

the **Lord Himself** is going to arrive on the scene, just like the prophets said He would, and therefore you must **prepare your heart** for His arrival.

Mark 1:7-8 - 7 And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals. 8 "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." NASB

Now you see John, the **messenger preparing** the way for the **Messiah** was telling the people, here he comes. **“And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.”** This was a profound thing. Throngs of people flocking out to John to be dunked in the Jordan River out in the desert, and yet John is telling them, **“After me One is coming who is mightier than I.”** Yes John was telling them that God’s Messiah would visit them, and they needed to **prepare their hearts** and their lives for Him by **confessing** and **repenting** of their **sins**. And John was saying this **One** who comes is **very great**, in fact **“I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.”** This was John’s message, that Jesus was coming and He was the holy One of God. When he comes He will do mighty things way beyond anything I am doing here. Of Jesus John was telling them, 8 **“I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”** Consider this very profound thing that John was saying to them, that Jesus would baptize them with the Holy Spirit! Wow, what kind of thing will this be? What kind of worship of God will happen with us when we are **“baptized with the Holy Spirit?”** Well this is exactly what happened, Jesus did come, and He does baptize God’s people with the Holy Spirit. Because everyone who is a true follower of Christ has the very Holy Spirit of God living inside their own very soul!

Mark 1:9-10 - 9 And it came about in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; 11 and a voice came out of the heavens: "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased." NASB

Now Mark is giving us a historical account of the events that happened in the life of Jesus, and so he says, **“And it came about in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.”** Just as John had been telling the people that Jesus would come, sure enough, **the day came when he arrived** on the scene. And as if to **validate** the **message** that John had been preaching, the **Messiah Himself** came to be **baptized by John**. See here Christ’s

approval of all that John had done and said, even bringing Himself to be baptized, so that all who follow after Him may have this example to follow. And indeed when Jesus calls us to follow Him, He calls us to be baptized, repenting of and confessing our sins. And look at the powerful thing that happened next, **“10 And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; 11 and a voice came out of the heavens: “Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased.”** Indeed a very profound moment in the history of the world. When God’s chosen One, the Messiah, appears on the scene, God Himself shows up to tell us, this is the One. And the very **Holy Spirit** descended upon Jesus, and to validate the whole picture **God the Father** speaks from the heavens, **“Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased.”** See here the **Holy Trinity** appearing altogether at the day that the Messiah appears publically to begin His ministry. And so the message that John had preached, that One is coming who is mighty is now validated by God Himself as the voice from the heavens identifies Jesus as God’s own very Son, **“thou art my beloved Son.”** And the Holy Spirit, who descends upon the Messiah as if to express His perfect unity with the Son.

I suppose that all who were there that day were asking a really important question that day, **who is this man** that has now appeared? And what will He say, and what will He do? Will He deliver us from Roman oppression and destroy all our enemies and usher in His Kingdom of peace like the prophets said He would? Who is this man, who the mighty prophet says, **I can’t untie His shoes?** Who is this man on whom the very **Holy Spirit descends** right before our very eyes? And isn’t this the same important question that we are presented with again this morning some 2000 years later? Who is this man who is called **Jesus Christ?** Let us see and hear in the Gospel of Mark this morning what God speaks from heaven to say, **“Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased.”**

1 John 4:14-15 – 14 And we have **beheld and bear witness that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.** 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. NASB

Mark 1:12-13 - 12 And immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness. 13 And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him. NASB

Now Jesus is led by the **Holy Spirit** out into the **wilderness** where He will be **“tempted by Satan.”** See here that it was actually God that sent Him into the

wilderness to be tempted, it was God's purpose, even though Satan was the Tempter. God put Jesus to the test (the Spirit led Him to it) to show He was **qualified** for His **messianic mission**. But also **Satan** tried to **draw Jesus away** from His **divinely appointed mission**. And so it happened, that Jesus was tempted, **"13 And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan."** Even though Jesus was the **sinless Son of God**, He was still **actually tempted** which shows that He was also truly **man** who **could be tempted**. Mark writes, **"and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him."** See here that all the dangers and discomforts of the wilderness were there to tempt Him and wear Him down so that He might fail and sin. Luke tells us in Luke 4:2 that He was there **40 days** in the wilderness and that He fasted and **ate nothing**. Thus Satan used His hunger and discomfort to try and tempt Him, but Jesus withstood these temptations until finally it was over and the **"angels were ministering to Him."** That is, they helped Him to heal and cared for Him.

See here that Jesus was superior to Satan and his temptations, and was able to overcome all the trials of a 40 day fast in the wilderness. Surely He was **tested** and **tried**, but withstood even the most severe trials.

Mark 1:14-15 - 14 And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." NASB

Here the **arrest** of **John the Baptist** is mentioned. John was arrested by Herod because Herod was seeking and occasion against him. See here that the ministry of God's messenger John the Baptist had **finished its course** and now the ministry of the Messiah was here.

Mark writes, **"14 And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God."** As Jesus begins His ministry notice, He was **preaching**. You see Jesus was a preacher of the Gospel, yes the greatest preacher that ever lived. He was a herald, speaking out, and Mark tells us what he was preaching... **15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."** Jesus began to say that **"the time was fulfilled."** The long awaited day of the **Messiah** had arrived, He was here to deliver God's people and bring His Kingdom into the world. This is what he was saying, **"the Kingdom of God is at hand."** It is **here**, it has **arrived**, I have brought the rule of God's Kingdom to the world. And even though Jesus didn't come brandishing swords and looking for war against the earthly powers, He no less brought the authority as God's King into the realm of space and time. The

Kingdom had now come through the Person of the King, and He is the “One” who has all authority in heaven and earth. This authority He will soon display in His public ministry. But rather than bring His rule forcefully upon people, Jesus invites them to come and be forgiven through Him. His Kingdom comes in the form of inviting men to come to God and be forgiven through His priestly ministry of dying as a **sacrifice** for their **sins**. He came as a suffering servant, as the Lamb of God to die as a **sacrifice**. And when He brought the Kingdom, he did it by preaching and calling people to respond to the message He preached. Mark writes about what Jesus was saying, **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”** **“Repent”** Jesus was saying and **“believe the Gospel.”** This is very much like John, who had prepared the way before Him, telling people to **“repent of their sins,”** and be made right with God by being **baptized**. But Jesus adds here, **“believe the Gospel.”** Jesus was calling people to **“Repent and Believe.”** And to this day when the Gospel is preached, this is what we call people to do, **“Repent and Believe.”** That is, **stop sinning, turn away from your sins, show your genuine remorse over the guilt of your sin and repent!** And also, **“believe the Gospel,”** that is the **good news about Jesus Christ** who has come to be the **Savior of the world**. Come and trust Him for His righteousness before God, and **not your own**. The only thing acceptable to God is the **life and death of Jesus**. We can never **earn God’s favor** as our lives are **simply too sinful**, and we have **broken God’s laws** and need His **forgiveness**. So God offers that forgiveness through the life and death of Jesus. This is the good news of the Gospel that Jesus was telling us to believe. Have you heard the **voice of the Savior calling you?** Here is what He says, **“Repent and believe the Gospel.”**

Mark 1:16-20 - 16 And as He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." 18 And they immediately left the nets and followed Him. 19 And going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. 20 And immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him. NASB

Now see here Jesus begins to call His disciples to follow Him. **“He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”** Jesus chose them and called them, come follow me. See here the authority that Jesus carries even to call men to follow Him, to become His subjects and learners, to order their lives after His way of life. Leave your life

behind and come to follow me and I will give you a whole new purpose in your life. And look at their response, **“And they immediately left the nets and followed Him.”** And the same thing happened with James and John, **“And going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. 20 And immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him.”** Notice carefully what Jesus said to these men, **“Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”** Here Jesus takes these fishermen and gives them a much higher purpose in life, to be **“fishers of men.”** And that is what they became. These are the same **Apostles** who started the **early Christian Church**, and it is through their ministry and preaching that **God exploded the Christian Church in the First Century** across the entire Roman world. These very fishermen began to preach the Gospel also, and it is through that **powerful Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ**, that people are being **saved and forgiven** even now in the **21st Century**. And men are still **“fishers of men”** when they **preach the Gospel**. See how this Kingdom of Jesus has been saving people out of every **tribe and language and people** down through the **ages of history** so that **God’s heaven** will be **populated** forever with people who **“repent and believe the Gospel.”** This is indeed the way those fishers of men catch men, and this is the way that people are **saved and forgiven** and receive **everlasting life** in Heaven with God. As the Scripture says,

Acts 4:12 - 12 "And **there is salvation in no one else**; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." NASB

John 14:6 - 6 Jesus said to him, **"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.** NASB

Acts 10:42-43 - 42 "And **He ordered us to preach to the people**, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. 43 "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name **everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.**" NASB

Mark 1:21-28 - 21 And they went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach. 22 And they were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. 23 And just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, 24 saying, "What do we have to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are — the Holy One of God!" 25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" 26 And throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice,