

Gate Breaker News Digest

Matthew 16:18 "I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against



Discovery Stuns Scholars

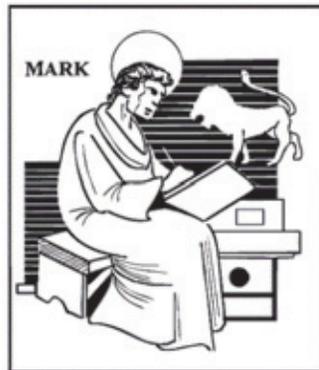
The recent discovery of a fragment of the Gospel of Mark has many paleographers talking. Daniel B. Wallace, professor of the New Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary, announced the finding on February 1 at a debate with Bart Ehrman at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

The fragment has been dated by one leading paleographer to the first century. He said that he was certain of the dating. If the authenticity and the dating are accurate, this fragment of the Book of Mark will predate the other oldest manuscript of Mark by between 100 and 150 years. It would also become the oldest manuscript of a portion of the New Testament known to exist.

The world must wait in suspense for about a year to know for certain whether the fragment is authentic and properly dated. In the past, there have been hoaxes that keep scholars suspicious of such discoveries. Yet, the evidence for the early dating of this Mark fragment and the fact that it was found with other possible second century New Testament fragments was enough to stun the academic world and set it ablaze with interest.¹

Mark was also known as John Mark. His mother was named Mary (Acts 12:12) and his cousin was Barnabas (Acts 12:25; Colossians 4:10).

John Mark traveled with Barnabas and Paul on one of



their missionary journeys for a while. He apparently felt the burden of missionary travel and returned home for awhile. When later, on another mission, he tried to join with them again, a dispute broke out between Paul and Barnabas over him coming. Paul said, "no", but Barnabas said, "yes". (Acts 15:36-41). This difference of opinion caused Paul and Barnabas to separate and go on different missions. Paul took Silas with him and Barnabas took Mark.

The Book of Acts covers Paul's missionary efforts after this and Barnabas falls from the pages of history. However, to be fair to Barnabas, the great encourager of the apostles and early Christians (Acts 4 - 11), it was he who first introduced Saul, later called Paul,

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Kenya College of Ministry

When I moved to Meridian, Idaho, in 2007 and began attending Capital Christian Center, I had no idea that I would become so deeply involved in helping to start a school for pastors in Kenya, Africa. At the time of writing this, I am on my eighth trip to train pastors in a school outside of Nairobi.

How did I get drawn into this? Perhaps my involvement in the new school of ministry should not have surprised me so much because I had already been engaged in many aspects of education over the years.

For instance, my undergraduate degree from the University of Nevada in 1978 was in education. It positioned me so that I was asked to help start a Christian school in 1980 in northern Idaho. I worked with that school (K - 12) for many years as a teacher and an administrator.

In 1988 I enhanced my education by obtaining a masters degree in teaching from Whitworth College. Then, after I became a pastor, I attended college again, earning my doctoral degree in practical ministry from Northwest Graduate School of the Ministry in 1998.

Next, I began teaching intensives at various Bible schools while I was still pastoring. Eventually, for a season, I



helped doctoral candidates working on their dissertations at Beacon University.

So, I guess that it makes sense that the Lord would want me to continue to use my experience in the realm of education. It is kind of a no brainer really, but sometimes when I am prayerfully wondering what God wants me to be involved in next, I forget that the next steps are just a different part of the path that He has already been leading me on.

The vision to begin a school for pastors in Kenya was developed at Capital Christian Center

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**Kenya College of Ministry
(continued)**

(CCC) under the leadership of Pastor Ken Wilde. He had previously traveled to Kenya several times for ministry. The connection with Kenya came through members in the congregation who were born in Kenya but then came to the United States for education, eventually becoming U.S. citizens and members of CCC.

Evans Baiya was one of the Kenyans at church who had a deep desire for missions to many places, including Kenya. Pastor Ken, Evans, and others had discussed the idea of starting a school for pastors in Kenya, but it had never advanced beyond a dream. When I came along, they began to talk to me about the possibility of getting involved, and so the dream began to take on the form of a workable vision.

In April, 2009, Evans and I traveled to Kenya to teach a conference for a couple hundred pastors who belong to the Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa (PEFA). Afterwards, I taught the first courses for the Kenya College of Ministry (Kcom) to a couple dozen pastors. Eighteen of those pastors committed to the school.

Since then, the school has developed into a three-year program with over fifty pastors. The focus of the school is theology and practical ministry, and the program model is based on teaching intensives, bi-monthly cohort group meetings, a curriculum of books, DVDs, CDs, etc. and project-based assignments in which the pastors use what they are learning to impact their congregations and / or communities.

The pastors are given project options to complete for each course. For example, one project option for a course on evangelism was to develop a program in their churches to train the members about evangelism and then to hold outreach events. The results were reported in a project paper. Many pastors reported significant spiritual growth among their members and also the exciting, successful outreach results of many who gave their lives to the Lord. Follow up with the new converts was also part of the project assignment.

In another course on spiritual leadership, pastors had to create and implement a leadership training process within their congregations. Organizational charts were also required.

Each course, whether it is on worship, Christian history, world religions, apologetics, or conflict resolution, has both a theological

aspect and a practical ministry application.

While I have been the main professor, I have not been the only one involved. Others have included Pastor Ken Wilde, worship pastor Mark Thornton, intern pastor Shane Grove, Dr. Bill Graybill, and (soon-to-be-Dr.) Evans Baiya, who just finished his PhD program in technology and business.

In a real sense, the development of Kcom has been a partnership between Capital Christian Center and Gate Breaker Ministries. While the members of CCC have carried the burden for financing the operations of Kcom through mission offerings, GBM has given numerous books, DVD's, and other resources. Furthermore, the many teachings that I have developed for GBM have been given to the school, as well as my time and energy. In short, if it were not for the faithful monthly donors of GBM, I would not be able to do this.

Yet, many have given and sacrificed. Dr. Bill Graybill, pastor of Abundant Life Center in Jefferson, Oregon, gave of his time, money, and resources to teach the pastors on conflict resolution and hermeneutics. Evans Baiya, founder of Expansion International, is currently creating a Kcom website through which the pastors can upload their academic project papers. The site will also be used for in-school communication as well as promotion. It has taken all of these givers and participants in order for Kcom to become successful thus far, and more will be required in the future.

The school is not free. It charges the Kenyan pastors a minimum tuition to attend the courses. This helps offset costs, but it does not currently cover the greater percentage needed to operate the school. However,

it is a reasonable amount for the students, considering that the average Kenyan makes about two dollars a day.

The pastors come from both rural and urban communities. Their church memberships vary in size, but all together there are thousands of people who are being impacted by Kcom, since the pastors apply what they are learning to their local fellowships.

I have spent time with these pastors in classes, in prayer, in fellowship, and I have ministered in some of their churches. These are people of high integrity. They desire to

These are people of high integrity. They desire to serve the Lord and are desirous of training that will make them the best pastors and leaders that they can possibly be.



A photo in December, 2011 of some of our third year students at the BTL Christian Conference Center where we hold classes in Ruiru, Kenya, outside of Nairobi. Dr. Bill Graybill is on the right.

serve the Lord and are desirous of training that will make them the best pastors and leaders that they can possibly be. Some of them are bivocational because they cannot live off the meager salary that they receive from pastoring. Most are married with families. A few have degrees in higher secular education and some have previously been in Bible school, but they are all hungry for a school where theological training is balanced with practical ministry and application. Numerous times, we have heard them say that they have never received anything like this type of training before.

Why Kenya? It seems that the Lord is really up to something in Kenya. I constantly hear about missionaries going to Kenya or some major Christian event happening there. Of course, now that I have the country in my radar, I am more aware of the subject. Perhaps it is like owning a certain make or model of car; it seems like you see them all over the place. Yet, I really think that it is more than that. I remember being in a prayer session with the Kcom pastors last year and I had a prophetic sense that Kenya currently holds the key to the heart of Africa, that God is really moving in Kenya to impact the greater part of the continent with the Gospel of Christ.

Recently, a friend showed me an article about Africa and missions. It states: "The country of Kenya has led the way by becoming the first country to engage all of its unreached peoples with national missionary teams. It is very likely that based on the momentum we are seeing in Africa, all of the unreached peoples on the continent will be fully engaged and reached in the next decade."¹

So, it does seem that the Lord is really doing an amazing work in Kenya "for such a time as this". May all of Africa get evangelized!

My hope and prayer is that Kcom will strengthen, grow, and impact all the regions of Kenya, and that it will become a pastoral training center of such excellence that pastors not only learn deep, life-changing theology but also become experts at practical ministry which will transform their congregations, communities, and the nation.

Thanks to all of you who give and pray. It is because of you that Kcom is equipping pastors and congregations in Kenya today.

Prayer Points

- For the exact purpose that the Lord desires.
- For the finances to support, maintain, and grow Kcom.
- For just the right team of professors to train and equip the pastors.
- For favor with God and men to open all of the right doors at the right times.
- For the Kcom pastors and their families.
- For transformation and impact of the congregations and communities represented by the pastors.
- For Kenya to send Christian missionaries to every unreached people group in Africa.

Endnotes

¹ Rick Wood, quoting David Taylor in "Africa: Hope in the Midst of Darkness", *Mission Frontiers* (November-December 2011), published by USCWM in Pasadena, CA.

The Amazing Act of Prayer

Years ago, I collected quotes about prayer for a book that I was thinking about writing. Who knows, maybe someday I will complete the book, but for now I have some inspiring quotes that I want to share with you. My suggestion is that you meditate on them and let them minister to your spirit. I am assigning titles to the longer ones.

Short Thoughts

- We are to ask with a beggar's humility, to seek with a servant's carefulness, and to knock with the confidence of a friend. – D. L. Moody¹
- The strongest one in Christ's kingdom is he who is the best knocker. The secret of success in Christ's kingdom is the ability to pray. – E. M. Bounds²
- This is His open doorway to invite our candid call for help. He isn't too busy to care, and He's not too preoccupied with universe-wide duty to have time and resource to answer. – Jack Hayford³
- Faith knows that God's will is the highest good, and that anything which is beneficial to us will be granted to our petitions. – Charles Spurgeon⁴
- Prayer is faith passing into act. – Richard Cecil⁵
- Faith creates nothing; it simply reckons upon that which is already there. – A. W. Tozer⁶
- When we humble ourselves like little children and put on no airs of self-sufficiency, but run happily into the joy of our Father's embrace; the glory of his grace is magnified and the longing of our soul is satisfied. – John Piper⁷
- Prayers open a whole planet to a man's activities. I can as really be touching hearts for God in far away India or China through prayer, as though I were there. Not in as many ways as though there, but as truly. – S. D. Gordon⁸
- Prayer is nothing else but a sense of the presence of God. – Brother Lawrence⁹

We are to ask with a beggar's humility, to seek with a servant's carefulness, and to knock with the confidence of a friend. – D. L. Moody

manifest only when and as we are aware of His Presence. On our part there must be surrender to the Spirit of God, for His work it is to show us the Father and the Son. If we co-operate with Him in loving obedience God will manifest Himself to us, and that manifestation will be the difference between a nominal Christian life and a life radiant with the light of His face. – A. W. Tozer¹⁰

Praying for Other Churches

Could the divided churches not give expression to the communion which already exists among them by praying regularly for one another? The divisions and barriers created through the centuries are not yet healed and overcome . . . But could we not break down this barrier? Could the churches not anticipate the one Church at least to the

extent of praying for each other more deliberately? . . . Intercession for the whole people of God leads us to them, permits us to participate in their witness, struggle, anxiety, despair, in their prayer for pardon, in their suffering. To pray for one another means already to accept one another." Lukas Vischer¹¹

The Potency of Prayer

The potency of prayer hath subdued the strength of fire; it hath bridled the rage of lions, hushed anarchy to rest, extinguished wars, appeased the elements, expelled demons, burst the chains of death, expanded the gates of heaven, assuaged diseases, repelled frauds, rescued cities from destruction, stayed the sun in its course, and arrested the progress of the thunderbolt. – John Chrysostom¹²

Approaching God

There is nothing that will preserve the life of prayer; its vigor, sweetness, obligations, seriousness and value, so much as a deep conviction that prayer is an approach to God, a pleading with God, and asking of God. Reality will then be in it; reverence will then be in the attitude, in the place, and in the air. – E. M. Bounds¹³

The Ear of God

We must remember that the goal of prayer is the ear of God. Unless that is gained the prayer has utterly failed. The uttering of it may have kindled devotional feeling in our minds, the hearing of it may have comforted and strengthened the hearts of those with whom we have prayed, but if the prayer has not gained the heart of God, it has failed in its essential purpose. – C. H. Spurgeon¹⁴

The Manifestation of His Presence

The Presence and the manifestation of the Presence are not the same. There can be the one without the other. God is here when we are wholly unaware of it. He is

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Discovery Stuns Scholars (Continued)

to the apostles. He trusted in the reformation work of Christ in Paul's life, whereas other believers did not. It was he who went and got Paul and brought him to Antioch to minister to the believers there.

His difference with Paul was probably not so much against Paul as a desire to encourage Mark, his younger kinsman. This action possibly limited Barnabas' potential influence on the formation of the early church in the way that Paul did, but Barnabas' rescue of Mark in that embarrassing situation may have helped the young man overcome any long-term, adverse reaction. Only God knows. Barnabas died in circa 60 AD, and it is believed that Mark buried him in Cyprus.

Next, Mark traveled with the apostle Peter and possibly even before Barnabas' death. Peter referred to Mark as "my son" (1st Peter 5:13), and this signifies spiritual son. Perhaps, much earlier, he had led Mark to accept Christ as his Savior, or maybe they became like father and son as they traveled many places together later on.

Tradition tells us that Peter was crucified in Rome in 67 AD at the order of Emperor Nero. Peter begged that he not die in the same way as the Lord. So, they turned the cross upside-down with him on it. After Peter's death, Mark was approached by Christians who wanted him to write Peter's story about Christ. Since Mark had travelled extensively with Peter and heard the account of Christ, perhaps hundreds of times, he knew Peter's life experiences. So, he wrote and produced what became known as the Gospel of Mark.

It is interesting to note that Paul must have eventually reconciled with Mark. (See Colossians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:11).

According to Eusebius, early Church father and the first comprehensive Church historian, the Gospel of Mark was written second after Matthew's gospel.

Tradition implies that Mark was the first to preach the Gospel in Alexandria. He became the first bishop of the Church of Alexandria. He was martyred by being dragged with a rope around his neck. His bones were eventually taken to Venice where he became the patron saint.²

The exciting discovery of the early Gospel of Mark will come under close scrutiny by notable paleographers. If it is confirmed to be an authentic first century copy of Mark's writing, it will hush the voice of higher critics who say that the New Testament books were written much later, in the second or third centuries. Comparison to the later copies of Mark's Gospel will be equally important.

The discovery reminds us that these were real people who lived in a time and culture that was responding to the birth, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. They set the world on fire with the Gospel message of God's love, plan for salvation and the gift of eternal life.

Endnotes

- 1 Joe Kovacs, *1st Century Gospel of Mark Found?* www.wnd.com/2012/02/earliest-gospel-of-mark-found/.
- 2 Stan Fleming, *Lasting Legacy* (Columbus, GA:TEC, 2006).

Contact Information

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Prayer requests: Send us your need and we will prayer for it.

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Dr. Stan Fleming

Internet Thieves?

Have you heard the expression *all that glitters is not gold*? Of course, this refers to iron pyrite that looks similar to gold but it flakes when pressure is applied. It is *fool's gold*.

Well, I am sorry to say that not all internet pages on Google that say Gate Breaker Ministries are associated with my ministry. Most are.

A few weeks ago I decided to type the words *Gate Breaker Ministries* and see what would come up. The vast majority of pages were associated with GBM (the right one). They post articles, broadcast sermons, show videos of the GBM sewing centers in Pakistan, or report on GBM's non-profit status, etc. associated with this ministry. So good so far.

Yet, there are also a few pages that mention ministries by the same name in Wisconsin and Texas. It is difficult to discover much information about them. I cannot judge the legitimacy of their ministries. The Lord gave me the name Gate Breaker Ministries through prayer in the late 1990's. It is based on Matthew 16:18 and it seemed appropriate for an apologetic ministry. How they got their names, I do not know.

However, the thing that alarmed me and that I am warning you about is that one page uses my mailing address in connection with a donation button that my ministry did not set up. I am in the process of investigating this, but please be careful about giving donations to GBM on any web pages other than the official website.

The Gate Breaker Ministries website is www.gatebreakers.com. If you have not visited it before or if it has been awhile, then please take a moment to acquaint yourself with it. There are many resources: articles, sermons, videos, and, yes, there is a donate button that donors use to give and bless the ministry. Please contact me at sfleming@gatebreakers.com if you have any concerns or questions. Thanks.

The potency of prayer hath subdued the strength of fire; it hath bridled the rage of lions, hushed anarchy to rest, extinguished wars, appeased the elements, expelled demons, burst the chains of death . . . —John Chrysostom

The Amazing Power of Prayer (Continued)

Hanging Heads of Wheat

Confession implies humility, and this, in God's sight is of great price. A farmer went with his son into a wheat field, to see if it was ready for the harvest. "See, father," exclaimed the boy, "how straight these stems hold up their heads! They must be the best ones. Those that hang their heads down, I am sure

cannot be good for much." The farmer plucked a stalk of each kind and said:

"See here, foolish child! This stalk that stood so straight is light-headed, and almost good for nothing; while this that hung its head so modestly is full of the most beautiful grain." — D. L. Moody¹⁵

Prayer Reveals Our Condition

When we pray, our human condition is unveiled to us, and we know then that we are in this distress and also in that hope. It is God who places us in this situation; but at the same time he comes to our aid. Prayer is thus man's response when he understands his distress and knows that help will come to him. — Karl Barth¹⁶

Different Answers to Prayer

I do not mean that every prayer we offer is answered exactly as we desire it to be. Were this the case, it would mean that we would be dictating to God, and prayer would degenerate into a mere system of begging. Just as an earthly father knows what is best for his children's welfare, so does God take into consideration the particular needs of His human family, and meets them out of His wonderful storehouse. — J. Kennedy Maclean¹⁷

End Notes

- 1 D.L. Moody, *Prevailing Prayer* (Chicago, IL: The Bible Institute Col. Assoc. 1885), 92.
- 2 E.M. Bounds, *Purpose in Prayer* (New York: Fleming H Revell Company, 1920), 156.
- 3 Jack Hayford, *Worship His Majesty* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 47.
- 4 Quoted in D.L. Moody, *Prevailing Prayer*, 103.
- 5 Quoted in E.M. Bounds, *Purpose in Prayer*, 13.
- 6 A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications Inc., 1948), 55.
- 7 John Piper, *Desiring God* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1986), 131.
- 8 S.D. Gordon, *Quiet Talks on Prayer* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1941), 15.
- 9 Quoted in E.M. Bounds, *Purpose of Prayer*, 14.
- 10 A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*, 64.
- 11 Lukas Vischer, *Intercession* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), 1-2.
- 12 Quoted in E.M. Bounds, *Purpose of Prayer*, 32.
- 13 E.M. Bounds, *Ibid.*, 117.
- 14 Quoted in E.M. Bounds, *Purpose of Prayer*, 94.
- 15 D.L. Moody, *Prevailing Prayer*, 28-29.
- 16 Karl Barth, *Prayer: According to the Catechisms of the Reformation* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1952), 26-27.
- 17 Quoted in E.M. Bounds, *Purpose of Prayer*, 156.

Website

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