

The Submission of the Servant

Mark 1: 9-15

Our text today reveals what most consider the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Up until this point, even in the other Gospels, we have very little detail about the life of Jesus. From this moment on, Jesus will live His life in public scrutiny.

In the parallel passages within Matthew and Luke's Gospels, we find more detail about the baptism and temptation of Jesus. There is clearly enough biblical information to preach three separate messages from the text we have read today. However, I want to follow the pattern Mark sets, and look at the verses we've read together. I want to examine the [phases](#) of the beginning of Jesus' public ministry as we consider: [The Submission of the Servant](#).

I. The Affirmation of Jesus (9-11) – Mark exposes the coming of Jesus to the Jordan River to be baptized of John. This act of submission affirmed His deity and public ministry. Consider:

A. The Son's Acceptance (9) – [And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan](#). Following the details of John's ministry, preaching repentance and baptizing in the Jordan, Mark reveals that Jesus came from Nazareth and was also baptized of John. We must understand that Jesus was not baptized because He was sinful and needed cleansing, but rather as an act of obedience to the sovereign plan of God. He publicly identified Himself with God the Father and revealed His submission to Him.

- The baptism of Jesus signaled the beginning of His public ministry. He publicly identified Himself as the promised Messiah, the One who came to redeem and save from sin.
- His baptism also publicly revealed His total submission to the sovereign will of God to provide the means of salvation for humanity.
- Also the baptism of Jesus stood as a profound picture of the Gospel message He would preach and fulfill. It pictured His death as the sacrificial atonement for sin and resurrection from the dead!

B. The Spirit's Anointing (10) – [And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him](#). As Jesus came up out of the Jordan, following His baptism, the Spirit descended upon Him. Those present likely failed to see the significance of this event, but it was necessary for Jesus and His ministry. He was fully God, and

He was fully man. He came to earth, in the form of a man, to live a perfect, sinless life, in order to offer Himself the atoning sacrifice for sin. He was able to live that life of perfection because He was guided by the Spirit within. This was in accordance with prophecy of old, [Isaiah 11:1-5](#).

C. The Father's Approval (11) – [And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased](#). God the Father proclaimed His approval of Jesus, affirming He was in fact the Son of God. All who were present that day heard a public proclamation of the Father's approval of the Son. Jesus received personal affirmation of the Father. That doesn't mean Jesus doubted the Father, but this served as a reminder of the God's approval of His Son.

- This approval ought to bring peace and comfort to our hearts as well. Those who are saved by grace have the righteousness of Christ imputed to their account. God is pleased with the finished work of the Son, and we are accepted based on His works of righteousness! [Rom.4:22-24](#) – [And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.](#) ^[23] [Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;](#) ^[24] [But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.](#)

II. The Temptation of Jesus (12-13) – Again there is greater detail of Jesus' temptation in the other Gospels, but Mark reveals much in these verses. Consider:

A. The Directive (12) – [And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness](#). This was not some haphazard event of little significance. Jesus was driven into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted of Satan. He was literally "*urged with force, thrust, and driven into the wilderness.*" Jesus would face every temptation we face, and yet He did so without sin. His period of temptation was necessary in His work of redemption. [Heb.4:15](#) – [For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.](#)

B. The Duration (13a) – [And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan](#). This was not a momentary season of testing, but one that lasted forty days. Day after day, week after week, Jesus endured intense temptation from the enemy. This is consistent with the biblical model we see time and again in Scripture regarding testing – Moses was on the backside of the desert forty years; the children of Israel wandered for forty years; the spies were in Canaan forty days, considering the possibilities and obstacles associated with the Promised Land.

- This serves as a reminder to us that our times of testing may not always be brief. We too may endure long seasons of testing and adversity, but the Lord is always faithful.

C. The Difficulty (13a) – [And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan](#). This was a time of difficulty for the Lord. It was certainly not a leisurely vacation in the back country. He endured forty days of temptation from the devil. Satan offered every temptation known to man, and yet Jesus endured faithful. I am convinced Jesus faced every temptation you and I could possibly face, and yet He overcame by the Spirit.

- John reveals that every temptation we face falls into one of three categories: [1 John 2:16 – For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world](#). Jesus faced, and overcame each of these in the wilderness. Our seasons of temptation from the devil are difficult, but we can overcome through the Spirit. [1 Cor.10:13 – There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it](#).

D. The Devotion (13b) – [And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him](#). It is uncertain why Mark referenced the wild beasts in the wilderness with Jesus, but he does affirm that the angels ministered to the Lord during His temptation. While it may have appeared that Jesus was alone, the angels were there with Him to aid in His season of great difficulty. They would minister to Him again as He suffered in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

- As Jesus ascended to the Father, following His resurrection, He sent the Spirit to guide and comfort our hearts. We are never alone in our times of temptation. The Lord will never abandon us in the journey. We have the Comforter within to guide and guard our lives!

III. The Proclamation of Jesus (14-15) – Here Mark spoke of the beginning of Jesus' public preaching ministry, following His baptism and temptation in the wilderness. Notice:

A. His Arrival (14a) – [Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee](#). John the Baptist had been imprisoned by Herod for preaching against his unlawful relationship with his brother, Philip's wife. Following his imprisonment, Jesus came preaching. This was as it had to be. John came as the forerunner, preparing the way for Jesus' ministry. He knew his ministry would have to fade as Jesus came on the scene. He had fulfilled his purpose, and Jesus was now beginning His public ministry among men.

B. His Approach (14b) – Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. As Jesus began His ministry, He faithfully preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God. He came heralding the good news they had longed for generations to hear. God had long promised Messiah would come to save them from their sin and bondage, establishing His kingdom here on earth. While most ignored and rejected Jesus as the Christ, He came to fulfill the Father's plan of redemption. Having expected an immediate kingdom, many failed to see Jesus as their Savior and Redeemer. However, He was faithful to preach the Gospel and fulfill the plan of redemption for humanity.

▪ We must remain faithful to share the good news of Jesus Christ today. He is the only hope for humanity and the sole means of salvation. He is the only way to be accepted of God. One must know Christ in salvation to obtain forgiveness of sin and inherit eternal life.

C. His Appeal (15) – And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. Mark revealed the gracious appeal in Jesus' preaching. Consider:

- He revealed their wait was over. The Messiah they looked for had come. God had been faithful to His promise, and the Christ was among them. There was no need to look any further, or consider another. Christ had come!
- Jesus also revealed the kingdom of God was at hand. This too served to reveal the urgency of the moment. The prophecies of old had been fulfilled. God had sent His Son into the world to save from sin. He had come to redeem. There was no time to waste. The time to look to Christ by faith was now! (Again, many missed this because they looked for an earthly kingdom at that time, but Jesus wanted them to see Him as the Christ, believing by faith.)
- Jesus preached a message of repentance and faith. They were challenged to repent of sin and believe the Gospel. They must see their sinful ways and repent of their evil deeds. They must be willing to confess their sin and need for a Savior. They had to look to Jesus and believe that He was in fact the Christ. They had to embrace Him as the sole means of salvation.

Many today view this as a narrow minded message, and I will agree it is. Jesus spoke of the broad way that leads to destruction and the narrow way that leads to life eternal. The message of repentance and faith has not changed. Jesus remains the sole means of salvation. We too must see our sinful ways, repent of our sin, (turning to Christ and away from sin,) and receive the Gospel by faith. We must believe that Jesus died in our place, atoning for our sin, was buried, and rose again in triumphant life. This is the way of salvation!

Conclusion: There is much in this passage that offers hope and comfort. Christ the Lord came in a body of flesh, lived a perfect, Spirit-filled life, overcoming every temptation we would ever face. He offered Himself as the sacrifice for sin, dying in our place to purchase our redemption. He rose again in resurrection life for our justification, securing eternal life for all who believe. I have much in this life and in the life to come through Christ. He is the source of my strength, joy, and hope. If you know Christ as your Savior, rejoice in His great provision. If you are yet unsaved, respond to the message of the Gospel by faith, repenting of sin, and be saved today!