

Preparing the Way

Mark 1:1 – 20

I. Intro

A. Leaving Exodus

- i. Instructions on specific laws
- ii. Building the “tent of meeting” or tabernacle while in the wilderness
- iii. Instructions about priests, priests garments
- iv. Instructions on tabernacle furnishings and sacrifices

B. Today, Gospel of Mark; shortest of 4 gospels; written by John Mark – not an eye-witness or a disciple of Jesus; gospel accounts based on what he heard/learned from Simon Peter; companion of Paul and Barnabas on missionary journeys throughout Asia

C. Mention of John Mark: Acts 13:4-5 (ESV)

4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.

D. For some unknown reason John Mark left them for a while (Acts 13:13)

E. Then later returned but it caused disagreement between Paul and Barnabas: Acts 15:36-40 (ESV)

36 And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.”

37 Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.

38 But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

39 And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus,

40 but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.

F. Audience of Mark’s gospel: Believed written in Rome; in general written to Gentiles (Romans and slaves); often referred to as “servant gospel”; Mark’s intent to show Jesus as Son of God (v. 1), but also focus on Jesus’ humanity

- i. Jesus as carpenter (6:3)
- ii. Jesus demonstrating righteous anger (3:5, 8:33, 10:14)
- iii. Jesus being tired, needing rest (4:38)
- iv. Jesus moved with compassion (6:34)
- v. Jesus sighing (7:34, 8:12)
- vi. Jesus looking at the rich young ruler and loving him (10:21)
- vii. Jesus being hungry (11:12)

- G. Today look at preparation God put in place start of Jesus' ministry; Mark's gospel doesn't give account of Jesus' birth – starts at point of Jesus' baptism
- H. 3 aspects of preparing the people for Jesus' ministry on earth – Herald of Christ, Harassing of Christ, Helpers of Christ
- I. **READ Mark 1:1 – 20**

II. **1 - Herald of Christ**

- A. (v. 1) Mark begins by clearly stating this gospel is about *Jesus Christ, the Son of God*
- B. (v. 2) Mark quotes passage from the book of prophet Isaiah (OT); this gospel of Jesus Christ started long, long ago; all through OT prophets God tells His people of the coming Messiah – coming of the Gospel of Christ
 - i. Passage quoted from Isaiah promise from God to send a messenger (forerunner) to prepare the way for His Son
- C. (v. 4) John the baptizer appears on the scene – baptizing people for repentance and forgiveness of sin (v. 5)
 - i. Slight difference in meaning of John's baptism of people, and baptism we participate in today – after crucifixion and resurrection of Christ
 - a) John's – baptism of repenter, those coming and confessing their sins before God; common for person to stay in water after John baptized them to confess their sins
 - b) Our baptism – baptism of redeemed, those who have trusted Christ as Savior; sins already cleansed by faith, baptism our first witness to Christ's transforming work in our life through trusting Him
 - c) The mode (immersion) was the same, today representing our dying to self and being buried just as Christ died and was buried, and our being raised to new everlasting life just as Christ was raised
 - d) After John baptized Jesus, He didn't remain in the water, he immediately walked out (v. 10) because He had no sins to confess – Christ was sinless
- D. But John the baptizer, chosen by God to prepare the way for His Son, and to proclaim the coming of the long-awaited Messiah
- E. **[SLIDE]** We've been chosen by God to also prepare the way for Christ and to proclaim His Gospel
 - i. The message of John, our message is to be the same, was to point all people to Jesus Christ; the One of whom John said – (v. 7) ... *one who is mightier than I*; John 3:30 (ESV)
30 He must increase, but I must decrease.”; the One who baptizes us with the Holy Spirit (v. 8)
 - ii. Proclaim to all people just as angel told Jesus' disciples - Acts 1:11 (ESV)

11 ... This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

III. **2 – The Harassing of Christ (v. 12, 13)**

- A. **Jesus in the wilderness 40 days – no food, no water, tempted by Satan**
- B. **Satan, who succeeded in corrupting the first Adam, but not the second Adam**
- C. **Satan, from the beginning of time, and continually tried to stop God’s work in hearts and lives of all men and women; here, Satan’s attempt to stop God’s work of redemption in the world**
- D. **But God is way more powerful than Satan, He is omnipotent – all-powerful; God controls what Satan is able to do and not do; when God allows Satan to work in heart and life of a person it’s for one of two reasons – to test that person, or to draw that person to Himself**
- E. **And Jesus Christ, the *Son of God* (v. 1), *God made flesh* (John 1:14), also way more powerful than Satan, overcame temptation**
- F. **Question: How was Jesus victorious over Satan? By using the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, used scripture**
- G. **[SLIDE] To overcome sin, temptation to sin, we have access to the same – the Word of God; and, in Christ and presence of His Spirit within us we are also empowered to have victory over sin and temptation**
- H. **Hebrews 4:14-16 (ESV)**
 - 14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.
 - 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
 - 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (When we’re facing temptation is certainly for us a “time of need”)

IV. **3 – Helpers of Christ (v. 16 - 20)**

- A. **The people Jesus chose to help Him in ministry – Simon, Andrew (his brother), James, John (his brother – sons of thunder) – ordinary, low-class, fishermen; some believe rejected as priests of the temple**
 - i. **Later, chapter 2, even chose people as helpers hated by people – Levi (Matthew), tax collector**
- B. **The mission Jesus gave His helpers – (v. 17) become *fishers of men*; fishermen not lazy, very hard-workers, it was necessary work; Jesus called and expected these men to labor hard for the kingdom of God, His Father – a critically necessary work for salvation of men**

- C. **Question:** How long did it take these men to make their decision whether or not to accept this calling of Jesus? About a milli-second – (v. 18) ... *immediately they left their nets and followed Him*
- D. **Question:** What sacrifices did they make in order to follow Jesus?
- i. Family – (v. 20) ... *they left their father, Zebedee; was a family business they gave up*
 - ii. Friends – (v. 20) ... *left their father ... with the hired servants; worked side-by-side with these servants, sure built friendships over time*
 - iii. Careers (Income) – (v. 18) ... *left their nets, how they made their living; Gr. (Def.) - to send them away, to give them up*
- E. **Matthew 10:37-39 (ESV)**
- 37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.
- 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.
- 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
- F. **Luke's record of these same words: Luke 14:26-27 (ESV)**
- 26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.
- 27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.; **Luke 14:33 (ESV)**
- 33 So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.
- G. **[SLIDE] If we claim to be one of Jesus' disciples (helpers), we are called to do the same – to renounce anything in our lives that we give more value to than our relationship with Christ**
- H. **Matthew 6:24 (ESV)**
- 24 "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and [*mammon*]. (**mammon – any possessions**)

V. Close

- A. **Question:** How are you doing as a herald of Christ?
- B. **Question:** How are you doing as a recipient of the power of Christ in being victorious over temptation and sin?
- C. **Question:** How are you doing as a helper (disciple) of Christ?
- D. **Confess failure, shortcomings in these areas before observing communion**