

MARK 1:1 – 15

¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, ³ the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’” ⁴ John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” ⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” ¹² The Spirit immediately drove

him out into the wilderness. ¹³ And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him. ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming 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.”

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Take time to read the passage carefully for yourself. Notice and mark down its structure, repeated words, key movements, and anything that stands out or raises questions. The questions below are offered as tools to help you notice, reflect, and respond to the text—use those that are most helpful for you or your group.

EXPLORING THE PASSAGE

- What is the significance and meaning of the first line of Mark?
 - What do we learn about the book from this phrase?
 - How should this influence the way we read Mark?
- What is the significance of the Old Testament quotes in Mark's opening? To whom do they refer, and why does Mark choose to begin his Gospel with these references?
- What is significant about the ministry, appearance and message of John the Baptist?
 - How does he fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah?
 - How do the people respond to John's ministry and what is the significance of their response?
- What is the significance of Jesus' baptism? What do the sights and sounds that accompany His baptism reveal about His identity and mission?
- What is significant about Jesus' time in the wilderness? Why might the Spirit drive him into this time?
- What is the good news that Jesus proclaims?
 - How does it compare with the message of John?
 - What is God's kingdom, and why would its coming lead people to repentance and belief?
- Summary:

- What do we learn about Jesus, the gospel, and kingdom of God in this passage?
- What do we learn about faith, preparation, and repentance?
- Write a one or two-sentence summary of the main point of this text. What is God's word for you from this passage? How will you respond?

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

- This passage focuses on the preparation for Jesus' ministry. How is God preparing you for His work and message—through His Word, times of repentance, wilderness experiences, or other means? How can you be more attentive and responsive to God's preparation in your life?
- Why is the kingdom of God good news to you personally? In what practical ways can you live out repentance and belief in your daily life?
- This book marks the beginning of Jesus' gospel. How has Jesus' gospel transformed your life? How can you trust and respond to it daily? How might you invite others to encounter this good news?