

Mark

Lesson 1

Chapter 1:1-12

Participant Guide

Leader Guide Bible Studies

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Mark 1:1-12, Lesson 1

Opening Prayer

Introduction

Church tradition holds that Mark wrote the gospel of Mark, a missionary disciple who traveled with Paul (2 Timothy 4:11), Peter (1 Peter 5:13), and Luke (Philemon 1:24). Mark may be the same person as John Mark in Acts 12 and 15 who went on a missionary journey through Turkey with Paul and his cousin Barnabas but returned to Jerusalem when they reached Pamphylia (southern Turkey). On his second journey, Paul would not take John Mark. John Mark sailed for Cyprus with Barnabas, where Barnabas was martyred. John Mark continued his missionary journey to Turkey, where Paul gave him a letter of reconciliation and introduction (Colossians 4:10).

Mark's gospel was written as early as 50 AD to as late as 60-68 AD near the time of Peter's death in Rome. Mark is a simple, brief account of the gospel of Jesus' life, proclaims him to be the Son of God, the Son of Man, and calls us to discipleship. This study will include highlights from Mark and illustrate how Mark provided a foundation for Matthew and Luke.

Read Mark 1:1-8

Mk 1:1 The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Mk 1:2 It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" [Mal 3:1] ³ "a voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" [Is 40:3]

Mk 1:4 And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Mk 1:5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. Mk 1:6 John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

Mk 1:7 And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

1. What is the first thing we learn about Jesus in Mark's gospel, verse 1:1?
2. What is significant about Mark (verse 2) following his declaration of Jesus as the Son of God with quotes from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3?

3. How was John's baptism different from Jesus'? See also Acts 18:24-26 and 19:1-7

Acts 18:24 Meanwhile, a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Acts 19:1 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

Acts 19:3 So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied.

Acts 19:4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

Acts 19:5 On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 19:6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

4. What is the benefit of baptism in the name of Jesus?

5. What is the significance of John's clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt and diet of locusts and wild honey? See 2 Kings 1:8, Malachi 4:6, Matthew 17:10-13.

2Ki 1:7 The king asked them, "What kind of man was it who came to meet you and told you this?"

2Ki 1:8 They replied, "He was a man with a garment of hair and with a leather belt around his waist." The king said, "That was Elijah the Tishbite."

Mal 4:5 "See, I will send you the prophet **Elijah** before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."

Mt 17:10 The disciples asked him, "Why then do the teachers of the law say that **Elijah** must come first?"

Mt 17:11 Jesus replied, "**To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things.**"

Mt 17:12 **But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way, the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands."**

Mt 17:13 Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

6. Why was John the Baptist so significant to Jesus' ministry – especially in proclaiming the gospel to the Jewish community?

7. What does the comparison of John the Baptist and the prophet Elijah teach you how about the manner God can fulfill prophecy? See also 1 Corinthians 1:21-24.

^{1Co 1:21} For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. ²² Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Read Mark 1:9-13 and compare to Matthew 3:13-17 and John 1:29-34

^{Mk 1:9} At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

^{Mk 1:10} As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

^{Mk 1:11} And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

^{Mk 1:12} At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, ¹³ and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

^{Mt 3:13} Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

^{Mt 3:14} But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

^{Mt 3:15} Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness."

Then John consented.

^{Mt 3:16} As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

^{Mt 3:17} And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

^{Jn 1:29} The next day [after Jesus' baptism] John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

^{Jn 1:32} Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. ³³ I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

Jn 1:34 I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.”

8. Matthew and John add essential details to the account of Jesus' baptism. Why did Jesus need to be baptized since John was right, he needed to be baptized by him, the one who was without sin and did not need to repent [Jesus was without sin (1 Peter 2:22)].

9. Jesus' baptism is a compelling example for baptizing adults (otherwise known as believer's baptism). On what basis are infants baptized, and what is the benefit of infant baptism? Refer to the following texts:

Ephesians 1:3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith —and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

The New Testament records four accounts of the baptism of new believers and their entire household; Cornelius (Acts 10:24-48), Lydia (Acts 16:15), the Philippian Jailer (Acts 16:30-33), and Stephannas (1Corinthians 1:16). Acts 16:15 is an example:

Acts 16:15 When she [Lydia] and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home.

Mark 10:13-16,¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them.

Mk 10:14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

Mk 10:16 And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

10. Mark makes a passing reference to Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (verses 1:12-13).

Mk 1:12 At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert,¹³ and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

As time permits, refer to Matthew 4:1-11 or Luke 4:1-13 for details of Jesus' temptation and discuss: Why would God cause his Son to suffer hunger, thirst, and temptation in the wilderness for such a long time - 40 days? See Hebrews 4:5

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are —yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

11. As time permits, peruse the first three chapters of Matthew and Luke, and the first chapter of John. What additional accounts do they include in the gospel of Jesus?

Closing Prayer and Blessing