Helen K. Bond, "A Fitting End? Self-Denial and a Slave's Death in Mark's Life of Jesus," *New Testament Studies* 65, no. 4 (2019): 425.

[101] Keith, "The Markan Portrayal," 22.

[102] Breytenbach, "Narrating the Death," 154.

[103] Breytenbach, "Narrating the Death," 166.

understand the reason Jesus was crucified.[104] Here, Mark's narrative invites readers to contemplate the paradoxical necessity of the cross in defining Jesus as the Messiah.

Crucially, the centurion who saw Jesus' suffering and death on the cross is the first and only instance of a human character realizing Jesus' Messianic identity as the 'Son of God' (15:39), which is how Mark introduces Jesus, along with 'Christ' (1:1). Meyer emphasizes that only Mark, out of all the Synoptic writers, manages to keep the centurion's confession tense in a truly creative manner through the Messianic secret, in which Jesus discourages the confession of His Messianic identity by His miracles. Yet, during Jesus' crucifixion, the centurion—a Gentile like many early Christians—confesses a paradoxical acknowledgment: In His suffering, Jesus is the Son of God; in His weakness, Jesus is powerful; and in His death, Jesus is God with us.[105] Akin to this, Keith concludes:

> "Mark's portrayal of various characters' recognition of Jesus as Son of God provides a powerful statement on Jesus' identity to readers. According to Mark, human characters apprehend Jesus as Son of God only by viewing the cross.That is, although Mark informs his reader that Jesus is the Son of God at the beginning of his Gospel, he shows the reader what this means through his narration of the centurion's statement. Just as Jesus defines his status as Messiah in reference to his rejection and death at Caesarea Philippi, the centurion identifies Jesus as Son of God on the same grounds while he stands at the foot of the cross. 'This,' the Markan narrator pronounces, "is how you know that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God."[106]

Mark ultimately calls the reader to confront the profound truth that only by seeing Jesus as the Crucified Messiah can one fully grasp the mystery of His human-divine identity, and the seeming preposterousness of His mission.

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[104] Breytenbach, "Narrating the Death," 166.

[105] Marvin Meyer, "Taking up the Cross and Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark," *CTJ* 37 (2002): 236.

[106] Keith, "The Markan Portrayal," 23.

Discipleship and Taking up a Cross in Mark 8:34

Scrutinizing the interrelationships across passages from 8:22 to 10:52, this investigation delves into how Mark fuses the motif of 'taking up the cross' (8:34) into his nuanced portrayal of discipleship. This close reading reveals that Mark intentionally binds the call to discipleship and seeing its cost, presenting the cross symbolic for self-denial required for following Jesus.

In the NT, the subject of discipleship is introduced in the Gospels. Meyer emphasizes that discipleship is particularly significant.[107] Brower and van Eck describe the Messianic identity and mission of Jesus as establishing the character and cause of being disciples.[108] In this context, Brower stresses that the call to be followers of Jesus is a call to cross-bearing discipleship, a central feature of Mark as the entire narrative revolves around Jesus' death on the cross.[109] This notion aligns with Doe's emphasis on the epithet of Jesus as the suffering Son of God, as well as with Cockerill's remarks on the paradigm of Jesus on the cross for His disciples taking up their own cross in 8:34.[110] Thus, discipleship is inseparable from a recognition of the Crucified Messiah, whose example sets the foundation for the life of every believer and follower of Jesus.

Subsequently, Lumingkewas et al. argue that 8:31–38 presents Jesus' call for His disciples' attention from their diverse perspectives to understand and partake in His identity and mission. Thus, in light of the fact that the disciples will share His resurrection at the end

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[107] Meyer, "Taking up the Cross," 230–231.

[108] Kent Brower, "'We are able': Cross-bearing Discipleship and the Way of the Lord in Mark," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 29 (2007): 189; Ernest van Eck, "Mission, Identity and Ethics in Mark: Jesus, the Patron for Outsiders," *HTS Teologiese Studies* 69, no. 1 (2013): https://doi.org/10.4102/ hts.v69i1.2003.

[109] Brower, "'We are able,'" 178.

[110] Gareth L. Cockerill, "The Invitation-Structure and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark," *The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 28–43.

of time, they must accept suffering, rejection, and death in this life, as Jesus did.[111] Similarly, Meyer agrees that following Jesus involves embracing the cross, which is closely associated with the theme of Markan discipleship.[112] Hence, Jesus' disciples must see and understand Him, His Messianic identity, and mission, as it is essential and influential in a follower's faith journey.[113] Discipleship, therefore, becomes not just a process toward understanding but a conscious participation in Jesus' path, reflecting the eternal implications of His death and resurrection.

Notably, Mark 8:34 provides a vivid connection between being a follower of Jesus and taking up a cross, consisting of Jesus' main statement for His disciples to take up their own cross and follow Him. Rumple mentions that the cross saying emphasizes the disciple's general commission to 'follow after' Jesus in its broadest literary context—the entirety of Mark (1:17–18, 20). Beginning with Jesus' own commission from God (1:11), Mark sets up a story in which the implications of that charge progressively become clear as Jesus conducts His earthly ministry.[114] Regarding Jesus' fate according to the Father's will, Jesus is direct and clear. It is evident to Him that He is traveling to Jerusalem to die.[115] This trajectory toward the cross becomes the template for how disciples are to fix their eyes, marked by self-sacrifice and submission to God's will.

Conversely, Breytenbach contends that the preceding context of 8:36–37 suggests that discipleship—rather than Jesus' death—gives life to those who follow Him. Hence, the

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[111] Marthin Steven Lumingkewas, Bobby Kurnia Putrawan, and Susanti Embong Bulan, "The Meaning of Jesus' Identity in Mark 8:31-38: A Reflection for God's People," *Millah* 21, no. 1 (2021): 256.

[112] Meyer, "Taking up the Cross," 231.

[113] Lumingkewas, et al., "The Meaning of Jesus," 256.

[114] Rumple, "'Take Up The Cross,'" 67.

[115] Brower, "'We are able,'" 186.

disciples will be saved in the future or receive eternal life when they follow Him and give up their lives for His and the gospel's sake (8:35; 10:30).[116] This dynamic reinforces the paradox of the good news: that in losing one's life for Jesus, true life is gained, and the call to discipleship is a call to live within this tension.

However, Brower argues that a disciple's death serves the cause, not the redemption. In Mark, bearing a cross is an inevitable result of following and not a means to redeem oneself. In contemporary times, the call to all aspiring followers to 'take up their cross' (8:33–9:1) emphasizes Jesus' own journey to the cross and is regarded as the model for how all disciples are to live their lives.[117] The path of discipleship, therefore, is a reflection of Christ's own suffering, not as a method of salvation but as the cost of truly following Him.

Hall clarifies that Christians are called to suffer like Jesus, not because suffering is inherently good, but because suffering exists, meaning that God's creations, including humans, are already suffering because 'the whole creation groans.' Therefore, it is a matter of willingness, preparedness, and endurance to suffer like the Messiah on the cross.[118] Such affliction, rather than an end in itself, becomes the context in which faith is tested and strengthened, pointing beyond present pain to the hope of future glory.

For Lumingkewas and others, viewing 8:31–38, people are encouraged to look in the mirror as they embody the persona and purpose of Jesus.[119] The primary tenet of discipleship is to follow Jesus on His way—the route leading to the cross in Mark. However, Brower points out that human resistance to cross-bearing is expected, which links people with the

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[116] Breytenbach, "Narrating the Death," 161.
[117] Brower, "'We are able,'" 179.
[118] Douglas John Hall, *The Cross in our Context* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2004), 152.
[119] Lumingkewas, et al., "The Meaning of Jesus," 269.

forces of evil working against God's will.[120] This contestation accentuates the ongoing battle within every disciple of Jesus, where the call to self-denial is constantly challenged by the deceitful agents of self-preservation.

Consequently, Skinner states that realizing that one's way of life and identity is at odds with the prevailing currents in society is the act of taking up a cross, representing the denial of oneself by the world.[121] Ultimately, according to Brower, people must pay attention to Jesus, the suffering Son of Man who proclaims His own destiny and calls others to follow Him if they want to focus their thoughts on divine rather than human matters. God's way, which is the path of cross-bearing discipleship, is what God has outlined for His beloved Son and His beloved Son's followers.[122] Thus, discipleship is not merely an individual call but a cosmic alignment with God's redemptive purpose, challenging worldly priorities and values.

Tanner asserts that the only appropriate response individuals can give is complete surrender to Jesus, even at the cost of one's own life. Disciples should be willing to suffer to follow and serve Jesus, just as Jesus willingly suffered for humanity.[123] Therefore, to embrace the cost of discipleship in 8:34, a person should be free from the patterns of selfishness, receiving a new set of eyes, a new heart, and a new understanding of one's identity and mission modeled after Jesus.[124] In this way, the act of cross-bearing transforms the believer from the inside out, reorienting their entire being toward the example of the Messiah.

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[120] Brower, "'We are able,'" 186.

[121] Matthew L. Skinner, "Denying Self, Bearing a Cross, and Following Jesus: Unpacking the Imperatives of Mark 8:34," *Word and World* 23, no. 3 (2003): 329–330.

[122] Brower, "'We are able,'" 187.

[123] Paul Tanner, "The Cost of Discipleship: Losing One's Life for Jesus' Sake," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 56, no. 1 (2013): 60.

[124] Skinner, "Denying Self," 330.

In this chapter, the researcher explores scholarly perspectives on the structural composition of Mark. Various considerations have led to several suggestions regarding the Markan structure. Notably, some scholars propose that a distinct literary unit spans from 8:22 to 10:52, framed by two restoration of sight narratives: the first in Bethsaida (8:22–26) and the second in Jericho (10:46–52).

The theme of the spiritual blindness of the Twelve takes center stage within this division, especially in 8:27 to 10:45, where the apostles struggle to fully grasp Jesus' true Messianic identity and mission. While Mark portrays Jesus as the Crucified Messiah—emphasizing His suffering and death on the cross for humanity's redemption—this concept extends beyond Jesus alone.

Several theologians argue that Mark also highlights a cross-bearing discipleship, as explicated in Mark 8:34. They discuss the intricate message of Mark, shedding light on the disciples' evolving understanding and the profound implications of the cross in their journey of faith, following Jesus on the way.

CHAPTER III

DISCUSSION OF METHODOLOGY

This research employs an inductive approach to the Gospel of Mark, focusing on the thematic significance and structural function of 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit within the broader narrative. It examines how the healings of two blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52) serve as narrative brackets, framing a critical section that reveals the Twelve's spiritual blindness in perceiving Jesus' Messianic mission, which requires His death on the cross (8:27–10:45). Additionally, this study analyzes the intricate connections among passages within 8:27–10:45, as a section, illuminating Jesus' call for cross-bearing discipleship (8:34). This methodology aims to infer theological implications regarding what it means to be Jesus' followers in relation to spiritual insight into the essence of Jesus' crucifixion.

To achieve these objectives, the researcher utilizes successive hermeneutical steps:

1. A survey of the Book of Mark.

2. A survey of 8:22–10:52 as a division within the Markan narrative.

3. A detailed analysis of 8:27–10:45 as a section within this division.

4. Selection and answering of interpretive questions raised from observation.

5. Presentation of theological implications.

Three Levels of Observation

In his article, Fuhr quotes the renowned German-Swiss theologian Adolf Schlatter, who eloquently states that the task of hermeneutics is "seeing what is there."[125] Similarly, Jensen describes the observation phase in a survey study as "seeing what the text says."[126] With IBS, this study follows three levels of observation: book survey of Mark; book division survey of 8:22–10:52; and detailed section analysis of 8:27–10:45. This approach ensures that the full narrative is understood, from its overarching themes down to the finer details of specific passages.

Survey of a Book

A survey of a Biblical book involves a comprehensive evaluation from various perspectives, also known as synthesis, overview, skyscraper view, panoramic study, or bird's eye view.[127] Jensen argues that considering the big picture (survey) before examining individual components (analysis) is essential for thoroughly studying the Bible.[128] In this

[125] Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Adolf Schlatter: A Model of Scholarship," *Biblical Foundations*, accessed February 2024, https://biblicalfoundations.org/adolf-schlatter/.

[126] Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen's Survey of the New Testament* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1981), chap. 3, ePub.

[127] Jensen, *Jensen's Survey*, chap. 3.

[128] Jensen, *Jensen's Survey*, chap. 3.

study, the researcher conducts a survey of Mark as a book in several processes (see Figure 3.1).

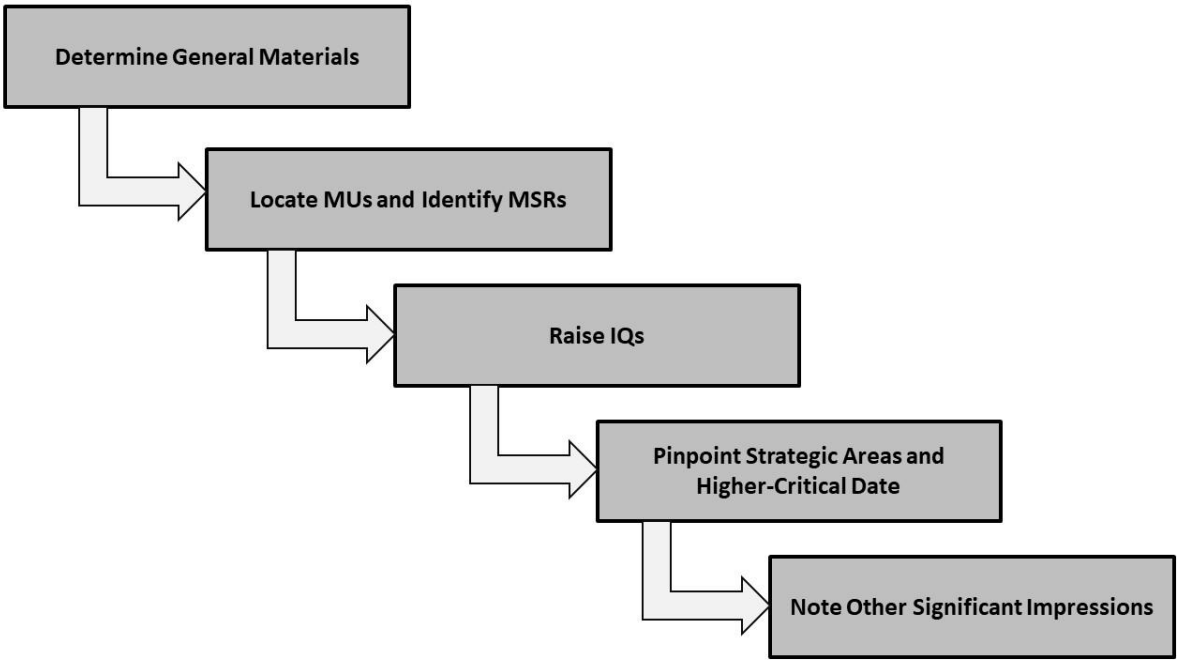

Figure 3.1 Five Phases of Book Survey, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

Figure 3.1 presents the five phases of book survey: (1) determine general material of Mark; (2) locate main units (MUs) and identify major structural relationships (MSRs); (3) raise IQs based on these relationships; (4) pinpoint strategic areas and higher-critical data along; and (5) note other significant impressions of Mark as an entire narrative.[129] This holistic examination prepares the foundation for deeper, more nuanced study, allowing the Markan texts' complexities to be appreciated in their proper contexts.

In connection with this, Chafer and Walvoord emphasize that it is essential to believe that God, in His power as Creator, communicates with His creatures and makes His

[129] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 10.

intentions known through various human writers.[130] Consequently, Rendsburg recognizes the authors of the Bible as exceptional *literati*,[131] whose proficiency enhances the impact of their overarching messages.[132] Such perspectives highlight the intentional literary design Biblical authors used to shape their messages.

Building on this idea, Bauer and Traina suggest that any cohesive entity consists of two main components: material and structure.[133] Regarding the primary emphasis of a Biblical book, they identify five possibilities: (1) biographical, focusing on persons; (2) historical, showcasing events; (3) chronological, centering on timelines; (4) geographical, featuring places; and (5) ideological, presenting ideas.[134] The interplay between these components supports that the theological and literary weight of the book resonates throughout the survey.

Moreover, understanding the sequence within a book often influences its interpretation.[135] Van Benthem explains that dynamic information flow occurs at various linguistic levels.[136] In this study, locating MUs facilitates comprehension of the book's movement.[137] Jensen specifies two major goals of a survey study: (1) to see each component in the context of its intended emphasis and (2) to see each component in light of the others.[138]

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[130] Lewis Sperry Chafer and John F. Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes: 52 Vital Doctrines of the Scripture Simplified and Explained* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974), chap. 2, ePub.

[131] *Literati* (pl. n.) are well-educated people who are interested in literature.

[132] Garry A. Rendsburg, *How the Bible is Written* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2019), 2.

[133] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[134] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[135] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[136] John van Benthem, "Logic and the Flow of Information," *Studies in Logic and the Foundations of Mathematics* 134, (1995): 693–724.

[137] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[138] Jensen, *Jensen's Survey*, chap. 3.

Thus, surveying Mark as a book and dividing it into MUs as broadly as possible offers a more exhaustive view of the narrative-as-a-whole.[139]

Subsequently, in identifying structural hints, Larsen highlights how scholars utilize literary devices.[140] These factors, along with other elements, aid in discerning the book's units. For an inductive approach, the researcher employs two intertwined techniques to organize Mark as a book in a progressive manner using MUs and MSRs (see Figure 3.2).

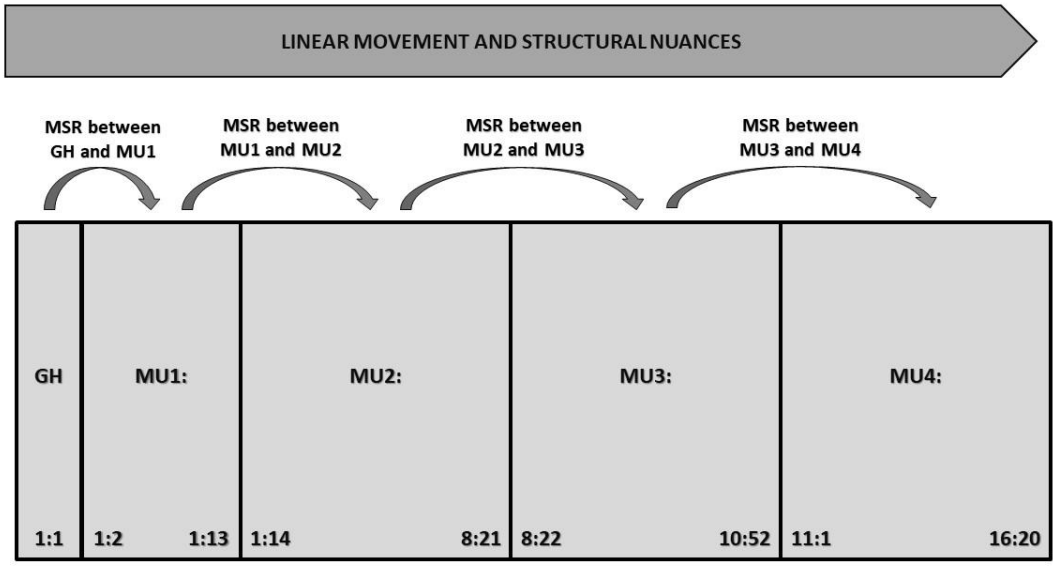

Figure 3.2 Two Methods in Structuring a Book, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

Figure 3.2 indicates two methods in structuring a book: (1) locating MUs, demonstrating primary shifts of emphasis within the book; and (2) noting implications from the identified MSRs.[141] Such attention to linear movement and structural nuances in

[139] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.
[140] Kevin W. Larsen, "The Structure of Mark's Gospel: Current Proposals," *CBR* 3, no. 1 (2004): 152.
[141] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

surveying a book allows the reader to see the theological and narrative flow more effectively, ensuring a substantial interpretation of the text.

Note that locating the breakdown of MUs serves several purposes: (1) determining dominant themes or issues that control blocks of material; (2) ascertaining the relative amount of space dedicated to various themes or issues; (3) discerning where a passage fits within the book's scheme; and (4) identifying turning points significant for understanding the book's message.[142]

Consequently, MSRs address how different ideas and motifs are dynamically arranged throughout the book. These structures can be categorized into recurrence (repetition), semantic (sense connection), and rhetorical (arrangement) (see Table 3.1).[143] This classification helps in understanding the underlying patterns and themes that contribute to the overall narrative and message of the text.

Table 3.1 Major Structural Relationships (MSRs), adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

Major Structural Relationship (MSR)	Definition	Basic Function	Examples
Recurrence	The repeated mention of a term, character, or concept throughout a text, highlighting its significance and inviting deeper exploration of its meaning.	1. To signal importance for the reader to grasp. 2. To trace character or concept evolution across the narrative. 3. To enhance understanding through comparative interpretation.	The character of Nicodemus appears throughout the Gospel of John, evolving from a timid inquirer to a courageous disciple.
Semantic Structures	These feature a binary or dual progression	To show relationships in	Contrast; Comparison; Climax;

[142] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.
[143] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

	reflecting a transition from one thing to another.	meaning or 'sense connections.'	Particularization; Generalization; Causation; Cruciality; Summarization; Interrogation; Particularization/ Realization; Instrumentalization
Contrast	The association of opposites or differing elements that the writer aims to highlight.	To emphasize differences and invite deeper understanding of concepts.	In Psalm 1, verses 1–3 describe the way of the righteous, while verses 4–6 depict the way of the wicked, illustrating the stark contrast between the two paths.
Comparison	The association of like things or elements, emphasizing their similarities.	To highlight similarities and deepen understanding of concepts.	In Psalm 1, the psalmist compares the righteous to "trees planted by streams of water" (v. 3) and the wicked to "chaff that the wind drives away" (v. 4), illustrating their contrasting states through comparison.
Climax	The movement from the lesser to the greater, leading up in a high point or culmination.	To create a sense of anticipation and resolution in the narrative.	In the book of Acts, the climax occurs when Paul reaches Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire, where he spreads the gospel unhindered before Caesar, marking a significant moment in the narrative (Acts 28).
Particularization	The movement from general to particular, encompassing various forms like identificational, ideological, historical, geographical, and biographical particularization.	To add clarity and detail by expanding a general statement into specific information, often enhancing interpretive depth.	1. Identificational: Joel 1:1 ascribes the content to "the word of the LORD." 2. Ideological: Proverbs 1:7 sets the theme of wisdom. 3. Historical: John 1:14 describes Jesus' incarnation, further detailed in the Gospel. 4. Geographical:

			Genesis shifts from the cosmos to Canaan. 5. Biographical: Genesis narrows focus from humanity to Abraham's family.
Generalization	The movement from particular to general. It reverses particularization and can take several forms, including identificational, ideological, historical, geographical, and biographical generalization.	To summarize specific information into a broader statement, enhancing understanding of essential themes or overall message.	1. Identificational: Hebrews 13:22 summarizes the book as a "word of exhortation." 2. Ideological: Hosea 14:9 encapsulates wisdom themes. 3. Historical: Judges 21:25 summarizes Israel's state without a king. 4. Geographical: Acts 1:8 outlines the gospel's spread from Jerusalem outward. 5. Biographical: Ruth's genealogy links her story to Israel's lineage.
Causation	The movement from cause to effect, including types such as historical, logical, and hortatory causation.	To illustrate how one event, idea, or action directly leads to another, clarifying progression and implications within the text.	1. Historical: In Amos, Israel's sin leads to God's judgment ("Because Israel has sinned, therefore God will judge Israel"). 2. Logical: Hebrews 8:1 concludes Jesus' high priesthood ("Now the main point… we have such a high priest"). 3. Hortatory: Ephesians 4:1 transitions from doctrine to exhortation ("Therefore… lead a life worthy of the calling").
Substantiation	The movement from effect to cause, typically indicated by connectives such as 'because' or 'for,' encompassing types	To provide reasoning for actions, statements, or events, clarifying motivations and	1. Historical: In Jonah 4:1–2, Jonah explains his flight to Tarshish ("I fled… because I knew you are a gracious God…"), revealing his

	that parallel causation.	justifications within the text.	true motivation for disobeying God's call. 2. Hortatory: Revelation chapters 2–3 give exhortations to remain faithful, substantiated by the unfolding judgment in chapters 4–22. 3. Logical: In Romans 1:16–17, Paul asserts the gospel's power for salvation, with the following verses supporting this claim through theological reasoning.
Cruciality	The movement characterized by a pivotal passage that causes a radical reversal or total change in direction, effectively canceling out the material that precedes it. Both negative and positive cruciality can occur.	To highlight a major turning point that redefines the preceding context, impacting the interpretation of subsequent material.	1. Negative Cruciality: In 2 Samuel, David's reign goes from prosperity to disaster due to his sin with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11–12). 2. Positive Cruciality: In Acts, Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus turns him from a persecutor into a proponent of the gospel (Acts 9:3–19a).
Summarization	The process of abridgment or compendium that either precedes or follows a unit of material, serving as a point-by-point recapitulation. It is similar to generalization or particularization but is more precise, capturing essential components of the summarized content.	To highlight essential elements and significance of the material being summarized.	In Esther 9:24–28, the summary highlights Haman's plot and its reversal, emphasizing the importance of Purim. In Acts 1:8, the summary outlines the church's witness expanding from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.
Interrogation	The use of a question or problem followed	To guide understanding by	In Psalm 15, the psalmist questions who

	by its answer or solution, found in two forms: a straightforward question followed by an answer, and a statement of a problem followed by a solution.	posing questions or problems and providing answers or solutions, emphasizing key themes.	may abide in the Lord's presence, followed by the answer detailing the righteous. In Genesis, the problem of sin is followed by God's covenant with Abraham, leading to blessing.
Preparation/ Realization	The inclusion of background or setting for events or ideas, where preparation refers to the introductory material and realization denotes the event or idea for which the preparation is made.	To establish context for understanding subsequent events or ideas, enhancing the reader's interpretation.	In Job, chapters 1–2 provide the background of Job's blessings and the challenge from Satan, setting the stage for the dialogues on suffering. In Mark, the account of John the Baptist introduces Jesus's ministry, guiding the interpretation of the narrative that follows.
Instrumentalization	The movement from means to end, expressed in two forms: a statement of purpose that includes explicit declarations of purpose, and a description of means that outlines how something is accomplished.	To clarify the relationship between means and intended outcomes, guiding interpretation and understanding.	In John 20:31, the purpose is stated: "These are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah." In Hebrews, atonement is described as coming by means of Christ's sacrificial work, contrasting with the Levitical system.
Rhetorical Structures	These involve the arrangement of material within the text, pertaining to the ordering or placement of elements.	To show relationships in arranging elements, enhancing semantic relationships.	Interchange; *Inclusio*; Chiasm; Intercalation
Interchange	The exchanging or alternation of certain elements in an a-b-a-b arrangement, where contrasting elements strengthen the overall message or theme.	To enhance relationships of causation and substantiation through alternating elements.	In Micah, the structure alternates between declarations of guilt and judgment of Israel and promises of restoration. In Hebrews, it alternates

			between theological arguments and corresponding exhortations, highlighting their causal relationship.
Inclusio	The repetition of words, phrases, or concepts at the beginning and end of a unit, creating a bracket effect that establishes the main thought or essential concern of the text.	To frame the text and highlight the central themes or ideas, establishing connections between the outer and inner content.	In Psalm 150, the phrase “Praise the LORD!” is repeated at the beginning and end, framing the intervening verses that describe how to praise Him. In Matthew, the book begins with “God is with us” (1:23) and ends with “I am with you always” (28:20), emphasizing God’s continual presence.
Chiasm	The repetition of elements in inverted order, typically structured as a-b-b’-a’, sometimes including a middle element (a-b-c-b’-a’), creating a pattern that invites interpretation of corresponding elements.	To emphasize relationships by reflecting parallels and contrasts, inviting the reader to interpret elements in light of one another.	In Psalm 67, the structure moves from God's blessing (A) to nations' praise (B), back to God's blessing (A’), framing the central theme of joyful worship among the nations (C). In Matthew 5:45, it highlights that God blesses both the good (B) and the evil (A), emphasizing the universality of divine blessings.
Intercalation	The insertion of one literary unit within another, typically splitting a narrative to interpose another narrative. This structure prompts readers to consider the relationship between the intercalated material and its surrounding context.	To create pauses in the narrative, prompting reflection on the relationship between intercalated and surrounding materials.	In Mark 5:21–43, the story of the woman with a hemorrhage is intercalated within the story of Jairus's daughter, highlighting themes of faith and healing. In Genesis 38, the story of Tamar interrupts Joseph's narrative, contrasting Joseph’s purity with Judah's moral failure.

Table 3.1 indicates the different MSRs, with their definitions, basic functions, and several examples.[144] Structural relationships exist at all literature levels and can be explicit or implicit.[145] These observations on MSRs serve as valuable tools for comprehending how Mark progresses and develops its theological messages, enabling a profound view of its narrative strategies.

Conversely, in evaluating 'questions,' Ciardelli's dissertation challenges the long-standing assumption that inquiries have no place in logic, expanding the idea of implications to capture patterns through questions.[146] Questions are also crucial in this study, particularly raising IQs (see Figure 3.3). These questions bridge observation and interpretation, forming the basis for hermeneutics.[147]

[144] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11; See David R. Bauer, *An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011); David E. Aune, *Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003); Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Howard Tillman Kuist, *These Words Upon Thy Heart: Scripture and the Christian Response* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1960); Joseph E. Grimes, *The Thread of Discourse*, Janua Linguarum, Series Minor, Vol. 207 (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 1996); Eugene A. Nida, *Exploring Semantic Structures* (Munich: Fink, 1975); John Beekman, Norman Callow, and Thomas Kopesec, *The Semantic Structure of Written Communication* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981); Robert E. Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse*, 2nd ed. (New York: Springer, 1996); Mildred L. Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1998); Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989).

[145] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[146] Ivano A. Ciardelli, "Questions in Logic," (PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 2015), 1.

[147] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

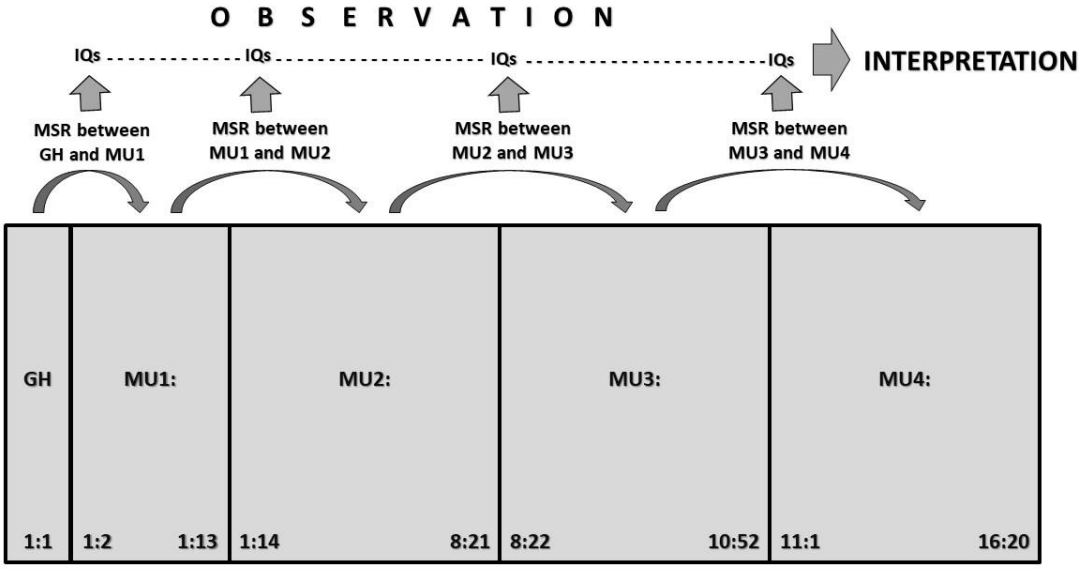

Figure 3.3 Raising Interpretive Questions (IQs), adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

There are three primary types of IQ: definitive or explanatory (what does this mean?), rational (why is this included, and why here?), and implicational (what does this imply?). Additionally, four auxiliary types of questions are utilized: identificational (who or what is involved?), modal (how is this accomplished?), temporal (when is this accomplished?), and local (where is this accomplished?).[148] By applying these various forms of inquiry, this study opens itself to a richer and more layered understanding, facilitating a more complete interpretive process.

After raising the IQs, the researcher moves to the final phases of the book survey, beginning with a detailed examination of each MSR to pinpoint the strategic areas that most effectively illustrate the association between structures.[149] Also, the researcher specifies

[148] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.
[149] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

higher-critical data that may shed light on the author, recipients, location, date of writing, and occasion of writing of a book.[150] Finally, the researcher records other significant impressions from the examination of Mark-as-a-whole, covering substantial aspects not addressed in previous phases.[151] This thorough method for conducting a book survey of Mark reinforces a comprehensive overview and provides a solid foundation for subsequent observation stages.

Survey of a Book Division

The survey of a book division represents the second level of observation in this research. This process involves examining the division, its section, and segments—three progressively smaller units within the book (see Figure 3.4).

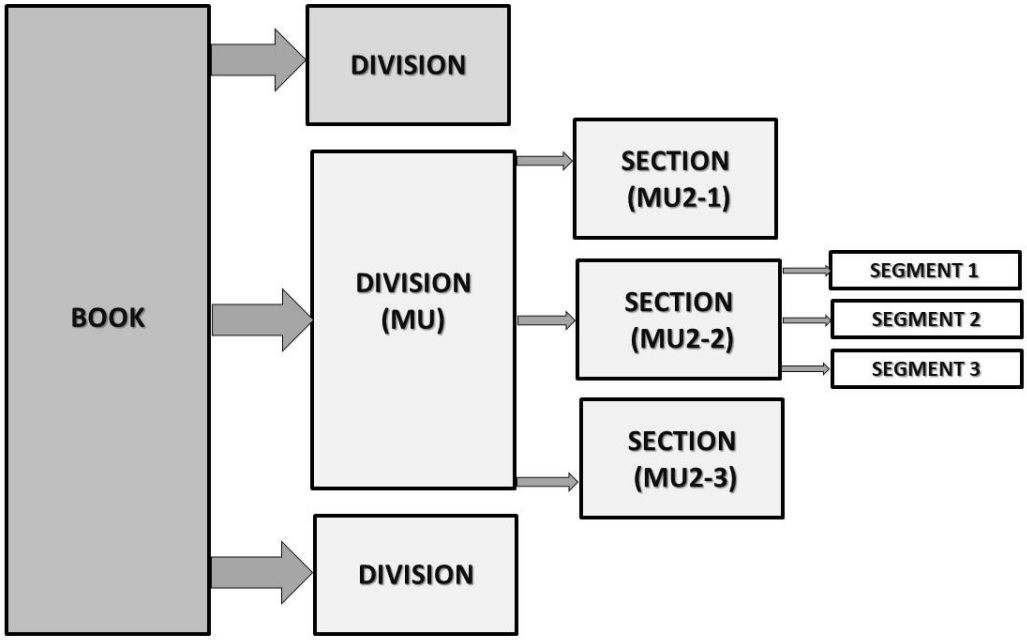

Figure 3.4 Parts of a Book, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

[150] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.
[151] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

Figure 3.4 depicts the portions of a book, including divisions that represent the main units (MU#), sections that serve as subdivisions of these main units (MU#-#), and segments (segment # of MU#-#), which are further subdivisions of the sections. This hierarchical progression—from the book to the division, from the division to the section, and from the section to the segment—moves from general to specific.[152] This general-to-specific order is a literary element used to enhance composition by providing a broad overview followed by detailed elaboration.[153] Such a layered approach allows the researcher to track the intricate unfolding of themes and narratives as they progress from a macro to a micro focus. Similar to a book survey, a survey of a book division also consists of multiple steps (see Figure 3.5).

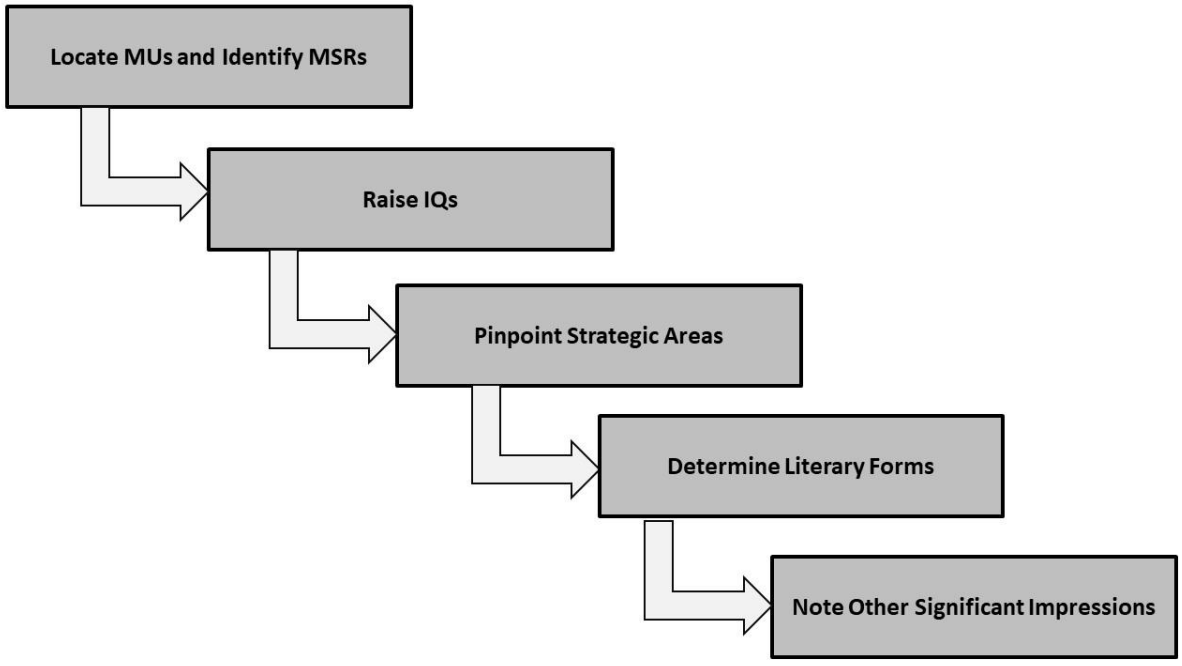

Figure 3.5 Five Phases of Book Division Survey, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

[152] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12.

[153] Richard Nordquist, "Understanding General-to-Specific Order in Composition," *ThoughtCo*, February 12, 2020, https://www.thoughtco.com/general-to-specific-order-composition-1690812.

Figure 3.5 shows the five phases of book division survey: (1) locating MUs and identifying MSRs; (2) raising IQs based on each observed MSR; (3) pinpointing strategic areas; (4) determining literary forms employed; and (5) noting other significant impressions related to the division as a whole.[154] Similar to book survey, each phase interlinks with the others, creating a comprehensive understanding of the literary unit, and deepening both the awareness of the structure and the hermeneutical inquiries that arise from it.

As presented, four of the five phases of a book survey—excluding the ascertaining of general material and marking of higher-critical data—are used in the survey of a book division. However, this second level of observation includes an additional process: determining literary forms.[155] Bailey and Vander Broek highlight that a common exegetical challenge involves understanding literary forms, particularly the difficulty in discerning the nature and purpose of a passage's configuration, which can impede comprehension of its meaning.[156] Bauer and Traina list the types of Biblical literature (see Table 3.2). By distinguishing between these forms, one can better appreciate how each genre shapes the theological messages and narrative techniques employed by the Biblical authors.

Table 3.2 Primary Literary Forms, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

Literary Forms	Definition	Key Characteristics	Examples
Prose Narrative	A literary form of story or historical reportage.	1. Default assumption is literal language, with figurative language being clearly indicated if present. 2. Material typically moves in chronological	- Matthew 3:1–17 - Genesis 31:1–55 - John 2:18–23 (foreshadowing example).

[154] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12.
[155] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12.
[156] James L. Bailey and Lyle D. Vander Broek, *Literary Forms in the New Testament: A Handbook* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1992), 2.

		sequence unless interrupted by flashback (analepsis) or foreshadowing (prolepsis). 3. Emphasizes the relationship of events (plot) and characters (characterization). 4. Readers are encouraged to explore the significance of interruptions in chronological flow.	
Poetry	A form of literature characterized by emotive and associative figurative language, meter, and parallelism.	1. Uses figurative language as the default assumption, with literal language only when context demands it. 2. May not follow chronological sequence; focuses on total emotional effect. 3. Features three types of parallelism: synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic. 4. Generally, most Biblical poetry examples are found in the OT, but some occur in the NT as well.	- Poetry in Psalms (various examples). - Song of Solomon (various poetic sections). - Proverbs (various proverbs demonstrating parallelism). - NT hymns or quotes from the OT.
Parables	A fictitious story drawn from everyday life that points to a spiritual truth.	1. Utilizes the principle of analogy (from Greek terms ‘para’ and ‘ballō’). 2. Employs narrative to communicate spiritual truths. 3. Requires careful interpretation to understand the relationship between the story and the spiritual truth.	- Parables of Jesus (Matthew 13, Mark 4, Luke 15). - Nathan's parable to David (2 Samuel 12).

Apocalyptic Texts	A literary form found in several portions of the Bible, particularly prominent from about 200 BC to AD 200.	1. Characterized by the use of figurative language, with a default assumption that it is figurative unless indicated otherwise. 2. Figurative language is esoteric, strange, and bizarre, appealing to the imagination and challenging perceptions of reality. 3. Uses visual and pictorial language to uncover God's hidden action and future plans. 4. Literature seeks to reveal God's sovereign action, often in hidden ways, amidst oppressive circumstances.	- Book of Daniel - Book of Revelation (especially chapters 4–22)
Discursive Texts	A discursive literary form found in the New Testament Epistles and elsewhere in the Bible, focusing on logical argumentation.	1. Generally assumes literal language unless the context indicates otherwise. 2. Emphasizes logical sequence rather than chronological progression, focusing on the flow of the argument. 3. Aims for cognitive precision, inviting readers to focus on specific communication rather than associative language. 4. Importance lies in the development of concepts and relationships between concepts, rather than events or characters.	- NT Epistles - Legal material (e.g., Deuteronomy 28)

Dramatic Texts	A literary form that uses personification and vivid description to convey ideas symbolically for emotional impact.	1. Ideas are presented through dramatic descriptions of persons or events not meant to be taken literally but symbolically. 2. Requires discernment to determine whether the writer speaks of actual history or employs drama to highlight truth. 3. Recognizes the dramatic method as a legitimate form of communication, important for interpretation.	- Isaiah 2:1–4 - Ezekiel 37 (vision of dry bones)

Table 3.2 indicates primary literary form—prose narrative, poetry, parables, apocalyptic texts, discursive texts, and dramatic texts—with their definitions, key characteristics, and some examples.[157] In determining the literary forms of a section or segment within a book division, the researcher consults this presentation along with primary and secondary sources to explore the potential types of selected Markan texts.

[157] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12; For discussions of prose narrative, see Phyllis Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994); for poetry, see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985); for parables, see Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 13–167; for apocalyptic texts, see John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); for discursive texts, see George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); for dramatic texts, see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); See also James L. Bailey and Lyle D. Vander Broek, *Literary Forms in the New Testament: A Handbook* (Louisville Westminster John Knox, 1992).

These phases of the book division survey are employed in an inductive approach to Mark 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit relevant to the area of interest.

Detailed Analysis of a Book Section

The final level, focused observation, involves a detailed analysis of 8:27–10:45 as a section, meticulously examining its segments and exploring how cross-bearing discipleship in 8:34 relates to and connects with passages in this portion of the Markan narrative. Fundamentally, detailed analysis outlines the literary parts demonstrating structural relationships and contextual connections.[158] In this method, the researcher follows several processes relevant to observing the topic of emphasis (see Figure 3.6).

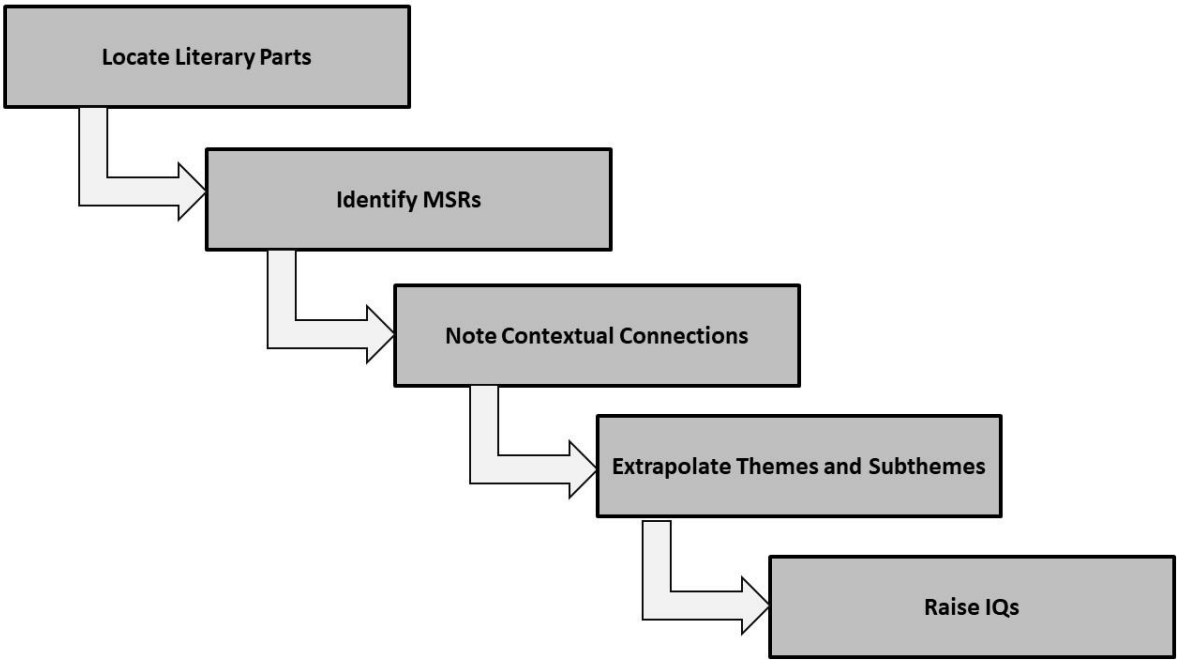

Figure 3.6 Five Phases of Detailed Analysis of a Book Section, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

[158] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 13.

Figure 3.6 illustrates the five phases of detailed analysis of a book section, starting with locating literary parts, such as book segments and their subunits; identifying MSRs; noting contextual connections; extrapolating unifying themes and subthemes; and raising IQs relevant to the research focus.[159] These steps keep the analysis rooted in the text itself, allowing the researcher to engage with the material from a place of curiosity rather than assumption, setting a firm foundation for the interpretive work.

Addressing Interpretive Questions

Interpreting Biblical texts requires more than simply reading the words on the page; it demands a thoughtful approach that considers the complexity and depth of the Scriptures. Without a clear interpretive framework, one risks overlooking critical insights or misapplying the meaning of the text. A structured method allows the researcher to carefully navigate these nuances, ensuring that observations through IQs are both accurate and cohesive in their theological implications.

Selecting Interpretive Questions

Generally, selecting the right questions to gather data is essential for making informed decisions in organizations, as it enables the collection of relevant and reliable information that directly relates to desired outcomes, thereby guaranteeing efficient use of resources and improved performance.[160] This also applies to this research, where selecting

[159] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 13.

[160] Ingrid Guerra, "Asking and Answering the Right Questions: Collecting Useful and Relevant Data," *Performance Improvement* 42, no. 10 (2003): 24.

IQs must align with the ongoing investigation—inferring theological implications through an inductive study of the Gospel of Mark, particularly 8:22–10:52.

Answering Interpretive Questions

Moving forward in answering the selected IQs, it is essential to have a clear methodology. Meyer describes Biblical interpretation as "a methodically mounted effort to read a text that does not yield its sense immediately."[161] According to Berkhof, greater diligence in interpreting the Bible is necessary because sin darkens humanity's understanding, continuing to harm one's conscious mental life.[162]

Therefore, the researcher employs a specific procedure for interpretation. The researcher uses a form of synthetic model,[163] which this study refers to as 'Inference Weighing Model' (IWM) (see Figure 3.7).

[161] Ben F. Meyer, *Reality and Illusion in New Testament Scholarship: A Primer in Critical Realist Hermeneutics* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1995), 90.

[162] Louis Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1950), 12.

[163] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 15.

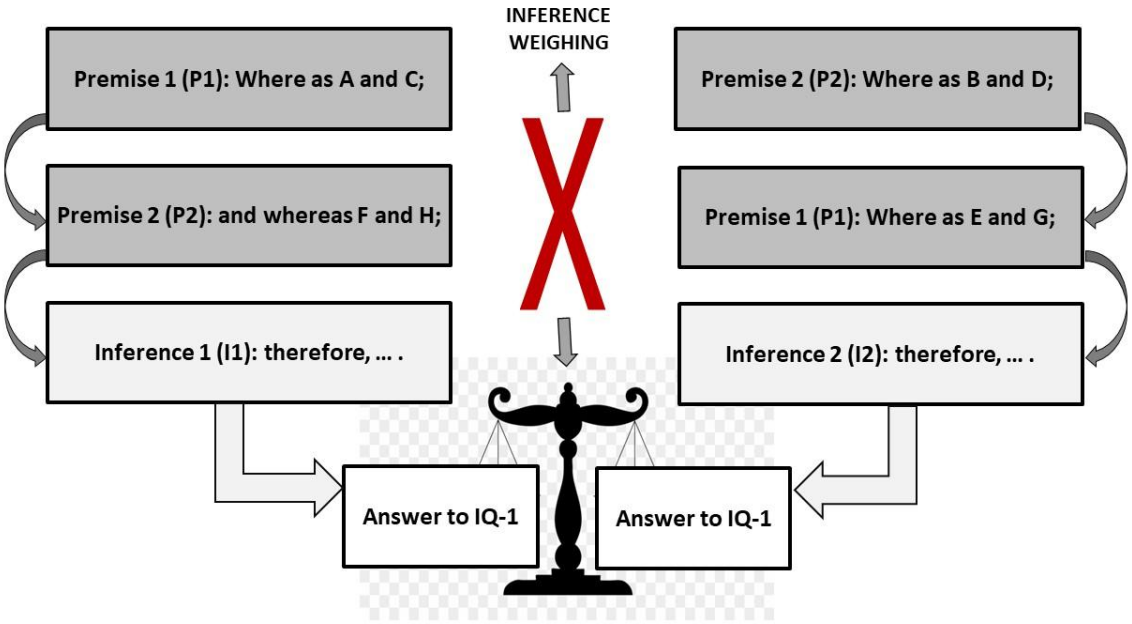

Figure 3.7 Inference Weighing Model (IWM)

Figure 3.7 depicts IWM that combines various pieces of evidence into premises that form the foundation for interpretive inferences.[164] This model not only aids in addressing textual complexities but also serves to bridge the gap between human limitations and the divine message embedded in Scripture. That said, IWM acknowledges that there is a variety of pieces of evidence for interpretive inferences (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Types of Evidence, adapted from Bauer and Traina, 2011

Evidence	Definition	Purpose	Method/Tool
Preliminary Definition	Determines a basic, initial meaning of a term as used by the Biblical author.	To establish foundational meaning of a term.	Use standard Hebrew and Greek lexicons for basic definitions.
Literary Context	Examines evidence within the broader literary framework of the Biblical book. It includes immediate,	To provide interpretive insight by situating passages within the book's	Identify key structural elements in context, using tools like original-language concordances,

[164] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 15.

	segment, and book context, focusing on how surrounding verses, segments, and the overall structure shape the passage's interpretation.	narrative and logical flow.	lexicons, and structural analysis.
Word Usage	Analyzes how a specific word from the passage is used outside the Biblical book, divided into Biblical (within the Bible) and extrabiblical (outside the Bible) categories.	To give linguistic background for understanding how the implied author might expect readers to interpret the word.	Use original-language concordances, Septuagint resources, or Bible software with search capabilities.
Scriptural Testimony	Looks at the concept of God and His revelation where the specific term appears or does not appear, requiring an analysis of how this concept is treated throughout the Bible.	To illuminate the meaning of a concept by considering its treatment in various passages, enhancing understanding through continuity and discontinuity.	Use topical concordances or topical Bibles to identify relevant passages and analyze them critically in relation to the concept.
Kinds of Terms	Determines if a term is used literally or figuratively, and understanding the significance of its meaning in Biblical interpretation.	To clarify theological concepts and enhance understanding of God's nature and relationships expressed through language.	Analysis of literal and metaphorical usage.
Inflections	Scrutinizes changes in the form of words, indicating their grammatical sense and significance, such as person, number, case, tense, mood, and voice.	To clarify the interpretive significance of verbs and nouns in Biblical texts, enhancing understanding of meaning.	Use grammars or grammatical studies for original-language analysis.
Syntax	Pertains to the grammatical structure of sentences, focusing on the relationships between words and phrases.	To explore how sentence structure influences the meaning of passages and the relationships between concepts.	Use grammars or grammatical studies for original-language

Literary Forms	Involves recognizing and categorizing text based on its literary form or genre.	To identify how the chosen genre affects the interpretation of the text, enhancing semantic relationships.	Analysis of literary categories and their features.
Psychological Factor	Explores the emotional or psychological state of the writer or characters within a passage to inform interpretation.	To understand how psychological factors affect the meaning of the text and enhance its emotional depth.	Analysis of character emotions and psychological states.
Tone or Atmosphere	Refers to the emotional or visceral feel of a passage and the feeling-impact upon the reader, affected by personal backgrounds and situations.	To convey the intended emotional impact and enhance communication of the message.	Analyzing emotional elements in the text and considering reader responses.
Author's Purpose and Viewpoint	Refers to the relationship between the writer's perspective and other voices within a text, assessing the writer's intention in presenting these perspectives.	To understand how differing viewpoints inform the text's meaning and to discern the author's intended message.	Analyzing characters' reliability and their agreement or disagreement with the implied author's perspective.
Historical Background	Explores the context of the writing itself and the historical context of persons or things mentioned in the text, influencing interpretation.	To understand the implications of the text in light of its historical and cultural contexts and to avoid misinterpretation.	Utilizing Biblical introductions, commentaries, dictionaries, and sociological/cultural analyses to provide relevant background information.
History of the Text	Involve the study of the history of the wording of a passage, assessing variations and their significance in interpretation.	To uncover significant interpretive and historical issues that may be overlooked, enhancing understanding of the text.	Utilizing specialized texts and resources focused on OT and NT textual criticism.
History of the Tradition	Presents extended process of growth and	To consider all significant aspects of	Utilizing critical methods such as

	development behind the final form of Biblical texts, reflecting historical traditions and emphasizing the significance of critical methods to understand passages in context.	the existence of the Bible, including its prehistory, thus enhancing understanding of the text.	historical criticism, tradition criticism, source criticism, and redaction criticism.
Interpretation by Others	Examines scholarly discussions on the interpretation of the passage or book under investigation, emphasizing the communal aspect.	To engage in dialogue with the history of interpretation to enhance understanding and ensure a comprehensive view of the text.	Consult exegetical commentaries and scholarly studies, ensuring diverse theological and historical perspectives are included.

Table 3.3 shows the different types of evidence pertinent to this study.[165] These evidences inform and relate to each other, allowing them to be synthesized to make a compelling case for particular interpretations.[166] Following IWM, the researcher identifies the primary interpretive options of the passage using an analytical procedure. Then, the researcher combines pieces of evidence to create premises, which develop lines of reasoning that lead to the main interpretive possibilities.[167] This process reflects the multifaceted nature of Biblical texts, which often demand a convergence of various interpretive lenses to yield a fuller understanding.

This method aids the researcher in inferring theological implications on discipleship through induction from the Gospel of Mark, particularly focusing on 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit. It addresses IQs regarding the relationship between the two restoration of sight

[165] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 14.
[166] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 15.
[167] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 15.

narratives (8:22–26; 10:46–52) that frame a section illustrating the Twelve's failure to see Jesus as the Crucified Messiah (8:27–10:45). It also seeks to uncover how the passages within 8:22–10:52 illumine the concept of cross-bearing discipleship in 8:34.

Presenting Theological Implications

This study derives theological implications by first establishing the analytical context and identifying relevant literary elements. Clarifying this context sharpens the focus and significance of the insights. Key inferences are then developed through careful analysis, with each grounded in evidence to provide a logical foundation for further exploration.

These implications are listed and labeled, enabling a cohesive examination of the main ideas. Alternative interpretations are briefly addressed to ensure balance, demonstrating that these insights have been thoughtfully weighed against other perspectives. Finally, the study highlights how these implications may inform faith practices, especially in seeing and following Jesus as the Crucified Messiah, bearing one's own cross and connecting thorough analysis with meaningful and practical application.

This chapter outlines the inductive methodology employed in the analysis of the Gospel of Mark, focusing on the thematic and structural significance of 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit—a division within the Markan narrative. It highlights how the healings of two blind men frame this book portion, revealing the spiritual blindness of the Twelve regarding Jesus' Messianic mission and the necessity of 'seeing' Him as a Crucified Messiah (8:27–10:45). The study further explores the connections within 8:27–10:45 as a section, featuring Jesus' call for cross-bearing discipleship (8:34) and its theological implications for following Him.

To achieve these objectives, the researcher employs successive hermeneutical steps: a survey of the Book of Mark, a survey of 8:22–10:52 as a division within the book, a detailed analysis of 8:27–10:45 as a section within this division, the selection and answering of IQs raised from observation, and the presentation of theological implications.

The methodology employs a three-level observation pertinent to IBS: a book survey of Mark, a book division survey of 8:22–10:52, and a detailed analysis of 8:27–10:45 as a section. These stages involve a comprehensive evaluation from various perspectives, allowing for a holistic understanding of the book's schema. It considers Mark's literary proficiency, emphasizing the dynamic interplay of material and structure within the Gospel, bridging observation and interpretation. As a hierarchical approach, this examines divisions, sections, and segments, moving from a broad overview to detailed analysis. Each stage enhances understanding of themes and narratives, following a general-to-specific order that facilitates tracking the unfolding of the text.

This structured approach deepens the insight into the significance of 8:22–10:52 within the broader context of the Gospel. The detailed section analysis of 8:27–10:45 culminates the observation aspect. This involves a meticulous examination of passages, particularly how the theme of cross-bearing discipleship in 8:34 relates and connects to surrounding verses.

Consequently, interpreting Biblical texts requires a thoughtful framework to navigate complexities, ensuring that inferences are accurate and cohesive. Thus, selecting relevant IQs is essential for gathering meaningful data that aligns with the research objectives of inferring theological implications from the Gospel of Mark. To address these IQs, the study employs the IWM, which synthesizes various pieces of evidence into premises for interpretive

inferences through logical weighing. This model aids in understanding the multifaceted nature of the Markan narrative. By identifying primary interpretive options and creating lines of reasoning, the researcher can develop a fuller understanding of the Mark's theological implications, especially regarding discipleship.

The study concludes with the presentation of theological implications organized into central themes and creates a balanced examination of alternative interpretations. This emphasizes how these concepts can inform faith practices, particularly in understanding and following Jesus as the Crucified Messiah. Overall, the research utilizes an inductive approach within a hermeneutical framework, progressing from observation to interpretation to derive profound insights about discipleship in 8:22–10:52.

CHAPTER IV

SEEING THE STRUCTURE OF MARK IN THREE LEVELS

This chapter implements the three level of observation outlined in Chapter 3, utilizing an inductive approach.[168] This includes a book survey of Mark (1:1–16:20); a division survey of 8:22–10:52, framed by the healings of two blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52); and a detailed section analysis of 8:27–10:45, exploring the structural relationships, contextual connections, and logical associations related to the call to cross-bearing discipleship in 8:34.

Level One: Book Survey of Mark (1:1–16:20)

At the first observation level, I examine Mark's general materials to gain an overarching understanding of the Markan text. From there, I locate MUs within the narrative and identify MSRs. Based on these relationships, I raise several IQs that guide further

[168] For a detailed explanation of the method, see Chapter 3. In this chapter, I will primarily observe and present the Markan texts using the ESV, along with the transliterated original language.

analysis. Additionally, I pinpoint strategic areas and higher-critical data, and finally note other significant impressions that emerge from viewing Mark as a book.

General Materials of Mark: Biographical

Identifying the general materials of a book addresses the question: What is the primary emphasis of its content? As mentioned in Chapter 3, there are at least five possible answers: (1) biographical; (2) historical; (3) chronological; (4) geographical; and (5) ideological.[169] However, it must be clear that these categories do not necessarily correspond to the book's genre.[170]

Observing the Gospel of Mark, it does not take long to identify its general materials as biographical. At the onset of the narrative, Mark introduces the main protagonist of the book—Jesus. In 1:1, it states: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." This passage vividly identifies Jesus with two epithets. The first is 'Christ,' which may appear to be part of Jesus' name due to its placement. However, 'Christ,' or *Christos* in Greek, means 'anointed one' and serves as the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *Mashiach* (Messiah). This term signifies a person chosen by God for a special purpose, particularly as a king or priest.[171]

'Christ' is used 529 times in the NT as a title for Jesus, appearing interchangeably as 'Jesus Christ' or 'Christ Jesus.' In Mark alone, 'Christ' is mentioned seven times, identifying Him as the promised Messiah who fulfills OT prophecies.[172] While the NT also refers to

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[169] See Chapter 3; Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.
[170] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.
[171] Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, abridged in one volume by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 1203–1216.
[172] Kittel and Friedrich, *TDNT*, 1203–1216.

false messiahs (Matt 24:5, 24; Mk 13:6, 22; Lk 21:8), these instances describe individuals falsely claiming the title rather than an alternative legitimate use. The NT consistently affirms Jesus as the true Christ, distinguishing Him from impostors and emphasizing His divine mission as both the spiritual ruler and mediator for humanity.

The second title Mark uses to introduce Jesus in 1:1 is 'Son of God.' In the NT, the epithet 'Son of God' is central to understanding who Jesus is, signifying both His mission and His unique relationship with the Father. This designation, which was a key aspect of the charges brought against Him by Jewish leaders (14:61–62), emphasizes His divine authority and fulfillment of Messianic expectations as foretold in Scripture.[173]

With the immediate narrative introduction of Jesus through the titles 'Christ' and 'Son of God' in 1:1, Mark's portrayal of these descriptions highlights their straightforward meaning. This emphasizes Jesus' divinity and ministry,[174] which also requires His humanity, pointing to Him as the Crucified Messiah. Consequently, this observation accentuates the biographical general materials of Mark, focusing on Jesus' persona by opening the Gospel with a distinct and illustrative commencement.

As Mark progresses, varying responses towards Jesus' Messiahship arise, emphasizing the understanding of who Jesus truly is—one of the overarching themes of Mark. Central to these differing receptions of Jesus as the Messiah is His question to the Twelve in 8:27, 29: "Who do people say that I am? … But who do you say that I am?"

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[173] J. D. Douglas and Merrill C. Tenney, eds., *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, rev. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), ePub, ISBN 978-0-310-49235-1, s.v. "Son of God."

[174] Herbert W. Bateman IV, "Defining the Titles 'Christ' and 'Son of God' in Mark's Narrative Presentation of Jesus," *Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 3 (September 2007): 557.

Surrounding this are evidence of confessions, confusions, concealments, and challenges to Jesus'—the narrative's main protagonist—real identity and mission (see Figure 4.1).

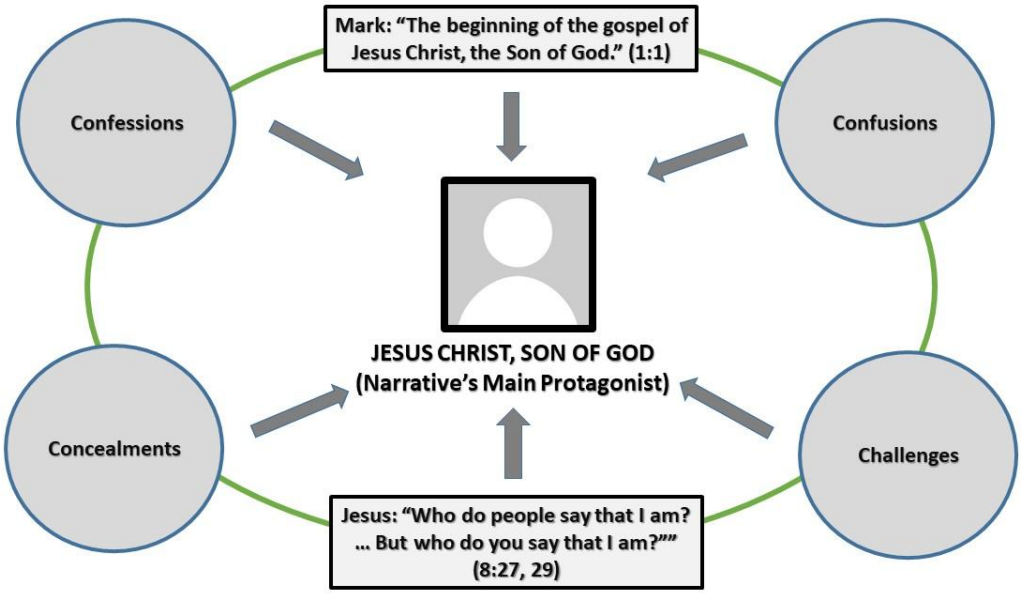

Figure 4.1 4Cs to Jesus' Messianic Person as the Main Protagonist in Mark

Figure 4.1 depicts how the introduction of Mark to Jesus' identity as 'Christ' and 'Son of God' (1:1) relates to the continual responses from various figures throughout the narrative regarding Jesus' Messianic persona, including those of Jesus Himself. There are explicit confessions from God the Father (1:11; 9:7), unclean spirits and demoniacs (1:24; 3:11; 5:7), Peter (8:29), Bartimaeus (10:47–48), the crowd in Jerusalem (11:9–10), and finally, the Roman centurion (15:39).

Alongside these explicit confessions are implicit ones, such as Jesus' actions—proclaiming the Kingdom (1:15), forgiving sins (2:10), asserting lordship over the Sabbath (2:27–28), foretelling the Son of Man's suffering, death, and resurrection (8:31; 9:12, 31;

10:33–34, 45), and performing miracles like healing the sick (1:21–28; 1:29–31; 1:32–34; 1:40–45; 2:1–12; 3:1–6; 5:1–20; 5:25–34; 5:21–24, 35–43; 7:31–37; 8:22–26; 10:46–52) and providing for people's needs (6:30–44; 8:1–10; 12:13–17). He also demonstrates authority over nature (4:35–41; 6:45–52), and His transfiguration (9:2–8) further reveals His divine identity. Additionally, John the Baptist's proclamation affirms Jesus' role, while the faith of the sick and the needy confirms their recognition of Him (1:40–41; 5:30–34; 9:24; 10:52; 14:3–9).

However, several characters express confusion about Jesus' identity, starting with His family (3:21). Also, the Twelve show misunderstanding, especially after He calms the storm (4:41) and feeds the multitude again (8:4). Dealing with Peter, Jesus sternly rebukes him for failing to comprehend His passion prediction, exposing the confusion not only in Peter but among the other apostles regarding the true nature of the Messiah's purpose (8:32; 9:31–32). Similarly, James and John's request for positions of honor demonstrates their flawed comprehension of the Messiah's kingdom, which leads to tension and indignation among the disciples (10:37, 41). Furthermore, Mark pictures a public uncertainty about who Jesus is (6:14–15; 8:27).

Interestingly, Jesus does not immediately correct these confusions by openly revealing His identity but often conceals it by silencing unclean spirits and demoniacs (1:24–25; 3:11–12), instructing those He healed to remain silent (1:43–44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26), and even commanding the Twelve not to disclose anything (8:30; 9:9).

As the narrative's main protagonist, Jesus also faces opposition from those who challenge His identity as the Messiah. Hostility and accusations come from the Scribes,

Pharisees, and religious leaders (2:7, 16, 24; 3:6, 22). Both the high priest and Pilate question Him directly (14:61; 15:2). Even as He hangs on the cross, the crowd taunts Him, demanding He prove His claim by saving Himself (15:32). These responses to Jesus reinforce Mark's biographical nuances, with its multi-faceted exploration of Jesus' personhood, which Mark establishes from the very beginning of the Gospel. This holds deep significance for readers, inviting to place their faith in Jesus and follow Him, seeing Him as He truly is.

MUs and MSRs in Mark as a Book

Describing the structure of Mark—MUs and MSRs—unfolds a symbiotic relationship with its biographical general materials. In this second phase of structural analysis, I present two components: (1) the MUs of Mark according to its horizontal logical flow, and (2) the identification of MSRs between these MUs in sequential progression along with other MSRs operative throughout Mark as a book (see Figure 4.2). Note that each MU is typically wide-ranging, highlighting the broad, overarching motion of the narrative in a linear development.[175]

[175] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

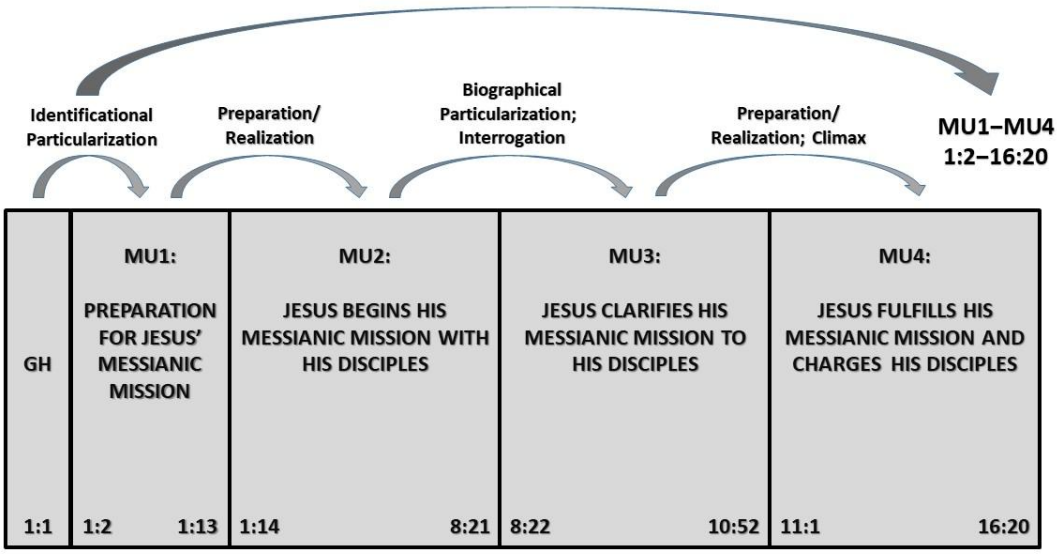

Figure 4.2 MUs and MSRs in Mark as a book

Figure 4.2 illustrates the arrangement of a general heading (GH) and four MUs, along with the MSRs in Mark, presenting a survey of the book as a whole. As noted earlier, 1:1 serves as an introduction to the narrative's focus—the *bios* of Jesus with an emphasis on His identity and mission as the Messiah. This verse functions as the GH for the entire book.

Then, I label the MUs considering each overarching theme of the unfolding of Jesus' Messianic mission and His interactions with His followers: MU1, Preparation for Jesus' Messianic Mission (1:2–13); MU2, Jesus Begins His Messianic Mission with His Disciples (1:14–8:21); MU3, Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples (8:22–10:52); and MU4, Jesus Fulfills His Messianic Mission and Charges His Disciples (11:1–16:20).

Consequently, the MSR between the GH and MU1, along with the rest of the MUs, is 'identificational particularization' (see Figure 4.3), presenting the substance of the narrative

that follows.[176] This structure may offer insight into how the book is intended to be understood by readers.

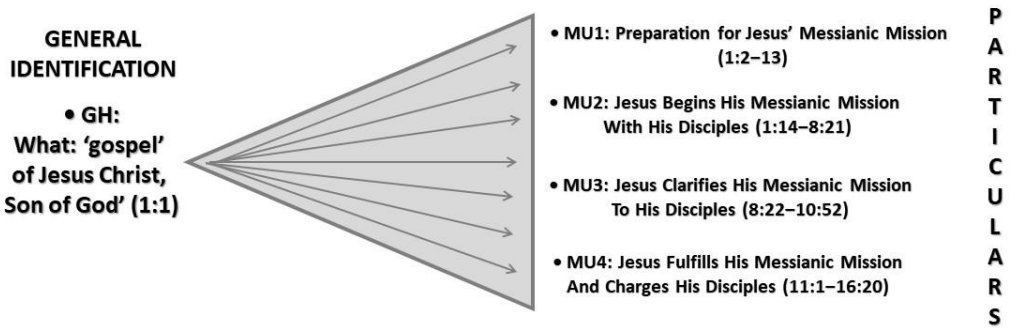

Figure 4.3. MSR between GH and MUI–4: Identificational Particularization

Figure 4.3 shows the relationship between the GH and MUs 1–4. The GH identifies the material as 'gospel,' specifically "of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." The word 'gospel' is derived from Old English, translating the Greek term *euangelion*, meaning 'good news.'[177] In this context, a gospel can be understood as a loosely connected, episodic narrative recounting the words and actions of Jesus, leading up to His trial, death, and concluding with His resurrection and various accounts of post-resurrection appearances.[178] Therefore, the MSR of

[176] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

[177] Linda Woodhead, *Christianity: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 4.

[178] Loveday Alexander, "What is a Gospel?" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Gospels*, ed. Stephen C. Barton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 16.

identificational particularization is not solely between the GH and MU1 but extends between the GH (1:1) and the entire book (1:2–16:20).

Transitioning to the MSRs between the MUs, MU1 (1:2–13) emphasizes the preparation for Jesus' Messianic mission through the introduction of John the Baptist (vv. 2–8), as well as essential human experiences such as baptism (vv. 9–11) and temptation (vv. 12–13). These experiences of Jesus are accompanied by heavenly affirmation of His divinity through the acknowledgment of His Sonship (v. 11) and the ministry of angels to Him (v. 13).

Then, MU2 (1:14–8:21) describes the beginning of His ministry, which draws a multitude of people from various regions (3:7–8). Among this large number of followers, Jesus selects twelve apostles (3:13–19) whom He sends to minister alongside Him (6:7–13). However, the Twelve exhibit signs of misunderstanding their Master, leading Him to figuratively question their perception (8:17–21). Observing the movement from the preparatory stage for ministry to the actual ministry of Jesus, the connection between MU1 and MU2 constitutes ‘preparation/realization’ (see Figure 4.4).

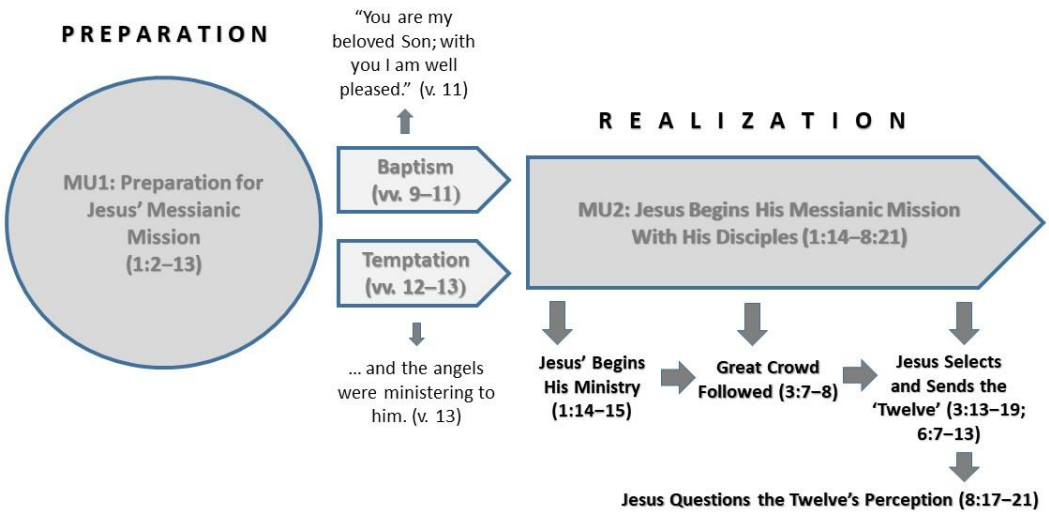

Figure 4.4 MSR between MU1 and MU2: Preparation/Realization

Figure 4.4 displays the preparation/realization structure between MU1 and MU2. This MSR, also known as 'introduction,' sets the stage or provides the background for the events or ideas (preparation) that unfold afterward (realization).[179] Thus, while MU1 entails Jesus' preparation for His Messianic mission, MU2 presents the realization of that ministry, which is not a series of random tasks, but points to a more specific redemptive work, which remains vague for the Twelve.

In MU2, along with Jesus' initial ministries and the emergence of His followers, a recurring motif arises regarding the apostles' failure to understand Jesus. This theme is illustrated in various examples, such as the Twelve not understanding Jesus' parables (4:10–12), being puzzled by His authority over the storm (4:41), being frightened by His walking

[179] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

on water (6:49–52), being doubtful about the feeding of the smaller multitude (8:4), and misunderstanding Jesus' warning against the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod (8:15–21). The latter highlights the misperception of the Twelve, emphasized by a series of questions about their comprehension, in which Jesus uses the human senses as an allegory: “Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear?” (8:18).

Moving forward, MU3 begins with the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26) and concludes with the healing of Bartimaeus in Jericho (10:46–52), sandwiches a more focused examination of Jesus’ interactions with the Twelve, particularly regarding their perception of His identity and mission as the Crucified Messiah. Consequently, a recurring theme of the suffering and service of the Son of Man is evident (8:31–32; 9:9–13, 30–32; 10:32–34, 42–45).

In conjunction with this essential truth about Jesus, MU3 features how His followers should respond through their own experiences of suffering and service, starting with Jesus’ call for cross-bearing discipleship (8:34–38) and extending to the question of their ability to be baptized like Jesus (10:35–45). Considering these points, two MSRs can be observed between MU2 and MU3: ‘biographical particularization’ and ‘interrogation’ (see Figure 4.5).

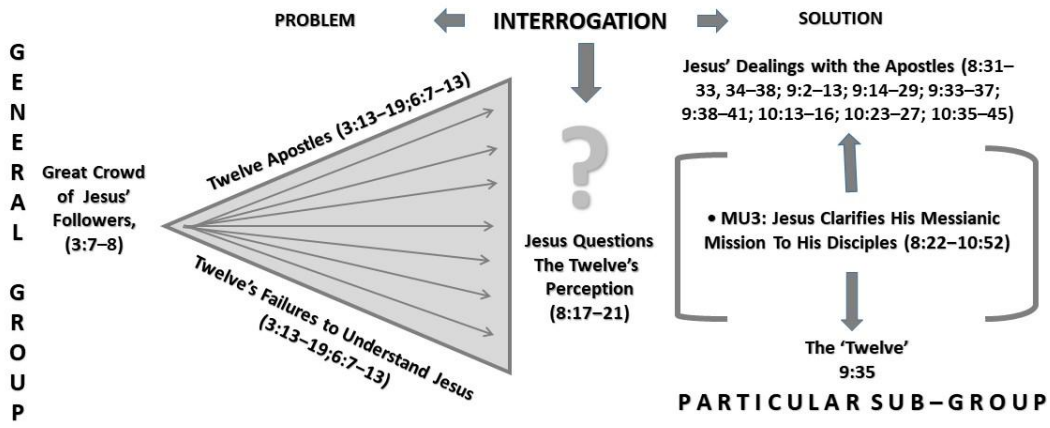

Figure 4.5 MSRs between MU2 and MU3: Biographical Particularization and Interrogation

Figure 4.5 illustrates a biographical particularization structure between MU2 and MU3. This MSR involves a transition from introducing a larger group of individuals to concentrating on a specific subgroup or even an individual within that larger cohort.[180] In MU2, Jesus personally calls and publicly attracts a significant crowd of followers from "Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon" (3:7–8). Subsequently, Jesus selects and sends twelve apostles (3:13–19; 6:7–13). And in MU3, the focus shifts to His private interactions with the Twelve, a specific subgroup among that larger group of followers, depicted by an episode where Jesus calls the apostles to sit as He teaches them (9:35).

[180] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

Complementing this is another MSR—interrogation. This involves presenting a question or problem, followed by offering an answer or solution.[181] Between MU2 and MU3, the rationale for the biographical particularization from the great crowd of followers in MU2 to the Twelve in MU3 highlights how Jesus addresses the issues raised, specifically the flawed perception of the apostles to Jesus' Messianic mission. MU3 begins with the two-stage healing of the blind man, presenting a gradual process for the restoration of sight. In connection to the Twelve's misunderstandings of Jesus, MU3 offers a solution by showcasing the apostles' failures in seeing and following Jesus as the Crucified Messiah, along with Jesus' dealings with them (8:31–38; 9:2–13; 9:14–29; 9:33–37; 9:38–41; 10:13–16; 10:23–27; 10:35–45).

Lastly, the MSRs between MU3 and MU4 are 'preparation/realization' and 'climax' (see Figure 4.6). Here, MU3 prepares for the events realized in MU4 (11:1–16:20), which entails the climax of the narrative. Climax refers to the progression from the lesser to the greater, culminating in a peak moment.[182] Thus, the last MU of Mark ties the prior events together.

[181] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.
[182] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

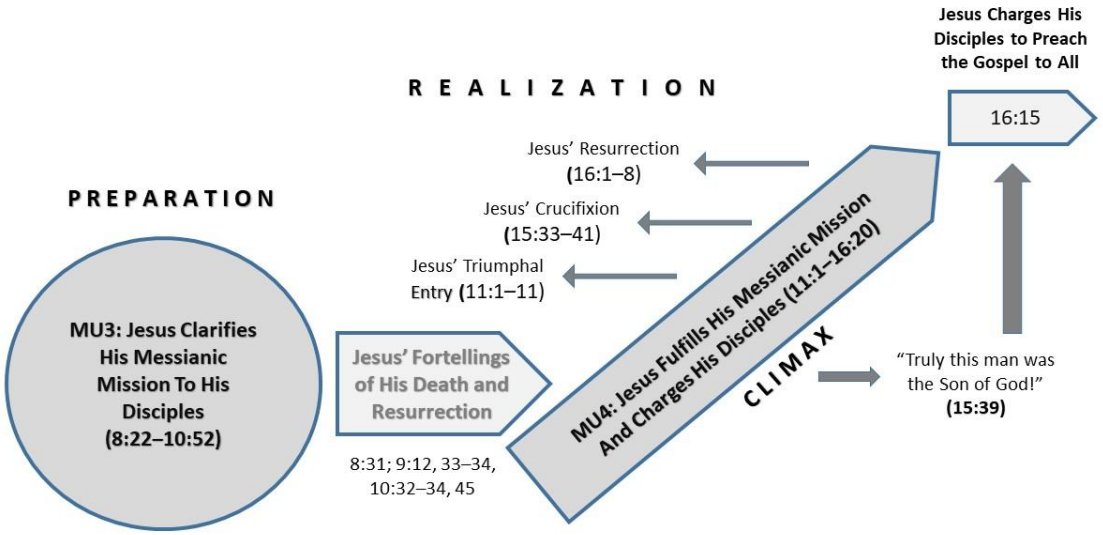

Figure 4.6 MSRs between MU3 and MU4: Preparation/Realization and Climax

Figure 4.6 illustrates that as MU3 prepares Jesus' foretellings of His suffering, death, and resurrection as the 'Son of Man' (8:31–38, 9:9–13, 9:12, 9:30–32, 9:33–37, 10:32–34, 10:35–45), MU4 presents their realization: the fulfillment of Jesus' Messianic mission, from His triumphant entry into Jerusalem (11:1–11) to His suffering and death on the cross (15:33–41), and victorious resurrection (16:1–8). This sequence leads to a climactic statement of belief from the Roman centurion—a Gentile (15:39). This gentilic confession reinforces Jesus' charge to His disciples, who continue to struggle with unbelief (16:9–20).[183]

[183] "Some manuscripts end the book with 16:8; others include verses 9–20 immediately after verse 8. At least one manuscript inserts additional material after verse 14; some manuscripts include after verse 8 the following: But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this, Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation. These manuscripts then continue with verses 9–20." *English Standard Version (ESV), The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, Text Edition (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), Mark 16, accessed October 12, 2024, https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%2016&version=ESV.

IQs from MSRs related to MU3 (8:22–10:52) within Mark

As established, Mark 8:22–10:52 is labeled as MU3—"Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples." After identifying the MUs in the Markan narrative, the next step involves raising IQs. These inquiries emerge from observations of the text's overall structure, essential for interpretation. This study focuses on MU3 as a cohesive literary unit and, thus, I concentrate on raising IQs derived from the associated MSRs—specifically between GH and MU3; MU2 and MU3; and MU3 and MU4 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 IQs Raised from MSRs associated with MU3

MUs	MSRs	IQs
GH→←MU3	**Identificational particularization**	What is the meaning of this general identification of "gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God" (GH)? How is the general identification in GH particularized in the following material (MU3)? How does the focus on MU3 relate to the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God in GH? What are the implications?
MU2→←MU3	**Biographical particularization**	What is the meaning of this general group of people (a great crowd of Jesus' followers in MU2)? How is the general group of people in MU2 particularized in the following material (Jesus' twelve disciples in MU3)? How does the focus on the twelve disciples in MU3 relate to the great crowd of Jesus' followers in MU2? Why did Mark include this movement from a general group to a particular sub-group? What are the implications?
MU2→←MU3	**Interrogation**	What is the meaning of the problem presented in MU2 (the twelve' lack of understanding)? How is this problem solved in MU3 (Jesus' healings and dealings with the twelve)? What are the major elements involved in the movement from problem to solution, and what is the meaning of each? Why did the Mark include this interrogation? What are the implications?
MU3→←MU4	**Preparation/ realization**	What is the meaning of this background material in MU3 (Jesus' passion statements)? How does MU3 prepare for MU4 (Jesus' death and resurrection)? Why did Mark prepare for Jesus' death and resurrection? Why in this way? What are the implications?
MU3→←MU4	**Climax**	How does MU4 reach its climax in 15:39? How does this climactic development illuminate 15:39 and the material

		leading to it (MU3)? Why did Mark include this climax? What are the implications?

The IQs in Table 4.1 arise from observations, particularly those focused on MU3, and form the foundation for interpretation in this study. Notably, insights from the observation phase generate guiding questions for interpretation, emphasizing MU3's cohesive literary structure. These IQs, therefore, are grounded in the text's framework, bridging initial observations with deeper understanding.

Strategic Areas and Higher-Critical Data in Mark

After identifying the MSRs in Mark, key passages that best represent these relationships become clear. These selected verses provide strategic areas offering valuable insight into Mark's overall structure and meaning. Focusing on MU3, I center on pinpointing strategic areas within certain MSRs related to MU3 (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Strategic Areas from MSRs associated with MU3 within Mark

MUs	MSRs	Key Observations
GH→←MU3	**Identificational particularization**	- General identification in GH: 'gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God' (1:1) - Particular identification in MU3: the good news is particularized in 10:45, "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
MU2→←MU3	**Biographical particularization**	- General group in MU2: 'great crowd of followers' (3:7–8) - Particular sub-group in MU3: 'Jesus sits with the Twelve' (9:35)
MU2→←MU3	**Interrogation**	- Problem in MU2: Twelve's failure to see and understand Jesus (8:17–21) - Solution in MU3: Jesus' call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship (8:34)
MU3→←MU4	**Preparation/ realization**	- Preparation in MU3: Passion predictions (8:31, 9:12, 9:31, 10:33–34, 45) - Realization in MU4: Jesus' actual crucifixion (15:33–41) and resurrection (16:1–8)

MU3→←MU4	**Climax**	Climactic statement: Confession of belief by the Roman centurion (15:39)

These key passages in Table 4.2, presenting strategic areas from MSRs related to MU3, serve as important markers that help guide where to direct study efforts. By zeroing in on these texts, attention is drawn to the most significant sections and segments within the Markan narrative, as determined by its structure.[184] This targeted focus ensures that the most crucial themes and insights are explored in depth, maximizing the value of study even with limitations.

Regarding higher-critical data, Mark does not provide extensive information on the Gospel's background, leaving much to be determined through further investigation. However, it is notable that Mark demonstrates familiarity with Aramaic, while his audience generally appears not to have been. This is evident in passages where Aramaic terms are translated into Greek, as in 5:41 (*Talitha koum* translated as "Little girl, I say to you, arise"), 15:22 (*Golgotha*, translated as "Place of the Skull"), and 15:34 (*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?* translated as "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). This pattern suggests that the author wrote for a predominantly Greek-speaking audience.

Other Significant Impressions on Mark as a Book

Among the other significant impressions in Mark is its fast-paced action, highlighted by the frequent use of the term 'immediately,' which infuses the narrative with a sense of urgency. This word appears in numerous passages, including 1:10, 12, 17, 20, 21, 29, 30, 42;

[184] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 11.

2:8, 12; 5:30, 42; 6:27, 45, 50, 54; 7:25; 8:10; 9:15, 24; 10:52; and 11:2, giving the story a rapid and energetic momentum.

In addition, while Jesus often refers to Himself as the ‘Son of Man,’ no one else in the Gospel uses this title for Him. This self-designation is found in passages such as 2:10, 28; 8:31, 38; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 13:26; and 14:21, 41, 62, emphasizing Jesus' unique understanding of His Messianic identity and mission.

Moreover, Jesus is frequently called ‘Teacher’ (e.g., 4:38; 5:35; 9:17, 38; 10:17, 20, 35; 12:14, 19, 32; 13:1; 14:14), which underscores His role as a disciple-maker. This recurrent designation emphasizes the discipleship motif in Mark, as Jesus spends considerable time instructing and shaping His followers for the continuation of His mission.

Furthermore, in contrast to the Twelve, minor characters such as the leper (1:40–45), the bleeding woman (5:25–34), Jairus (5:22–43), the Syrophoenician woman (7:24–30), the blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26), the father of the boy with an unclean spirit (9:24), Bartimaeus (10:46–52), and the woman at the tomb (16:1–8) often exhibit profound faith and understanding of Jesus. In contrast, the apostles frequently display failures, such as their lack of faith during the storm (4:40), their inability to heal the boy with an unclean spirit (9:14–19), and their ignorance of Jesus’ passion predictions (8:27–30; 10:35–41). These inconsistencies highlight a significant theme in Mark, where those who are usually overlooked demonstrate a genuine response to Jesus, fostering the narrative’s exploration of discipleship.

Level Two: Book Division Survey of MU3 (8:22–10:52)

As established, the literary unit under study, Mark 8:22–10:52, is designated as MU3, which I label "Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples." In this part of the research, I concentrate on surveying this division.

MUs and MSRs of Mark 8:22–10:52 as a Book Division

In conducting a survey of a division like MU3 for this research, similar to a book survey, there are two key components: locating the MUs within the division or sections (MU3-#s) and identifying the MSRs that operate throughout 8:22–10:53. Thus, in surveying MU3 as a division, I focus on the sections and the MSRs governing this literary unit (see Figure 4.7).

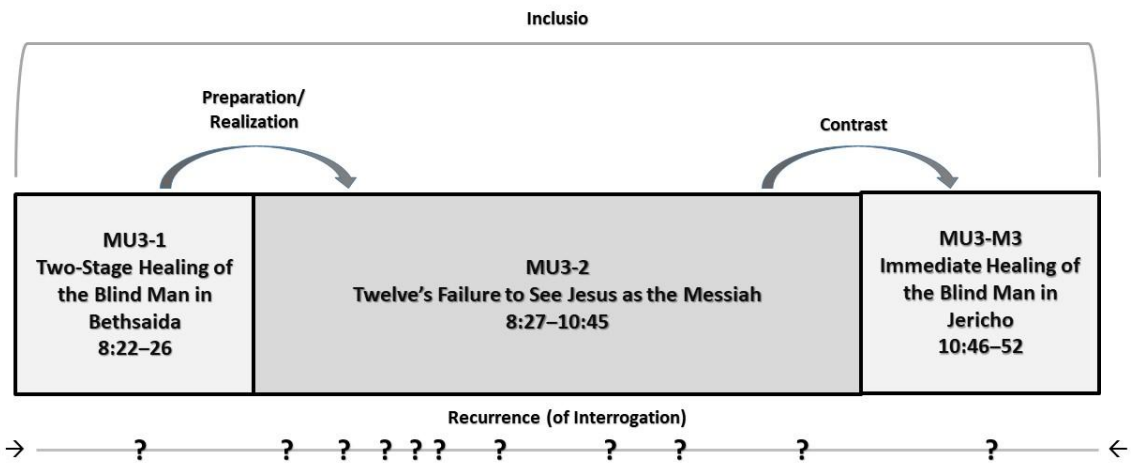

Figure 4.7 MUs and MSRs in MU3

Figure 4.7 illustrates three sections, which I label as follows: MU3-1, Two-Stage Healing of the Blind Man in Bethsaida (8:22–26); MU3-2, Twelve's Failure to See Jesus as the Messiah (8:27–10:45); and MU3-3, Immediate Healing of the Blind Man in Jericho

(10:46–52). It also displays the MSRs in MU3: ‘recurrence of interrogations,’ ‘preparation/realization,’ ‘contrast,’ and *inclusio*.

Throughout MU3, a notable recurrence of interrogations appears, featuring exchanges between Jesus and various characters, primarily the Twelve. These interactions demonstrate Jesus' consistent use of inquiry as a teaching tool. Throughout this division, at least twelve instances of questioning are noted (8:23–24; 8:27–29; 8:36–37; 9:11–13; 9:16–18; 9:19–27; 9:28–29; 9:35–37; 10:2–9; 10:17–22; 10:35–40; 10:51–52). The distribution of these questions spans the entire unit, suggesting an ongoing pattern of dialogue aimed at engaging His followers (see Figure 4.8).

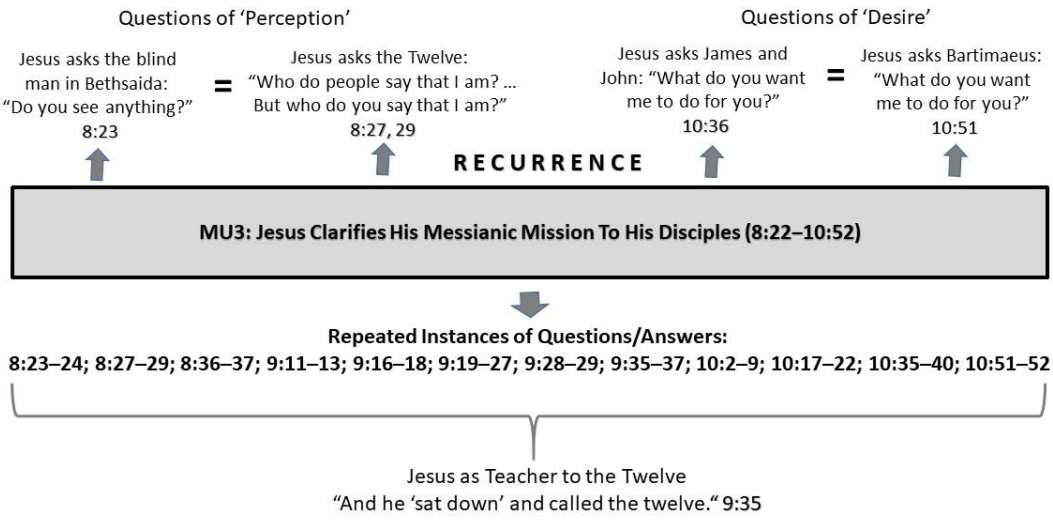

Figure 4.8 MSR in MU3: Recurrence of Interrogations in MU3

Figure 4.8 shows that Jesus’ questions to the Twelve begin in 8:27, 29 with inquiries about public and personal perceptions of Him: “Who do people say that I am? ... But who do

you say that I am?" and extend to a question of desire in 10:36 to James and John: "What do you want me to do for you?" These are framed by two parallel inquiries Jesus poses to two blind men. To the blind man in Bethsaida, He asks a question of (literal) perception: "Do you see anything?" (8:24), while to the blind man in Jericho, He poses a similar question of desire: "What do you want me to do for you?" (10:51)—the same question He asks of James and John earlier in the narrative (10:36).

Moreover, in this division, a key moment occurs when Jesus asks, "What were you discussing on the way?" (9:33), directly following the apostles' conversation about who is the greatest, as indicated by their silence in 9:34. After this, Jesus sits down and calls the Twelve (9:35), marking a transition into a significant moment of teaching.

In addition, throughout MU3, questions are also directed at Jesus by His followers. For instance, the apostles ask why they were unable to cast out a demon from a boy (9:28–29). This question highlights the Twelve's inquiry into their own capabilities and their need for further instruction. Similar questions appear from other characters at various points (10:2, 10:17), contributing to the ongoing pattern of dialogue between Jesus and His disciples.

The observed recurrence of interrogations is a prominent feature in MU3. Jesus' questions and answers to the Twelve and others reveal a pattern of repeated inquiry and response. This consistent exchange serves as a central feature in the relationship between Jesus and His followers throughout this division.

Moving along, MU3-1 (8:22–26) presents the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida, a unique account in Mark among the Gospels. This gradual restoration of sight

highlights a process distinct from other healings that occur immediately in the Markan narrative (e.g., 1:31, 1:42, 2:12, 3:5, 5:29, 5:41–42, 7:35, 10:52). This is followed by the pivotal section, MU3-2 (8:27–10:45), where the Twelve's unclear perception and need for restoration of sight of Jesus as the Messiah is addressed. This connection between MU3-1 and MU3-2 creates a preparation/realization dynamic, where the two-stage healing foreshadows the apostles' initial, partial perception of Jesus' Messianic identity and mission, much like the blind man initially saw people as trees walking (8:24) (see Figure 4.9).

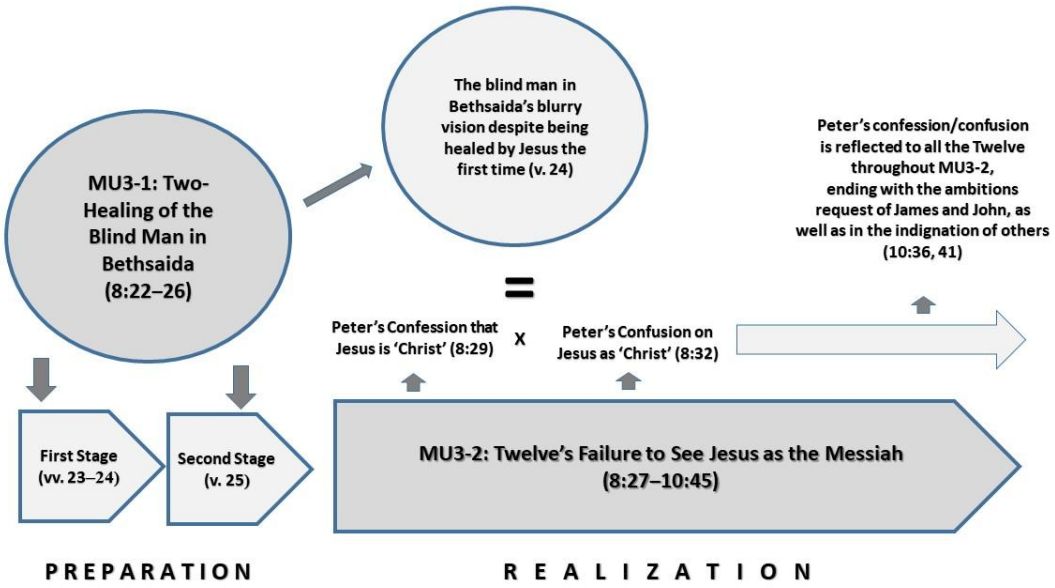

Figure 4.9 MSR between MU3-1 and MU3-2: Preparation/Realization

Figure 4.9 illustrates how MU3-1 introduces MU3-2. In MU3-1, Jesus took the blind man by the hand, led him out of the village, and spat on his eyes (8:23), initiating a deliberate healing process. However, unlike other miracle stories, the blind man's vision was not

restored right away. Only after Jesus laid His hands on him again was the man's sight fully restored (8:25).

Meanwhile, MU3-2 begins with Peter's contrasting responses to Jesus following the two-stage healing, reflecting the theme of flawed perception. Peter recognizes Jesus as the Messiah but does not fully see His mission. His declaration in 8:29—"You are the Christ"—falls short of full understanding, as seen shortly after in 8:31–32.

Here, Jesus begins to teach His disciples that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, be killed, and rise again after three days (8:31). However, Peter takes Jesus aside and rebukes Him (8:32), showing that while Peter acknowledges Jesus' Messianic identity, his grasp of the Messiah's mission remains unclear. This instance underscores the structural relationship between MU3-1 and MU3-2, where the theme of spiritual blindness surfaces in the Twelve's interactions with Jesus.

This same problematic insight of the apostles continues through to the end of MU3-2, exemplified by the request of James and John in 10:36. They envision Jesus as the Messiah seated in glory but fail to comprehend His mission, asking for power and position. This eventually leads to indignation from the rest of the apostles upon knowing it (10:41). This contrasts with Jesus' sacrificial purpose of service and suffering, as He explains in 10:45: "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Proceeding to the connection of MU3-2 and MU3-3. Throughout MU3-2, the Twelve repeatedly fail to see Jesus clearly as the Messiah, one who is called to serve and suffer. A

critique of their lack of faith is evident in 9:19, where Jesus refers to them as a "faithless generation" following their inability to heal a boy with an unclean spirit (9:14–18). After this, Jesus heals the child (9:20–27), underscoring the necessity of faith. This is further highlighted in Jesus' exchange with the boy's father in 9:23–24, where Jesus states, "All things are possible for one who believes," and the father responds, "I believe; help my unbelief!"

While the Twelve are described as 'faithless' in MU3-2, MU3-3 introduces Bartimaeus, a blind man whose faith results in immediate healing. This difference underscores the Twelve's incomplete perception and lack of faith against Bartimaeus's understanding and faith in Jesus as the merciful Son of David (10:47, 48), which results in clear sight and healing. This presents a striking contrast (see Figure 4.10).

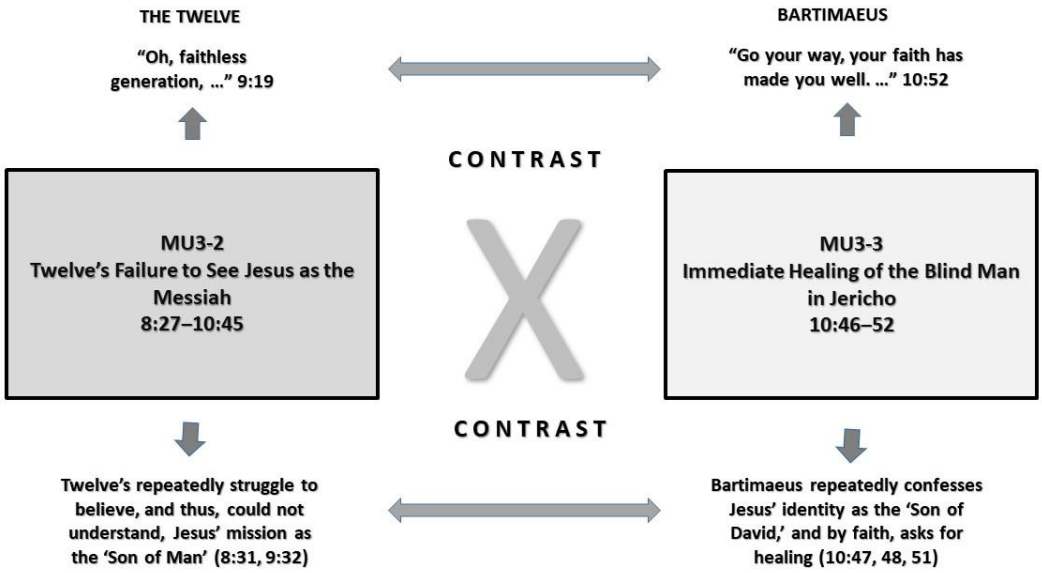

Figure 4.10 MSR between MU3-2 and MU3-3: Contrast

Figure 4.10 illustrates the repeated failures of the Twelve to fully grasp Jesus' role as Messiah throughout MU3-2, especially in their reactions to His predictions of suffering and death, and even resurrection. This difficulty in understanding is tied to their struggle to accept the nature of Jesus' mission as the 'Son of Man.' Following His first passion prediction (8:31), Peter immediately rebukes Him (8:32), rejecting the idea that the Messiah must suffer. After the second prediction (9:31), the Twelve continue to misunderstand and avoid further questioning (9:32), signaling a reluctance to embrace Jesus' path of suffering.

Their misunderstanding is also evident in their actions and conversations afterward. Instead of absorbing Jesus' message of servanthood, they dispute over who is the greatest (9:33–37), showing an expectation of earthly status rather than spiritual transformation. Their attempt to stop someone from casting out demons in Jesus' name (9:38–41) and their treatment of the children approaching Jesus (10:13–16) further highlight their blindness to His inclusive, servant-oriented mission.

Moreover, the ambitious request by James and John for prominent positions (10:35–37) exemplifies this persistent misunderstanding. Seeking power rather than accepting Jesus' path of sacrifice, their request and the resulting indignation of the others (10:41), reveal a shared misconception among the Twelve.

On the other hand, MU3-3 presents Bartimaeus, a blind man in Jericho who perceives Jesus' identity clearly. Calling out to Him as 'Son of David' (10:47, 48), Bartimaeus recognizes His Messianic role in a way the Twelve do not. His plea for mercy reflects a faith that Jesus acknowledges, saying, "Go your way; your faith has made you well" (10:52). This faith leads to both physical and spiritual sight, as Bartimaeus immediately follows Jesus.

The contrast between the Twelve's failure to see Jesus as the Messiah and Bartimaeus' faith in Jesus despite his vision impairment underscores the theme of spiritual blindness versus insight across MU3-2 and MU3-3. While the Twelve, despite their proximity to Jesus, remain focused on political expectations rather than His redemptive work (8:33, 9:33–34, 10:35–37),[185] Bartimaeus, though physically blind, demonstrates a clear-sighted faith that brings healing and discipleship.

Finally, MU3-1 and MU3-3 form a structural bracket around MU3-2. Each of these sections initiates with parallel phrasing. The recurrence of phrasing, paired with the repeated theme, reinforces MU3's design as an *inclusio*, which emphasizes the central theme of this division: seeing Jesus as the Crucified Messiah and calling followers to accompany Him on the way, embracing the cross (8:34) (see Figure 4.11).

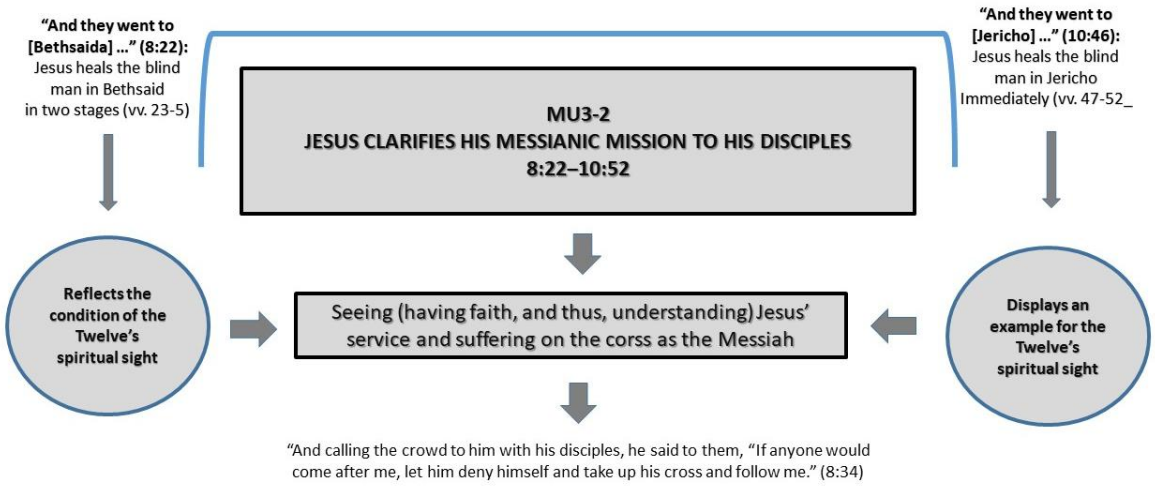

Figure 4.11 MSR in MU3: *Inclusio*

[185] See Vincent Henry Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah: A Study in the Earliest History of Christianity* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1886), passim.

Figure 4.11 shows that MU3 is framed by the phrases “And they came to Bethsaida” (8:22) in MU3-1 and “And they came to Jericho” (10:46) in MU3-3, each introducing accounts of Jesus healing a blind man. This framing creates a bracket, or *inclusio* effect, highlighting the motif of blindness and sight. Within MU3-2, the Twelve’s spiritual blindness becomes apparent as they repeatedly fail to see Jesus as the Messiah who must serve and suffer (8:31–32; 9:31–34; 10:33–37, 41).

Consequently, the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26) mirrors the apostles' own spiritual vision. Just as the blind man initially perceives people as indistinct figures, the Twelve have a blurred perception of Jesus’ identity and mission. This impaired insight is seen in Peter’s confession, quickly followed by his rebuke of Jesus when He speaks of His suffering and death (8:29–32).

Meanwhile, the healing of a blind man in Jericho (10:46–52) provides a remarkable example for the Twelve. Though physically blind, Bartimaeus calls out to Jesus with clarity about His Messianic role, addressing Him as the ‘Son of David’ (10:47–48). His faith brings about immediate healing, unlike the earlier gradual process. Bartimaeus’ actions also model discipleship, as he follows Jesus ‘on the way’ (10:52), a phrase that recurs throughout this section (8:27; 9:33; 10:32; 10:52).

These two healing accounts sandwich MU3-2, reinforcing the theme of discipleship. They illustrate that seeing—having faith and insight into Jesus as the Crucified Messiah—is essential for following Him. This idea is echoed in Jesus’ teachings on discipleship, where He calls followers to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him (8:34). The call to

bear one's own cross and follow Jesus displays the essence of spiritual sight—truly understanding who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him.

IQs from MSRs within MU3 (8:22–10:52)

At this phase of the second level of observation, the focus shifts to developing IQs related to MU3 as a division. Thus, I concentrate on raising IQs drawn from MSRs observed in this literary unit (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 IQs Raised from MSRs associated with MU3 as a Book Division

MUs	MSRs	IQs
→**MU3**←	**Recurrence of interrogations**	What is the primary meaning of this recurring element (interrogations between Jesus and others, primarily with the Twelve)? How do the individual occurrences of questions/answers relate to and illuminate one another? Why this recurrence of interrogations? What are the implications?
MU3-1→ ←MU3-2	**Preparation/ realization**	What is the meaning of this background material in MU3-1 (Two-stage healing)? How does MU3-1 prepare for MU3-2 (Twelve's unclear perception of Jesus)? Why did Mark prepare for the Twelve's failure to see Jesus as the 'Crucified'? Why in this way? What are the implications?
MU3-2→ ←MU3-3	**Contrast**	What major differences are between the Twelve and Bartimaeus emphasized by Mark? What is the precise and specific meaning of each of these differences, and why did he deal with them as he did? What are the implications?
→**MU3**←	***Inclusio***	What are the major similarities presented between MU3-1 and MU3-3, and what is the meaning of each? How does this inclusio strengthen the comparison and illumine the major points of similarity? Why did Mark emphasize and support these similarities? What are the implications?

Table 4.3 presents IQs derived from observations within MU3 as a book division, forming a foundational basis for interpreting this portion of the Markan narrative. The insights gathered during the structural analysis, particularly focused on this division,

naturally generate questions that drive the interpretive process, helping to explore the meaning and purpose of sections within MU3.

Strategic Areas in MU3

After identifying the MSRs in MU3, I pinpoint key passages to be strategic areas for each structure (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Strategic Areas from MSRs in MU3 as a Book Division

MUs	MSRs	Key Observations
→**MU3**←	**Recurrence of interrogations**	- Beginning of MU3: Question/answer on the public and the Twelve's perception of Jesus' identity (8:27, 29) - Middle of MU3: Question/answer on the Twelve's inability to heal (9:28–29) - End of MU3: Question/answer on the desire of James and John (10:38), as well as Bartimaeus (10:51)
MU3-1→ ←MU3-2	**Preparation/ realization**	- Preparation in MU3-1: The blind man in Bethsaida's partial sight (8:23–24) - Realization in MU3-2: Twelve's failures to see the essence of Jesus' Messianic mission (9:32)
MU3-2→ ←MU3-3	**Contrast**	- Contrast in MU2-3: Twelve's faithlessness (9:19) - Contrast in MU3-3: The blind man in Jericho's faith (10:52)
→**MU3**←	***Inclusio***	- Opening bracket in MU3-1: "And they came to .." (8:22); and "… and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly" (8:25) - Closing bracket in MU3-3: "And they came to …" (10:46); and "… he recovered his sight and followed him on the way" (10:52)

Table 4.4 highlights key verses that direct interpretive efforts toward strategic areas from MSRs in MU3. These verses emphasize the crucial flow within the division of Mark, exploring central themes and insights efficiently.

Literary Forms of the Sections in MU3

In examining the Markan texts, particularly the sections encompassing MU3 (MU3-1; MU3-2; MU3-3), the narrative unfolds through a dynamic interplay of literary forms. Through these shapes of literature, MU3—"Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples"—as a division, invites readers to engage with the accounts within the sections.

First is MU3-1 (8:22–26), featuring the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida. This section is a 'dramatic text,' characterized by a gradual unfolding of events that creates tension and anticipation.[186] The interaction begins with Jesus leading the blind man "out of the village" (8:23), isolating the man from the crowd and preparing for a deeper encounter. As the healing proceeds with Jesus spitting on the man's eyes and laying hands on him (8:23), the physicality of the act heightens the suspense factor, emphasizing the intimate and transformative nature of the healing. The blind man's initial partial sight—seeing "people like trees walking" (8:24)—introduces uncertainty, mirroring the ambiguity often found in dramatic works. Nonetheless, the second touch leads to a complete restoration of sight (8:25). This serves as the climax and resolving the built tension, much like a drama culminating in a moment of resolution.

Second is MU3-2 (8:27–10:45), which presents a 'prose narrative' through a sequence of events that detail the Twelve's failure to see and follow Jesus.[187] This section follows a straightforward narrative, depicting the apostles' flawed understanding of Jesus through actions and dialogues. It begins with Jesus asking, "Who do people say that I am?" (8:27), and the disciples listing titles like John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets (8:28).

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[186] See Table 3.2 Primary Literary Forms, 'dramatic texts'; Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12.

[187] See Table 3.2 Primary Literary Forms, 'prose narratives'; Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12.

Jesus then asks, “But who do you say that I am?” (8:29), with Peter declaring, “You are the Christ” (8:29). Then, Jesus instructs them not to tell anyone (8:30) and shares His first passion prediction: the Son of Man must suffer, be rejected, and be killed (8:31). Peter's rebuke (8:32) leads to a confrontation between their expectations and Jesus' Messianic role.

The second passion prediction occurs (9:31), but the Twelve fail to understand and show fear instead (9:32). The narrative includes a discussion about who is the greatest (9:34), and Jesus teaches about humility by taking a child (9:36–37). John also tries to stop a man casting out demons in Jesus' name (9:38–40), with Jesus affirming, “For the one who is not against us is for us” (9:40). The third passion prediction (10:32–34) again elicits fear from those who followed (10:32). The narrative concludes with James and John requesting positions of glory (10:35–37), and Jesus teaching about servanthood and reversing worldly values (10:43–45).

Throughout MU3-2, the structure relies on the progression of events and dialogues that shift between the Twelve's failure and the increasing clarity of Jesus' Messianic mission. The prose narrative format presents the unfolding episodes chronologically, highlighting key conversations, actions, and the apostles' responses to Jesus, and vice versa.

In the last section, MU3-3 (10:46–52), the immediate healing of the blind man in Jericho is presented in a ‘dramatic text’ design, similar to MU3-1.[188] The narrative begins with the geographical setting of “And they came to Jericho” (10:46), introducing the context for the events coming to light. Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, cries out to Jesus for mercy,

[188] See Table 3.2 Primary Literary Forms, ‘dramatic texts’; Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12.

“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (10:47). Despite the crowd’s attempts to silence him (10:48), Bartimaeus persists. When Jesus calls Bartimaeus to approach, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you” (10:49), it creates a pivotal moment with a dramatic atmosphere. Bartimaeus responds by throwing off his cloak (10:50), signifying a transformation in his status.

The dialogue between Jesus and Bartimaeus continues with the question, “What do you want me to do for you?” (10:51). Bartimaeus answers, “Rabbi, let me recover my sight” (10:51), prompting Jesus’ response, “Go your way; your faith has made you well” (10:52). Bartimaeus is healed, both physically and spiritually, following his faith. Finally, Bartimaeus follows Jesus "on the way" (10:52), marking his transition into discipleship.

Thus, MU3-3 (10:46–52) exemplifies dramatic text through the vivid portrayal of characters and their interactions, heightening the relational dynamics between Jesus and those He encounters. The narrative is illuminated with actions and dialogue, illustrating the development of Bartimaeus from a blind beggar to a disciple, depicting the shift from blindness to sight.

Other Significant Impressions in MU3 as a Book Division

In exploring the thematic and literary nuances of MU3, several significant impressions emerge within the narrative. These observations highlight key elements that contribute to the focus on discipleship and Messianic revelation in this division of Mark.

The phrase “on the way” recurs throughout MU-3 (e.g., 8:27; 9:33; 10:32, 46), signifying both a geographical and journey motif as Jesus and His followers travel toward

Jerusalem. This repeated phrase underscores the ongoing movement within the narrative and places an emphasis on the various challenges and teachings that occur along the path. This motif is prominent in depicting the disciples' experiences and encounters with Jesus.

Throughout this literary unit, the tone can be characterized as instructional. Jesus engages in several teaching moments with His disciples, responding to their questions and addressing misunderstandings (e.g., 8:33; 9:35–37). The instructional tone is evident in His direct responses, as well as in the lessons on humility, service, and His mission. The tone establishes Jesus' role as a teacher and shapes the disciples' interactions with Him.

The division dedicates significant material to Jesus' predictions of His passion as the Son of Man (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) relative to the disciples' misunderstandings. The narrative repeatedly presents these predictions and the disciples' consistent difficulty in perceiving them, depicting a central focus on their struggle with comprehension. This layout within the structure emphasizes the theme of the disciples' problematic sight in light of Jesus' Messianic mission.

Consequently, themes of sight and blindness are also interwoven within this section, illustrated by the healings of the blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26) and in Jericho (10:46–52). These healing accounts detail instances of physical restoration that parallel the Twelve's ongoing journey of spiritual sight, providing contrast between the gradual and immediate responses to Jesus.

Minor characters are depicted as having faith that stands in contrast to the disciples' challenges (8:22–26; 9:21–24; 10:46–52). This difference highlights a recurring pattern

within the narrative, where characters outside of Jesus' chosen Twelve demonstrate belief. These portrayals create a juxtaposition between different individuals' responses to Jesus, including those often marginalized by societal norms.

Level Three: Detailed Section Analysis of MU3-2 (8:27–10:45)

The detailed section analysis centers on MU3-2 (8:27–10:45)—"Twelve's Failure to See Jesus as the Messiah," where Jesus introduces the cost of following Him (8:34). The analysis begins with a structural examination, mapping the segments and movements of the narrative. It then explores overarching themes and subthemes, focusing on how these contextual connections reinforce the central call to cross-bearing discipleship in 8:34 (see Figure 4.12).

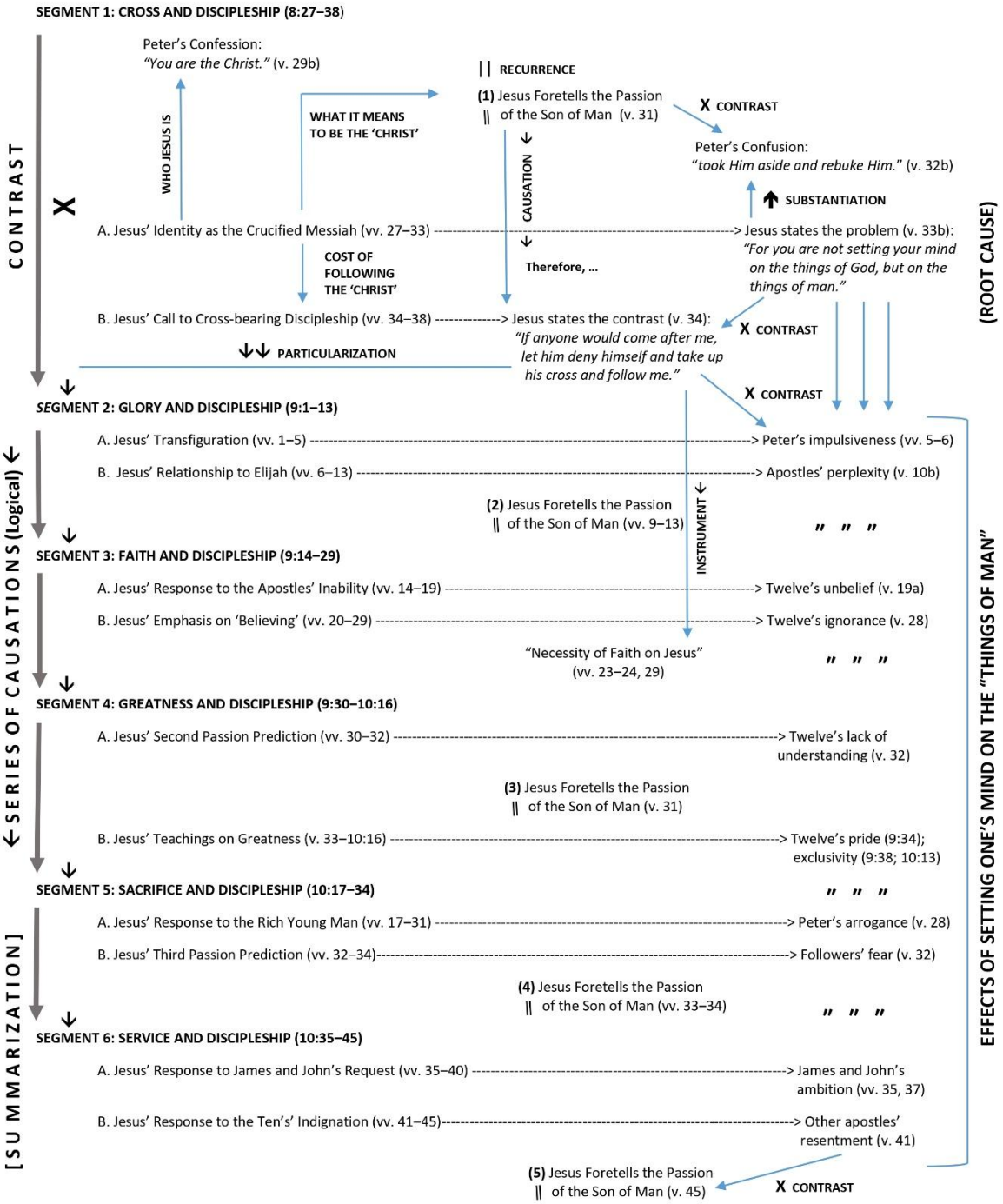

Figure 4.12 Detailed Section Analysis of MU3-2 (8:27–10:45)

Six Segments of MU3-2 (8:27–10:45)

Figure 4.12 illustrates the structure of MU3-2 (8:27–10:45), divided into six segments with distinct subunits. Each segment contributes to a comprehensive exploration of Markan discipleship, highlighting different aspects of the disciples' journey and understanding of Jesus' Messianic mission and call.

Segment 1: The first segment, “Cross and Discipleship,” spans 8:27–38, establishing the foundational premise of Jesus’ identity as the Crucified Messiah and His call to discipleship. This segment includes the subunits “Jesus' Identity as the Crucified Messiah” (vv. 27–33) and “Jesus' Call to Cross-bearing Discipleship” (vv. 34–38). Here, Jesus questions the apostles about His identity, leading Peter to confess Him as the Christ. Immediately following, however, Jesus predicts His suffering and rebukes Peter’s resistance, highlighting the contrast between popular messianic expectations and the true nature of His mission (vv. 27–33). This subunit emphasizes that Jesus' Messiahship includes suffering, setting the stage for His teaching on discipleship.

In verses 34–38, Jesus calls the crowd to “deny themselves and take up their cross.” Extending beyond the Twelve, this instruction emphasizes that true discipleship requires both self-denial and a willingness to suffer. The cost of following Jesus is clear—His disciples must align with His mission, a commitment marked by sacrifice and the rejection of worldly priorities

Segment 2: In Segment 2, “Glory and Discipleship” (9:1–13), the subunits “Jesus' Transfiguration” (vv. 1–5) and “Jesus' Relationship to Elijah” (vv. 6–13) reveal a powerful

divine affirmation of Jesus' identity. In the Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John witness His glory, receiving a glimpse of His divine nature that complements the prior call to suffering. This moment serves as reassurance of Jesus' ultimate fulfillment of God's redemptive purposes, foreshadowing the glory awaiting beyond His suffering.

The apostles' subsequent question about Elijah (v. 11) offers Jesus an opportunity to clarify that John the Baptist fulfills this prophecy, linking His mission to Israel's prophetic expectations. Jesus affirms that His journey, although involving suffering, aligns with God's redemptive plan. This segment reinforces that discipleship involves both revelation and participation in God's fulfilled promises.

Segment 3: "Faith and Discipleship" (9:14–29) is the focus of Segment 3, encompassing "Jesus' Response to the Twelve's Inability to Heal" (vv. 14–19) and "Jesus' Emphasis on Believing" (vv. 20–29). Here, a gap in the apostles' understanding is highlighted: their inability to cast out a demon reflects a deficiency in faith. Jesus' exasperation (v. 19) underscores the need for unwavering belief in God's power as the foundation of discipleship.

In the following verses, Jesus emphasizes faith, telling the boy's father, "All things are possible to the one who believes" (v. 23). This incident illustrates that the effectiveness of discipleship depends on complete reliance on God, with faith serving as the means by which His power is realized. Jesus' emphasis here reiterates that discipleship involves a journey toward strengthened belief and dependency.

Segment 4: The theme of “Greatness and Discipleship” unfolds in Segment 4, which includes “Jesus' Second Passion Prediction” (vv. 30–32) and “Jesus' Teachings on Greatness” (vv. 33–10:16). Here, Jesus again predicts His suffering (v. 31), a teaching the Twelve fail to understand (v. 32), highlighting their ongoing struggle with the concept of sacrificial leadership.

As the apostles later argue over who is greatest, Jesus redefines greatness by teaching that it lies in humility and service, illustrated through His gesture of embracing a child (v. 36). This teaching counters the disciples' ambition and reorients their understanding of leadership within the Kingdom of God. In this segment, true discipleship is reframed as servanthood, directly opposing worldly views of status and ambition.

Segment 5: Segment 5, “Sacrifice and Discipleship” (10:17–34), focuses on “Jesus' Response to the Rich Young Man” (vv. 17–31) and “Jesus' Third Passion Prediction" (vv. 32–34). When the rich young man asks how to inherit eternal life, Jesus instructs him to sell all he possesses (v. 21), highlighting the difficulty of sacrificing material wealth. The man’s reluctance demonstrates how attachments to worldly assets can impede discipleship, underscoring the cost of following Jesus.

This segment concludes with Jesus’ third prediction of His suffering, further preparing His disciples for the demands of sacrificial discipleship. By detailing His condemnation and death, Jesus exemplifies the ultimate sacrifice, setting a standard for His followers. It illustrates that discipleship requires an openness to relinquish personal attachments in order to fully embrace Jesus' mission.

Segment 6: Finally, Segment 6, “Service and Discipleship” (10:35–45), covers “Jesus' Response to James and John's Request” (vv. 35–40) and “Jesus' Response to the Ten's Indignation” (vv. 41–45). James and John’s request for positions of honor (v. 37) reveals a misunderstanding of Jesus' Kingdom. Jesus redirects their ambition by emphasizing that discipleship involves sharing in His suffering rather than seeking status.

When the other apostles react with indignation, Jesus teaches them that greatness in His Kingdom is defined by servanthood (v. 43). His words culminate in a powerful reminder: “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve” (v. 45). This segment encapsulates the essence of discipleship, centering it on selfless service, where true leadership mirrors Jesus’ own sacrificial example.

Segmental Movements in MU3-2 (8:27–10:45)

Figure 4.12 also outlines the movements of each segment, presenting the accounts in MU3-2 in a logical narrative sequence through their MSRs.[189] These structural relationships highlight how the events in this section build upon the overarching theme of recognizing Jesus as the Crucified Messiah and following Him on the path He sets.

Contrast between Segments 1 and 2: The movement from Segment 1, “Cross and Discipleship” (8:27–38), to Segment 2, “Glory and Discipleship” (9:1–13), reveals a stark contrast between suffering and glory. Segment 1 introduces Jesus’ own passion and call to discipleship, marked by sacrifice and the necessity of taking up one’s cross (8:31, 34–35). In Segment 2, however, the Transfiguration shifts focus to the glory inherent in Jesus’ divine

[189] See Table 3.1 Major Structural Relationships (MSRs).

identity, providing a foreshadowing of His resurrection (9:2–8). This contrast between sacrifice and triumph accentuates the dual nature of Jesus' Messianic mission, highlighting both suffering and divine glory as integral to discipleship.

Causation between Segments 2 and 3: The movement from Segment 2 to Segment 3, "Faith and Discipleship" (9:14–29), illustrates a logical cause-and-effect relationship. Segment 2 confirms Jesus' identity and authority through the Transfiguration and His prophetic connection to Elijah (9:1–13). This divine revelation, in turn, sets the stage for Segment 3, where the apostles' failure to heal a boy with an unclean spirit (9:14–19) underscores their need for unwavering faith. This progression reflects that the divine affirmation in Segment 2 calls for a strong response of faith, making the disciples' failure and Jesus' teaching on belief a natural development.

Causation between Segments 3 and 4: The movement from Segment 3 to Segment 4, "Greatness and Discipleship" (9:30–10:16), further illustrates causation. In Segment 3, Jesus emphasizes faith after the Twelve's failure to heal (9:14–19), addressing their need for greater belief (9:20–29). This focus on faith establishes the foundation for Segment 4, where Jesus predicts His suffering a second time (9:30–32) and addresses the disciples' misunderstanding of greatness. Through teachings on humility and servanthood (9:33–10:16), He contrasts worldly ambitions with the values of God's Kingdom. The disciples' struggle with faith directly informs their misunderstanding, reinforcing the foundational need for faith established in Segment 3.

Causation between Segments 4 and 5: The movement from Segment 4 to Segment 5, "Sacrifice and Discipleship" (10:17–34), continues this cause-and-effect pattern. Jesus

redefines greatness in Segment 4, emphasizing humility alongside His second prediction of suffering (9:30–32, 9:33–10:16). This theme leads naturally into Segment 5, where Jesus' interaction with the rich young man (10:17–31) illustrates the cost of discipleship. Jesus' third passion prediction (10:32–34) then reinforces the theme of sacrifice. Together, these accounts suggest that true greatness in discipleship necessitates sacrificial living, making Segment 5 a logical extension of the principles in Segment 4.

Summarization between Segments 5 and 6: The movement between Segment 5 and Segment 6, "Service and Discipleship" (10:35–45), is characterized by summarization. Segment 5 introduces key discipleship themes, such as sacrificial living (10:17–31) and Jesus' third passion prediction (10:32–34). These principles are further distilled in Segment 6, where Jesus emphasizes servanthood in response to the apostles' ambition and indignation (10:36, 41). Presenting the Son of Man as the model of servant leadership (10:42–45), Jesus encapsulates and reinforces previous teachings, thereby summarizing the central messages on true discipleship within MU3-2.

Cause of the Twelve's Spiritual Blindness (8:33b)

Figure 4.12 reveals that the root of the Twelve's spiritual blindness is revealed in 8:33b, where Jesus critiques Peter's mindset: "For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." Here, the conjunction 'for' (Gk. *gar*) introduces this statement as a substantiation, directly linking Peter's reaction to the primary issue of misperceiving Jesus' Messianic mission. Peter's perspective—representing the Twelve—focuses on earthly expectations, particularly the hope for a conquering Messiah rather than a

suffering one (8:31–32). This substantiation in 8:33b serves as a foundation for the disciples' continued misunderstanding throughout the section.

In Segment 1, Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ (8:29), yet immediately after Jesus predicts His suffering (8:31), Peter rebukes Him (8:32), illustrating a fundamental clash between Peter's expectations and Jesus' mission. Jesus' sharp response to Peter, calling him 'Satan' (8:33a), indicates that Peter's opposition aligns with human concerns rather than divine intentions, setting the stage for the recurring theme of the Twelve's failure seen in the following episodes.

Segment 2 (9:1–13), the Transfiguration, serves as a revelation of Jesus' divine identity. However, the apostles continue to question and interpret events based on traditional expectations, as shown in their inquiry about Elijah (9:10–13). Their question about Elijah's return reflects their reliance on eschatological expectations, showing an ongoing struggle to grasp Jesus' role beyond what they had anticipated. This episode repeats the pattern introduced in Segment 1, where the disciples' perspective remains anchored in familiar but limited interpretations.

In Segment 3 (9:14–29), the Twelve are depicted as powerless to cast out a demon (9:18), and Jesus' response underscores their need for prayer (9:29). This episode contrasts human effort with divine reliance, suggesting that the apostles' inability to understand true discipleship is related to their dependence on human abilities rather than trust in God. This dependence parallels the issue in 8:33b, where earthly thinking is inadequate for the demands of faith.

Segment 4 (9:30–10:16) shows the Twelve arguing about greatness (9:34) right after the second passion prediction (9:30–32). This contrast highlights their persistent misunderstanding of Jesus' purpose and the nature of discipleship. Jesus' teaching on humility (9:35–37) directly addresses their focus on status, underscoring that their preoccupation with position echoes the misaligned priorities highlighted in 8:33b.

In Segment 5 (10:17–22), the interaction with the rich young man introduces a parallel theme of material attachment. This episode reflects the broader narrative issue of misplaced priorities, as the rich man's attachment to wealth (10:22) mirrors the apostles' struggle to relinquish their own security. Jesus' instruction to leave everything (10:21) reinforces the theme of renouncing worldly fixations as a barrier to understanding the demands of discipleship.

Finally, Segment 6 (10:35–45) culminates in James and John's request for positions of honor and the indignation of the rest of the Twelve (10:35, 37, 41), which demonstrates the apostles' continued focus on status. Jesus' response (10:42–45) emphasizes selfless service as the true path to greatness, echoing His earlier teaching and reinforcing a core message that stands in contrast to the worldly mindset described in 8:33b.

Across these passages, the narrative consistently links the Twelve's spiritual blindness to their attachment to earthly priorities, as initially identified in 8:33b. Each episode builds on this central issue, showing a pattern of misunderstanding that shapes the disciples' journey and reveals Mark's focus on the struggle to shift from human-centered expectations to a deeper insight into Jesus' mission. This observational analysis emphasizes how the text,

through its connections and patterns, illustrates the disciples' gradual movement toward a clearer perspective on true discipleship.

Cure for the Twelve's Spiritual Blindness (8:34; 9:23)

Moreover, in Figure 4.12, having identified the cause of the Twelve's spiritual blindness in 8:33b, where their minds are set on human concerns rather than divine matters, attention now turns to the cure, introduced in 8:34: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." This directive highlights self-denial and cross-bearing as intertwined, essential components of discipleship. This represents the abandonment of personal desires and the willingness to endure hardship for Jesus' sake, each requiring faith, which here serves an instrumental role (instrumentalization) in enabling this commitment, as further underscored in 9:23: "All things are possible for one who believes."

After addressing the cause of Peter's—and, by extension, the Twelve's—spiritual blindness, Jesus outlines the cost of discipleship in Segment 1 (8:34), contrasting this radical call to self-denial and cross-bearing with the apostles' focus on "the things of man" (8:33b) This call serves as a structural foundation for understanding Jesus' Messianic mission and reinforces the demands of following Him. The message in 8:34 is further elaborated in subsequent teachings, as the apostles' perception of this theme is dealt with across multiple episodes.

The Transfiguration (9:2–8), in Segment 2, highlights the gap between Jesus' divine revelation and the Twelve's limited earthly understanding. Despite the revelation of Jesus' glory, the apostles remain perplexed (9:10b) and question Elijah's role (9:11–13),

interpreting events through traditional eschatological expectations.[190] This event illustrates that without faith—as the means of true insight—they are unable to see beyond familiar categories, underscoring the necessity of a shift from earthly to divine perspective for genuine discipleship grounded in self-denial and cross-bearing.

In Segment 3 (9:14–29), the apostles' failure to heal a boy with an unclean spirit (9:18) emphasizes their reliance on human effort rather than faith, which is critical for overcoming spiritual blindness. Jesus' frustration with their lack of belief (9:19) and His emphasis on belief and prayer (9:23–24, 29) underline faith as a critical requirement for the spiritual vision to pursue self-denial and cross-bearing. This dependence on faith illustrates that overcoming spiritual blindness requires a shift from self-reliance to trust in divine power.

Segment 4 (9:30–10:16) further reveals the Twelve's misunderstanding as they fail to comprehend Jesus' second prediction of His suffering (9:30–32) and instead argue over status (9:34). Jesus reframes this focus by teaching that true greatness lies in servanthood (9:35–37), a concept deeply linked to self-denial and cross-bearing initially called for in 8:34. This lesson on humility reinforces that discipleship involves rejecting earthly ambitions and embracing a life oriented around service, grounded in faith.

The encounter with the rich young man in Segment 5 (10:17–22) also exhibits this principle. The young man's attachment to wealth (10:22) and the disciples' pride in their own sacrifices (10:28) reveal that true discipleship requires a complete reordering of values.

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[190] Andrew M. Okorie, "Jesus and the Eschatological Elijah," *Scriptura: Journal for Biblical, Theological and Contextual Hermeneutics* 73 (2000): 189–192.

Jesus' statement about the difficulty for the wealthy to enter the kingdom (10:23–25) highlights the necessity of both sacrifice and faith in guiding the disciples toward a path of commitment and surrender foundational to cross-bearing.

Finally, Segment 6 (10:35–45) indicates James and John's ambition for status (10:35, 37) and the others' indignation (10:41), reflecting a continued focus on worldly greatness. Jesus' response—that true greatness is found in selfless service (10:42–45)—reiterates that discipleship rooted in both self-denial and cross-bearing (8:34) is inseparable from faith. Faith serves as the instrument enabling the disciples to embrace this radical redefinition of glory.

Throughout these passages, Jesus defines faith as the means by which the Twelve's spiritual blindness may be cured. Each episode progressively illustrates that faith serves as a guiding principle, moving the disciples away from human-centered perspectives toward the vision necessary to follow Jesus' path. Faith's instrumental role (9:23) is essential in the disciples' journey to fully embrace the demands of self-denial and cross-bearing (8:34), highlighting that true discipleship is characterized by humility, service, and the relinquishing of worldly attachments in favor of a life oriented around divine purposes.

Crucified Messiah as Model for Cross-Bearing Disciples (8:34)

Lastly, Figure 4.12 exhibits the model of the Crucified Messiah for cross-bearing disciples in 8:34—a central theme in 8:27–10:45. This section presents Jesus as the ultimate paradigm for His followers. In Segment 1, Jesus predicts His suffering, death, and resurrection in 8:31, using the title 'Son of Man.' He then calls His followers to deny

themselves and take up their cross in 8:34, presenting a logical causation. The repeated reference to the 'Son of Man' in the passion predictions (9:12, 31; 10:31–34, 45) establishes a consistent pattern, linking Jesus' mission of suffering to the disciples' calling to cross-bearing, highlighting their need to emulate His example.

Segment 2 focuses on the Transfiguration (9:2–8), where three apostles—Peter, James, and John—witness Jesus' divine glory. However, as they descend, Jesus again speaks of the suffering of the Son of Man (9:12). This emphasis on suffering alongside glory reinforces the structural connection between both concepts, setting a framework for discipleship that involves recognizing both the glory and the cost of following Jesus.

In Segment 3, the failure of the Twelve to heal a boy with an unclean spirit (9:18) brings Jesus' frustration over their lack of faith (9:19b). The contrast between their failure and Jesus' teachings highlights the importance of faith and prayer for successful discipleship. Jesus stresses belief (9:23–24) and points to the necessity of prayer (9:29), illustrating that true discipleship requires trust in divine power and reliance on God, rather than human effort. This connects directly to the example of Jesus' own reliance on God in the face of suffering.

Segment 4 presents Jesus' second prediction of His suffering (9:30–32), which stands in contrast to the Twelve's preoccupation with greatness (9:34). Their misunderstanding of greatness is corrected by Jesus' teaching on servanthood (9:35–37) and humility (10:13–16). The structure of this section contrasts worldly ambitions with the true nature of discipleship, which involves embracing humility and self-denial, mirroring Jesus' path of suffering and service.

Segment 5 addresses the challenge of sacrificial living. The rich young man's attachment to wealth (10:22) and the apostles' concerns about their own sacrifices (10:28) bring into focus the difficulty of prioritizing the kingdom over earthly possessions. Jesus underscores the difficulty for the wealthy to enter the kingdom (10:23–25) and reiterates the importance of sacrifice (10:28–34). This further illustrates the relationship between cross-bearing and the necessity of forsaking material concerns in favor of the demands of discipleship modeled by Jesus.

Segment 6 examines the ambitions of James and John for positions of honor (10:35, 37), and the resulting indignation among the other apostles (10:41). Jesus corrects this misunderstanding by teaching that true greatness lies in selfless service (10:42–45). This final section reinforces the central theme of the narrative: true discipleship involves following Jesus' example of servanthood and self-denial as the Crucified Messiah.

The repeated references to the 'Son of Man' in the passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) serve as a structural motif throughout these passages. They establish a consistent connection between Jesus' path of suffering and the demands placed on His followers. Discipleship is portrayed as a journey of self-denial, faith, sacrificial living, and servanthood—qualities exemplified by Jesus Himself. Through these structural patterns, the text clearly presents Jesus as the model for cross-bearing disciples.

IQs from the Detailed Section Analysis of MU3-2

Based on the observations in the detailed section analysis, I raised these IQs:

1. Substantiation: How does 8:33b as the substantiatory passage cause the rebuke of Peter to Jesus (8:31), representing the subsequent misperceptions of the Twelve)? What are the major elements involved in this movement from effect to cause, and what is the meaning of each? Why did Mark include this substantiation? What does this imply about the disciples' understanding of Jesus' identity and mission?

2. Contrast: What major differences between 8:33b and 8:34 are emphasized by Mark? What is the precise and specific meaning of each of these differences, and why did he structure them this way? What does this contrast imply about how disciples must abandon human-centered thinking to align with Jesus' call to discipleship?

3. Recurrence: What is the primary meaning of the repeated Jesus' passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45)? How do the individual occurrences relate to and illuminate one another and to the cost of discipleship in 8:34? Why does Mark emphasize this recurrence? What does this repetition imply about the role of suffering in discipleship and its connection to Jesus' mission?

This chapter implements the three levels of observation, utilizing an inductive approach. It includes a book survey of Mark (1:1–16:20); a division survey of 8:22–10:52, framed by the healing of two blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52); and a detailed section analysis of 8:27–10:45, identifying the segments, their movements, and exploring the connections to call to cross-bearing discipleship in 8:34.

In level one, the book survey determines Mark as a biographical narrative centered on Jesus as Christ, the Son of God, with Jesus as the main protagonist alongside various

characters, including the Twelve. The book's structure is divided into GH and four MUs: MU1, Preparation for Jesus' Messianic Mission (1:2–13); MU2, Jesus Begins His Messianic Mission with His Disciples (1:14–8:21); MU3, Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples (8:22–10:52); and MU4, Jesus Fulfills His Messianic Mission and Charges His Disciples (11:1–16:20).

Across these MUs, MSRs are identified: identificational particularization (GH and MUs); preparation/realization (MU1 and MU2; MU3 and MU4); biographical particularization and interrogation (MU2 and MU3); and climax (MU3 and MU4). From these MSRs, IQs are raised, and strategic areas are pinpointed. Higher critical data is reviewed, and other significant impressions in Mark as a book are noted.

In level two, for the book division survey of Mark 8:22–10:52, sections are defined: MU3-1, Two-Stage Healing of the Blind Man in Bethsaida (8:22–26); MU3-2, Twelve's Failure to See Jesus as the Messiah (8:27–10:45); and MU3-3, Immediate Healing of the Blind Man in Jericho (10:46–52). MSRs identified within this division include: recurrence of interrogations (across MU3); preparation/realization (MU3-1 and MU3-2); contrast (MU3-2 and MU3-3); and *inclusio* (framing MU3, 8:22–26; 10:46–52). IQs are raised from these MSRs, and the literary forms of the sections are identified, with MU3-1 and MU3-3 as dramatic texts and MU3-2 as prose narrative. Lastly, other significant impressions within Mark 8:22–10:52 as a book division are noted.

In level three, the section MU3-2 (8:27–10:45)—"Twelve's Failure to See Jesus as the Messiah"—is analyzed in detail, breaking it down into six segments: Segment 1, "Cross and Discipleship" (8:27–38); Segment 2, "Glory and Discipleship" (9:1–13); Segment 3,

“Faith and Discipleship” (9:14–29); Segment 4, “Greatness and Discipleship” (9:30–10:16); Segment 5, “Sacrifice and Discipleship” (10:17–34); and Segment 6, “Service and Discipleship” (10:35–45).

Segmental progressive movements identified include contrast (Segments 1 and 2); a series of logical causations (Segments 2 and 3; 3 and 4; 4 and 5); and summarization (Segments 1–5 and 6). Finally, the structural relationships and contextual connections of the passages to the cost of discipleship in 8:34 are explored, identifying 8:33b as the cause of the Twelve's spiritual blindness, with self-denial and cross-bearing by faith as the cure (8:34, 9:23), and Jesus as the Crucified Messiah as the model for cross-bearing disciples.

CHAPTER V

SEEING THE MARKAN DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH 8:22–10:52

This chapter presents the selected IQs pertinent to inferring theological implications regarding discipleship. These IQs arise from MSRs identified through a book survey of Mark, a book division survey of 8:22–10:52—framed by two narratives of sight restoration (8:22–26; 10:46–52)—and a detailed section analysis of 8:27–10:45. To address these inquiries, I employed the IWM, drawing conclusions based on multiple forms of evidence.

Selected IQs for Theological Implications on Discipleship

These are the selected IQs for inferring theological implications concerning Markan discipleship, drawn from the three levels of observation utilized in Chapter 4 (see Table 5):

Table 5. Selected IQs Raised from the Three Levels of Observation

SELECTED IQs FROM THE BOOK SURVEY OF MARK	SELECTED IQs FROM THE BOOK DIVISION SURVEY OF MARK 8:22–10:52	SELECTED IQs FROM THE DETAILED SECTION ANALYSIS OF MARK 8:27–10:45
Biographical particularization: What is the implication on	**Preparation/realization:** What is the implication on	**Substantiation:** What is the implication on discipleship of

discipleship of the transition in focus from the general group, the great crowd of followers (MU2), to a particular sub-group, the twelve apostles (MU3)?	discipleship of the two-stage healing as preparation (MU3-1) for the Twelve's journey of spiritual insight with Jesus as realization (MU3-2)?	identifying 8:33b as the cause of Peter's inability to perceive the essence of Jesus' Messianic mission (8:32)?
Interrogation: What is the implication on discipleship of the transition from the problem of the Twelve's misunderstanding of Jesus (MU2) to the solution in Jesus' dealings with them (MU3)?	**Contrast:** What are the implications on discipleship of the contrast between the Twelve's (MU3-2) and Bartimaeus' faith and insight into Jesus' Messianic identity and mission (MU3-3)?	**Contrast:** What is the implication on discipleship of the difference between the mindset on the things of man (8:33b) and Jesus' call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship (8:34)?
Climax: What is the implication on discipleship of Jesus' clarifications of His Messianic identity and mission (MU3) leading to the climactic statement of the Roman centurion (MU4, 15:39)?	***Inclusio*:** What is the implication on discipleship of the framing of the two-stage healing of sight (MU3-1) and the immediate healing of sight (MU3-3) in relation to Jesus' dealings with the Twelve's spiritual blindness (MU3-2)?	**Recurrence:** What is the implication on discipleship of the repeated Jesus' passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) in relations to the call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship?

Table 5 presents specific IQs that aid in inferring theological implications on discipleship as presented in the Markan narrative through the three levels of observation. Through these inquiries, drawn from MSRs, the message of following Jesus as His disciples is illuminated, bridging the gap between observation and interpretation.

Answers to Selected IQs through IWM

As established in Chapter 3, the methodology for drawing answers to the selected IQs involves weighing evidence-based inferences, providing stronger theological implications through IWM. Three specific IQs are addressed at each observation level, revolving around the theme of discipleship.

Implications from MU3 (8:22–10:52) within Mark

There are three selected implicational IQs answered from the book survey of Mark, examining the following MSRs: biographical particularization, interrogation, and climax. Each premise synthesizes evidence to form an inference. Subsequently, the two inferred conclusions are weighed against each other to determine the more probable answer to the IQ.

IQ 1 raised from biographical particularization between MU2 (1:14–8:21) and MU3 (8:22–10:52): What is the implication on discipleship of the transition in focus from the general group, the great crowd of followers (MU2), to a particular sub-group, the twelve apostles (MU3)?

Premise 1: Whereas Jesus lived during a time when Rabbinic Judaism established educational traditions,[191] and in *Bet Midrash*, the third of the three stages of Jewish education (*Bet Sefer*, *Bet Talmud*, and *Bet Midrash*), after having twelve or thirteen gifted disciples, they are to memorize the teacher's words, learn their teacher's traditions and interpretations, imitate their teacher's actions, and raise their own disciples, thus describing the cultural context of the institution of discipleship in the first-century Jewish period,[192]

Premise 2: and whereas the Gospels recognize that within first-century Judaism, various individuals were called 'disciples,' including Jesus' disciples, the "disciples of the Pharisees" (e.g., Matt 22:15–16; Mk 2:18), the "disciples of John the Baptist" (Mk 2:18), and the "disciples of Moses" (Jn 9:24–29), who focused on their privileged position as recipients of God's revelation through Moses,

Inference 1: therefore, since models of discipleship already existed and were well-established within the cultural background of Judaism during Jesus' time, the shift from the great crowd of followers (MU2) to a specific number of apostles (MU3) indicates that Jesus adheres to Jewish Rabbinic traditions of making disciples. This suggests that Jesus is utilizing existing cultural practices, particularly in education, to fulfill His mission. Thus, Jesus' focus on the Twelve in MU3 is a culture-relevant movement, aligning with the common practice among rabbis in developing their disciples within the cultural norms and traditions of first-century Jewish educational systems.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas in the Jewish model of discipleship, the gifted disciples usually seek a rabbi of their choice, joining *Bet Midrash*,[193] Mark presents Jesus doing the opposite: Jesus is

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[191] Jacob Neusner, *The Four Stages of Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002), vii.

[192] D. Thomas Lancaster, *King of the Jews: Resurrecting the Jewish Jesus* (Littleton: First Fruits of Zion, 2006), 52–53; Ikechukwu Michael Oluikpe, "Jesus and Rabbinic Schools: Implications for Adventist Education," *Asia-Africa Journal of Mission and Ministry* 11 (2015): 119.

[193] Oluikpe, "Jesus and Rabbinic Schools," 119.

the one who calls His disciples (1:16–20; 2:13–17), selecting and sending twelve as apostles (3:13–19; 6:7–13), who had no significant status in a synagogue or belonged to a priestly order, thus breaking the pattern of traditional rabbinic practices,

Premise 2: and whereas Jesus consistently made Himself available to His disciples for three years, demonstrating faith through action; and by living alongside the twelve apostles, He did not just teach with words only but through life experiences—Jesus walked, ate, and faced challenges with them, sharing every aspect of their journey; this bond lasted from their travels together to the anguish of Calvary and His ascension from the Mount of Olives;[194] and in the Markan discipleship, emphasized in 8:34, goes beyond imparting knowledge and involves personal transformation;[195] this transformative calling redefined discipleship, foundational to Jesus' charge for them to preach the gospel to all nations (16:15) and to become leaders of the early church amidst persecution (Acts 1:13–14; 2:14, 42–43; 4:33; 6:2–4),

Inference 2: therefore, although Jesus has similarities to the Jewish model of discipleship, His way differs in intensity and intentionality displayed in His calling, selection, sending, and intimacy to the Twelve, focusing on preparing them for fulfilling God's mission bearing their cross. Thus, the movement from the great crowd of followers in MU2 to a particular number of apostles in MU3 implies that it is part of God's plan for the followers of Jesus not only to be like Jesus in a rabbinic sense—in knowledge and deeds—as 'cultural' disciples, but in commitment to fulfilling the will of the Father, embracing suffering as Jesus did, being His true disciples.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference* 2 a notably stronger conclusion as it highlights Jesus' distinct approach to discipleship, emphasizing His intentional selection, close personal involvement, and transformative teaching. This method prepared the Twelve for their mission, focusing on personal transformation and commitment to God's will, which included embracing suffering, and not mere cultural adherence to the existing Jewish model of discipleship. This depth of preparation and personal engagement aligns more closely with the intensive and intentional discipleship model Jesus practiced,

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[194] Efraim Goldstein, *The Common Characteristics of the Mentors of New Believers in Jesus in Israel* (Doktorski rad, Faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary, 2010), 129.

[195] R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark,A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), "Learning to Recognize Jesus" (8:27–9:13), ePub.

making it a stronger and more compelling explanation of the biographical particularization from the great crowd (MU2) to the Twelve (MU3).

IQ 2 raised from interrogation between MU2 (1:14–8:21) and MU3 (8:22–10:52): What is the implication on discipleship of the transition from the problem of the Twelve's misunderstanding of Jesus (MU2) to the solution in Jesus' dealings with them (MU3)?

Premise 1: Whereas the theme of the Twelve's failure to understand is introduced through their lack of comprehending Jesus' words such as His parables (4:13) and metaphorical sayings, which the apostles took literally (8:14–21) at the end of MU2, and the term 'to understand,' translated from the Greek verb *syniēmi* found in 8:21, involves combining various pieces of information or insights in the mind to form a unified and coherent understanding,[196] and in the Roman world, understanding was highly prized, linked to wisdom and the capacity to discern truth, the concept of *syniémi* would resonate with both Jewish and Greek audiences, reflecting the Jewish focus on wisdom as highlighted in Proverbs) and the Greek philosophical tradition that valued knowledge and comprehension,[197] thus making *suniémi* an intellectual pursuit,

Premise 2: and whereas the Twelve are generally unschooled rather than intellectuals, which is supported by Acts 4:13, where Peter and John are described in Greek as *anthrōpoi agrammatoi eisin kai idiōtai*, which is translated in English as "they were uneducated, common men" (ESV), "they were unschooled, ordinary men" (NIV), and "they were unlearned and ignorant men" (KJV), and in Mark 9:33 (cf. Matt 5:1-2; 26:55; Luke 5:3), Jesus' role as rabbi for these apostles is emphasized by his sitting position, the formal teaching posture, implying the commencement of a school session,[198] which in rabbinic traditions focuses on gaining information and enhancing knowledge from the Hebrew Bible,[199]

Inference 1: therefore, given that the issue in understanding can be considered educational, and the Twelve are generally described as lacking proper education compared to the more learned Jewish disciples, the problem in MU2 is primarily intellectual, marked by their inability to fully understand Jesus' teachings. Thus, the solution presented in MU3 is to offer cognitive enrichment. This involves Jesus providing various teachings to the Twelve to enhance their understanding. This effort is underscored by Jesus' sitting position as He teaches, indicating the formal learning session, in line with rabbinic traditions.

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[196] Bible Hub, "4920. Suniémi," *Berean Strong's Lexicon*. Accessed November 15, 2024, https://biblehub.com/greek/4920.htm.

[197] Bible Hub, "Suniémi."

[198] Strass, *Mark*, 409.

[199] Craig A. Evans, "Jewish Scripture and the Literacy of Jesus," in *From Biblical Criticism to Biblical Faith: Essays in Honor of Lee Martin McDonald*, edited by Craig A. Evans and William H. Brackney (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007), 48; Laurie Woods, "Jesus at Home in Judaism," (2005), 2, accessed November 15, 2024, https://resource.acu.edu.au/ge-hall/fcf-woods.pdf.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas Mark metaphorically uses the senses multiple times in MU2, particularly sight and hearing, in describing understanding (4:9, 12, 23; 7:16; 8:18), and in the NT, *syniémi* frequently pertains to spiritual or moral insight, especially regarding comprehending Jesus' teachings or the secrets of the Kingdom of God,[200] as *suniémi* in 8:21 is preceded by: "Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear?" (8:18), a rhetorical question that conceptually aligns with Isaiah 6:9–10, echoing Jesus' words in Mark 4:11–12; the disciples seem dangerously close to becoming like the "outsiders" (religious leaders) who cannot grasp the parables because their eyes are shut to the secrets of the kingdom,[201] and ironically, the religious leaders are highly educated individuals,

Premise 2: and whereas the teachings of Jesus in MU3 do not center on intellectual matters, but on Kingdom virtues (8:34–38; 9:33–37, 42–50; 10:13–16, 17–31, 35-45) grounded in the perception of Jesus as the suffering Son of Man (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33, 45), and Jesus' critique to the Twelve is not their lack of intelligence, but their preoccupation with "the things of man" (8:33) and their lack of faith (9:19), emphasizing that the object of the verb *suniémi* (8:21) is spiritual, highlighting a spiritual insight into Jesus' words and actions,

Inference 2: therefore, the problem of understanding introduced in MU2 does not necessarily pertain to the level of education of the Twelve but rather their spiritual perception of Jesus and His verbal and enacted teachings. Consequently, MU3 emphasizes seeing and following Jesus as the suffering Son of Man, with a mindset on the Kingdom of God and unwavering faith. Thus, the progression from problem to solution between MU2 and MU3 implies that Jesus' foremost desire is to restore the spiritual insight of the disciples through personal and relational teaching.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* holds a greater weight and a more compelling implication. It underscores Jesus' distinct model of discipleship, which prioritizes restoring spiritual insight over mere intellectual understanding. This approach highlights personal and relational teaching, fostering a profound transformation in the disciples' spiritual perception. By focusing on heavenly matters and having faith, Jesus prepared the Twelve for a mission that went beyond cognitive enrichment. This integrates personal engagement and spiritual depth, offering a stronger explanation of the interrogation

[200] Bible Hub, "Suniémi."
[201] Strauss, *Mark*, 346.

between MU2 and MU3, demonstrating the significance of spiritual growth in following Jesus.

IQ 3 raised from climax between MU3 (8:22–10:52) and MU4 (11:1–16:20; 15:39): What is the implication on discipleship of Jesus' clarifications of His Messianic identity and mission (MU3) leading to the climactic statement of the Roman centurion (MU4, 15:39)?

Premise 1: Whereas the identity of Jesus as the Messiah is emphasized in MU3 through Jesus' question about the public opinion of Him (8:28), which even the Twelve are confused about (8:32; 9:32), highlighting the speculative nature of the Jewish expectation for the Messiah,[202] and as MU3 includes the Father's second affirmation of Jesus during His Transfiguration as the beloved Son (9:7; 1:11), and the climactic statement in MU4 by the Roman centurion refers to Jesus as the 'Son of God' after His death on the cross (15:39), similar to Mark's introduction of Jesus in the beginning of the Gospel (1:1), establishing the identity of Jesus in relation to the Father,

Premise 2: and whereas Jesus' submission to the Father is highlighted in MU4 (14:36), saying "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will," resonating with Jesus' call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship in MU3 (8:34), providing a paradigm with His consecrative attitude as the 'Son of God;' also, as 'Abba' is an Aramaic term meaning 'father,' and frequently used by Jesus to address God, reflecting both intimacy and respect,[203] fostering the deep connection between Jesus and God the Father in times of affliction,

Inference 1: therefore, the movement from the emphasis on Jesus' service and suffering in MU3, coupled with the affirmation of His divine Sonship, leads to the climactic statement of the Roman centurion who, upon seeing Jesus die on the cross, confesses Him as the 'Son of God.' This progression clarifies the Jewish speculations about Jesus' identity and establishes His relationship with the Father. Moreover, it provides a model for the disciples, demonstrating a Father-and-son relationship that calls them to follow Jesus in submission to God's will, regardless of the cost. Thus, the transition from MU3 to MU4, leading to the climax in 15:39, reinforces both Jesus' divinity and the cost of discipleship.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas MU3 centers on the passion of the Son of Man, encapsulated in 10:45 with the phrase "a ransom for many," referring to the Messianic mission; the phrase "a ransom for many" underscores the idea of substitution, where one takes the place of the 'many'; this alludes to the sacrifice of one for many, echoing Isaiah 53:11, and in rabbinic literature and Qumran, it refers to the chosen community—the eschatological people of

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[202] William Scott Green and Jed Silverstein, "The Doctrine of the Messiah," in *The Blackwell Companion to Judaism*, ed. Jacob Neusner and Alan J. Avery-Peck (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 266.

[203] Douglas and Merrill C. Tenney, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, sv. "Abba," ePub.

God;[204] in Christianity, this includes anyone who believes in Jesus (John 1:12; 3:16; Rom 10:9; Gal 3:26; 1 Pet 2:9), opening the offer of salvation to the gentiles through the cross,

Premise 2: and whereas a prevailing perspective posits that Mark was crafted for a Gentile audience, likely in Rome,[205] and Mark's use of Greek along with Aramaic (5:41; 7:34; 14:36; 15:34), leading more to gentilic recipients, making the climactic statement of a Gentile character in 15:39 compelling to non-Jewish readers; this corresponds to the notion of a universal scope of the Messianic mission, furthered in Jesus' charge to the disciples to "preach the gospel to the whole creation (16:15)," making His followers to partake in the cosmic scope of salvation,

Inference 2: therefore, suggesting that the concept of Jesus' passion in MU3, emphasizing being "a ransom for many," underscores the extent of the Messianic mission, offering hope to the Gentile population. This renders the climactic declaration by the Roman centurion in 15:39 significant to a non-Jewish audience, affirming Jesus' identity as the Messiah and the purpose of His crucifixion as having a universal scope. Consequently, the disciples grasp the inclusive nature of Jesus' redemptive work as an example of servanthood. Thus, the transition from MU3 to MU4 (15:39) demonstrates Jesus' service and suffering on the cross as the Messiah as encompassing the Gentiles, aligning with Mark's aim to resonate with a Gentile audience, and urging Jesus' followers to emulate the model of being servants to all.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* more aptly explains the movement of the Markan texts to the climax in 15:39. This inference better captivates the original Gentile audience and, consequently, is less likely to address Jewish issues concerning Messiahship. While the connection between Jesus and the Father, along with Jesus' unwavering commitment to His will, is significant, the climax more profoundly underscores the purpose of the cross. It emphasizes not only Jesus' Messianic identity but also highlights the mission to redeem humanity through the sacrificial blood of Christ shed on the cross. This interpretation offers a model of impartial service, encompassing suffering,

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[204] Lane, *Mark*, 384; See Cf. R. Marcus, "Mebaqqer and Rabbim in the Manual of Discipline vi, 11-13," *JBL* 75 (1956): 298–302.

[205] Walter W. Wessel, "Mark," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, Vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 609; Pheme Perkins, *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 241; Delbert Burkett, *An Introduction to the New Testament and the Origins of Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 157.

for the disciples. It underscores the vast extent of God's love for all people and reinforces the commission to preach the gospel to all nations.

Implications from MU3 (8:22–10:52) as a Book Division

There are three selected implicational IQs answered from the book division survey of Mark 8:22–10:52 (MU3)—"Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples"—examining the following MSRs: preparation/realization, contrast, and *inclusio*. Each premise synthesizes evidence to form an inference. Subsequently, the two inferred conclusions are weighed against each other to determine the more probable answer to the IQ.

IQ 1 raised from preparation/realization between MU3-1 (8:22–26) and MU3-2 (8:27–10:45): What is the implication on discipleship of the two-stage healing as preparation (MU3-1) for the Twelve's journey of spiritual insight with Jesus as realization (MU3-2)?

Premise 1: Whereas MU3-1 begins with the geographical indicator, "And they came to Bethsaida" (8:26), and MU3-2 continues with another locations: to the villages of Caesarea Philippi (8:27), passing through Galilee (9:30), coming to Capernaum (9:33), and traveling to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan River (10:1); and the historian Josephus identifies Bethsaida—referred to in his time as Julia—as being positioned approximately 120 stadia from Lake Semechonitis, near the Jordan River where it flows into the center of the Sea of Galilee,[206] situating it as a crossroads of movement and underscoring its narrative function as a geographical pivot that supports a shift in focus and journey,

Premise 2: and whereas the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida in MU3-1 occurs in two stages, where Jesus performs a physical action in two steps—first applying saliva to the blind man's eyes and then touching them again to restore full sight—mirroring the two geographical progressions toward Jerusalem—the first stage, from Caesarea Philippi to Galilee, marks a southward movement from the northernmost boundary to central Israel (8:27–9:32), while the second stage, from Capernaum to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, continues this trajectory toward the southern regions, approaching Jerusalem (9:33–10:45),[207] highlighting the physical presence of Jesus to the disciples, and vice versa, in various places,

Inference 1: therefore, given that the restoration of sight narrative in MU3-1 presents a geographical indicator and a two-stage healing involving Jesus performing two distinct

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[206] Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. William Whiston, 3:10.7.

[207] See Barry J. Beitzel, *The New Moody Atlas of the Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009).

actions to heal the blind man, and it follows two-stage geographical movements in MU3—Caesarea Philippi to Galilee (8:27–9:32) and Capernaum to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan (9:33–10:45)—it demonstrates the physical aspect of following Jesus. This journey involves many steps along the way. Thus, the movement of preparation/realization from MU3-1 to MU3-2 can be seen as geographical, emphasizing the physical aspect of discipleship.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas MU3-1 is identified as a dramatic text and thus a symbolic narrative,[208] where the two-stage healing of the blind man not only illustrates the gradual process of physical healing but also presents symbolism; and as Mark introduces confusion by initially reporting an event and later adding further details leading to Bethsaida: "Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd" (6:45), making Bethsaida a location related to uncertainty,[209] a motif seen in the two-stage healing of the blind man in MU3-1, and then in MU3-2, beginning with Peter's confusion on Jesus' Messianic role that becomes the theme of the entire section,

Premise 2: and whereas in its literary context, being transitional, MU3-1 connects both the preceding and following narratives,[210] and symbolizes the contrast between Israel's religious leaders' failure to 'see' and 'hear' the kingdom of God's message and the blind man's restoration of sight,[211] guiding Jesus and His followers toward Caesarea Philippi, revisiting the blindness theme from 8:18; the two-stage healing process mirrors the disciples' progressive understanding, where their spiritual blindness is gradually restored,[212] emphasizing the need and hope for the disciples to vividly see Jesus spiritually,

Inference 2: therefore, considering the literary form of MU3-1 as a dramatic text, the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida serves as a symbolic message to the disciples. This narrative precedes the theme of the Twelve's spiritual blindness in MU3-2. Thus, the movement of preparation/realization from MU3-1 to MU3-2 is symbolic, focusing on the theme of spiritual blindness, highlighted by the failures of the apostles to see Jesus' Messianic identity and mission. Through this journey, Jesus personally touches their lives on the way to Jerusalem.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* taking precedence, for it considers the literary form of MU3-1 as a dramatic text. This establishes a deeper connection between the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida and the preceding

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[208] See Chapter 4, "Literary Forms of the Sections in MU3."

[209] Douglas and Tenney, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "Beth Rehob."

[210] Strauss, *Mark*, 354.

[211] Strauss, *Mark*, 355.

[212] R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 8:22–26, ePub.

and succeeding narratives. Consequently, the transition from MU3-1 to MU3-2 not only sets the stage for geographical movements but also conveys a profound message on discipleship. This revolves around the theme of spiritual blindness and the journey toward spiritual insight, with Jesus depicted as the one who can restore the sight of those who follow Him. The symbolism in MU3-1 captures the motif of MU3-2, highlighting human failures and misunderstandings while offering hope for spiritual restoration through Jesus' personal touch. This implies that followers of Jesus are to commit to His process of restoration and seek spiritual insight into His true identity and mission to understand the path of true discipleship.

IQ 2 raised from contrast between MU3-2 (8:27–10:45) and MU3-3 (10:46–52): What are the implications on discipleship of the contrast between the Twelve's (MU3-2) and Bartimaeus' faith and insight into Jesus' Messianic identity and mission (MU3-3)?

Premise 1: Whereas in MU3-2, the Twelve struggle to understand Jesus' role as the Crucified Messiah (8:32–33; 9:33–34; 10:35–37), a concept clear in the OT (Isa 53:5), Bartimaeus clearly identifies Jesus as 'Son of David' (10:47, 48), reflecting a Jewish understanding of the Davidic covenant, presenting God's plan for His chosen people, holding both immediate and long-term implications through an anticipated descendant of David who will bring peace and justice to God's people through His reign,[213] indicating the insight and faith of Bartimaeus to the OT prophecies fortified by his miserable and desperate situation as a blind beggar,

Premise 2: and whereas throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, the concept of the Davidic covenant is central to Messianic expectations: promising an eternal Kingdom (2 Sam 7:12–16), emphasizing the everlasting nature of David's line and God's steadfast love (Ps 89:3–4, 28–29) through the Messiah endowed with wisdom, justice, and righteousness (Isa 11:1–4; Jer 23:5–6), in whom Bartimaeus begs for 'mercy' (10:47, 48), a cry directed to God by the afflicted in the Psalms (e.g., Ps 4:1; 6:2; 41:4, 10; 51:1; 109:26; 123:3),[214] displaying that Bartimaeus recognizes the divinity of Jesus, going beyond an earthly political deliverer in contrast to the apostles' perception of Jesus (8:32–33; 9:33–34; 10:35–37),

Inference 1: therefore, the difference between the Twelve in MU3-2 and Bartimaeus in MU3-3 underscores the importance of understanding the OT texts, particularly the Davidic

[213] Michael A. Grisanti, "The Davidic Covenant," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 10, no. 2 (1999): 233–250.

[214] Lane, *Mark*, 357.

covenant, as foundational for recognizing Jesus' Messianic identity and mission. Given that the nature of the Messianic expectation in Jesus' time was speculative, those who aspire to follow Jesus must place their faith in Him, having a clear insight into the Hebrew Scriptures. Consequently, as Mark's audience is generally Gentiles, the contrast in Messianic insight becomes particularly relevant. This further highlights the necessity of grasping Hebrew Scripture as a lens to see Jesus as the Messiah, acknowledging Him as the 'Son of David' who brings mercy, avoiding the ambiguities that even Jewish people, like the apostles, struggled with due to various interpretations and perspectives.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas Mark introduces the Twelve's confused perception of Jesus in the narrative prior to MU3-2 (4:12, 40–41; 6:37, 49–52; 7:18; 8:14–21), and this theme continues and is accentuated in MU3-2 as a prose narrative marked by an atmosphere and tone of ambiguity for the apostles, providing accounts of how the Twelve fail to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, which contrasts with MU3-3, a dramatic text that symbolically responds to the discipleship journey of the Twelve,[215] emphasizing the aspects of faith in following Jesus, making the immediate healing of Bartimaeus functions as a reflective narrative, revealing the Twelve's internal struggle and lack of faith (9:19, 33–34; 10:35-37), demonstrating their blindness to Jesus' Messianic role; while Bartimaeus' faith and determination (10:47, 48), indicating his spiritual insight and trust in Jesus as the 'Son of David,' begging for mercy and conveying a sense of certainty (10:52), highlighting Bartimaeus as a model disciple,[216]

Premise 2: and whereas Mark ends MU3-3 portraying Bartimaeus as a disciple who follows Jesus on the 'way,'[217] a recurring term in Mark (1:2–3; 2:23; 4:4; 6:8; 8:3, 27; 9:33; 10:17), last appearing in 10:52, referring to Bartimaeus' desire to follow Jesus after his sight is restored, the term 'way' is translated from the Greek *hodos*, which is used both literally (physical path) and metaphorically (path of life), and in both Jewish and early Christian thought, *hodos* represents a spiritual journey,[218] which in Mark linked with service and suffering of Jesus on the 'cross' (10:32–34), making the example of a faithful and determined disciple like Bartimaeus strategically placed preceding the confession of the Jerusalem crowd as Jesus enters (11:10–11), on the way to His death on the cross (MU4),

Inference 2: therefore, the difference between the Twelve and Bartimaeus displays a foundational message on discipleship, where the apostles' spiritual blindness and lack of faith are contrasted with the blind man in Jericho's insight into Jesus' Messianic identity and unwavering faith in Him. Consequently, the literary structure and context of Mark support the function of the story of Bartimaeus as a dramatic text, providing the audience a retrospective moment to identify themselves with the Twelve, and later on with Bartimaeus, seeing the service and suffering of Jesus as the Crucified Messiah. Thus, the contrast between MU3-2 and MU3-3 conveys Mark's intention to present Jesus as the suffering

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[215] See Chapter 4, "Literary Forms of the Sections in MU3."
[216] Strauss, *Mark*, 474.
[217] Strauss, *Mark*, 474.
[218] Bible Hub, "Hodos."

servant, with the passion predictions and the cost of discipleship in MU3-2, culminating with a model disciple on the way to Jerusalem.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* shines through, as it underscores an intentional and foundational message on discipleship by contrasting the apostles' spiritual blindness with Bartimaeus' clear insight into Jesus' Messianic role. Having insight into the Hebrew Scriptures is indeed significant. Nonetheless, how the Markan narrative unfolds demonstrates an emphasis on its overall progression as a whole. The literary structure and context of Mark are crucial, with MU3-3 strategically placed before Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, emphasizing the built-up journey towards the cross. This placement highlights faith and the 'way,' shedding light into the concept of the Crucified Messiah. The transition from MU3-2 to MU3-3 provides a significant shift in understanding the cost of discipleship. This juxtaposition allows the audience to first relate to contrasting individuals, with their failure and faith, making the narrative more impactful as readers themselves decide to follow Jesus.

IQ 3 raised from *inclusio* in MU3, framed by MU3-1 (8:22–26) and MU3-3 (10:46–52): What is the implication on discipleship of the framing of the two-stage healing of sight (MU3-1) and the immediate healing of sight (MU3-3) in relation to Jesus' dealings with the Twelve's spiritual blindness (MU3-2)?

Premise 1: Whereas MU3-1 and MU3-3 begin with a phrase indicating location: 'Bethsaida' (8:22) and 'Jericho' (10:46), the *inclusio* has a geographic emphasis, demonstrating the journey of Jesus and the apostles toward Jerusalem in MU3, framing a variety of places (8:27; 9:33; 10:1); as in the Gospels, Bethsaida is shown as a place of revelation and rejection through Jesus' miracles (Mk 8:22–26; Lk 9:10–17) and rebuke of the city (Mat 11:21), and historically within the region of Gaulonitis, enlarged by Philip the Tetrarch and named 'Julias' to demonstrate loyalty to the imperial administration,[219] making it a pivotal starting point that sets the stage for the final phase of the unfolding of Jesus' Messianic identity and mission against human authorities and expectations from MU3 towards MU4,

[219] M.G. Easton, *Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Third Edition* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1897), s.v. "Bethsaida."

Premise 2: and whereas throughout Scripture, Jericho is crucial as the first city conquered by Israel (Josh 5:13–6:23), a symbol of Israel's devotion (Josh 6:17–19), a site for prophetic events (2 Kings 2:4–22), and a place of encounters in Jesus' ministry, including healing the blind (Mat 20:29–34; Mk 10:46–52; Lk 18:35–43) and meeting Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1–10), highlighting its historical significance in understanding the journey of Jesus and the disciples, establishing geographical-historical elements that aid in understanding the interplay of revelation (Bethsaida) and rejection to victory (Jericho), interacting with the progression of the Twelve in MU3,

Inference 1: therefore, the *inclusio* in MU3, framed by MU3-1 and MU3-3 and fortified by repeated phrases indicating historical places, illustrates a movement that relates to the backgrounds of these regions. This provides a deeper understanding for readers of the culminating phase of the journey of Jesus and the apostles to Jerusalem. Bethsaida is significant as a place of revelation, rejection, and loyalty to the imperial administration, while Jericho is notable as a place of conquest. These locations mirror the struggle of the Twelve to see Jesus as the Crucified Messiah and the wider Jewish and Roman communities to see Him as the Conqueror Messiah, which are intertwined Messianic concepts that every disciple ought to understand.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas the intended audience of Mark was non-Jewish, the Markan texts are crafted to relate to Gentile readers, focusing on its literary structure as a book, and the miracle stories of the healing of the blind are parallel in MU3-1 and MU3-3, framing MU3, which are considered dramatic texts,[220] serving as thematic framing emphasizing the apostles' struggle in seeing Jesus' Messianic identity congruent with the sacrificial mission of the Son of Man (8:32–33; 9:33–34; 10:35–37); and such literary forms provide moving effects, in which the events are to be taken symbolically,[221]

Premise 2: and whereas MU3 is framed by the healings of two blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52), this symbolizes the Twelve's spiritual blindness (6:52; 8:17–18, 21) and centers on their re-education through repeated passion predictions (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34) and teachings on kingdom values, shifting from public miracles to private instruction (9:30–31), emphasizing discipleship as a transformative journey (8:27; 9:33–34; 10:17, 32, 52) toward embracing the cross and Jesus' Messianic mission (8:34–9:1; 10:30, 39),[222] making these miracle narratives align with Mark's literary and theological objectives, forming an *inclusio* that underscores the flawed spiritual perception of both the religious leaders and the disciples,[223]

Inference 2: therefore, considering the audience and literary intentions of Mark, the *inclusio* emphasizes a transformative progression from spiritual blindness to profound insight into Jesus' Messianic identity and mission. It underscores Jesus' role as the Crucified Messiah who bestows mercy while fulfilling the redemptive plan of God. The parallel dramatic prose

[220] See Chapter 4, "Literary Forms of the Sections in MU3."
[221] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, chap. 12.
[222] France, *Mark*, 8:22–26.
[223] Strauss, *Mark*, 465.

of MU3-1 and MU3-3 compels readers, contrasting the apostles' clear view in proximity to Jesus with their failure to fully recognize Him as the Messiah. This establishes MU3 a coherent and vivid division, highlighting the overarching motif of gaining insight into the message of the cross, which is foundational to the concept of cross-bearing discipleship as articulated in 8:34.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* stands out for its depth and alignment with Mark's narrative. Beyond geographic markers, the *inclusio* reveals Mark's intention to engage a non-Jewish audience, evident in how it frames the Twelve's spiritual blindness and subsequent enlightenment. The literary flow, particularly the shift from public miracles to private instruction, underscores the apostles' journey from misunderstanding to insight. The dramatic healing accounts in MU3-1 and MU3-3 symbolize this transformation, adding a profound, moving effect to the text. The *inclusio* in MU3, therefore, is not merely structural but thematic, emphasizing the progression from spiritual blindness to recognizing Jesus' true Messianic identity and mission. This enhances the understanding of discipleship, focusing on the necessity of spiritual insight and the embracing of the cross, foundational to Mark's message of cross-bearing discipleship.

Implications from MU3-2 (8:27–10:45) as a Book Section

There are three selected implicational IQs answered from the detailed section analysis of Mark 8:27–10:45 (MU3-2)—"Twelve's Failure to See Jesus as the Messiah"—examining the following MSRs: substantiation, contrast, and recurrence. Each premise synthesizes evidence to form an inference. Subsequently, the two inferred conclusions are weighed against each other to determine the more probable answer to the IQ.

IQ 1 raised from substantiation between 8:32 and 8:33b: What is the implication on discipleship of identifying 8:33b as the cause of Peter's inability to perceive the essence of Jesus' Messianic mission (8:32)?

Premise 1: Whereas Jesus' response to Peter's rebuke of His passion prediction, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man" (Mk 8:33), identifies Peter's misunderstanding of Jesus' Messianic mission as rooted in materialism, for the term 'Satan' links to the tempter who,[224] during Jesus' wilderness temptation (Mk 1:13; Mat 4:1–11; Lk 4:1–13), offered dominion over earthly kingdoms in exchange for worship; the Greek phrase *ta tōn anthrōpōn* (the things of man) reflects a desire for worldly possessions and power, as *anthrōpos* often represents humanity's earthly priorities, contrasting with divine concerns (cf. Mat 16:23; Col 3:2),[225] undermining Peter's understanding of Jesus as the Crucified Messiah,

Premise 2: and whereas, Jesus immediately further opposes materialism, stating, "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" (Mk 8:36), a rhetoric directly countering Peter's materialistic nature of Messianic expectations, and the narrative of the rich young man (Mk 10:17–22) further exemplifies this conflict, as Jesus demands the man to forsake his possessions to follow Him, illustrating the incompatibility of material wealth with true discipleship,[226]

Inference 1: therefore, Peter's rebuke of Jesus reveals his hope for an earthly kingdom, mirroring a desire for wealth and power through association with the Messiah. Peter's inability to perceive the essence of Jesus' Messianic mission reflects his materialistic aspirations. Jesus' rebuke underscores Peter's alignment with worldly desires (Mk 8:33b) rather than divine purposes. By following Jesus as the Christ, Peter expected earthly power and possessions, as substantiated by his misunderstanding of the Messianic mission. This highlights the danger of discipleship rooted in self-interest, contrasting sharply with Jesus' call to self-denial and rejection of worldly gains (Mk 8:34–36; cf. 1 Jn 2:15–17).

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas, Jesus calling Peter 'Satan' (8:33a) underscores the adversarial nature of his Messianic expectation, refraining Jesus from fulfilling His mission,[227] which Jesus associates with a 'mind' set on 'things of man' (8:33b), highlighting Peter's human-centered perspective, as *anthrōpos* (man) is often associated with flawed reasoning and earthly concerns, inflicted by the sinful nature,[228] and in the 1st-century Jewish context, expectations for the Messiah were predominantly political and militaristic, aimed at overthrowing Roman

[224] Bible Hub, s.v. "G4567. Satan," *Strong's Concordance*, accessed December 2024, https://biblehub.com/greek/4567.htm.

[225] Bible Hub, s.v. "G444. Anthrópos," *Strong's Concordance*, accessed December 2024, https://biblehub.com/greek/444.htm.

[226] Joseph H. Hellerman, "Wealth and Sacrifice in Early Christianity: Revisiting Mark's Presentation of Jesus' Encounter with the Rich Young Ruler," *Trinity Journal* 21, no. 2 (2000): 143–164.

[227] Kittel et al., *TDNT*, 910.

[228] Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. "ἄνθρωπος," Strong's NT 444, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977), accessed December 2024, https://biblehub.com/greek/444.htm.

rule and establishing an earthly kingdom,[229] reflecting a human-centered perspective on power and glory,

Premise 2: and whereas in the Markan narrative, Peter was willing to give up material things for the coming kingdom in contrast to the rich young man: "See, we have left everything and followed you" (10:26 cf. 1:16–18), but throughout the Gospel, he and the other apostles fail to understand the sacrificial nature of the Messianic mission (8:32; 9:32; 10:37), displaying a human understanding of redemption grounded in earthly affairs, overthrowing Roman occupation and establishing a new order under Jewish rule through political means,[230]

Inference 2: therefore, Peter's insight of the Messianic mission is deeply flawed due to his human-centered perspective and expectations. Despite his willingness to give up material possessions, Peter's focus remains on an earthly kingdom and political liberation, rather than the sacrificial and spiritual nature of Jesus' mission. Jesus' rebuke, calling Peter 'Satan,' underscores the adversarial nature of this misunderstanding, emphasizing that Peter's mind is set on the "things of man"—flawed reasoning and earthly concerns. This highlights the danger of interpreting discipleship through a lens of human power and earthly glory, rather than understanding the true essence of Jesus' call to spiritual redemption and sacrificial living.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* significantly more insightful. It underscores a model of discipleship that prioritizes spiritual insight over human-centered expectations. Mark 8:32–33 illustrates this substantiation: Peter's rebuke and Jesus' sharp response highlight the misalignment between Peter's earthly aspirations and Jesus' mission. By calling Peter 'Satan,' Jesus emphasizes that Peter's mind is set on worldly concerns (Roman occupation), not divine purposes (spiritual redemption), reflecting Jewish hopes for a political Messiah. Jesus' rebuke, addressing Peter's human-centered views, serves as a critical teaching moment. It encapsulates that true discipleship involves embracing the "things of God" rather than the "things of man," focusing on the sacrifice and service of the Messiah over human-driven political vision. Thus, it offers a more robust

[229] Edward A. Wicher, "Ancient Jewish Views of the Messiah," *The Biblical World* 34 (1909): 317–325.

[230] Wicher, "Ancient Jewish Views," 317–325.

understanding of true discipleship and its demands grounded on seeing and adhering to the will of God, and not of man.

IQ 2 raised from contrast between 8:33b and 8:34: What is the implication on discipleship of the difference between the mindset on the things of man (8:33b) and Jesus' call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship (8:34)?

Premise 1: Whereas, the Greek phrase *ta tōn anthrōpōn* (the things of man) in Mark 8:33b reflects a desire for worldly possessions and power, as *anthrōpos* often represents humanity's earthly priorities, contrasting with divine concerns (cf. Mat 16:23; Col 3:2),[231] and Peter being called 'Satan' by Jesus in his rebuke, that across the NT relates to love of material wealth and is contrasted against love and service of God (Mat 4:8–11; 6:24; 1 Tim 6:10; Lk 16:13),[232]

Premise 2: and whereas, the cost of discipleship in 8:34 highlights the call to "deny," translated from the Greek *aparnēsasthō,* denoting a strong rejection or renunciation of oneself,[233] and the phrase "take up your cross," incorporating an image of cross-bearing that reflects a path of suffering,[234] followed by rhetoric presenting a choice between the material and spiritual (vv. 35–38), a concept of discipleship further unfolded in the account of the rich young man (10:17–22) and the betrayal by Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, for money (14:10–11),

Inference 1: therefore, the difference between 8:33b, where Peter's mindset is focused on the "things of man," and 8:34, where Jesus calls for self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship, underscores a contrast between materialistic concerns and spiritual living. Jesus directly addresses Peter's attachment to worldly priorities—his focus on earthly possessions and power—by rebuking him, associating such concerns with the devil. In response, Jesus outlines discipleship as a path of self-renunciation and suffering, urging a shift away from material desires toward spiritual commitment. This opposition is further illustrated in the accounts of the rich young man (10:17–22) and Judas Iscariot's betrayal for money (14:10–11), emphasizing the cost of following Jesus over pursuing material gain.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas, the focus on Peter's "setting of mind" in Mark 8:33b refers to human-centered thinking,[235] which includes an earthly perspective focused on immediate concerns,[236] presented by the misunderstandings of the Twelve regarding Jesus' Messianic

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[231] Bible Hub, s.v. "G444. Anthrópos."

[232] Bible Hub, s.v. "G4567. Satan."

[233] BibleHub, "533. Aparneomai, Strong's Lexicon," accessed December 2024, https://biblehub.com/greek/533.htm.

[234] Kittel et al., *TDNT*, 969.

[235] BibleHub, "5426. Phroneó, Strong's Lexicon," accessed December 2024, https://biblehub.com/greek/5426.htm.

[236] Bible Hub, s.v. "G444. Anthrópos."

identity and mission throughout the Markan narrative (4:10–13; 6:49–52; 8:14–21; 9:32; 10:35–45) and introduced by the two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida (8:22–26), mirroring the apostles' misunderstanding rooted in the Jewish expectation of a political and military Messiah[237]—a widespread view among Jews that failed to see the suffering and death of Jesus, undermining Old Testament prophecy (Isa 53:3–5), which is foundational to the fulfillment of His mission (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) and the call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship in Mark 8:34, opposing the conventional perspective of reestablishing their long-awaited Kingdom through human efforts against Roman occupation,[238]

Premise 2: and whereas the Gospel of Mark may have been shaped as a response to oppression within a turbulent environment that heightened the sense of urgency for deliverance and deepened Messianic expectations,[239] presenting a narrative that interacts with divine wisdom and revelation of the Crucified Messiah in contrast to human speculations and visions of redemption through political and military means, in which the Messianic mission is not to be confused with political liberation but with spiritual salvation achieved through service and sacrifice (10:45), making the call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship in Mark 8:34 a unique statement compared to the sayings of the rabbis at the time,[240] where the disciples repeatedly fail to understand the nature of the kingdom and the path to glory (9:30–32; 10:35–41), for their eyes are still spiritually blind to the nature of Jesus' mission, and they must set their minds to the "things of God" to see the way of the cross as the true path to glory,

Inference 2: therefore, the contrast between Peter's mindset in Mark 8:33b, focused on human-centered concerns, and Jesus' call for self-denial and cross-bearing in Mark 8:34 highlights the distinction between human perceptions of power and the divine understanding of the Messianic mission. Peter's misunderstanding, reflecting the Jewish expectation of a political Messiah, reveals a flaw common to the Twelve and others in the Markan narrative: failing to recognize the suffering and death of Jesus as central to His identity and mission (cf. 8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45). This reflects the spiritual blindness that permeates their worldview, shaped by hopes for political deliverance. In contrast, Jesus' call to discipleship redefines power—glory is achieved through self-renunciation, service, and sacrifice, not political victory. In the context of Roman oppression, Jesus critiques conventional expectations of redemption, offering an alternative vision for the Kingdom of God. The disciples must align their mindset with God's will to understand the way of the cross.

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[237] Wicher, "Ancient Jewish Views," 317–325.

[238] Wicher, "Ancient Jewish Views," 317–325.

[239] McClintock and Strong, "Neronian Persecution," in *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, accessed September 2024, https://www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/N/neronian-persecutions.html; Stephen Benko, *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), passim; Michael D. Coogan, ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Fully Revised Fifth Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1431.

[240] Kittel et al., *TDNT*, 970.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* t**o** be the more coherent and accurate interpretation**.** While material gain contrasts with the call to self-denial and cross-bearing, it is essential to consider this within the broader context of Peter's rebuke. Jesus' sharp response to Peter in Mark 8:33 exposes the flaw in focusing on human-centered concerns, which, in this case, include not only worldly power but also a misunderstanding of the Messianic mission. Peter's perspective, shaped by Jewish hopes for political redemption, fails to grasp the true nature of Jesus' mission—a mission centered on suffering, death, and spiritual salvation. In contrast, Jesus' call to discipleship redefines power and glory, emphasizing self-renunciation, service, and sacrifice. This alternative vision of the Kingdom invites the disciples to align their mindset with God's will, focusing on "the things of God rather than the things of man."

IQ 3 raised from the recurrence of Jesus' passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33-34, 45) in relation to 8:34: What is the implication on discipleship of the repeated Jesus' passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) in relations to the call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship?

Premise 1: Whereas, Jesus explicitly predicts His suffering and death as the Son of Man (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45), underscoring the inevitable fate of the Messiah, where the call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship is framed within the context of the first passion prediction (8:31–38), linking the disciples' path to Jesus' Messianic mission; the concept of *aparnēsasthō* (self-denial) signifies a decisive rejection of personal interests and desires in favor of complete allegiance,[241] and, combined with "taking up one's cross," becomes a metaphor for embracing suffering as a way of life thereby establishing suffering as an indispensable element of discipleship,

Premise 2: and whereas, the rebuke of Jesus to Peter, calling him 'Satan' and highlighting his misaligned mindset with God's will by attempting to prevent Jesus from suffering (8:32–33), establishes the context for the mandate of suffering, modeled by Jesus' inevitable Crucifixion as the Messiah (Matt 27:32–56; Mk 15:21–41; Lk 23:26–49; Jn 19:17–37); in Mark 8:35–38, Jesus contrasts temporal suffering with eternal rewards, urging disciples to lose their lives for His sake to save them, thereby reinforcing the necessity of embracing suffering as integral to the broader narrative of redemption and eschatological glory, as

[241] BibleHub, "533. Aparneomai.*"*

emphasized through the recurring portrayal of the suffering Messiah within the Markan narrative,

Inference 1: therefore, the recurrence of Jesus' passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) in relation to the call for self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship in Mark 8:34 underscores suffering as a necessary mandate for following Jesus. The passion predictions establish a framework for understanding discipleship as inherently connected to Jesus' own path of suffering and death. In this context, the call to self-denial and cross-bearing highlights the inevitability of suffering in the life of a disciple, as demonstrated by Jesus Himself. His rebuke of Peter (8:33) for rejecting the necessity of suffering emphasizes that disciples must align their will with God's plan. Additionally, in Mark 8:35–38, Jesus contrasts temporary suffering with eternal rewards, reinforcing the understanding that suffering is not only mandated but also a means of achieving redemption and glory for Jesus' followers.

But, on the other hand …

Premise 1: Whereas, Jesus' repeated passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) clarify His true identity as the suffering Messiah within the Markan narrative by explicitly contrasting His foretelling of suffering, death, and resurrection with the prevailing expectations of a triumphant, political Messiah who would deliver Israel from Roman oppression,[242] while the disciples' failure to comprehend His mission highlights the need for spiritual insight, attainable only through aligning their will with God's purpose, as demonstrated through Jesus' repeated interactions (4:10–13; 8:14–21; 8:32–33; 9:18–19; 9:33–37; 10:13–16; 10:35–45), which challenge their human perspectives and underscore that true discipleship requires a transformed mind attuned to the things of God (8:33),

Premise 2: and whereas, Jesus' repeated passion predictions provide a backdrop for the apostles' misunderstandings of the Messianic mission—for example, the passion prediction in 8:31 followed by Peter's rebuke of Jesus (8:32), the passion prediction in 9:30–32 juxtaposed with the apostles' discourse on greatness (9:33–37), and the passion prediction in 10:33–34 preceding James and John's request and the others' indignation (10:35–41)—teaching service and suffering, introduced in 8:34, where the Greek term *stauros* (cross) is figuratively employed in the call to cross-bearing, with the passion predictions presenting a model symbolizing ongoing dedication, self-denial, and a life potentially involving suffering and ultimately surrendering one's life,[243] fostering an unwavering belief in God as Jesus critiques the apostles and emphasizes the necessity of faith in 9:14–29,

Inference 2: therefore, the repeated passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) in the Markan narrative serve to clarify the true nature of discipleship, especially in relation to Jesus' call to self-denial and cross-bearing in 8:34. These predictions reveal that the Messiah's mission is not one of political triumph but of suffering, death, and resurrection, which stands in contrast to the disciples' expectations. Their failure to understand this mission underscores the need for spiritual insight, which can only be gained by aligning their

[242] Wicher, "Ancient Jewish Views," 317–325.
[243] Kittel et al., *TDNT*, 969–970.

will with God's purpose. Jesus' call to take up the cross in 8:34 highlights that true discipleship involves self-denial, the willingness to suffer, and a transformation of the mind to follow Jesus' example. The repeated passion predictions serve as a backdrop for the disciples' misunderstandings, showing that embracing God's will requires a shift in perspective, from self-centeredness to a life of sacrificial service and unwavering faith in God.

After weighing *Inference 1* and *Inference 2*, I find *Inference 2* to be the clearer and sensible conclusion. While suffering is a crucial part of discipleship, the emphasis is on the transformation of the disciple's mind and their alignment with God's will. The repeated passion predictions underscore a marked contrast between the disciples' expectations of a victorious Messiah and the true nature of the Messianic mission. Jesus' call to self-denial and cross-bearing (8:34) entails more than merely enduring hardship. It signifies a fundamental shift in the disciple's perspective, moving from self-interest to complete commitment to God's purpose. Taking up the cross, therefore, is a metaphor for this profound change in priorities. True discipleship is not simply about suffering for its own sake but involves a process of spiritual renewal. The recurrence of passion predictions provides a backdrop for this transformative journey, demonstrating that suffering, when understood within God's greater plan, is integral to the believer's path toward redemption and eternal glory.

Presentation of Theological Implications on Discipleship

There are nine implicational questions on discipleship, answered through inductive inferential reasoning with IWM. These IQs emerge from the MUs and MSRs in Mark, including biographical particularization, preparation/realization, a couple of contrasts, *inclusio,* interrogation, recurrence, climax, and substantiation. Each question examines how these relationships illuminate the disciples' spiritual blindness, their gradual insight into Jesus' Messianic identity and mission, and the demands of true discipleship.

By applying IWM, this section systematically weighs multiple forms of evidence synthesized into premises to infer theological implications on Markan discipleship, particularly in relation to self-denial and cross-bearing, faith, suffering, and servanthood as modeled by the Crucified Messiah.

Discipleship Involves Intentional and Transformative Preparation

The biographical particularization focused from the general group of followers (MU2) to the particular sub-group of the twelve apostles (MU3) implies a deeper and more intentional approach to discipleship by Jesus. While Jewish traditions involved disciples seeking a rabbi and following established educational practices, Jesus reversed this by calling His own disciples and deeply investing in their lives. His method went beyond imparting knowledge; it was transformative, involving personal selection, intimacy, and preparation for their mission. This approach emphasizes a commitment to fulfilling God's will, embracing suffering, and being true disciples, rather than merely adhering to cultural practices. This intentional and transformative preparation aligns more closely with Jesus' unique model of discipleship, making it a stronger explanation of the shift from the great crowd to the Twelve.

Discipleship Emphasizes Spiritual Insight Over Intellectual Understanding

The interrogation presenting the problem of understanding (MU2) to the solution in Jesus' dealings with the Twelve (MU3) signifies a shift from intellectual comprehension to spiritual perception. While the Twelve initially struggled with understanding Jesus' teachings due to their lack of formal education, the true issue was their spiritual insight. Jesus' teachings in MU3 focus on Kingdom virtues and the perception of Him as the suffering Son

of Man, rather than intellectual matters. This approach highlights the importance of spiritual enrichment and personal transformation in discipleship. By emphasizing personal and relational teaching, Jesus restored the spiritual insight of the Twelve, preparing them for their mission with a profound focus on heavenly matters and unwavering faith. This offers a stronger and more compelling explanation of the interrogation between MU2 and MU3, demonstrating the significance of spiritual growth in following Jesus.

Discipleship Embraces Universal Redemption and Servanthood

The transition from Jesus' clarifications of His Messianic identity and mission (MU3) to the climactic statement by the Roman centurion (MU4, 15:39) highlights the universal scope of Jesus' mission and the true cost of discipleship. Jesus' identity as the Messiah is clarified through public opinion, divine affirmation, and His submission to the Father's will. The Roman centurion's declaration, "Truly this man was the Son of God," after witnessing Jesus' death on the cross, encapsulates the culmination of this revelation. This shift underscores the Messianic mission as a ransom for many, extending hope and salvation to the Gentiles. The disciples are thus called to emulate Jesus' model of servanthood, embracing a mission of universal redemption and understanding the profound cost of following Jesus. This transition from MU3 to MU4 not only affirms Jesus' divinity but also emphasizes the inclusivity of His redemptive work, urging His followers to preach the gospel to all nations.

Discipleship Entails Spiritual Insight through Restoration

The movement from the two-stage healing as preparation (MU3-1) to the Twelve's interaction and journey with Jesus as realization (MU3-2) underscores the theme of spiritual

blindness and gradual restoration. The two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida serves as a symbolic narrative that mirrors the disciples' gradual understanding of Jesus' Messianic identity. This narrative highlights the need for spiritual insight, emphasizing that the journey with Jesus involves not only physical following but also deep spiritual perception. Through Jesus' personal touch, the disciples' spiritual blindness is gradually healed, preparing them for their mission. The shift from MU3-1 to MU3-2 underscores that true discipleship involves committing to Jesus' process of restoration, seeking spiritual insight into His identity and mission, and understanding the profound path of following Him.

Discipleship Highlights Spiritual Insight through Faith

The contrast between the Twelve (MU3-2) and Bartimaeus (MU3-3) underscores the significance of spiritual insight and unwavering faith in recognizing Jesus' Messianic identity and mission. While the Twelve struggle with understanding Jesus' role as the Crucified Messiah, Bartimaeus demonstrates profound insight by identifying Jesus as the 'Son of David' and begging for mercy, acknowledging His divinity. This contrast emphasizes the necessity of faith and spiritual perception in discipleship. Bartimaeus' immediate healing and desire to follow Jesus on the 'way' highlight his role as a model disciple, in stark contrast to the apostles' spiritual blindness. Mark strategically places this narrative to illustrate the journey towards the cross, emphasizing faith, service, and the 'way' of the Crucified Messiah. This juxtaposition allows the audience to relate to both the apostles' failures and Bartimaeus' faith, offering a deeper understanding of the cost and commitment required in true discipleship.

Discipleship Requires Spiritual Insight to Bear the Cross

The *inclusio,* framing the two-stage healing of sight (MU3-1) and the immediate healing of sight (MU3-3) in relation to Jesus' dealings with the Twelve's spiritual blindness (MU3-2), underscores a transformative journey from spiritual blindness to profound insight. This *inclusio,* marked by geographic indicators and thematic framing, illustrates the apostles' struggle to recognize Jesus' Messianic identity. The healings symbolize the gradual restoration of spiritual sight, emphasizing the necessity of spiritual insight and the embracing of the cross. The transition from public miracles to private instruction highlights discipleship as a journey toward understanding and embracing Jesus' sacrificial mission. This *inclusio* is not merely structural but thematic, reinforcing the message of cross-bearing discipleship. It engages the audience, highlighting the need for spiritual transformation and the recognition of Jesus as the Crucified Messiah who fulfills God's redemptive plan.

Discipleship Prioritizes the Heavenly Mission Over Earthly Affairs

The substantiation, identifying 8:33b as the cause of Peter's inability to perceive the essence of Jesus' Messianic mission (8:32), entails a model of discipleship that emphasizes spiritual insight over human-centered expectations. Jesus' rebuke of Peter, calling him 'Satan' and highlighting his mind set on the "things of man," reveals Peter's flawed understanding rooted in human-centered aspirations. Despite his willingness to give up material possessions, Peter's focus remains on an earthly kingdom and political liberation. Jesus' sharp response underscores the misalignment between Peter's personal concerns and Jesus' mission of spiritual redemption and sacrificial living. This critical teaching moment encapsulates the essence of true discipleship—embracing the "things of God" rather than the

"things of man," focusing on the sacrifice and service of the Messiah over human-driven political vision.

Discipleship Demands Total Commitment Over Human-Centered Concerns

The difference between the mindset on the "things of man" (8:33b) and Jesus' call to self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship (8:34) highlights a critical contrast in understanding true discipleship. Peter's focus on current societal circumstances, reflective of human-centered thinking, reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of Jesus' Messianic mission. Jesus' sharp rebuke of Peter, calling him 'Satan,' underscores the adversarial nature of this perspective. In contrast, Jesus outlines discipleship as a path of self-renunciation, service, and suffering, urging a shift from human desires toward spiritual commitment. This distinction is further emphasized in the broader context of the Markan narrative, where the Twelve consistently struggle with political and earthly expectations, failing to grasp the spiritual nature of Jesus' mission. True discipleship, as defined by Jesus, involves embracing the "things of God," prioritizing spiritual salvation and the way of the cross over human affairs and concerns.

Discipleship Necessitates Willingness and Alignment with God's Will

The repeated predictions of Jesus' passion (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) in relation to the call for self-denial and cross-bearing discipleship (8:34) illuminates the true nature of discipleship as a transformative journey. Jesus' predictions clarify that His mission involves suffering, death, and resurrection, which contrasts with the disciples' expectations of a political Messiah. This highlights the need for spiritual insight, achievable only through

aligning one's will with God's purpose. The call to take up the cross signifies a profound shift from self-interest to complete commitment to God's plan, involving self-denial, willingness to suffer, and unwavering faith. The repeated predictions serve as a backdrop for the disciples' misunderstandings, emphasizing the necessity of embracing God's will and understanding that suffering is integral, not as a mandate but an extent, to the path of redemption and eternal glory. True discipleship is not merely about enduring hardship but requires a fundamental transformation of the mind and spirit, in alignment with Jesus' example of sacrificial service.

This chapter examined the theological implications on discipleship in Mark 8:22–10:52, focusing on how the Gospel presents discipleship as a progressive journey of transformation rather than a static state. Through an analysis of the selected IQs, this study explored the structural, thematic, and theological elements that shape Markan discipleship.

The chapter demonstrated how discipleship in Mark is framed by a movement from spiritual blindness to insight (8:22–26; 10:46–52) and how the disciples' journey is marked by misunderstanding, correction, and growth. The contrast between Peter's rebuke (8:32–33) **and Jesus' call to** self-denial (8:34) emphasized the tension between human expectations and divine purposes. The repeated passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) further reinforced the reality of suffering in discipleship, challenging conventional views of leadership and greatness.

By identifying these theological implications, this chapter has clarified how Mark portrays discipleship as an ongoing process of realignment with Jesus' Messianic mission.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a clear and concise summary of the findings, conclusion, and recommendations for future research or practical applications.

Summary of Findings

The findings, derived through an inductive approach, represent the results of observed and interpreted evidence. This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the key findings, offering answers to the research questions and highlighting significant insights.

Structure and Flow of the Gospel of Mark

Through the three levels of observations on Mark and its biographical materials, this research identifies the Gospel's divisions, sections, and segments through book survey, book division survey, and detailed section analysis respectively. These literary parts are arranged in a horizontal logical flow along with their structural relationships.

Book Survey of Mark (1:1–16:20)

This study structures Mark using MUs and MSRs to form its narrative and theological themes. Mark 1:1 introduces the central theme as the GH: Jesus' Messiahship, unfolding across the following MUs: MU1 (Preparation for Jesus' Messianic Mission, 1:2–13), MU2 (Jesus Begins His Messianic Mission with His Disciples, 1:14–8:21), MU3 (Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples, 8:22–10:52), and MU4 (Jesus Fulfills His Messianic Mission and Charge to His Disciples, 11:1–16:20).

The relationship between the GH and the MUs is termed 'identificational particularization,' highlighting the progressive revelation of Jesus' identity and mission as "the Christ, the Son of God." The shift from MU1 to MU2 follows a 'preparation/realization' pattern: MU1 sets the groundwork for Jesus' mission, and MU2 initiates its actualization. Transitioning from MU2 to MU3, defined by 'biographical particularization' and 'interrogation.' The focus narrows to Jesus' interactions with the Twelve, addressing their misunderstandings. Between MU3 and MU4, the relationship combines 'preparation/realization' and 'climax.' MU3 prepares the disciples for Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection as part of the universal redemptive work, culminating in MU4 with these events and the Roman centurion's confession of belief (15:39).

Book Division Survey of MU3 (8:22–10:52)

MU3—"Jesus Clarifies His Messianic Mission to His Disciples"—(8:22–10:52) is sectioned into three portions: MU3-1 (Two-Stage Healing of the Blind Man in Bethsaida, 8:22–26), MU3-2 (Twelve's Failure to See Jesus as the Messiah, 8:27–10:45), and MU3-3 (Immediate Healing of the Blind Man in Jericho, 10:46–52). The MSRs in this division include 'recurrence of interrogations,' 'preparation/realization,' 'contrast,' and *inclusio.*

Throughout MU3, Jesus frequently questions His disciples, highlighting their ongoing struggle to grasp His identity and mission. There are twelve instances of interrogation, such as “Who do you say that I am?” (8:29) and “What do you want me to do for you?” (10:36), illustrating a method aimed at deeper reflection.

The ‘preparation/realization’ dynamic between MU3-1 and MU3-2 is noteworthy. The two-stage healing in MU3-1 as a dramatic text symbolizes the disciples’ misperception of Jesus, which is only fully dealt with later in MU3-2. Here, the Twelve’s failure to comprehend Jesus’ mission is highlighted through their reactions to His predictions of suffering and death, exemplified by Peter’s rebuke (8:32) and James and John’s request for glory (10:35–37) and the other apostles’ indignation toward it (10:41).

MU3-3 introduces Bartimaeus, a blind man in Jericho, whose faith contrasts sharply with the Twelve’s lack of it (9:19), leading to his immediate healing (10:52). This difference emphasizes the theme of spiritual blindness versus insight, displaying that true understanding of Jesus’ mission is marked by faith.

The *inclusio* structure in this division, with the healing of blind men in MU3-1 and MU3-3 framing MU3-2, reinforces the journey of Jesus and His followers. This highlights the need for true spiritual sight—understanding Jesus as the Crucified Messiah—and calls followers to embrace the cross (8:34).

The literary forms in MU3 enhance the narrative. MU3-1 (8:22–26) is a dramatic text, symbolizing the disciples’ gradual understanding of Jesus. MU3-2 (8:27–10:45) follows a prose narrative, focusing on the Twelve’s repeated failures to see Jesus’ mission. MU3-3 (10:46–52) returns to a dramatic text, emphasizing Bartimaeus’ faith and immediate healing as a contrast to the Twelve’s failings.

Detailed Section Analysis of MU3-2 (8:27–10:45)

MU3-2 (8:27–10:45) delves into the disciples' spiritual blindness and their struggle to understand Jesus' Messianic identity and mission. This section is divided into six segments: "Cross and Discipleship" (8:27–38), "Glory and Discipleship" (9:1–13), "Faith and Discipleship" (9:14–29), "Greatness and Discipleship" (9:30–10:16), "Sacrifice and Discipleship" (10:17–34), and "Service and Discipleship" (10:35–45). These segments develop the process by which the disciples' flawed perceptions are challenged, corrected, and gradually reshaped toward spiritual insight.

The 'contrast' between Segment 1 and Segment 2 highlights the tension between suffering and divine affirmation, underscoring the disciples' inability to reconcile a suffering Messiah with their expectations. The 'causation' between Segment 2 and Segment 3 illustrates how divine revelation demands faith, which the disciples lack, as seen in their failure to heal the demon-possessed boy (9:14–29).

In addition, the 'causation' between Segment 3 and Segment 4 shows that a lack of faith contributes to misunderstandings about true greatness and humility, as Jesus teaches that greatness lies in servanthood (9:30–10:16). The 'causation' between Segment 4 and Segment 5 highlights how the pursuit of status can impede the understanding of sacrificial discipleship, as displayed by the encounter with the rich young man and the challenge of sacrificing material wealth (10:17–34). The 'summarization' between Segment 5—including Segments 1–4—and Segment 6 reinforces the ultimate teaching of their misunderstanding—true discipleship is not about power but servanthood (10:42–45).

The cause of the disciples' spiritual blindness is explicitly identified in 8:33b, where Jesus rebukes Peter for setting his mind on human concerns rather than divine purposes. This misplaced perception governs the Twelve's actions throughout MU3-2, leading them to reject Jesus' suffering (8:31–32), fail to exercise faith (9:19), deny inclusivity (9:38; 10:13), and pursue status (9:33–37; 10:35–37, 41). Their flawed perception is not due to ignorance alone but to a deeply ingrained expectation of a Messiah who conforms to human ideals of power and glory rather than one who suffers and serves.

The cure for this blindness is outlined in 8:34, where Jesus presents self-denial and cross-bearing as the means of true discipleship. However, insight into this calling does not come immediately but develops progressively. Faith is emphasized as the essential factor in gaining true vision, as demonstrated in 9:23: "All things are possible for one who believes." This necessity of faith is reinforced by the disciples' failure to cast out a demon (9:18–19) and Jesus' instruction that their lack of spiritual power stems from inadequate reliance on God (9:29).

Jesus, the Crucified Messiah, serves as the paradigm for this transformation, a theme emphasized in the passion predictions (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45). These statements, framed by the repeated Son of Man motif, reinforce the inescapable link between Jesus' suffering and the disciples' call to follow Him in self-denial and servanthood. Each segment demonstrates the disciples' struggle to accept this reality: the Transfiguration (9:2–8) affirms Jesus' divine identity while exposing their confusion, the failure of the Twelve (9:14–29) reveals their incomplete faith, and Jesus' teachings on humility and servanthood (9:35–10:45) directly challenge their misconceptions about greatness.

Ultimately, MU3-2 portrays discipleship as a journey from spiritual blindness to insight, requiring faith, sacrifice, humility, and servanthood—qualities exemplified by Jesus, the Crucified Messiah, for His cross-bearing disciples.

Theological Implications on Discipleship

The theological implications of discipleship in the Gospel of Mark unfold through a careful examination of 8:22–10:52, where Jesus progressively reshapes the disciples' understanding of what it means to follow Him. Key themes such as spiritual blindness and insight, suffering and glory, and true greatness in God's kingdom highlight the transformative journey of discipleship revealed in this Gospel.

This discussion follows the study's inductive approach, moving from observation to interpretation, uncovering the deeper theological significance of Jesus' teachings. It highlights central themes that show how discipleship is not only about intellectual comprehension but also about an active, faith-filled response to Jesus as the Crucified Messiah. By tracing the disciples' development and contrasting their struggles with the insights of other characters, Mark presents a compelling vision of discipleship—one that demands a reorientation toward God's redemptive mission

The journey of discipleship in the Markan narrative unfolds progressively, offering a nuanced understanding of what it truly means to follow Jesus. Throughout the Markan narrative, we encounter a continual tension between human expectations and divine purposes, particularly regarding the nature of the Messiah's mission and the transformation

required of His followers. This progression is marked by a shift from spiritual blindness to insight and from worldly ambitions to a radical redefinition of greatness in God's Kingd

Jesus' approach to discipleship is fundamentally relational and transformative. The calling of the Twelve, situated between MU2 (1:14–8:21) and MU3 (8:22–10:52), exemplifies this shift. Unlike traditional discipleship models, which often emphasized intellectual understanding or social standing, Jesus calls ordinary people to a deeper, personal transformation—a transformation that is not rooted in intellectual or social achievement, but in a radical commitment to God's mission, one that demands embracing suffering and rejecting worldly power.

As the narrative progresses, we observe this call to transformation take shape, particularly in the disciples' evolving comprehension of Jesus' true identity and mission. This transition between MU2 and MU3 underscores the central theme of spiritual vision, with Jesus guiding His followers through a process of spiritual renewal and understanding—moving from self-centered concerns to aligning with divine priorities. Discipleship, therefore, is a journey of continuous growth and insight, requiring both perception and faith in Jesus' revelation.

A pivotal moment in this journey occurs at the midpoint of MU3, particularly in the two-stage healing of the blind man in 8:22–26. This passage serves as a metaphor for the disciples' spiritual awakening. Just as the blind man's sight is gradually restored, so too is the disciples' understanding of Jesus' identity. This spiritual restoration emphasizes that true discipleship demands time, patience, and faith. Full clarity of vision is not instantaneous, but comes through a willing engagement with Jesus and openness to His transformative work.

The contrast between the apostles' persistent misunderstandings and Bartimaeus' insight (10:46–52) further clarifies this theme. While the disciples remain spiritually blind to the true nature of Jesus' mission, Bartimaeus exemplifies the essence of discipleship. His faith in Jesus as the Messiah—despite his physical blindness—demonstrates a profound understanding of what it means to follow the Crucified One. This moment challenges readers to reflect on their own response to Jesus.

The structural device of *inclusio*, framed by the healing of the blind men in Bethsaida and Jericho (8:22–26; 10:46–52), underscores the dynamic nature of discipleship. This *inclusio* stresses the necessity of ongoing spiritual renewal, illustrating that discipleship is not a fixed achievement but a continuous unfolding journey. It is a process of sustained engagement with Jesus, whose presence alone can restore sight to the spiritually blind and guide His followers on the way toward a deeper understanding of His mission.

At the heart of this journey lies a crucial shift in perspective, as demonstrated by Peter's rebuke of Jesus in 8:32, and Jesus' rebuke of Peter in 8:33. Peter's rejection of Jesus' prediction of suffering reflects the natural human tendency to focus on worldly concerns—power, success, and glory. Jesus' sharp correction of Peter exposes this misunderstanding, urging His disciples—and, by extension, all readers—to abandon their worldly aspirations and adopt a new understanding of greatness. True discipleship involves not seeking prestige or power, but embracing the cross and the call to self-denial.

Jesus' invitation to take up the cross in 8:34 encapsulates this redefinition of discipleship. The cross becomes a symbol of the radical reorientation of one's life—moving from self-interest to a total surrender to God's will. Discipleship, therefore, is not simply

about enduring hardship but involves a profound transformation of priorities, a shift from personal gain to sacrificial service.

The repeated passion predictions throughout the Gospel (8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33–34, 45) emphasize the transformative nature of discipleship. These predictions reveal the gap between the disciples' expectations and the reality of the Messiah's mission, which is centered on suffering and sacrifice. Discipleship is not about following a triumphant, worldly ruler but about aligning with the Suffering Servant whose path to glory is through the cross. These provide a framework for understanding the cost of discipleship—emphasizing that true greatness in God's Kingdom is found in by emptying oneself to fulfill His will.

Generally, there are nine theological statements grounded on the respective implications on discipleship:

- Inferred from 'biographical particularization' between MU2 and MU3: "Discipleship involves intentional and transformative preparation."

- Inferred from 'interrogation' between MU2 and MU3: "Discipleship emphasizes spiritual insight over intellectual understanding."

- Inferred from 'climax' between MU3 and MU4, 15:39: "Discipleship embraces universal redemption and servanthood."

- Inferred from 'preparation/realization' between MU3-1 and MU3-2: "Discipleship entails spiritual insight through restoration."

- Inferred from 'contrast' between MU3-2 and MU3-3: "Discipleship highlights spiritual insight through faith."

- Inferred from *inclusio* in MU3: "Discipleship requires spiritual insight to bear the cross."

- Inferred from 'substantiation' between MU3-2, 8:32 and 8:33b: "Discipleship prioritizes the heavenly mission over earthly affairs."

- Inferred from ‘contrast’ between MU3-2, 8:33b and 8:34: “Discipleship demands total commitment over human-centered concerns.”

- Inferred from ‘recurrence’ in MU3-2: “Discipleship necessitates willingness and alignment with God’s will.”

Therefore, the implications for discipleship in the Gospel of Mark, particularly 8:22–10:52, present a coherent vision that challenges conventional views of power, success, and glory.

Conclusion

This inductive study of Mark 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit reveals the core theological implications on discipleship in Mark’s Gospel. Discipleship is portrayed as a transformative journey grounded in spiritual insight, personal growth, and unwavering commitment to God’s mission, with Jesus, the Crucified Messiah, serving as the ultimate model.

A key discovery is the disciples’ spiritual blindness—a barrier to fully understanding Jesus’ Messianic mission. This misperception is more than an intellectual gap; it represents a profound spiritual struggle between the ‘things of God’ and ‘things of man.’ The two-stage healing of the blind man in Bethsaida serves as a metaphor for this condition and gradual spiritual restoration. The contrast between the Twelve’s lack of understanding and Bartimaeus’ immediate healing underscores that true discipleship goes beyond knowledge, requiring spiritual perception and trust. Through His personal interaction with the disciples, Jesus addresses their flaws, preparing them for a deeper role in His redemptive work.

Mark portrays discipleship as a journey from spiritual blindness to vivid insight, where the disciples’ progression from misunderstanding to a clearer grasp of Jesus' identity

and mission underscores the primacy of faith. True discipleship calls for total dedication to Jesus, the surrender of one's will to God, and the willingness to embrace the cross. It involves a personal transformation moving beyond self-centered ambitions.

In essence, Mark's depiction of discipleship is not about intellectual or social agreement but about engaging in a relational and transformative process. It is about becoming like Jesus in mission and character—through self-denial and cross-bearing by faith and sacrificial service. As the disciples move from spiritual blindness to enlightenment, they are invited to walk the way of the cross, embodying Jesus' redemptive love. This journey encapsulates the significance of true discipleship: a commitment to follow Jesus 'on the way' wholeheartedly, living a life marked by consecration and total devotion to God's will.

Recommendations

While this study provides valuable insights into Mark 8:22–10:52 as a literary unit and its implications for discipleship, several areas warrant further exploration:

First, future research could focus on a more in-depth investigation of specific MSRs within the Gospel of Mark that relate to the ongoing theme of discipleship. While this study has highlighted the MSRs central to 8:22–10:52, additional analysis of other MSRs throughout the Gospel could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how discipleship evolves in the Markan narrative.

Second, focused studies on individual texts within Mark would allow for a more granular examination of key moments in Jesus' interactions with His disciples. For example, exploring the titles of Jesus, the dialogues in the pericopes within and surrounding the

healing of the blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52), or centering on other minor characters within MU3 such as the father of the boy with an unclean spirit or the rich young man (9:14–29; 10:17–31) would deepen our understanding of the nuances in Jesus' teaching and its implications for discipleship in this division.

Furthermore, this study has raised several IQs that could benefit from further inquiry. Specifically, questions regarding the cultural context of Mark's audience, the significance of the 'blindness' theme, and the disciples' evolving understanding of Jesus' identity would be valuable to explore. These areas could yield new insights into the nature of discipleship and the journey from misunderstanding to spiritual insight.

Finally, although not directly addressed in this study, an intertextual comparison with the other Synoptic Gospels could be a useful avenue for future research. A detailed exploration of how Mark's presentation of discipleship aligns with or diverges from Matthew and Luke could offer a richer understanding of early Christian conceptions of discipleship, particularly in the context of the Crucified Messiah.

By addressing these areas, further research can build upon the findings of this study, offering a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of discipleship in Mark.

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