

Gospel of Mark Chapter 1B Who is Jesus

Last week we embarked upon a fast paced journey through the Gospel of Mark.

- Throughout this journey we will be affirming from the Word, WHO Jesus is.

If you were with us last week we saw that Mark opened his letter with a clear statement:
Mark 1: 1 **The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;**

Mark's announcement of Jesus Christ is GOOD NEWS...

- It is news of the arrival of Jesus the Christ, the Messiah
- Mark identifies Jesus as "The Son of God."

REMEMBER I described for you the fast paced method in which Mark communicates this Gospel.

- I said Mark's Gospel is the HEADLINE NEWS Edition of Jesus' life.
- While Matthew and Luke communicate the life of Christ in more detail Mark hits the highlights. (like watching a 40 yard dash compared to a 1 mile run)
- Through this style of writing Mark conveys a sense of constant activity.
- Remember from last week I said that Mark uses the word, "Immediately" nearly 40 times as he communicates the good news.
- By doing this Mark helps us feel the energy of the events that are unfolding for us.
 - Jesus is baptized by John.
 - The Spirit immediately drove Him in to the wilderness where he was tempted by the Devil.
 - Jesus announces the Kingdom of God.
 - Immediately: He calls his first disciples,
 - He casts out an unclean spirit.
 - Immediately: He moves to heal a multitude.

There are three things that I would like to draw your attention to at the outset of Jesus' public ministry as recorded in Mark 1.

1. The Inauguration of the ministry of Jesus Christ.
2. The Identification of Jesus Christ as the Son of God
3. The Temptation of Jesus in the wilderness

Inauguration

Mark 1: 9 **In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.**

- The baptism of John marked Jesus' public inauguration as the Messiah.
- It is here at the baptism where the FORERUNNER (the one sent to announce) and the MESSIAH (the one being announced) MEET face to face.

Take note that the ministry of the Lord Jesus begins with the same glory and humility in which it will eventually end.

- Jesus did not enter the public eye with pomp and circumstance to Lord over men; instead he came with lowliness and humility to deliver us from the shackles of sin which imprisoned us.

1 Timothy 1: 15 **The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.**

Jesus who never sinned but was always obedient to the Father stands in the murky waters of the Jordan. These are the same waters to which the children of Israel have been thronging to wash away their sin and prepare their hearts for the coming messiah.

- Now, six months into the baptismal Ministry of John, Jesus shows up.
 - Mark doesn't describe John's reluctance to baptize Jesus; he doesn't communicate John's objection where he said that He (John) is the one who needs to be baptized by Jesus.
 - No Mark simply states that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.
 - Mark's brief record of the Baptism of Jesus leads us from his public inauguration as Messiah to the FATHER'S IDENTIFICATION as his beloved Son.

Identification:

Mark 1: 10 **And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."**

- This is a rare and beautiful picture of the three persons of the Holy Trinity affirming together the true identity of Jesus the Messiah.
- Mark writes, **"He Saw the heavens opening,"**

Ezekiel 1:1

The opening of the heavens occurs in the beginning of Ezekiel. **"The heavens opened and I saw visions of God"** The heavens opening is usually a sign that God is about to speak or about to act.

- In the original language Mark uses the word TARE or REND, the Spirit split the sky and descended upon Jesus.

I can't help but connect Mark's description of the Spirit "Rending the Heavens" and descending to the sentiment of the Prophet Isaiah:

Isa 64:1 **Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,**

- How many of US have had these same sentiments or said the same thing?
- The streets of our own nation have been troubled with violence.

- The fear and intimidation of Radical Islam have become a plague upon our world so we say, “Come Lord Jesus!” Rend the heavens and come down.

The First identification comes by the Holy Spirit as He affirms the identity of the Lord Jesus for John the Baptist.

- While John knew that he was to prepare the way for the Messiah, he did not know the identity of the Messiah, until that day when the Spirit descended upon Jesus like a dove.

John 1:33 *I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’* 34 *And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”*

The Holy Spirit is seen coming upon the Lord Jesus. Prophetic scripture in both Old and New Testaments tell us the Messiah would be given the Spirit without measure.

- John 3:34 *For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.*

The Spirit of God comes fluttering down on Jesus “*Like a Dove*” not in the FORM of a Dove. It is a dove-like descent, NOT a dove-like Spirit.

- Think about that!
- The descent of divine power from heaven that inaugurates the Reign of God doesn’t swoop down like an eagle but comes quietly and gently like a hovering dove.
- This is that same Spirit who fluttered upon the Chaotic Waters (Gen.1)at the creation, where he brought order out of chaos; NOW He descends upon the Lord Jesus to bring order to the sea of humanity from the Chaos of Depravity.
- OK the Spirit has identified Jesus, NOW it is the Father’s turn:

The Identification of the Father:

Mark 1: 11 *And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”*

- So that there is NO question, The Eternal Father confirms for ALL of us the Identity of Jesus Christ, His beloved Son.
- Keep in mind, at this point Jesus had lived on the earth for 30 years. There is no credible record of him ever doing a miracle, no evidence of him teaching. What he was, was a perfect, sinless human being.

He honored his mother, had no other God but the Father, didn’t covet, never bore false witness, kept holy the Sabbath.

- The Father rejoices over him as his public ministry is inaugurated. *YOU Are by beloved Son and I am well pleased with you.*

As a Father I can relate to the Father's pleasure. 3 Jo 1:4 *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.*

Moving from verse 11 into verse 12 we move quickly from the testimony about Jesus to the temptation of Jesus.

Mark 1: 12 *The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.* 13 *And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.*

From this mountain top experience, the Lord Jesus is literally CAST into the wilderness. With IMMEDIACY and FORCE the same Spirit which gently descended on Jesus as a DOVE now DRIVES Jesus into the wilderness.

- Jesus moves from a sweet CONFIRMATION into a bitter CONFRONTATION, from the DOVE to the DEVIL.
- This is a direct confrontation between heaven and hell, *holiness and depravity*,
- Steven Lawson says, "What is at stake here is who will be the ruler of the world."

Before we get into Marks description, travel back with me in time to an earlier confrontation, another day when God Almighty faced that old Serpent the Devil.

- Shortly after Eve had been deceived and Adam had fallen into sin God had a face to face meeting with the Serpent.

Genesis 3:14 *The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."*

- This is round 1 of the battle in which Jesus would CRUSH the Serpents head.
- What the First Adam lost in the Garden the Lord Jesus, the Last Adam had now come to redeem.
- The First Adam forfeited his freedom, the Last Adam, Jesus, came to BUY it back with his own blood.

1 John 3:8B, *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.*

- Here at the very outset of his public ministry the Spirit drives Jesus to an altercation with the one who is called the "*Prince of the power of the air. The god of this World*"

Mark 1: 13 *And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.*

- Remember that the First Adam was confronted by the Serpent in a garden. His temptation took place in a lush and perfect environment, a place of FEASTING where every one of his needs was perfectly met.

- The First Adam was NOT ALONE when he was tempted. Eve was with him. The one he called: “*bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.*”
- Adam faced the Serpent from the position of strength, Jesus faced him from a position of weakness. (fasting 40 days, alone in the wilderness)

WHY? If Jesus was to reverse what the First Adam had done, he needed to enter into the world NOT as Adam found it but as Adam LEFT it.

- So when Jesus was tempted of the Devil, it was NOT in a lush garden where he enjoyed the sweet fellowship of his helpmeet.
- He didn’t face the tempter while feasting on the richness of God’s provision, instead he face the serpent in the barren wilderness where he fasted for 40 days.

Sinclair Ferguson writes: “It was in a fallen, broken, sinful, disintegrating world that Jesus faced temptation and the powers of darkness, in order to win for his people a way back to the tree of life.

Mark does not provide the details of Jesus’ temptation. Unlike Matthew and Luke he doesn’t focus in on THREE specific temptations. INSTEAD Mark states that Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days “BEING TEMPED by Satan”

- Marks language describes 40 days of CONTINUAL (present tense) temptation.
- Certainly Jesus faced temptation throughout his life:
 - What would it be like to be a holy child being raised by sinful parents?
 - And you think your teenager “Knows it All!”
 - Surely Jesus was tempted as we are at every stage of life:
 - BUT this was a battle for the ages a marathon of relentless testing.

Think about this, the Father’s words of affirmation were still ringing in his ears: “*You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.*”

As he did in the Garden, the Serpent assaults God’s Word:

- “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”
- “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down,
- If your Father was telling the truth, and you really are the Son of God you wouldn’t be suffering like this! Prove me wrong make some bread!

IN the Garden and in the Wilderness the serpent questions and corrupts the Word of God.

Genesis 3:1: “HATH GOD SAID?”

- How do you know that this Jesus stuff is real? (just a story, myth, fairy tale)
- SO you prayed a prayer in 1973, do you really think that made a difference?
- What makes you think you are forgiven?
- You have been declared righteous ... But you still sin?
- So, Has the power of sin really been broken?

- Do you really think You are being changed into His image?
- If you really are God's child (Adopted) why are you struggling?

2 Corinthians 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

- We have the shield of faith, we hold the sword of the Spirit in our hand. With them:

5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

Each and every one of us faces temptation on a daily basis.

- From the First Adam we learn that when we FALL, we should run TO God. HE graciously provides the only covering for our sin through the sacrifice of Christ
- From the Second Adam we learn how to rightly respond to temptation.
- Submit to God and Resist the Devil, use the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit.
- In the Words of the Apostle Paul:

Ephesians 6: 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.