

## **The Literary Device of Inclusio**

### **Pastor Jeff McKeever**

Inclusio (sometimes double inclusio): Repetition of same language at beginning and end of a section of literature forming *bookends*. An inclusio tells the reader that what is in the middle of the two bookends is support or an explanation of what the words making up the bookends.

*Example #1 – Inclusio in Genesis*

**THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH AND  
HE WAS SUCCESSFUL (39:2-3)**

...

**THE LORD WAS WITH HIM AND  
MADE HIM SUCCEED (39:21-23)**

The Abrahamic covenant extended to Joseph. This chapter fleshes out two critical examples of it showing the Lord's faithfulness to His covenant people.

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*Example #2 – Double Inclusio in the Gospel of Mark:*

**IN THE WILDERNESS (1:3)  
BAPTISM (1:4-6)**

...

**BAPTISM (1:9-11)  
IN THE WILDERNESS (1:12-13)**

The wilderness is a place of cursing, being outside of the protection and blessing of the covenant community. This would be an unlikely place to hear the announcement of the Messiah.

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*Example #3 – Another double Inclusio in the Gospel of Mark:*

**CALLING DISCIPLES (1:16-20)  
TEACHING (1:21-22)**

...

**TEACHING (2:13)  
CALLING DISCIPLES (2:14-15)**

Mark's grammar (using a literary device) supports his message: emphasizing the calling of disciples through his powerful message (which is fleshed out in both teaching and mercy throughout the passage).