

Session 1: Mark 1:1-13

PROLOGUE

1. Read Mark 1:1. When you hear the word “Gospel”, what thoughts come to your mind? What does that word mean to you? For you?
2. Read Romans 1:16. How does Paul describe the Gospel? What should we expect as we read this Gospel?
3. Who is this Gospel about? What is the importance of Mark’s words?

INTRODUCTION

4. Who is Mark?
  - A. Early Church Fathers (Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen) attribute this Gospel to John Mark who was a disciple of Paul and Peter also the cousin of Barnabas.
  - B. The Church Historian Eusebius of Caesarea quotes a lost work by the Christian writer Papias (ca. 60-130) which says that Mark carefully wrote down what Peter preached about Jesus. The account is faithful, accurate, but not necessarily in order.
5. Some characteristics of Mark’s Gospel.
  - A. Deals in greater detail with the Lord’s acts than with His sayings.
  - B. Early Church Father attest that the Gospel was written in Rome. Probably written to a Gentile audience.
  - C. Mark portrays Jesus in at least six specific ways:
    - a) A man of authority (1:22).
    - b) A man of power.
    - c) Someone to be feared.
    - d) Someone who is divine.
    - e) Someone who is fully human.
    - f) Someone who is odd.
  - D. The Disciples are portrayed, not exclusively, but in general, in extremely negative terms.
  - E. Minor Characters stand out as positive examples and provide a foil for the portrayal of the disciples.
  - F. Enemies of Jesus are portrayed negatively and in open conflict with Jesus.

JOHN THE BAPTIST PREPARES THE WAY

6. Read Mark 1:1-8. Verses 2-3 is the only Old Testament Scripture quoted in the Gospel of Mark. How do verses 2-3 relate to verses 4-8?

7. What was the nature of John's baptism?
8. What did the Lord want to accomplish through John?
9. What is different about John's baptism for forgiveness and Christian Baptism? See Romans 6:3-5. How do you continue to daily live in your Baptism?

### **JESUS IS BAPTIZED AND TEMPTED**

10. Read Mark 1:9-13. Verse 9 literally reads: "And it came to pass in those day..." Can you guess what the significance is when Scripture speaks of "days" (ex. "in those day," "days are coming," "after those days.")?
11. "The heavens being torn open..." When is the next time in Mark's Gospel that the heavens were torn open? See Mark 15:38. What do these 2 instances have to do with Isaiah 64:1?
12. What is the meaning of God the Father's words at Jesus' baptism? See also John 3:13.
13. Who opposed Jesus in the wilderness? What does this opposition tell us about Jesus? See Hebrews 4:15.
14. What Old Testament event/story does Jesus replicate?
15. Open the Hymnal to page 327 and read Luther's evening prayer. Also read Psalm 91:11. What comfort do these words bring you in your daily life? Is this a promise that nothing bad will happen to you?