

Mark 1:17-45

From Dr. Robert Traina:

1. MATERIAL -- Give a title to each paragraph.
2. STRUCTURE -- Look for major groupings of materials, if any; and list the primary laws used in the segment and the specific materials with which they are used, including verse references.

Questions to ask to think through this section:

- Are there any details, terms, or expressions that surprise you or jump out at you?
- Are there any aspects of the passage that remind you of another passage or passages? Where have you read various details before?
- Are there discernible literary structures?
- If you didn't know what happened next, what would you expect? Why?
- Choose three characters in the narrative: how do you think they are perceiving events?
- By what means does the text characterize key figures within its narrative?
- If you were telling this story yourself, how might it differ from the biblical account?
- Are there any surprising omissions or absences in the story?
- How does this narrative provide background for, anticipate, or even foreshadow later narratives?
- To what larger narrative movements does this narrative belong? How does it serve their ends?
- Are there other biblical narratives or texts that cite or allude to it?
- If this narrative were removed, what would be lost to the book it is in and to the biblical narrative?

Words

What are the significant words?

If they are Greek, what are the Hebrew equivalents?

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Are there words that share the same root as this word?

Does this word have a picture or image or practice that it comes from? Are there any word plays, puns, or innuendo that come from this word? Where else is it used in the Bible? Where does it first occur?

Is it common? Is it rare? What does it tell me?

Places

Where does this story, event, passage take place? What was it known for?
What does this place look like, feel like, what pictures can I show of it?
What else happened in this place, both in Bible and in history?
What would the original audience have thought of when they thought of this place?
What does the name of this place mean?

The metanarrative

Where does this text fit into the larger story?
Where is it on the arc, on the progressive preparation of a people God can dwell in the midst of?
What does this have to do with what God is doing today?
Where else in the Bible does God say this, Do this, act like this? Is this the normal pattern, or is it unusual?
Does Jesus engage with this idea, subject, tradition, or place?

Tension

Where is the rub?
Where does the vision of life with God given in this text clash with the worldviews around us?

3. INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS -- Ask a few key structural questions concerning each of the primary laws and the specific material with which each is used.
Place the questions after each of the laws listed.
 4. STRATEGIC AREAS -- Identify key verses which illuminate the segment as a whole, and give the reason for the selection of each.
 5. LITERARY FORMS - Indicate the literary form(s) found in the passage.
 6. OTHER MAJOR IMPRESSIONS -- Note literary features and other characteristics of the segment as a whole not previously mentioned.
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What next? Follow the steps above for Mark 3:7-35 at home.

- 1) Write a prayer that comes out of your impressions about the truth revealed about God through the revelation of his Son, Jesus Christ.
- 2) Locate a verse or two within the passage that are key. It's probably the "strategic areas" that you identified in step 4. Commit to memorizing it.
- 3) Write out a paragraph or two about what you think the passage means and what steps you might take to live differently as a result.

If you'd like you can print it out and give it to me to look over or email it.