

SERIES: **The Jesus Journey**

TEXT: **Mark 1:1-8** (READ + PRAY)

HOOK- Getting ready to go anywhere with kids takes a special kind of person; Exhausting! Shoes??
-sometimes u gotta start getting ready early; *SOME THINGS TAKE PREPARATION*

TITLE: **Prepare the Way**

Outline:

- **Fast Facts**
- **Walk through the Text in Context**
- **Implications & Applications**
- **Call to Action**

Fast Facts-

- Mark is the earliest (and shortest) of the 4 Gospel accounts
- Fast paced, full of action (“Immediately” used over 40 times)
- Itself doesn’t identify author, but early Xians accredited authorship to John Mark (*Papias 60-130 AD*)
 - Was an apprentice of the apostle Peter & from whom he got all his material for the book
 - Had abandoned Paul & Barnabas- Paul was salty but later would say “Mark was useful to him”
 - One of the first churches met at his mom’s house (Acts 12:12)
 - Some believe that he is the guy who at some point in this book runs away naked (odd detail)
- Written to a Roman audience (Matt to Jews; Luke to Greeks; John to world) (internal evidence)
 - Important to know who it was intended for because it helps us understand as we ourselves read it
- Unique in that it presents to us Jesus mostly by what he *does* rather than what he *says*
- It has sandwiches! Markan Sandwiches (Ch. 5 little girl and woman w/ blood issue)
- You can divide the book several fun and obvious ways-
 - Chapter 1-8 = who Jesus is - Chapters 9-16 = why Jesus came
 - You can see the shift happen in **Mark 8:29, 31**
 - Jesus in Galile- Jesus on the way to Jerusalem- Jesus in Jerusalem
- Presents Jesus as Suffering Servant
 - Matthew’s=Messianic King; Luke=Seeking Savior and his humanity; John= Eternality and Divinity
 - The main verse of the book is

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many

Walk through the text in Context-

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

The beginning- Origins language (Gen 1)

In genesis we find the birth of the universe, here we find the birth of the gospel (*more @ application*)

The gospel- from the Greek "euangelion," meaning "good news"

In the Roman world, this term used to announce significant events, such as the birth of an emperor

Son of God- The primary title that Mark uses for Jesus

Interestingly, as you read the whole book (about 1 hour to do), you notice a *tension* building-

Mark tells us from the start as the narrator who Jesus is, but as he unfolds the story everyone involved is forced to make a conclusion about who this Jesus is- yet Mark keeps us in suspense because no one is quite getting it, not even his disciples- the demons even recognize *this* about Jesus, but not the people....that is, not until after Jesus dies on the cross- culminating with a Roman guard (of all people) finally acknowledging
“truly this man was the son of God” (**Mark 15:39**)

²As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: **See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way.**

³**A voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way for the Lord; make his paths straight!**

Mark mentioning Isaiah only was a normal literary device at the time, but he’s actually quoting from 3 sources-

Into promised land- **Exodus 23:20** “I am going to send an angel (messenger) before you to protect you on the way and bring you to the place I have prepared.

Back in the land from exile- **Malachi 3:1** “See, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before me. Then the Lord you seek will suddenly come to his temple, the Messenger of the covenant you delight in—see, he is coming,” says the Lord of Armies.

While in exile- **Isaiah 40:3** A voice of one crying out: Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness; make a straight highway for our God in the desert.

Each speaks of a messenger that will prepare the way of the Lord

By quoting these verses mark certifies that the Torah, the major prophets, and the minor prophets (IOW the OT) confirm what he is about to say about Jesus of Nazareth

And what is he going to say? **God's anticipated salvation and judgment take place in Jesus**
Jesus is the central figure of Scripture

Who is this man who will prepare the way for Jesus?

⁴John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

Unusual for Jewish people to do this at the time

none of their ritual washings were administered by another
Proselytes would do this to identify with Judaism

Here's what John message was, and what the people were acknowledging:

Repentance- turning from sin

Confession- acknowledging sin as wrong

Baptism-acknowledging the need to be cleansed

⁶John wore a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey.

Why add these details? The Bible is ALWAYS communicating something valuable-

- Wilderness- the same region where the prophet Elijah was taken by God in chariots of fire (**2 Kings 2 :6-12**)
- Mark quotes **Malachi 3:1**- in which God says he will send a messenger before the day of the Lord & Judgment- if you keep reading, in Ch 4:5 He says he will send Elijah
- His garment was that of the prophet Elijah
 - **2 Kings 1:7-8 NIV** The king asked them, "What kind of man was it who came to meet you and told you this?"⁸They replied, "He had a garment of hair and had a leather belt around his waist." The king said, "That was Elijah the Tishbite."
- John was critical of the king Herod as Elijah was critical of the king Ahab
- The Jewish people believed Elijah would come before the Messiah (Christ) came
 - **Matthew 11:13-14** For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴And if you're willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who is to come.

John's dress and diet identified him with the desert region rather than with the temple and religious leaders

Salvation came not from the law, it could not save- God made a way/ prepared a way

⁷He proclaimed, "One who is more powerful than I am is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals.

There is irony in what John is saying here- for the rest of the book, Mark proceeds to present Jesus as a servant

John's life and ministry made much of Jesus. Though he was known and followed, he didn't seek the spotlight, he sought to shine light on the one who was worthy (**John 3:30** He must increase, but I must decrease.)

⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

We need more than just rituals, we need true cleansing- the type only God's Spirit can do

In the OT, it was God alone who can give His Spirit out – Jesus will do this because Jesus is God

Which leads us to our first of 4 implications:

Implications and Applications-

1. Jesus is Lord

- a. Mark makes 3 cases: He calls this Jesus 'Son of God', he claims the OT spoke of this man, he promises this man will send the H.S. (something only God could do)
- b. Why is this important? Because if Jesus of Nazareth was truly more than a first century Jewish Rabbi, if He was who He claimed to be, God's Son, **than you and I need to be very attentive about all that He said and about the way we live in response to that**

JC Ryle- *“Let believers cling to his doctrine with jealous watchfulness. With it, they stand upon a rock. Without it they have nothing solid beneath their feet. Our hearts are weak. Our sins are many. We need a Redeemer who is able to save to the uttermost and deliver from the wrath to come.”*

It is important because it means Jesus can save- John washed them with water, but we needed a better cleansing agent, so Jesus washes with his Spirit – **Jesus is able! (What sin is stronger?)**

2. God meticulously, not compulsively, planned out our redemption

- a. The gospel begins in the OT according to Mark.....Why is that important?
Because since God calculated, processed and thought out all it would take (including our continuous mess ups) we can rest assured that He won't explode in a rage of anger against us or have a change of heart and turn His back on us

He doesn't just save us initially, He sanctifies us continually

- b. A lesson to be gleaned from these references back to the OT prophecies is that God is *actively unfolding history*. What that means for you and me is that **we can have comfort in the chaos since God is in control**; it also means that we are part of what God is doing, we play a role (as John did).

3. It is no small thing to make much of God

- a. John didn't have (that we know of) any official credentials, wasn't trained in the rabbinic schools, did not have the biggest and newest house and the latest clothes in fashion, did not eat at the best restaurants. He was an odd man living off the land. And yet Jesus said of him **no one greater than him had come (Matthew 11:11)**.
John had a resolve to make much of God, and we should too
- b. It should be the motivation of our hearts, overflowing into every aspect of life, that everywhere and anytime we make much of God (this is counter intuitive btw)

4. The identity of Jesus forces us to make a choice about our own identity

- a. Jesus of Nazareth is the most polarizing person to have walked this earth. Many love Him and dedicate their lives to revolve around His teachings; many others hate Him and what He stands for; many others misunderstand who he is.

If He's God, those far from Him would do well to draw near in humility and repentance

Those who are Xians would do well to follow him in every way

Who Jesus is determines what his disciples must become

Call to Action-

**John prepared the way for the coming of Jesus,
we get to prepare the way for his second coming**

Are you ready for Jesus????

- 21 for 25
- Gospel Engagements

BULPEN

Main commentaries I use on Mark:

- The Gospel of Mark- William Barclay
- Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of Mark- JC Ryle
- Christ Centered Exposition, Mark- Daniel L Akin
- Mark for You- Jason Meyer
- The NIV Application Commentary, Mark- David R Garland
- The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Mark- William L Lane
- The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Mark- John F Walvoord & Roy B Zuck
- The Baker Illustrated Bible Background Commentary- Scott Duvall & Daniel Hays
- The Moody Bible Commentary- Michael Rydelnik & Michael Vanlaningham
- Preaching Mark- The Good Book Company

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

— C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

Author- Early reputable witnesses attribute this book to John Mark,
the son of Mary in whose house the early church met (Acts 12:12)
the one who traveled with Paul and Barnabas on M.J.
Peter’s ‘apprentice’ (Early church fathers say Mark got his info from hearing Peter preach)

Original Audience: Roman gentiles (infrequent OT quotations, explanations of Jewish customs, translations of Aramaic and Hebrew phrases by Greek equivalents and ‘Latinisms’)

Mark’s two major themes are who Jesus is and what it means to be his follower.

V6= John’s authority as an Elijah...v 7-8= Jesus supreme authority

John the Baptist ministry & Jesus’ baptism- These two events stand as a transition from the era of the Old Testament prophets to the time of Jesus—a transition Jewish leaders found difficult to make.

The coming of John is the coming of Elijah; the coming of Jesus is the coming of God

Ritual washings were known throughout the ancient world. But John’s baptism was not just a copy of the other cultural ritual washings those were self-washings John’s baptism was administered by a second party

Repentance the Greek word for repentance metanoia means a change in one's thinking in other words it's a rational decision not an emotional feeling

Mark shows us the emotion of Jesus, at times frustrated, other times moved by compassion

Repent- one of the prayers I pray is "Help me to hate my sin"

In ancient times a proselyte which is a person who wasn't Jewish but wanted to become Jewish had to undergo three things they had to undergo circumcision because that was a sign of the covenant they had to offer a sacrifice for the atonement allegiance and they had to undergo a baptism for ritual washing. The Jews had ritual washings for themselves but not baptism. What John is in essence doing here in calling all Israel to be baptized he's implying that in some way all Israel is defiled.

Matthew 11:7 As these men were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind?

Matthew 11:12-14 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been suffering violence, and the violent have been seizing it by force. ¹³For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴And if you're willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who is to come.

"Jesus Fish"- ICHTHUS= Acrostic for, *Iesous Christos Theou Huios Soter* "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior"

JC Ryle- *There was nothing unforeseen and suddenly contrived in the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.*
God carefully planned your redemption. Ponder on that