

COMMENTARY

GOSPEL OF MARK
Chapter 1

vs. 1-8:

Mark begins straightway with his proposition that Jesus is the son of God and that the life of Jesus is Good News (meaning of the word: GOSPEL). He emphasizes that the events took place in accordance with God's plan; when he quotes Isaiah (prophesied between 740-680 B.C.).

The quote refers to a messenger which would be sent before the promised one of God (Messiah) would come. Mark explains that John the Baptizer was this person. His preparatory work included: preaching and teaching, calling people to repent, and then to be baptized as a testimony of their repentance. John lived off the land, yet people thronged to him. He understood his position and clearly told the people that God would send another messenger who would be far greater than he.

vs. 9-13:

Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee (in the north) to be baptized by John (an act of dedication to God; not for repentance of sin). God demonstrated the uniqueness of Jesus by sending His Spirit upon Jesus (descending AS A DOVE, can mean in the form of, or in the same manner as a dove would). God then spoke, identifying Jesus as His Son.

Jesus was then led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by Satan for 40 days.

vs. 14-20:

John was imprisoned and Jesus went returned to Galilee to proclaim God's message and calling people to repent. There in Galilee, Jesus called Simon and Andrew (brothers), and James and John (sons of Zebedee). All four of these men were fishermen. When Jesus called them to follow Him (as was typical of teachers of that day and considered quite an honor), they left everything and went to follow Him.

vs. 21-28:

Jesus then went to Capernaum (a city in the region of Galilee). On the Sabbath (setting of the Sun on Friday until the setting of the sun on Saturday; this was a day when the Jews were to do no work) Jesus went into the synagogue and taught. People were amazed as He spoke with authority (rather than referring to what "wise" men had said about God's Word). When a demon-possessed man entered and stated who Jesus truly was, Jesus cast out the demon. The people marvelled at His teaching and His authority over demons and spread the news of His work.

vs. 29-34:

Upon leaving the five (Jesus, James, John, Andrew and Peter) went to Andrew and Simons' (Simon is also known as Peter) house. Peter's mother-in-law was sick and Jesus miraculously healed her (the healing was immediate and complete). The people of the town brought all the sick and demon-possessed to Him, there, and he healed them and cast out the demons.

vs. 35-39:

Jesus left early in the morning to have time to Himself to pray. When His disciples found Him, He insisted on going to other villages to teach and preach (He had come to declare God's will). He continued His ministry in the region of Galilee, preaching and driving out demons.

vs. 40-45:

Jesus instantly and completely healed a man who had leprosy. He charged the man to tell nobody, but to follow the procedure of going to the priest, offering a sacrifice to God, to be recognized as being "clean". The man instead went around proclaiming what Jesus had done, and Jesus was thereby forced to stay out of the towns and out in more spacious areas. People then swarmed to those regions to see Him.

GOSPEL OF MARK
Chapter 2:

vs. 1-12:

Jesus returned to Capernaum (in Galilee) and was once again surrounded by people. So many had come that they filled the house and were even crowded together outside. Jesus preached to them. As He was doing so, 4 men brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus to be healed. When they saw that they could not get in, they went up on top of the roof (roofs in that land are flat and are used much as our porches are here) and made a large enough hole in the roof, that they could lower their friend down. Jesus, because of the faith of the friends, told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven. The religious leaders were indignant, for only God could forgive sin. Jesus knew what they were thinking, and to prove that He was from God and had such authority, He healed the man. This demonstrated His power and right to heal and to forgive. The people were amazed and praised God.

vs. 13-17:

Jesus went out to the Sea of Galilee and began to teach the multitude that had followed Him. Jesus spotted Levi (also known as Matthew) and called him to follow and leave behind his tax collecting business. Levi then took Jesus home and had a feast for Jesus and his friends. When the religious leaders saw that Jesus was associating with tax collectors and other "sinners" (ones they thought, a good person would avoid) they condemned His actions. Jesus told them that it was such people who needed to be healed (spiritual healing would include forgiveness and becoming a part of God's family).

vs. 18-22:

John the Baptizer's disciples fasted and so did the Pharisees (one of the 2 main groups of religious leaders; the Pharisees believed in life after death and angels; whereas the Sadducees did not). Fasting was a common spiritual discipline (helps develop self-control and is used to spend more time with God). Jesus was asked why He and His disciples did not fast. He responded by sayings that it was not an appropriate time (God's Son, the Bridegroom had come and it was a time for rejoicing) when He left, then they would fast.

Jesus then taught them that it is better to replace that which is old and worn out, rather than try to fix it (the old and worn out was: LAW and the Old Covenant; the New is: GRACE and the New Covenant).

vs. 23-27:

On the Sabbath, Jesus and His disciples were eating the grain in the field as they walked along. The Pharisees considered this a wrong thing to do on the Sabbath (they considered it work). Jesus responded by reminding them that one of their forefathers did what was necessary (even though regarded by others as wrong). He then emphasized that the Sabbath (having time for rest and worship) was designed for man's benefit and was not designed to become a burden (having to obey a stringent set of regulations as to what could and could not be done on that day!).

Study Guide

Mark 1

1. Who is Jesus?
2. What did John say the one following him, would be?
3. What happened when Jesus was baptized?
4. What did Jesus proclaim?
5. Who were the first 4 followers, in Mark's record?
6. Why were people amazed at Jesus' teaching?
7. Who were the people amazed that Jesus could give orders to?
8. Who did people bring to Jesus?
9. What did Jesus do in the morning?
10. What was one reason that Jesus came?
11. What was Jesus filled with, when He healed the leper?
12. What did Jesus tell the former leper, not to do?

BONUS:

1. Is there any difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism? Explain.
2. What do Jesus' miracles mean?
3. Why would Jesus not want people to know of His ability to heal?

Study Guide

Mark 2

1. What did Jesus do when people had filled the home?
2. What did 4 men do?
3. What was the first thing Jesus said to the paralytic?
4. What did some of the teachers of the law, think?
5. Why did Jesus heal the paralytic?
6. How did the people respond to Jesus healing the paralytic?
7. Who was the next man called to follow Jesus?
8. How did Jesus respond, when questioned about those around Him?
9. Why did Jesus' disciples not fast?
10. When would His disciples fast?
11. What did Jesus and His disciples do, that was considered unlawful by the Pharisees?
12. What did Jesus say about the Sabbath? (see vs. 27)

BONUS:

1. Why did Jesus first forgive the man's sin, before healing him?
2. Who should Christian associate with, and why?
3. How does Jesus' teachings regarding the Sabbath apply today?