

The Father's Pure Delight

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] Before we hear the Word of God preached, please take your Bibles again and turn to the book of Mark, the second book of the New Testament, the book of Mark, chapter 1. I will start reading from verse 1 through to verse 13.

Mark, chapter 1, verse 1. This is the Word of God. The beginning of the Gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in Isaiah the prophet, I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way, a voice of one calling in the desert, prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 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. John wore clothing made of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

And this was his message. After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

[1 : 27] At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

And a voice came from heaven. You are my son, whom I love. With you I am well pleased. At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and he was in the desert forty days being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. Amen. Let's hear the word of God preached. Please keep your Bibles open to that passage.

We have in the New Testament four inspired accounts of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I've preached through three of them, and this morning we embark on the fourth, the gospel according to Mark.

So let's dive in. Number one, who is Mark? Well, he's a first century Jewish Christian from Jerusalem, mentioned somewhere around nine times in the New Testament.

[2 : 46] He was not one of the apostles, but he was often found working alongside of them. The first mention of him is found in Acts 12 and verse 12. You remember how King Herod beheaded the apostle James and then arrested Peter and was planning to do the same to him.

But during the night, an angel of the Lord came and set him free and let him out of the prison. And as Peter was walking in the midnight air, he finally realized he wasn't dreaming.

He really was out of prison. So right away, we see that John is right there in the midst of the church of God in Jerusalem.

Next, we learn that when Paul and Barnabas were sent out from the church in Antioch on their first missionary journey, they got Mark from Jerusalem and took him with them.

That's Acts 12. They went first to the island of Cyprus. And after they were done there, they headed on. But John Mark went back to Jerusalem.

[3 : 59] That's Acts 13. And that became a point of contention, you remember, between Paul and Barnabas. For after they finished their whole first missionary journey and came back to Antioch, after a while, they decided to go back and visit those churches or those believers where they had preached.

And so they're ready to go back. And we read that Barnabas wanted to take Mark along. But Paul did not think it wise since he had deserted them and had not continued in the work.

Acts 15.38. So what happened? Well, Barnabas took his cousin Mark with him and they went one direction with the gospel.

And Paul took Silas with him and went another direction with the gospel. So the one missionary team is now in two with Mark going with his cousin Barnabas.

So Mark gets off to a rocky start in the ministry. But under this patient mentoring of Barnabas, whom the apostles renamed Son of Encouragement, Mark eventually proves himself faithful.

[5 : 14] Such that even Paul came to highly regard him as a cherished fellow worker. Colossians 4.10, Philemon 1.24. And during Paul's final imprisonment, he writes to Timothy saying in 2 Timothy 4, verse 11, Get Mark and bring him with you because he is helpful to me in my ministry.

Church history regards Mark then as the penman. I'm sorry. It was not only Paul that saw him as a valuable fellow worker, but we see the same is true of Peter.

And Mark also became a faithful co-worker of the apostle Peter. And at the end of Peter's life, just before he was executed, he's at Rome. And from Rome, he writes his first epistle to God's elect scattered abroad.

And Peter ends that first letter this way. 1 Peter 5.13. She who is in Babylon. That's code talk for the church of God in Rome. She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greeting. And so does my son, Mark. My son, Mark. What an intimate, close relationship Mark had with the apostle Peter at this time.

[6 : 40] It's similar to Paul in the way he speaks of my son, Timothy. My son in the faith. A special, close relationship. And so church history does regard Mark as the penman for the apostle Peter.

And what we find in this gospel is that Peter's testimony comes through heavily in the gospel of Mark. But knowing that, don't expect to have Peter's sins and failings somehow scrubbed out of the account by his son, Mark.

Rather, we'll see Peter, faults and all, in Mark's gospel. Because Peter is not the hero of Mark's gospel. The only hero is named in the very first verse.

He is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And maybe some of us Christians have major failings in our past. Failings that fill us with regret.

And even leave you thinking, perhaps, that you're permanently on the shelf, disqualified from any further service of the Lord. Well, this gospel of Mark ought to encourage you.

[7 : 52] Because as you see and read this gospel, you'll see what a valuable gift Mark gave to the church for her good. Even for us today.

And on every page, he wants us to see the Lord Jesus Christ. The only Savior who redeems failures like Mark himself. Like Peter.

Like you. And like me. And enables us by grace to become servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. We've all come short of the glory of God.

We've all sinned. So, let's enjoy this good news together as Mark focuses our eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's who Mark is. Secondly, Mark lets us know his purpose for writing in the very first line. He's going to tell us the gospel. In other words, Mark has good news for us.

[8 : 51] Verse 1. The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Notice the gospel is about a person. It's not a philosophy.

It's not just a set of ideas. It's not principles and practices to make your life better. Oh, it has that. But the gospel is the good news about a person.

It's about the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In coming to save sinners. And to make us right with God. Throughout this gospel, Mark will keep pointing us to three big things about Jesus Christ.

The first is his identity. Who he is. It's critical that we get that right if we would understand the gospel. Secondly, his mission.

Why he came. And it's important we not miss that either. Why is he here? And then thirdly, his demanded response from us.

[9 : 56] In other words, what we must do because of who he is and why he's come. You see, Mark isn't just giving us some facts to satisfy some curiosity about history.

No. No. No. Jesus Christ himself is speaking to us in this gospel. And he demands a personal response from every one of you.

You're not ever done with the word until who Jesus is and why he came has radically changed your heart and life. And oriented your life around this person.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Now that's just the authoritative nature of all scripture as we saw last week in Sunday school. And Mark's gospel is no less.

This word comes with the authority of Christ. There is a demanded response to who he is and why he's come. So that's the purpose of his writing.

[11 : 03] To tell us about the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Third, who is this main character that Mark confronts us with? Well, his identity and mission are clearly stated right up front in the very first verse.

As if to say, don't miss this. He is Jesus. He's Jesus. That's Jesus' human name. His personal name. And it means the Lord saves.

You remember how the angel said, you will give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. The name Jesus means the Lord saves.

And that's who he is. He's the Savior. And it's why he's come. We see both his identity and mission in the name Jesus. He's not come to condemn us.

John 3.18 says we're already condemned. So he didn't come to condemn us. No. He's come to save us condemned sinners.

[12 : 09] And that's gospel. That's good news for whoever we are. That's why he's here. But he's not only Jesus. He's Jesus Christ.

Christ. In the Hebrew, he's the Messiah. The long promised Messiah. Promised to come and save his people. To crush the head of the serpent.

Now, literally, the word Christ. Christos in the Greek and in the Hebrew means the anointed one.

And that's full of gospel for us.

Because that he's the anointed one means God himself has chosen and anointed him to be the prophet, priest, and king of his people. For their salvation.

So that's who he is and why he's come. He's Jesus Christ. The anointed. And Mark goes on to say he is the son of God.

[13 : 07] That's a statement of his full deity. He is God. Now, we're going to see that Jesus is a real man.

With a real human body. Like every one of us have. And a real human soul. Like every one of us have. And a body and soul with human limitations.

And the people saw this. Jesus got tired. He got weary. He got hungry. He got thirsty. And he was so real as to his humanity.

To look at him, he looked like just any other Jewish man. And that was true. He was a real man. But it was so real that they missed the more important fact that he was more than a man.

He was God. The son of God. Two natures in one person. The only person to ever be both God and man.

[14 : 10] Two natures but only one person. Great mystery. You may not understand it. But it's clearly revealed in Mark's gospel.

Right off the bat. Right up front. Now, we sometimes think perhaps of a son as being less than a father. Especially when they're younger. And you know, that's the doctrine of the Jehovah Witness. That Jesus, the son is. Oh, he's good. But he's less than God, Jehovah. He's not God. That's not the teaching of the gospel.

He is equal with the father in deity. He's no less God than God the father is God. Than God the spirit is God. He shares the one divine nature with the father and the spirit.

The three are one God. You may not understand that mystery. But if you don't believe it, you cannot be saved. The only savior God the father sent from heaven is his own eternal son.

[15 : 22] Fully God. Fully divine. And nothing less can save us. So, already we've seen in the very first verse the identity and the mission of Jesus Christ.

And in some ways, that's a table of contents for the whole gospel. The first half focuses more on the identity of Jesus. Who he is.

And it climaxes at chapter 8. Which is about halfway through the gospel. Verse 29 where Jesus says, Who do men say that I am? And they tell him who men think.

And then Jesus says, Well, who do you say that I am? And Peter answers. And again, as we saw in Sunday school, He got it right there. He gets it right here as well. He just answers, You are the Christ.

The Messiah. You are that anointed one promised. And then the last half of the book focuses more on Christ's mission. Centering on his suffering, his death, and his resurrection to save us.

[16:25] Now, those are not hard and fast points. We've already seen his identity and mission in verse 1. And we'll see the two mix. But in a general way, His identity is first emphasized and then his mission.

But the response demanded throughout is repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, we'll find at the end of this book, It's this claimed identity of Jesus, that he's God, That gets him killed. And he's on trial before the Sanhedrin. In chapter 14 at the end, The high priest asks him, Are you the Christ? The son of the blessed one?

I am, said Jesus. And you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the mighty one and coming on the clouds of heaven.

They all condemned him as worthy of death, claiming blasphemy, claiming to be God. This is the inescapable reality.

[17:35] Jesus Christ is the eternal God. And you may put him on a cross and reject that teaching.

But you'll never escape it. As Jesus said to those men, And you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of God. And you will be judged in that day by the one that God has appointed.

So at the end of Mark's gospel, What we'll see is that his identity as the son of God is the very claim that gets him to fulfill the mission.

That the father sent him on, which was to die. To save us from our sins. Amazing wisdom of God revealed in the gospel. Well, the rest of the passage today divides into three sections.

We have first the forerunner of Jesus. Then we have the baptism of Jesus. And then we have the temptation of Jesus. So let's look first at the forerunner of Jesus, verses 2 to 8. As you notice, Mark does not give us an account of the birth of Jesus, like Matthew and Luke do.

[18:47] Rather, he marks the beginning of his gospel account from the announcement of John the Baptist. That's his starting point. The beginning. And this was clearly foretold 700 years earlier as written by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 40.

And here in verses 2 and 3, we get to read those words from Isaiah. Of God the Father speaking to God the Son long before his incarnation.

This is what he says. He says, I will send my messenger ahead of you who will prepare your way. A voice of one calling in the desert. Prepare the way for the Lord and make straight paths for him.

So John's ministry, John the Baptist's ministry, is to prepare the way for the Lord. He's a forerunner. Kids, what is a forerunner?

He runs before. Okay? That's what a forerunner is. And John would be that for Jesus. To run before him to prepare the way for the Lord.

[19:56] Like a one man excavating crew. Doing prep work for a new road. Well, you can see that in Isaiah 40.

That the high places are brought low. And the low places are filled in. The crooked made straight. And the rough ground made level. Why? So that there's a smooth path.

So that when the Lord comes, there's no more obstacles in the way. Like sin. But there'll be a smooth path. To receive the Lord who's coming.

Like an excavator. Preparing the way. Another picture we have of the forerunner is. When a king was going into a certain city. Before he arrived, he would send a herald or a forerunner.

And he would go before the king. And he'd come into the city. And he'd say, the king is coming. Get ready for him. And so his whole work was to let them know.

[20:54] To proclaim his coming. His soon coming. And to help them to be ready to receive him warmly. As his subjects when he came. That was John the Baptist's role.

As the forerunner. And all that was spoken 700 years before he appeared. 700 years past after Isaiah's prophecy. With nothing happening.

In the way of this forerunner. Showing up. That's a long time to wait. That's like three times the history of our nation.

And they're waiting. For this forerunner. To come and pronounce the coming of the Lord. In the last 400 years of those 700. The heavens were silent.

There were no prophets. There was no prophetic word from heaven. Silence. Just that old promise. Ripening. For 700 years.

[21 : 53] And then. A voice. Of one calling in the desert. Prepare the way for the Lord. John's voice.

Where? In the desert. That was the marker. That a new age was dawning. This is the age of fulfillment. Of all that the Old Testament prophets had said about this coming Savior.

And so John came. That's how verses 4 to 8 begin. Isaiah foretold it. Now verse 4.

And so John came. Baptizing in the desert region. And preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 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. John wore clothing. Made of camel's hair. With a leather belt around his waist.

[22 : 54] And ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message. After me will come one more powerful than I. The thongs of whose sandals I'm not worthy to stoop down and untie.

I baptize you with water. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. 700 years earlier. A voice in the desert will come.

And so John came. It's a long time to wait for a promise. Some of you are waiting for a promise. Maybe you've waited long.

The promise is ask and you will receive. And you're waiting to receive. The promise is that God would work all things together for good.

You're still waiting. For the good. The promise is that joy and gladness will overtake you. And sorrow and sighing will flee away. And you're still waiting.

[23 : 58] Child of God. One day you will see just as. These people of the first century saw. That it all happened. Just as God said it would. That just as that voice appeared in the wilderness.

So. You will receive. Keep on asking. Joy and gladness will overtake you. And sorrow and sighing. So keep on believing.

Keep holding to the promise. He will work all things together for your good. Well John appears then. In the desert. Or we might. The word could also be translated wilderness.

In the wilderness. Wilderness. John was a wilderness man. He wore rough clothes. Simple diet. Living off the land. And his ministry was to prepare people for the coming of the Lord.

As the forerunner. And Mark mentions three ways that John the Baptist prepared the people for Christ's coming. First of all. He preached. After all.

[25 : 00] He was a voice. What does the voice do? The voice preaches. And he proclaimed. Calling people to repent. For the forgiveness of their sins. Indeed Matthew summarizes his preaching in this one line.

Repent. For the kingdom of God. Is at hand. It's at hand. Because the king. Is at hand. He preached repentance.

A change of mind. That leads. To a whole turnabout. Of life. Instead. Of life. Instead. Being oriented around yourself. And what you.

Your whole life. Is reoriented around what God wants. That's repentance. It's that. Turning.

Repudiating the old way. And it leads to a whole transformation of life.

So John is calling them. To turn away from their crooked ways. And to make straight paths. For the Lord. Nothing between. Their souls.

[26 : 01] And the coming savior. All obstacles of sin removed. So that when he comes. He might receive a ready entrance. Into their hearts.

It was a message of repentance. For the forgiveness of sins. You know that message has disappeared. For many churches today. I listened to a sermon.

Last week. Of a pastor in Grand Rapids. Who said that we don't need. To repent of our sins. Just believe. The good news. You see people want their sins forgiven.

Without having to turn from them. That gospel was never offered to sinners. And that's what. Mark is wanting us to see.

Right up front. What is this gospel offer? Many go to confessionals. To hear. Their sins are absolved. They're forgiven.

[27 : 02] But never. Ever intending. To turn from them. There is no forgiveness of sins. Without repentance. Repentance. Jesus said.

Unless you repent. You will all likewise perish. Luke 13. 3 and 5. You must turn from your idols. And turn to the living God. It's a turning from.

And a turning to. So I ask you. Have you repented? Are you repenting? It's a mark of every believer.

We're never done repenting. Until we stop. Until we're done sinning. John prepared the people. For Christ's coming. By preaching repentance.

For the forgiveness of sins. Secondly. He prepared them. By baptizing those. Who did repent. And that baptism. Was an outward sign.

[27 : 56] Of inward. Spiritual cleansing. We read in verse 5. Confessing their sins. They were baptized by him. In the Jordan River.

Water. Water. Water. Water. Baptism. Does not save you. But it is commanded. Of you. It's part of that.

Demanded response. Of the one. Who is God. And has come. To save sinners. It's meant. It's meant. As a strengthening.

Means of grace. For the one. Baptized. As an outward sign. Of what God has done. On the inside of him. Cleansing him. From sin. And forgiving him.

Just as water. Is a cleansing agent. So it pictures. The cleansing. And forgiving. Forgiveness of sin. It's interesting. When. After Jesus.

[28 : 49] Has died. And risen. And ascended. Acts 2. On the day of Pentecost. Peter's preaching. And the Jerusalem sinners. Were convicted. And cut in their hearts. That they had crucified. Their Messiah. And they said.

Brothers. What should we do? And Peter said. Repent. And be baptized. Every one of you. In the name of Jesus Christ. For the forgiveness. Of sins. Same message.

Same message. It doesn't change. And Peter was preaching. Here this morning. He'd tell you. The same thing. If you're convicted. Of your sin. And you see. Your lost condition.

And you can't save yourself. Repent. And be baptized. Every one of you. In the name. Of Jesus Christ. With your faith. In Jesus Christ. For the forgiveness. Of sins.

Have you repented? Have you been baptized? That's the response. Demanded of you. Because of who he is. And what he has done.

[29 : 48] Well the third way. John prepared them. Not only preaching repentance. Not only baptizing. Those who did confess. And repent. But thirdly. He told them to put their faith.

In the one who was coming. After him. We read that the masses. Went out to John. To be baptized. This John. Appearing in the desert.

This rugged. Wilderness. Mountain man. Created quite a stir. In Jerusalem. They came from all over. Out to him. Jesus will say later. For a while.

You walked in the light. Of John. In other words. Not all of these. Were genuine. Believers. Who confessed. From the heart. And truly did repent.

But. But there was this initial move. To come out. And to. To confess their sin. And to humble themselves. House. John was. A strange guy.

[30 : 43] Something of a maverick. He hadn't gone through. All the. The acceptable. Religious parties. And schools. Of the. The religious leaders. And so we read. That the religious leaders. In Jerusalem.

Sent some. I don't know if you want to call them spies. They sent priests. And Levites. Out into the desert. To ask. To find out from John. Just who he is. You read that in John 1.

19 to 23. The populace. Many thought. That John the baptizer. Might be the Messiah. And he told them plainly. I am not the Christ.

Then who are you? They asked. Are you Elijah? He said. I am not. Are you the prophet? That. The prophet. That. Moses talked about.

That would come. And he answered. No. And finally. They said. Well who are you? Give us an answer. To take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself? And I love his answer. I am the voice of one calling in the desert.

[31 : 41] Prepare the way for the Lord. I am that voice. 700 years ago. That Isaiah wrote about. This is no some upstart thing that's happening. This has been the plan of God.

From all eternity. Announced 700 years ago. And the age of fulfillment has come. Listen. This is God speaking to you. The voice.

The voice. And John's voice pointed their faith away from himself. To the one who was coming after him. You know that's the problem. John was so popular.

And people were following him at this point. And very jealous of him. And John says. No. No. I'm not him. I must decrease. He must increase.

I'm not the Messiah. No. He says. After me will come one more powerful than me. And he's so far above me.

[32 : 37] That I am not worthy to do the least service to him. To untie the leather straps of his sandals. And take them off so as to wash his feet.

The lowest servitude. I don't deserve. Listen. If you ever think that God ought to be pleased. That you are serving him. You need to read John's words.

And pray through them. And then go confess your proud thought. We are not worthy to do the least. The least thing.

To preach. To teach a Sunday school class. To hold the door open. To work in the nursery. We're not worthy to do any of the service to Christ. He is that much greater than us.

And John was pointing away from himself. It's all about him. And oh how we see this Jesus coming.

[33 : 36] And stooping. To serve us. We are unworthy of serving him. And he stoops from heaven. Philippians 2. Becomes a man. A servant.

To serve us. John says further. His superior power is seen in comparing. His baptism with my baptism. There's a. I baptize you with water.

John says. But he. He will baptize you. With the Holy Spirit. I baptize you with the outward symbol. Of water. That's the symbol of cleansing. He will baptize you. With the Holy Spirit. Who actually does the powerful. Supernatural work. Of cleansing the heart. From sin. You see the vast difference.

Water. The symbol. The Holy Spirit. The actual sanctifier. And cleanser. The washer. Of the heart. From sin. The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit.

[34 : 35] The Holy Spirit. Will move you. Will move you. To be careful. To keep his commands. He will renew your heart. He will. Take out that heart of stone.

And give you a heart of flesh. And he himself. Will come to live in you. To move you. To be very careful. To keep his commands. Ezekiel 36. 27. And he'll work in you. Both to will and to do.

With God's good pleasure. Have you experienced. This supernatural. Power. This Holy Spirit. Conversion. Changing your heart. From. A life oriented.

Around your way. To a life oriented. Around what God wants. That's the work. Of the Spirit. And then the ongoing. Work of sanctifying us. And making us more. And more like our Savior.

It's through faith. In Jesus Christ. We receive the promise. Of the indwelling Spirit. To sanctify us. And so in these. Three ways. The forerunner of Jesus. Prepared the people.

[35 : 31] For the Lord's. Coming. He preached. Repentance. He baptized. With the baptism. Of repentance. And he told them. To put their faith.

In the coming one. Who's coming after him. And who's far greater. Well that's the forerunner. Of Jesus. Let's look at the baptism. Of Jesus. Verses 9 to 11.

We read. At that time. Jesus came from. Nazareth. In Galilee. And was baptized. By John. In the Jordan. Isaiah said. A voice is coming. And so John came. Says Mark.

John said. The Lord is coming. And Mark says. At that time. Jesus came. At that time. When John was baptized. Jesus came. Now the baptism of Jesus.

Is a major. Major event. It's importance. It's importance. Can be seen. By the three amazing. Things that happened. Involving each person.

[36 : 27] Of the Trinity. Father. Son. And Holy Spirit. And we get to see. A rare peek. Into that eternal. Inner. Trinitarian. Love. And. Fellowship.

Of the Father. Son. And Holy Spirit. Three things. That were amazing. At the baptism. First of all. The Son of God. Was baptized. You say. What's so amazing.

About that? Well. What was John. The Baptist's baptism? It was a baptism. Of repentance. For the forgiveness. Of sins. Jesus had no sins.

To be repented of. Jesus needed. No forgiveness. It is amazing. That Jesus. Submitted. To the baptism.

Of repentance. And was baptized. By John. Indeed. You remember. In the other accounts. John says. No way. No. I'm not going to. You need to. Baptize me. John saw clearly.

[37 : 22] No. Suffering. Allow it to happen. To fulfill. All righteousness. He had no sins.

To repent of. And to be forgiven. That's right. But we did. We had sins. That needed. To be repented of.

And forgiven. And by his baptism. Jesus declares. His willingness. To bear our sins. To bear the sins.

Of his people. And so the son of God. As in the incarnation. So at his baptism. Identifies. With rebel sinners. Who need repentance.

And forgiveness. He stands. In. Their place. He stands. In. Our place. Here. Here. Just as he will be doing. Three years later.

[38 : 14] Standing. In the place of sinners. Identifying with us. And our rebelliousness. And need for repentance. And forgiveness. For the father.

Has laid. On him. The iniquities. Of us all. He who had no sin. Was made sin. For us. And he bore. Our sins. In his body. To the tree. You see. He's so identified. With his people. That their sins. Become his sins. Before God.

And here. At the baptism. He is showing. His willingness. To assume. This mission. That the father. Gave him. From all eternity past. Son. You go. You go.

And identify. With men. You become. One of them. So identify. With them. In the incarnation. You identify. With them. In every way. And Jesus.

[39 : 12] Is here. Showing that. He took our sins. And our sorrows. He made them. His very own. He had no. Grief. For his own sins. But he. Bore the burden.

To Calvary. And suffered. And died. Alone. So. Before beginning. His public ministry. Jesus is here. Submitting. To baptism. Signaling. His willingness.

To embrace. The mission. The father. Gave him. To save his people. By standing in. For them. In my place.

Condemned. He stood. In my place. He identifies. With my sin. And takes it. As his own. So that's the first. Amazing thing.

That happens here. Just the fact. That the son of God. Is baptized. Showing. He's going to assume. The sins. Of his people. But secondly. We see. The spirit of God.

[40 : 07] Descending. On Jesus. Verse 10. As Jesus was coming up. Out of the water. He saw heaven being torn open. And the spirit. Descending on him. Like a dove. Now that too. Was foretold.

Listen to what. Isaiah 42. 1 and 2 say. This is the. The heavenly father. Speaking. To his son. His servant son. Jesus Christ.

When he would become. In the heart. In the heart. Isaiah 41. Here is my servant. Whom I uphold. My chosen one. In whom I delight. I will put my spirit.

On him. And he will bring justice. To the nations. Have you thought about. The incarnate son of God. Needing to be upheld. That.

That is my favorite way. Of answering your question. How are you doing pastor? Pastor. I am upheld. I don't know. What else to say. And the father says.

[41 : 07] Here is my servant. Whom I uphold. Have you ever thought of. Jesus. The incarnate son of God. As to his humanity. Needing to be upheld. By the father.

And how does he uphold. His son. In his mission. That he's come to fulfill. I will put my spirit. Upon him. And the book of Isaiah. Is full of that.

Motive. The Holy Spirit. Will be put upon Christ. To fill his humanity. And to uphold him. In this great work. To equip him.

To empower him. To fulfill. The divine mission. This. Isaiah 11. 2. The spirit of the Lord. Will rest on him. The spirit of wisdom. And of understanding.

The spirit of counsel. And of power. The spirit of knowledge. And of the fear of the Lord. And he will delight. In the fear of the Lord. You remember the passage. In Isaiah 61. 1 and 2. The spirit of the Lord.

[42 : 03] Is upon me. Because the Lord. Has anointed me. To preach the good news. To the poor. To bind up the broken hearted. To proclaim freedom. For the captives. And release from darkness. For the prisoner.

To proclaim the year. Of the Lord's favor. And the day of vengeance. Of our God. And in that first sermon. When he preached in the synagogue. At Nazareth. He read that passage. And all eyes were upon him.

As he rolled the scroll. Of Isaiah back up. And sat down. And said. This day in your hearing. That scripture. Is fulfilled. The spirit of the Lord. On him.

To preach. To redeem. To save. Upholding. Equipping. Helping. In all he did. To save us. It was the spirit of God.

That upheld his humanity. And empowered his service to God. Enabling him to finish the work. The father gave him to do. When you see him in temptations. As we will in a moment. The spirit is upholding him.

[42 : 59] When you see him preaching. The spirit of God. Is upon him. When you see him. Wrestling in Gethsemane. The spirit of God. Is holding him up. When you see him.

Hanging on the cross. And you wonder. Why? Why does he not come down? Why? How can he stay there? Until it's been. The spirit of God. Was resting on him.

Indeed Hebrews 9.14 says. It was through the eternal spirit. That he offered himself up to God. It was through the spirit. Upholding him. And here. At his baptism.

The second amazing thing. Is that the heavens. Whatever that means. Were torn open. And this dove. That was the representative. Of the spirit. As the spirit. Came as a dove.

And rested on Christ. To fulfill the father's mission. And let me remind you believers. It's the same spirit. That dwells in you. To uphold you. In your trials. And to equip you.

[43 : 56] To serve the Lord. In whatever ways you are doing. The third amazing thing. At the baptism. Was the father's voice. The father's voice.

Expressing his love. And pleasure in his son. It's only one of the two times. In the gospels. That we actually. Hear the voice of God. Like they did on Mount Zion.

When he gave the 10. Or Mount. Sinai. When he gave the 10 commandments. And here. The heaven is torn open. And the voice. Says. You are my son. Now who. Who can say that.

Only a father. Can say that. Right. You are my son. And so this is the father. The heavenly father. Saying to his eternal son. You are my son. Whom I love.

And with you. I am well pleased. For all eternity. He has been the father's. Pure delight. And when they designated.

[44 : 51] The plan of salvation. They designed the plan of salvation. In eternity past. The father says. Now you go. Here's my. Here's the people. I'm giving you. Jesus constantly referred to his people.

As those the father has given me. He gave these people to us. Now you go. And procure their salvation. Do everything they need. To save them. And Jesus wasn't saying.

Oh do I have to. He was willing. He was. He was. He was. Hardly. Held back. As a race horse. Wanting to get out of the gate. Here am I. Send me. He came willingly.

And the father sees that willingness. And he can't. Contain himself. And the heavens are torn. And his voice says. This is my son. Whom I love.

With him. I am well pleased. Look. He's embracing. The mission. I sent him to do. And he speaks his pleasure. To his son. And Jesus gets it.

[45 : 46] What an encouragement. To the 30 year old. Jesus of Nazareth. As he begins his three year march. To the cross. He shows by his baptism.

His willingness. To embrace the father's mission. To take on the sins of his people. And become a curse. That we might be saved. And the father. Pours his commendation.

His love. And praise. And delight upon him. For doing so. John 10. 17 and 18. The Lord got it. The Lord Jesus. He says. The reason my father loves me.

The reason. There's a reason the father loves me. That he's talking about. The reason my father loves me. Is that I lay down my life. Only to take it up again. No one takes it from me.

But I lay it down. Of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down. And authority to take it up again. This command. I received. From my father. And the father sees his son.

[46 : 44] Coming. To be obedient. And willingly. Laying down his life for us. And the father's delight. Erupts in. Praise. To his son.

So the. At the baptism. The son of God. Embraces the mission. Given by the father. To stand in for sinners. He shows it in his baptism. The Holy Spirit. Comes to equip him. With everything. Needed to carry out the mission.

And the heavenly father. Voices his love. And delight. In his son's obedience. To the mission. That ought to encourage you. Brother and sister. That God.

The father. Son. And Holy Spirit. Conspire together. For your salvation. Blessed be God. That's good news.

Drink it in. For your comfort. And amazement. The last is the temptation of Jesus. We've seen the forerunner. The baptism. Now just quickly. The temptation of Jesus. Verses 12 and 13.

[47 : 39] At once. No sooner had he heard his father's approving voice. Loving voice. At once the spirit sent him out into the desert. And he was in the desert 40 days.

Being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals. And angels attended him. Satan means adversary. And here Mark wants us to see the demonic opposition.

Arrayed against our savior. The father saving mission. Will not succeed without a cosmic battle. With the spiritual forces of evil.

All hell breaks loose. At the coming of God's son to earth. Trying to thwart him from fulfilling his father's mission. Our savior's going into the desert to be tempted.

That too was on behalf of his sinful people. The first Adam fell to Satan's temptation. And by sin he forfeited eternal life for himself. And for all of his posterity.

[48 : 40] And he brought condemnation upon us all. Romans 5.12 And Jesus Christ is here coming as the last Adam. And he must now succeed against Satan's temptations.

In order to undo the results of the first Adam's failure. Not only suffering the condemnation. That we now deserve for our sin. But also perfectly obeying for us.

That he might win eternal life. For us. Romans 5 says. By the obedience of the one man. The many were made righteous.

And so by Jesus perfect obedience under temptation. He's working out a report card. Of perfect obedience. Even obedience to the death.

Even the death of the cross. Never once sinned. A righteousness. An obedience to put to our account. We who have no such righteousness. We've blown it.

[49 : 37] We're failures. And he has a righteousness now. If he can defeat Satan in every temptation. He was only tempted here for 40 days. But that wasn't the end of his temptation. Satan has followed him all the way through life.

Nipping at his heel. Tempting him. All the way to Gethsemane and to Calvary. It was only after that. That he was free of the temptation. And if he fails at just one point. Just one sinful thought.

One sinful attitude. Or emotion. Or word. Or something left undone. He has no righteousness to give to us. There's no good news.

There's no gospel of Mark. Oh but blessed be God. Though he was tempted in every way like we are. He did not sin. And then we have this interesting comment.

He was with the wild animals. What's that about? And the angels attended him. Well it's just reminding us. Jesus was tempted in a far worse situation. Then Adam was tempted. Adam was in a garden.

[50 : 37] A perfect scene. Yes there were animals. They were not wild yet. The lion and the lamb lay down together. He names them. They're his pets. But that's not the world in which Jesus was tempted.

Jesus is in a whole different world. A world under the curse. A world after the fall. When all of creation is filled with danger.

And nature is full of dangers. Even the wild beasts.

Red in tooth and claw. Well this is the world in which our Savior must complete the Father's mission. And it's the same Savior that is now able to pity you.

In your temptations. Because he's been where you are. He's been in this wicked world. Where the wild animals are. And therefore he knows how to comfort and to help those who are being tempted.

[51 : 42] And then it's this about angels attending him. Well again I believe it's showing us the weakness of his human nature. He hasn't eaten for 40 days.

And now the devil himself is tempting him. And the Father says my servant whom I uphold. Go angels. Go minister to him.

Build him up. Feed him. Whatever that meant. Angels attended him there. Again God shows his loving concern.

And delight in his son's perfect obedience. Look he's not giving in one inch to the devil. Ah. Go minister to him.

I love him. Go. And your obedience under temptation Christian means something to God. He is pleased with it. And yes he has angels.

[52 : 40] We share the planet with angels. And he sends them to us. His ministering servants to minister to those who will inherit salvation.

That's you. Who know him. Well this whole period of temptation then. Shows us the perfection of Jesus. And that yes he's got a battle against the evil spirits.

We'll see that throughout this gospel. But all of this that we've seen this morning was preparation then. For his three years of public ministry. Of coming to carry out the father's mission.

And dear believer. It was all for you. It was for you that he became a man. Took upon himself your humanity. It was for you that he was baptized.

It was for you that he was tempted. It was for you that he suffered and died on Calvary. It was for you that he was raised from the dead. And ascended on high. He's there in heaven. Praying for you.

[53 : 38] Interceding for you. And therefore he's able to save completely. Those who come unto God through him. Because he always lives to make intercession. And one day he's coming for you.

Do you not love him? Does that not make you want to know him better? And to love him more? Is he not your pure delight? Well he's the father's pure delight.

And any who get to know him find him to be their delight too. Let's pray. Let's pray. We love you our heavenly father. For having sent your son on the mission to save us.

We love you Lord Jesus. Son of God. For having willingly come to fulfill the father's mission. We're unworthy to be your servants.

And yet you the servant of the Lord stooped to serve us. We love you for that. We love you Holy Spirit. For coming and resting upon the son of God as he was incarnate.

[54 : 38] To equip him with everything for doing the father's mission. And we thank you for the way that you have come to dwell in the hearts of your people. To equip us.

To uphold us in the midst of our trials. That we might fulfill the mission given to us. We ask that you continue that good work in our hearts.

That you would stir in us the response that is fitting to such love and grace. That we would know the living God better.

That we would love him more fully. And we would serve him more willingly. Trusting him. Obeying him. Glorifying in him. Worshipping him. And telling others what a wonderful God and Savior is ours. We ask it in Jesus name. And for his praise. Amen.