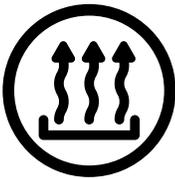




The Gospel of Mark



WARM-UP

What is something that you looked forward to for months or years before it arrived? How did you feel about it before it was here? How did you talk about it with others?

Pray for your time together as a group.

Read out loud as a group

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The Gospel of Mark is traditionally thought to be the first of all the gospels to be written down. It was written by John Mark, coworker of Paul and Barnabas, and most likely recorded from Peter's account. Throughout the book, Mark focuses on the actions and ministry of Jesus which is why instead of genealogy or theology, Mark begins his book with what prepared the way for the Good News of Jesus; John the Baptist.

Read out loud as a group

MARK 1:1-11 (NIV)

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, a the Son of God, 2 as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" – 3 "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"
4 And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 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. 6 John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps 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."
9 At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."



What stands out to you?

Possible Answers: Answers will vary.



Vs 2-3 are quoting Isaiah 40:3. Mark is setting up Jesus' identity by bringing in the Old Testament and identifying that there indeed was a forerunner to Jesus. Why do you think it was so hard for the Jewish leaders to connect what they were seeing with what they knew in the OT?

Possible Answers: Answers will vary, could be because it wasn't exactly how they imagined, because they weren't communicating in the ways they preferred, because they waited so long, because what they put their stock and hope in was works not what Jesus was preaching.



Where else have you seen locusts and also honey in the bible? What might this tell us about John the Baptist and Jesus?

Possible Answer: Locusts: seen in the plagues, wars or war language, clean insects to eat under Jewish law. Honey: seen in calling the promised land "the land of milk and honey", often used for gifts or in poetry to acknowledge something good, a desired food. Locusts often symbolize judgement while honey often symbolizes prosperity and blessings. It's cool that John the Baptist in laying the foundation for Jesus' coming is eating signs of judgement and prosperity. Eating, which is a sign that we are relying on the provision of God, emphasizes too that we are relying on Jesus to take our judgement and give us his prosperity.

Read out loud as a group

"The dove is above all a *bird for *sacrifice, as was true already in the time of Abraham (Gen15:9). According to Leviticus 1:14, if one's offering is a burnt offering of birds, then they will be turtledoves or young pigeons. The unpleasant ritual, which involves the priest wringing the neck, draining the blood and tearing off the wings, is recounted in Leviticus 1:15-17. Elsewhere we read that doves and pigeons are the offerings of the poor, those who cannot afford a sacrifice from a flock (Lev 5:7; 14:21-22)..."

- [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#), pg 216



In verses 10-11 we see all of the Trinity mentioned. Not only that, but this imagery of a dove reveals so much of who Jesus is. List out how this foreshadows and validates Jesus.

Possible Answers: Jesus as a sacrifice from the very beginning; Jesus' death isn't pleasant but brutal; Jesus as the answer for everyone regardless of income or means; Jesus IS the Son of God; the Spirit, Father and Son are all connected and have the same purpose/authority; Jesus as the option for everyone not just the wealthy.

Read out loud as a group

“Psalm 2. God made David and his descendants kings in order to fulfill the purpose for which Abraham was called: to bring blessing to all nations (Gen. 12:1-3). At a time when Gentile Kingdoms sought to throw off Israelite rule, this psalm recalls the promises made to the Davidic king at his coronation. Gentiles will find lasting joy only as subjects of this king. The Psalm also looks to the future, when the Davidic Messiah will rule all nations. “

- Commentary from the [ESV Global Study Bible](#)



As read above, Psalm 2 was read during coronations for Kings of Israel. What do you think the significance is of having this spoken over Jesus after He was baptized?

Possible Answers: Jesus in baptism was identifying himself with sin even though he was sinless. The foreshadowed sacrifice for the sin of the world. AND through that He was still King, a different type of King that established His rule through suffering. This was his divine coronation. Jesus is/was a king for the people, a better David. He was with and identified with them.



Can you think of any other times in the Bible where the number “40” has been used? Based on all the stories, what can we infer about the significance of 40?

Possible Answers: 40 days- Noah’s flood lasted 40 days, time Moses had in receiving the law, Jonah’s warning was about destruction that would happen in 40 days. Meaning: this 40 usually is related to a time of waiting, judgement and testing.

Read out loud as a group

MARK 1:12-20 (NIV)

12 At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, 13 and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. 14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” 16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 17 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” 18 At once they left their nets and followed him. 19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. 20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.



How does that impact you to know that our God also went through waiting and testing?

Possible Answers: Answers will vary.



Look at Jesus' invitation to the first disciples. What do you notice?

Possible Answers: Jesus is inviting, not commanding. Jesus is pointing to himself. By using fishing language, He is telling them that they are already equipped to "fish for people". They are still following Jesus even though they are being sent out to help fish people from the waiting judgement.

DISCUSSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



- How is God calling you to share His Good News to those around you this week?
- How can you be seeking Jesus and His truths about repentance and the coming of the Kingdom of God as we study Mark together?
- So many jews missed the OT signs of the Messiah. What is making it harder for you to see Jesus in your life right now?